CHAPTER 1

Alien Encounters: Europe in the Americas

ANTICIPATION/REACTION

Directions: Before you begin reading this chapter, in the column entitled “Anticipation” place a check mark beside any of the following seven statements with which you now agree. When you have completed your study of this chapter, come back to this section and in the column entitled “Reaction” place a check mark beside any of the statements with which you then agree. Note any variation in the placement of check marks from anticipation to reaction and explain why you changed your mind.

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading Chapter 1 you should be able to:

1. Assess the impact of the European invasion on Native American cultures.
2. Summarize the accomplishments of the Spanish in opening the New World to exploration, conquest, and colonization.
3. Explain why English settlers came to North America.
4. Evaluate Massachusetts Bay’s role as a hub of English settlement in New England.
5. List the requirements of successful colonization that evolved in English America.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Columbus

Christopher Columbus’ voyages in the 1490s opened the New World to European migration, exploitation, and settlement after 1500. Columbus explored the Caribbean basin thinking he was near China and Japan. Since he was intending to find an all-water route that would connect European markets to Asian products, Columbus never realized he had discovered a “New World.”

Earlier, Portugal’s Prince Henry and his school of navigators led the search for a new route to East Asia around Africa. But Columbus believed a western route across the Atlantic would reduce the travel distance and increase the profits of European trade with East Asia. Spain’s Queen Isabella commissioned his first expedition in 1492.

Spain’s American Empire

Spanish conquistadores eagerly explored the New World Columbus found. They discovered the Pacific Ocean, subdued the Aztec and Inca empires, and explored Florida, the Gulf Coast, and the present southwestern United States. To these regions, the Spanish brought their culture and the Roman Catholic religion. Greed for gold and power, a spirit of adventure, and a passionate desire to Christianize the Native Americans motivated them. They saw the New World as a land that offered infinite potential to make better lives for themselves, and they could not resist the opportunity to exploit it.

Indians and Europeans

The European settlement of the New World was an unprovoked act of aggression. To the Native Americans, the Europeans seemed as gods and European products fascinated them. But Columbus and the conquistadores tricked and cheated the Indians, drove them from their lands, and, through the Requerimiento, compelled them to recognize the sovereignty of the Spanish monarchy. The Spanish, like virtually all Europeans who settled in the New World, mistreated, exploited, and nearly exterminated the Native Americans they encountered.
Relativity of Cultural Values

Cultural differences led Europeans to assume that Indians were inferior beings. The non-Christian Indians were damned as contemptible heathens even though many were deeply religious people. Indians left a far lighter imprint on the American landscape than the Europeans, and they had little use for the concepts of personal property and individual wealth that Europeans valued. The Europeans’ inability to grasp the Indians’ kinship relationships and the communal nature of land tenure among Indians resulted in innumerable quarrels. Europeans were also infuriated by the Indian way of war—ambush by raiding parties rather than the European tradition of pitched battles between heavily armed mass armies.

Disease and Population Losses

The Indian population of the Western Hemisphere at the time of the arrival of Columbus is widely debated. Whatever their number in 1492, it declined sharply thereafter. Although many Europeans who came to the Americas depended on Indians for labor, trade, and knowledge, the barbarity of the conquest of the New World brought death to thousands of Native Americans. To little avail, Spanish missionary Bartolomé de Las Casas indicted his countrymen for their cruelty.

The most destructive weapons of the Europeans were the lethal microbes they brought from the Old World that caused decimating disease epidemics among Native Americans—smallpox, bubonic plague, influenza, and typhoid among them. Over the next three centuries, these diseases killed millions of Indians.

Spain’s European Rivals

England and France based their claims to the New World on the explorations of John Cabot and Giovanni da Verrazano, respectively. But, unlike Spain, these two nations were slow to follow exploration with permanent settlement. Both nations were torn by internal strife in the sixteenth century, and Catholic Spain, growing wealthy on New World gold and silver, seemed too powerful to be challenged. But, by the late sixteenth century, that very New World wealth was undermining Spain’s economy, the Spanish court was corrupted, and the Protestant Reformation was disrupting the Catholic Church throughout Europe.

