

Unit 1: Analyze the effects of Spanish colonization in the New World from 1491-1750.

Introduction

The period between 1491 and 1750 marked a significant era in the history of the Americas, characterized by the arrival and subsequent colonization by the Spanish Empire. This reading seeks to analyze the effects of Spanish colonization on Native American regions, namely the Southwest, Northwest, Great Plains, and Eastern Woodlands. Additionally, it will examine the motives behind Spanish colonization, the Columbian Exchange, key figures such as Hernan Cortez and Bartolome de las Casas, and other relevant factors such as the encomienda mission system and French exploration.

Native American Regions Before Colonization

Before the arrival of Spanish colonizers, the Americas were inhabited by diverse Native American societies, each adapted to its particular environment and characterized by unique cultural practices.

The Southwest region of North America boasted a dry and arid climate, featuring expansive deserts, mudflats, and intricate canyon systems. Native American societies such as the Puebloans constructed large apartment-like stone and adobe structures to accommodate their populations. Their agriculture relied on maize, squash, and beans, cultivated through sophisticated irrigation systems that utilized scarce water resources. The presence of large population centers allowed for the development of complex societies with leisure time for artistic and religious pursuits.

In contrast, the Northwest region offered a resource-rich environment characterized by abundant rainfall, dense forests, and cool temperatures. Native American tribes like the Chinook and Tlingit inhabited fixed settlements, constructing plank houses from the region's plentiful cedar trees. Their diet consisted of hunting, fishing, and gathering, facilitated by the region's diverse ecosystems. Northwest societies were relatively peaceful, with social structures centered around kinship ties and trade networks.

The Great Plains encompassed vast expanses of flat grasslands, with a climate conducive to nomadic lifestyles. Native American tribes such as the Sioux and Cheyenne lived in portable teepees, following the seasonal migration patterns of bison herds for sustenance. Hunting was central to their way of life, and territorial conflicts often arose over hunting grounds. The Plains societies were characterized by their nomadic nature and hierarchical structures based on leadership in warfare.

The Eastern Woodlands region offered a variety of climates and weather patterns, including forests, rivers, and fertile land. Native American tribes like the Iroquois and Algonquian built wigwams and longhouses for shelter. Their subsistence relied on a combination of hunting, agriculture, and gathering, with multi-crop patterns cultivated to sustain their communities. Eastern Woodlands societies were organized into fairly small communities, often governed by councils of elders or chiefs.

Spanish Colonization

Spanish colonization of the Americas was driven by three primary motives: Gold, Glory, and the Gospel. The quest for wealth, particularly in the form of precious metals such as gold and silver, motivated Spanish explorers and conquistadors to venture into unknown territories. Glory referred to the desire for conquest, expansion of the Spanish Empire, and personal fame for the explorers and conquistadors. The spread of Christianity, or the Gospel, was also a significant factor, as Spanish missionaries sought to convert indigenous peoples to Catholicism.

Christopher Columbus's exploration of the Americas in 1492 marked a pivotal moment in history. Sponsored by Spain, Columbus set sail seeking a western route to Asia but stumbled upon the Caribbean islands instead. His voyages initiated the Columbian Exchange, a transformative exchange of goods, cultures, and diseases between the Old and New Worlds.

The Columbian Exchange had profound effects on both hemispheres, leading to the spread of crops, livestock, and diseases. New foods such as potatoes and tomatoes were introduced to the Old World which helped increase the European population. Horses and pigs were introduced to the Americas, which Amerindians had never seen before.

Contact between Spanish colonizers and Native American societies also had devastating consequences. European diseases, to which Native Americans had no immunity, spread rapidly, leading to catastrophic population declines. The disruption caused by contact with Europeans, including social disorganization and dispossession of land, further weakened indigenous societies. While Columbus's expeditions opened up new horizons for European exploration and colonization, they also led to the exploitation and oppression of indigenous peoples, making his legacy a subject of controversy and debate.

In the years after Columbus's arrival, Conquistadores like Hernán Cortés played a central role in the Spanish conquest of the Americas. Cortez's conquest of the Aztec Empire in present-day Mexico demonstrated the military superiority of the Spanish forces and marked the beginning of Spanish rule in the region. The brutal tactics employed by the conquistadores, including warfare, enslavement, and forced labor, resulted in the subjugation and exploitation of indigenous peoples.

Bartolome de las Casas, a Spanish Dominican friar, was one of the earliest critics of Spanish colonial policies, advocating for the rights and dignity of indigenous peoples. Las Casas's writings exposed the atrocities committed by Spanish colonizers, leading to debates over the ethics of colonization and the treatment of indigenous populations.

