PART ONE (Chapters 1-5)

A COLONIZING PEOPLE
1492 - 1776

America has always been a nation of immigrants, an elaborate cultural mosaic created out of the unending streams of people who, for four centuries, have flocked to its shores from every corner of the world. It is the colonial roots of this intermingling of people and cultures that provide an organizing framework for the first part of this book. America began with the convergence of people from the three continents of North America, Europe, and Africa.

Chapter 1, “Ancient America and Africa,” explores the mingling of their values, institutions, and lifeways during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Insights to African, European, and Native American life and culture prior to contact are revealed. Chapter 2, “Europeans and Africans Reach the Americas,” examines Spanish conquest of the Americas, the early African slave trade, and the blending of cultures in the Americas. Chapter 3, “Colonizing a Continent in the Seventeenth Century,” explores six regions of settlement along the Atlantic seaboard and the Caribbean. The interplay of religious idealism, economic opportunity, political experimentation, and social adaptation to the new environment is examined on the Chesapeake tobacco coast; in Puritan New England; in the French, Dutch, and English colonies from the St. Lawrence to the Hudson rivers; in proprietary Carolina; in Quaker Pennsylvania; and New Spain’s Northern Frontier.

The ability to grow from small and struggling settlements in the seventeenth century to thriving, more populous colonies in the early eighteenth century depended above all on exploiting the natural resources of North America. Chapter 4, “The Maturing of Colonial Society,” traces the development of the colonies of England, Spain, and France in the first half of the eighteenth century. It stresses the increasingly complex, yet unfinished, character of colonial society, highlights its regional differences, and shows how economic growth, religious revival, and political maturation prepared the English colonists by 1750 for the epic events that would occur in the next generation. It was this fluidity of colonial society that made the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) and the subsequent coming of the American Revolution such a multifaceted and dynamic period, as Chapter 5, “The Strains of Empire,” spells out. Many other “American revolutions” will follow in our history.
Ancient America and Africa

(1) CHAPTER OUTLINE

As the stories about four important women of this era demonstrate, deep transformations were underway in West Africa, in southern and western Europe, and in the Americas. The cultures of Africa, Europe, and the Americas prior to contact are revealed.

The People of America Before Columbus
- Migration to the Americas
- Hunters, Farmers, and Environmental Factors
- Mesoamerican Empires
- Regional North American Cultures
- The Iroquois
- Pre-contact Population
- Contrasting World Views

Africa on the Eve of Contact
- The Spread of Islam
- The Kingdoms of Central and West Africa
- African Slavery
- The African Ethos

Europe on the Eve of Invading the Americas
- The Rebirth of Europe
- The New Monarchies and the Expansionist Impulse
- Anticipating North America

Conclusion: The Approach of a New Global Age
1. The clash that developed when the people of three continents—North America, Europe, and Africa—began to encounter each other forms the opening chapter of American history and is therefore the opening chapter of the textbook. With the stories of Isabela of Castile, Tecuichpotzin, Elizabeth I of England, and Queen Njinga, we see the intermingling and transformation of three worlds.

2. The chapter challenges the concept that Africans and Native Americans were passive primitive bystanders awaiting conquest. Native American, Africans, and Europeans were all critical participants in the making of the modern world.

3. The spread of Islam and the rise of great empires in West and Central Africa is also examined.

4. By taking readers inside the cultural beliefs and experiences of Native Americans and Africans, as well as Europeans, this chapter serves to counteract the traditional ethnocentric view that sees all developments through the eyes of Europeans. An example of this is the oft-repeated phrase “Columbus discovered America,” implying that there was no life or culture in the Americas until a European found it in 1492.

(3) LEARNING GOALS

**Familiarity with Basic Knowledge**

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Locate and briefly describe the Native American Mound Builders of the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys, the Pueblo dwellers of the Southwest, and the Iroquois Indians of the East Coast.

2. Describe Native American attitudes toward and beliefs about the natural world, wealth, community, family, and men and women.

3. Name and locate three West African kingdoms between the fifth and fourteenth centuries and describe West African beliefs about family, religion, and social organization.