The Protestant Reformation

The spiritual lethargy and bureaucratic corruption of the Roman Catholic Church in the early sixteenth century made it a target for reform. Martin Luther and John Calvin challenged Rome’s spiritual authority, and local European monarchs established their nation’s independence from the power of the Church. In the mid-sixteenth century, Henry VIII of England founded the
Anglican Church and England became a Protestant nation. In parts of Europe, business classes supported Protestant leaders and English, French, and Dutch trade and industry began to flower. In England, joint-stock companies pooled investment capital and offered limited liability to investors. These companies became important tools for expanding English trade and colonization.

**English Beginnings in America**

English merchants sought new routes to East Asia, a northwest passage through the Americas, and gold. Queen Elizabeth I supported these efforts because she hoped to break Spain’s overseas monopoly. For that purpose, she also commissioned English sea dogs like Francis Drake to capture Spain’s treasure ships. She was also involved in the earliest colonization efforts by Englishmen Humphrey Gilbert in Newfoundland and Walter Raleigh on Roanoke Island. These early efforts failed, but England’s defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 ended Spain’s ability to block English penetration of the New World.

These early experiences had shown that the cost of colonization was too expensive for any individual investor. In his *Discourse on Western Planting*, propagandist Richard Hakluyt made a strong argument for Crown support for English colonization based on military advantage and economic benefit. It was merchant capitalists in quest of quick profits, however, and not the queen and larger national interests, that was the primary organizing force behind English efforts to found colonies in North America.

**The Settlement of Virginia**

In 1607, the joint-stock London Company founded Jamestown as England’s first permanent settlement in America. There were problems from the start. The colony was located on a swamp and the settlers lacked agricultural skills; therefore, many starved. Company officers, looking only for quick profits, directed the settlers into fruitless activities. They also failed to take advantage of the economic hardships in England that were making skilled farm laborers available for migration. In Virginia, Captain John Smith provided some discipline and leadership in Jamestown, but the lack of a sense of common purpose among the settlers, infection and disease, and Indian attacks all ravaged the early colony.

Jamestown was saved when it began to produce its own food supply and John Rolfe initiated the cultivation of tobacco for export. To attract new settlers, the company made it easier for settlers to obtain their own land and gave them a rudimentary form of self-government in the House of Burgesses. But with these actions the London Company destroyed the colonists’ reliance on the company, and, profitless, it lost its charter in 1624 and Virginia became a royal colony.
“Purifying” the Church of England

The promise of economic opportunity motivated most English settlers to come to America, but religious persecution motivated others. Some religious dissidents in England objected to the ritual and doctrine of the Anglican Church. These Puritans accused the Anglican clergy of Arminianism—preaching a doctrine of good works instead of predetermination. Puritans also preferred a more decentralized system of church government, making each congregation self-governing or governed by representative presbyteries elected by laymen. Though they tried to purify it of its “popish” elements, most Puritans remained members of the Anglican Church.

Bradford and Plymouth Colony

More radical Puritans, called Separatists, withdrew their membership from the Anglican Church and migrated to the Netherlands, then to America. These “Pilgrims” elected William Bradford as the governor of their Plymouth Plantation in New England. Their Mayflower Compact established a society based on laws chosen by its members. The Indian named Squanto helped the hard-working new settlers, but Plymouth never grew rich nor well populated.

Winthrop and Massachusetts Bay Colony

English Puritans organized the Massachusetts Bay Company to establish a religious refuge in America. Their Great Migration began in 1630, and their carefully planned colony was blessed with good luck and a constant influx of industrious and prosperous settlers. The colony’s government was a practical democracy headed by an elected legislature—the General Court—chosen by the vote of male church members, and by an elected governor, John Winthrop. Church membership was obtained through a conversion experience. Most early male settlers satisfied this standard and could vote for governor and deputies of the General Court.

Troublemakers: Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson

Two zealous Puritans gave Massachusetts authorities trouble. Roger Williams insisted that the company’s charter was invalid because the company did not buy its land from the Indians. This, and his advocacy both of separation of church and state and of religious libertarianism, led to Williams’ banishment. He founded Rhode Island with a democratic government, rigid separation of church and state, and near-universal religious toleration.