The California Mission System

The encomienda system was a labor system established by the Spanish in the Americas, whereby Spanish colonists were granted control over indigenous communities and their labor. In theory, encomienda holders were responsible for the welfare and conversion of indigenous peoples to Christianity. However, in practice, the system often led to the exploitation and abuse of indigenous laborers, contributing to the decline of native populations and cultures. Father Junipero Serra was a Spanish Franciscan friar known for his role in the colonization of California and the establishment of missions along the California coast. Serra's missions aimed to convert indigenous peoples to Christianity and integrate them into Spanish colonial society. However, the missions also imposed forced labor and cultural assimilation on Native American communities, leading to resistance and conflict.

French Exploration

While Spanish colonization dominated much of the Americas, French explorers also played a significant role in the exploration and colonization of North America. French exploration, particularly in the Mississippi Valley and Great Lakes region, led to the establishment of fur trading outposts and alliances with indigenous peoples. French colonization differed from the Spanish approach, often emphasizing trade and cooperation with Native American tribes rather than conquest and exploitation.

Documents

Doc 1

Map: Native American Regions in North America



Doc 2



Doc 3

Farming and Food calories

North America		Europe	
Chief Crops	Calories per Hectare	Chief Crops	Calories per Hectare
Maize	7.3	Rice	7.3
Potato	7.5	Wheat	4.2
Yams (Sweet Potato)	7.1	Barley	5.1
Cassava	9.9	Oats	5.5

Doc 4

Christopher Columbus 1493

"They do not have arms and they are all naked, and of no skill in arms, and so very cowardly that a thousand would not stand against three [armed Spaniards]. And so they are fit to be ordered about and made to work, plant, and do everything else that may be needed, and build towns and be taught our customs, and to go about clothed."

Doc 5

Miguel Leon-Portilla The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico

[After the Spaniards fled Tenochtitlan after La Noche Triste, a great plague broke out here in Ten- ochtitlan.] It began to spread during [the month of October] and lasted for seventy days, striking everywhere in the city and killing a vast number of our people. Sores erupted on our faces, our breasts, our bellies; we were covered with agonizing sores from head to foot. The illness was so dreadful that no one could walk or move. The sick were so utterly helpless, they could only lie on their beds like corpses, unable to move their limbs or even their heads. They could not lie face down or roll from one side to the other. If they did move their bodies, they creamed with pain. A great many died from this plague and many others died of hunger. They could not get to search for food and everyone else was too sick to care for them, so they starved to death in their own beds. ... Their looks were ravaged, for wherever a sore broke out, it gouged an ugly pockmark in the skin. And a few of the survivors were left completely blind. The first cases were reported out- side of the city. By the time the danger was recognized, the plague was so well established that nothing could halt it and spread to all of the region around Lake Texcoco.

Doc 6

Source: Juan Sevilla, sailor who visited the Caribbean, in his journal, 1518.

Disease was a major cause of their demise. However, on Columbus' 2nd voyage he began to require a tribute from the Arawak/Tainos. They were expected to yield a certain quantity of gold per capita. Failing that each adult of 14 was required to submit 25lbs. of cotton. For those who could not produce the cotton either, there was a service requirement for them to work for the Spanish. This set the stage for a system of assigning the Arawak/Taino to Spanish settlers as effective slave labor. This system contributed significantly to their lessening numbers.

Doc 7

"I said everything to them I could to divert them from their idolatries, and draw them to a knowledge of God our Lord. Moctezuma replied, the others assenting to what he said, that they had already informed me they were not the aborigines of the country, but that their ancestors had emigrated to it many years ago; and they fully believed that after so long an absence from their native land, they might have fallen into some errors; that I having more recently arrived must know better than themselves what they ought to believe; and that if I would instruct them in these matters, and make them understand the true faith, they would follow my directions, as being for the best. Afterwards, Moctezuma and many of the principal citizens remained with me until I had removed the idols, purified the chapels, and placed the images in them, manifesting apparent pleasure."

Letter from Hernán Cortés to Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain, on his interaction with the Mexica (Aztecs), 1520