4. Explain the political, economic, and religious changes in early modern Europe that led to the exploration and eventual settlement of North America.

5. Explain the navigational improvements that led to European exploration.
Practice in Historical Thinking Skills

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Compare and contrast the values and lifestyles of the three worlds—Native American, African, and European—that met in the Americas early in the sixteenth century.

2. Evaluate the outcomes of that collision for each world. What do you think and feel about these outcomes?

3. Evaluate the motivations for European exploration. What do you think about their motivations?

(4) IMPORTANT DATES AND NAMES TO KNOW

Pre-Columbian epochs:

35,000 B.C.E. First humans cross Bering Land Bridge to reach the Americas
12,000 B.C.E. Beringian epoch ends
6,000 B.C.E. Paleo-Indian phase ends
500 B.C.E. Archaic era ends
500 B.C.E. - 1000 C.E. Post-Archaic era in North America
600 C.E.-1100 Rise of mound building center at Cahokia
632-750 Islamic conquest of North Africa spreads Muslim faith
800-1026 Kingdom of Ghana controls West Africa’s trade
1000 Norse seafarers establish settlements in Newfoundland
Kingdom of Benin develops
1000-1500 Kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, Songhai in Africa
1200s Pueblo societies develop village life in southwest of North America
1215 Magna Carta is signed in England
1235 Defeating the Ghanaian king, Mali becomes a West African power
1291 Marco Polo’s return from East Asia to Venice quickens European trade with Eastern Hemisphere
1300s  Rise of Aztec society in Valley of Mexico
1300-1450  Italian Renaissance
1324  Mansa Musa’s pilgrimage to Mecca expands Muslim influence in West Africa
1420s  Portuguese sailors explore west coast of Africa
1450-1600  Northern European Renaissance
1460s-1590s  Kingdom of Songhai declares independence from Kingdom of Mali
1469  Marriage of Castile’s Isabela and Aragon’s Ferdinand creates Spain
1500s  Quickening of western European trade and production of consumer goods

Other Names to Know

Prince Henry the Navigator  Mansa Musa  Marco Polo
Isabella of Castile  Ghana  Iroquois
Magna Carta  Cahokia

(5) GLOSSARY OF IMPORTANT TERMS

Pre-Columbian era: The period of history before Columbus in which Native American Indian cultures lived in the Americas undiscovered—and unaffected—by Europeans

matrilineal: Tracing descent and property and political rights through the mother

Renaissance: Period of cultural rebirth in Europe (fifteenth-sixteenth centuries)

Mesoamerica: The middle region bridging the great land masses of South and North America

Muslim: A person believing in the religion of Islam, which began in the seventh century and spread throughout the Middle East and northern Africa and eventually to Asia and Europe in succeeding centuries (Muslims, or Moslems, were sometimes called Moors by Europeans)
(6) ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Find out which Native American tribes and nations lived in your part of the country and whether there are any archaeological working sites or remains, like Cahokia, to visit. Also visit any museums or historical parks that feature local Indian history.

2. Assume that you are an archaeologist or anthropologist who wants to understand and reconstruct in your region as much of the original Indian culture and typical daily life as possible from relics and other remains. Present your findings to others in various forms: oral report, written paper, table display showing artifacts and a model of Indian life, or artistic drawings or skits illustrating Indian culture.

3. Pretend that you are an archaeologist or anthropologist from some distant future who wants to understand and reconstruct as much as possible of present-day culture and daily life in your community. Imagine the absolute destruction of all written records and the near-destruction and burying under dirt and debris of material objects and structures. As you dig up the remains or observe unusual topological and other features (like dammed-up streams, terraced and flattened hills, or roadway patterns), how much of the original daily life and culture do you think you could reconstruct?

4. Imagine yourself as an alien, who has never seen earthlings, arriving to explore and settle the planet Earth. From the behavior of human beings, what kind of conclusions might you draw about their cultural patterns and values? What images do you have about groups different from your own? Think about both positive and negative images.