Anne Hutchinson challenged the Massachusetts clergy’s admonition to church members to lead morally pure lives and serve as models for the unregenerate. She was accused of advocating the heresy of antinomianism—that the saved were exempt from the rules of good behavior and the constraints of law. Her disclosure of an experience with divine revelation led to her banishment
and she too went to Rhode Island. Both Williams and Hutchinson, two outspoken individualists, posed a genuine threat to the cooperative spirit of this Puritan community.

**Other New England Colonies**

Massachusetts Bay’s Puritan intolerance and its growing population produced new settlements in New England. Maine, New Hampshire, and Connecticut were all spin-off colonies from Massachusetts.

**French and Dutch Settlements**

While the English settled Virginia and New England, the French established colonies in Canada and the West Indies. Dutch settlers inhabited New Netherlands in an area earlier claimed by Henry Hudson. They purchased Manhattan Island from the Indians, traded for furs, and plundered Spanish treasure ships. The Dutch also tried without success to promote large-scale agriculture in the Hudson Valley.

**Maryland and the Carolinas**

Outside of Virginia and New England, most English colonies were not corporate ventures organized by merchants, but proprietary grants to landowning individuals or partnerships. The proprietors received their grants as personal property and they assumed near sovereign political power. But the realities of life in America limited their freedom of action and their profits.

The Calvert family founded Maryland as a haven for English Catholics. To attract settlers Lord Baltimore had to abandon his feudal plans, make his land easily available to settlers, and give them some power over local affairs. He also agreed to a Toleration Act that guaranteed religious freedom to all Christians.

John Locke’s elaborate social plan for Carolina—the Fundamental Constitutions—proved unworkable because it restricted settlers’ access to land. Carolina’s first settlers were from Barbados and they organized a thriving fur trade and exported foodstuffs to the West Indies. North and South Carolina were separated in 1712.

**The Middle Colonies**

King Charles II gave his brother, the Duke of York, a proprietary grant to the Dutch settlement north of Maryland. In 1664, English forces captured New Amsterdam without a fight and renamed it New York. To attract settlers, the proprietors of New Jersey offered land on easy terms, guaranteed freedom of religion, and established a democratic system of government.
English Quakers purchased New Jersey and established settlements in Pennsylvania where settlers were offered these same terms. Quakers believed in an individualistic mystical experience with God, pacifism, religious toleration, and freedom of conscience. William Penn founded the Quakers’ Holy Experiment in Pennsylvania. He was unusual for his fair treatment of local Indians and his colonists were guaranteed freedom of worship and individual civil rights. Through the Frame of Government, Penn established a paternalistic approach to governing the colony, but he sold land on easy terms and Pennsylvania became one of the most prosperous colonies.

**Indians and Europeans as “Americanizers”**

Interaction between Indians and Europeans caused a “Columbian Exchange”—each learned from the other. The Indians’ domestication of corn was an especially important contribution to the success of English colonization, while Indians eagerly adopted European metal tools and weapons technology. The fur trade best illustrates the consequences of Indian-European interaction. European demand for furs made Indians more efficient hunters and trappers and caused Indians to absorb European ideas about private property and material wealth. The trade also altered tribal organization; tribes formed confederacies to control more territory for trapping, and farming tribes relocated to settle along trade routes.

Colonists learned much from the Indians, but they had no desire to be like the Indians whom they considered savage barbarians. In fact, conflicts with the Indians caused whites to draw closer together and, over time, they developed a sense of having shared a common history. This process Americanized the transplanted Europeans.

**PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THINGS**

*Define the following:*

- *conquistadores* ____________________________

- *joint-stock company* ____________________________

- *predestination* ____________________________

13
Arminianism

antinomianism

proprietor

Describe the following:

Treaty of Tordesillas

Protestant Reformation

House of Burgesses

Church of England (Anglican Church)

Mayflower Compact

Great Migration

Toleration Act
Frame of Government

Identify the following:

Christopher Columbus

Prince Henry

John Cabot

Martin Luther

John Calvin

Henry VIII

Sir Walter Raleigh

Richard Hakluyt

Queen Elizabeth I
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<td>London Company</td>
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<td>William Bradford</td>
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<td>Squanto</td>
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<td>Roger Williams</td>
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<td>Anne Hutchinson</td>
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<td>Lord Baltimore</td>
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Duke of York

Quakers

William Penn

Locate the following places on the maps on the next page. Write in both the place name and its map location number. Questions 1-6 refer to Map I, question 7 refers to Map II.