Doc 8

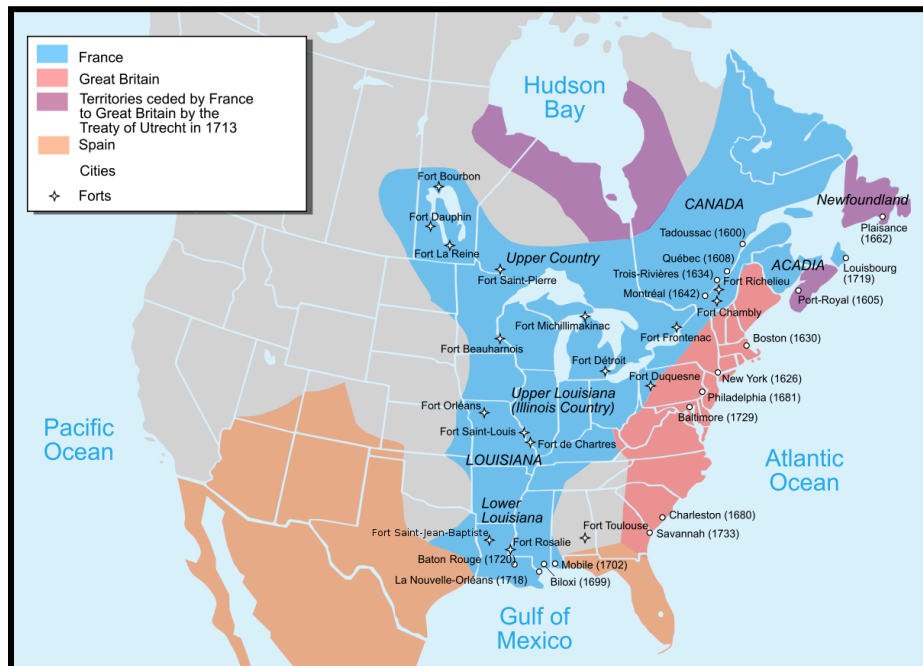
"The Americas were discovered in 1492, and the first Christian settlements established by the Spanish the following year. . . . [I]t would seem . . . that the Almighty selected this part of the world as home to the greater part of the human race. . . . [T]heir delicate constitutions make them unable to withstand hard work or suffering and render them liable to succumb to almost any illness, no matter how mild. . . . It was upon these gentle lambs . . . that, from the very first day they clapped eyes on them, the Spanish fell like ravening wolves upon the fold, or like tigers and savage lions who have not eaten meat for days. . . . The native population, which once numbered some five hundred thousand, was wiped out by forcible expatriation to the island of Hispaniola."

Bartolomé de Las Casas, 1552

Doc 9



Doc 10



CONTRASTING NATIVE AMERICAN REGIONS

DIRECTIONS: USE THE READING TO FILL OUT EACH CHART BELOW

SOUTHWEST	<u>CHARACTERISTICS</u>
CLIMATE	
HOUSING	
FOOD	
SOCIETY	

GREAT PLAINS	<u>CHARACTERISTICS</u>
CLIMATE	
HOUSING	
FOOD	
SOCIETY	

NORTHWEST	<u>CHARACTERISTICS</u>
CLIMATE	
HOUSING	
FOOD	
SOCIETY	

EASTERN	<u>CHARACTERISTICS</u>
CLIMATE	
HOUSING	
FOOD	
SOCIETY	

Unit 1: Analyze the effects of Spanish colonization in the New World from 1491-1750.

#	SUMMARIZE THE DOCUMENT (MAIN IDEA)	TIE TO P PROMPT ("THIS DEMONSTRATES"...)	wh Y ("THIS DOCUMENT WAS CREATED TO...")	VOCABULARY ?
1	The map indicates the dominant economic activity of various Native American regions in North America.	This demonstrates the fact that each Native American tribe had a unique food source and lifestyle that adapted to the climate and geography in which they lived.	This map was created to show the wide disparity in lifestyles that existed in North America prior to Spanish colonization.	Southwest Northwest Great Plains Eastern Woodlands
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

7				
8				
9				
10				

UNIT 1: EFFECTS OF SPANISH COLONIZATION

<p>A LESSER EFFECT OF SPANISH COLONIZATION:</p> 	<p>THE MOST SIGNIFICANT EFFECT OF SPANISH COLONIZATION:</p> <p>WHY WAS THIS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT EFFECT:</p>
<p>WHICH DOCUMENTS SUPPORT THIS ARGUMENT?</p> 	<p>WHICH DOCUMENTS SUPPORT THIS ARGUMENT?</p>
<p>VOCABULARY WORD FROM THE READING TO SUPPORT THIS ARGUMENT:</p> <p>EXPLAIN (DEFINE) THE VOCABULARY:</p> <p>TIE THE VOCAB WORD BACK TO YOUR ARGUMENT ("THIS SHOWS" OR "THIS DEMONSTRATES"):</p> 	<p>VOCABULARY WORD FROM THE READING TO SUPPORT THIS ARGUMENT:</p> <p>EXPLAIN (DEFINE) THE VOCABULARY:</p> <p>TIE THE VOCAB WORD BACK TO YOUR ARGUMENT ("THIS SHOWS" OR "THIS DEMONSTRATES"):</p>

CREATE YOUR THESIS STATEMENT (ARGUMENT) BY FILLING IN THE BLANKS

Between the years 1491 and 1750, one effect of Spanish colonization in the New World was _____.

However, the most significant effect of Spanish Colonization was _____

BECAUSE _____.