5. Look over the opening anecdote. Imagine yourself as each of the four women leaders, write a diary entry discussing the specific challenges you face as the leader of your specific group.

(7) SAMPLE TEST AND EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

Multiple choice: Choose the best answer.

1. The “New World” was first entered by people from the “Old World”
   a. about 12,000 to 28,000 years ago
   b. about 5,000 to 10,000 years ago
   c. in about 1000 C.E.
   d. in 1492

2. The five tribes that comprised the League of the Iroquois were
   a. Cahokia, Hopi, Zuni, Pueblo, and Mohawks
   b. Aztec, Olmec, Toltec, Inca, and Mayan
   c. Choctaw, Chickasaws, Cherokee, Creeks, and Seminoles
   d. Mohawk, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas
3. Cahokia was the center of
   a. “Hopewell” culture
   b. “Mississippi” culture
   c. “Pueblo” culture
   d. “Iroquois” culture

4. According to Native Americans, before the European invasion
   a. the natural world was a resource given by a Christian God
   b. every part of the natural environment was sacred
   c. the belief that spirits resided in nature was fading
   d. land was the basis of status and identity

5. From the fifth to the fourteenth centuries, West Africa
   a. was a savage land of nomadic hunters
   b. was colonized and exploited by various European nations
   c. was engaged in perpetual warfare with Muslims from the Middle East
   d. featured the development of a series of kingdoms with relatively advanced cultures and complex political structures

6. In the fifteenth century, West African societies
   a. developed an extensive industrial system based on slaves captured in tribal wars
   b. had the most brutal system of slavery in the civilized world
   c. respected the privileges of education and marriage and the protection of the law for slaves
   d. provided legal protection and rights only for slave children

7. Each of these was a West African empire EXCEPT
   a. Ghana
   b. Mali
   c. Songhai
   d. Egypt

8. By the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a new political entity, _______, had arisen in Europe
   a. dictatorships
   b. feudal states
   c. nation-states
   d. democracies

9. In traditional African slavery
   a. slaves were considered chattel
   b. slavery was race based
   c. status of a slave was limited and not inherited by offspring
   d. the primary occupation of slaves was gang field worker

10. The Magna Carta
    a. curbed the powers of the monarchy and established the parliament in England
    b. authorized Christopher Columbus’ first expedition to the Americas
    c. created a parliament solely composed of hereditary members
    d. was a kingdom in Central Africa.
11. The Renaissance that encouraged innovation in science and the arts took place between
   a. 500-1000 B.C.E.  c. 1300-1600 C.E.
   b. 1000-1500 C.E.  d. 1690-1800 C.E.

12. All of the following changes in fifteenth century Europe led to an expansionist impulse
   EXCEPT
   a. the rise of new monarchies
   b. technological improvements
   c. the rise of the Protestant denomination
   d. trade rivalry with the Muslims

13. Which of the following pairs is not correct?
   a. Tecuichpotzin - Aztec
   b. Queen Njinga - Angola
   c. Elizabeth I - France
   d. Queen Isabela - Spain

14. The expansionist impulse of European monarchs in the latter fifteenth century was
   a. temporarily subdued by the growth of the Renaissance culture
   b. nourished by population decline and civil disorder
   c. disrupted by internal wars of bickering nobles
   d. motivated by a desire to bypass Muslim merchants in trade with Africa and Asia

15. Which of the following nations became the early leader of the transatlantic slave trade
   and European exploration?
   a. Spain
   b. Portugal
   c. Holland
   d. France

Essays

1. Compare and contrast African, Native American, and European beliefs and practices about
   the natural world, status of women, property and wealth, and community and family life.

2. Discuss the differences between traditional African slavery and transatlantic slavery.

3. Analyze European motivations for exploring and eventually settling the New World.

4. “Too often in historical writing, Europeans reaching the Americas are portrayed as the
   carriers of a superior culture that inevitably vanquished people living in a primitive if not
   'savage' state.” Selecting appropriate evidence from the chapter, write an essay refuting
   this depiction of Africans and Native Americans as a passive or primitive people.