1. That portion of the New World explored by Christopher Columbus in the 1490s.

2. Where Sir Humphrey Gilbert attempted to establish an early English colony in the New World.

3. Where the first permanent English settlement in the New World was located.

4. New World island purchased by the Dutch from local Indians in 1624.

5. Island from where the early English settlers to the Carolinas came.

6. River scouted by the explorer Cartier to help establish French claims to the New World.

7. The 12 English mainland colonies founded in North America in the seventeenth century.
SELF-TEST

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. When he sailed from Spain in 1492, Columbus intended to find
   A. the northwest passage.
   B. a new world.
   C. a new route to the Orient.
   D. the lost continent of Atlantis.

2. All of the following Spanish *conquistadores* explored regions of what is now the United States EXCEPT
   A. Hernán Cortés.
   B. Pánfilo de Narváez.
   C. Hernando de Soto.
   D. Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca.

3. Wherever European explorers went in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they
   A. established more democratic political institutions.
   B. mistreated the native people they encountered.
   C. enriched the local economy.
   D. quickly assimilated the native people into their culture.

4. Invading Europeans found Native American cultures that were remarkably
   A. underdeveloped.
   B. weak.
   C. savage.
   D. varied.

5. Europeans usually viewed Native Americans as
   A. overly possessive and materialistic.
   B. politically weak and disorganized.
   C. incapable of Christian education.
   D. racially and culturally inferior.

6. From the perspective of European invaders, Native Americans lacked respect for all the following EXCEPT
   A. private property.
   B. nature.
   C. God.
   D. political authority.
7. England was slow to colonize in the New World in the sixteenth century because
   A. it was torn by domestic political and religious differences.
   B. it had no early territorial claim to the New World.
   C. Queen Elizabeth I had no interest in colonization.
   D. it was a Protestant nation.

8. During the Protestant Reformation, all of the following challenged the authority of the
   Roman Catholic Church EXCEPT
   A. Martin Luther.
   B. Henry VIII.
   C. John Calvin.
   D. Phillip II.

9. The joint-stock company was an effective tool for colonization because it
   A. created large pools of investment capital.
   B. prohibited foolish investments in risky ventures.
   C. held each investor personally responsible for all company debts.
   D. restricted investments to short-term payoffs.

10. Richard Hakluyt’s *Discourse on Western Planting* was
    A. a pamphlet used to recruit English colonists.
    B. a manual summarizing Indian agricultural techniques.
    C. a settler’s guide to the American colonies.
    D. an essay promoting and justifying English colonization.

11. Early Jamestown nearly failed as a colony because of all of the following EXCEPT
    A. few farming skills among early settlers.
    B. poor leadership from Captain John Smith.
    C. lack of a common sense of purpose among early settlers.
    D. unrealistic direction from company officials.

12. Eventually, the London Company encouraged immigrants to come to Jamestown by
    offering them an opportunity to
    A. own their own land.
    B. become titled nobility.
    C. gain religious freedom.
    D. search for gold.

13. Puritan reformers of the Anglican Church hoped to focus the act of worship on
    A. traditional rituals using candles, incense, and music.
    B. reading the Bible and analyzing the Scriptures.
    C. sermons emphasizing the doing of good works.
    D. the forgiveness of sins by the granting of indulgences.
14. To establish a civil government for themselves, the Separatist Pilgrims at Plymouth Plantation signed the
   A. Frame of Government.
   B. Fundamental Constitutions.
   C. Toleration Act.
   D. Mayflower Compact.

15. Of the following, the concept most highly valued by the Puritans was
   A. religious toleration.
   B. separation of church and state.
   C. fair treatment of the Indians.
   D. community harmony.

16. Roger Williams was banished from Massachusetts Bay because he advocated
   A. separation of church and state.
   B. a war of annihilation against the Indians.
   C. the doctrine of predestination.
   D. Calvinist theology.

17. Anne Hutchinson’s heresy of antinomianism called into question
   A. the right of Puritans to possess Indian land.
   B. the application of the colony’s laws to those who were in possession of saving grace.
   C. the truth of predestination.
   D. the possibility of divine revelation.

18. The proprietary form of colonization became the usual form of planting English colonies immediately following the
   A. restoration of the monarchy after the English Civil War.
   B. Glorious Revolution.
   C. chartering of the London Company.
   D. founding of Jamestown.

19. Quakers were NOT committed to
   A. freedom of conscience.
   B. pacifism.
   C. toleration of other religions.
   D. placing the sermon at the center of worship.
20. Arrange the following in correct time order: (A) the restoration of the English monarchy, (B) the Puritans’ Great Migration, (C) the founding of Jamestown, (D) the Protestant Reformation.
   A. B, C, A, D
   B. A, D, C, B
   C. D, C, B, A
   D. D, B, C, A

Essay Questions

1. Describe the ways Native American and European cultures were similar to and different from each other when Europeans arrived in America in the 1500s.

2. Explain why Spain was the first European nation to establish a New World empire and why England ultimately became so successful as a New World colonizer.

3. Compare and contrast the roles of economic and religious motives in the beginnings of English settlement in the New World.

4. Describe the religious views and social values of Massachusetts Bay Puritans and explain why Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson posed a real threat to that colony.

5. State the motives for founding of the proprietary colonies in English America in the late seventeenth century, and explain how they benefited from earlier colonizing experiences.

CRITICAL THINKING EXERCISE

Classification

Classification is one of the historian’s most important tools. Historical information usually comes in complex and confusing disarray, and it is the historian’s skill at classifying this information—organizing it into patterns that make sense—that makes narrative history comprehensible.

Historians often place information into geographical, sequential (chronological), topical, or other categories. For example, this chapter classifies information geographically when it separates the discussion of European voyages of exploration and discovery into three categories: those in the Caribbean, in South and Central America, and in North America. Secondly, the information in the chapter has been classified sequentially: first, voyages of exploration; second, Spanish colonization; and last, early English settlement. Finally, some of the information in the chapter is classified topically; for example, there are discussions of Native Americans, the Protestant Reformation, and New England religious dissenters. It is with classification schemes such as
Classification is a basic critical thinking skill. It is vital to gaining control of a large amount of information and arranging it in a comprehensible order. The skill of classification requires the classifier to systematically group many seemingly isolated facts into a few categories. Placement of a fact into a category is based on the classifier’s perception that some facts are related to each other in a given way, but not to other facts in the same way. It is an inductive process; that is, the classifier assembles several facts and then places particular facts into separate categories. These categories, called generalizations or concepts, describe the relationship among all the selected facts for that category. It is a skill that requires some familiarity with the information being classified. Greater familiarity means sharper perception of relationships and a more accurate placement of facts into proper categories.

The following exercise tests your familiarity with the information presented in Chapter 1. Of the four items in each of the ten groupings below, three of the items are related or associated with one another—that is, they can be classified together. The fourth item is not related to the other three in the same way they relate to one another. Your task is to:

1. Identify the three related items.
2. Cross out the unrelated item.
3. State the relationship of the three selected items in a single sentence.
Example: Group X

X.  Queen Isabella, Treaty of Tordesillas, Columbus, New World

Relationship: Queen Isabella commissioned Christopher Columbus’s voyage, which led to the “discovery” of the New World when he landed at San Salvador in 1492.

1. Ponce de León, Hernando de Soto, Francisco Pizarro, Francisco Coronado

   Relationship: ________________________________

2. geographically immobile, deeply religious, ecologically conscious, communal land ownership

   Relationship: ________________________________

3. Walter Raleigh, John Calvin, Humphrey Gilbert, Richard Hakluyt

   Relationship: ________________________________

4. Newfoundland, Roanoke Island, Chesapeake Bay, Florida

   Relationship: ________________________________

5. Puritans, Anglicans, Separatists, Quakers

   Relationship: ________________________________

6. William Bradford, John Smith, John Winthrop, John Cabot

   Relationship: ________________________________
7. revelation, Arminianism, antinomianism, predestination

Relationship: 


Relationship: 

9. social experimentation, access to land, political rights, religious toleration

Relationship: 

10. New York, Carolinas, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts

Relationship: 
