Chapter 1 Notes
New World Beginnings
33,000BC-AD 1769

Outside Info/CAQ's

• Lake Bonneville: Large, ancient sea that covered Utah, Nevada, Idaho that shrunk and evaporated into Great Salt lake

• Bering isthmus: Land Bridge used by Native American ancestors

Notes

I. The Shaping of North America
   A. 225 million years: Pangea splits
      1. Proof: similar fish species across continents
      2. Restlessness of Earth's crust create mountain ranges
         a. Appalachians before continental separation
         b. Most other “American” ranges arose afterwards

   B. “Nature” continued to sculpt Americas and the vast biomes

   C. Ice Age: 2 million years ago
      1. 2-mile-thick ice sheets leech across the continents
      2. Glaciers retreated approximately 10,000 years ago
         a. Transformed North American landscape to that we know of today.
         b. Giant, ancient Lake Bonneville

II. Peopling the Americas
   A. Controversial evidence of arrival via boats
   B. Steadier evidence points to a Land Bridge
      1. 35,000 years ago: ocean levels were lower due to glaciers
      2. Dropping sea levels exposed a Land Bridge from eastern Asia to North America
      3. People trailed migrating herds of bison, etc. across in small bands of Asian hunters
         a. Immigrating ancestors of Native Americans
         b. For 250 centuries, people moved across this bridge and populated the Americas
   C. 10,000 years ago: glaciers melted and seas levels rose
      1. Land Bridge sunk back into the waters from whence it arose
         a. American continents became isolated
         b. Climactic warming opened valleys through which the nomads traversed south

Based upon scientific theories, historians believe the world began as a super-continent, which, over thousands of years, split apart to resemble the modern world. Climactic changes caused glaciers to melt and form, causing a land bridge upon which early Native Americans were able to cross and enter the Americas.
Sophisticated cultures arose from the Incas (Peru), Mayans (Central America), Aztecs (Mexico)

- Prolonged drought was perhaps the reason for the natives’ decline
- Three-sister farming: technique that led to high population densities

- Slowly roamed and made their way to the southernmost tip of South America
- Split into tribes with 2,000+ languages, diverse cultures, etc.

D. Powerful/sophisticated civilisations
1. Cultivation of maize (fed millions)
2. Lacked horses, oxen, wheels, yet built cities and had much trading
3. Mathematicians and astrological discoveries
4. Aztec violence: human sacrifice to tribal gods

III. The Earliest Americans
A. 5000BC: wild grass developed into corn (Mexico)
1. Corn turned nomadic hunter-gatherer tribes into settled villagers
2. 1200BC: Pueblo people constricted irrigation systems for corn
3. Cultivation of corn spread unequally throughout Americas
   a. Few nation-states north and east of Pueblos
   b. Provided ease for colonies that arrived later

B. Mound Builders (Ohio River valley), Mississippi (lower Midwest), Anasazi (Southwest)
1. First millennia AD: large settlements
2. Ancient cultures declined by AD 1300

C. AD 1000: three-sister farming
1. Beans grown on cornstalks, squash on planting mounds to retain moisture
2. Growth among Creek, Choctaw, Cherokee peoples

D. Iroquois: political military alliance that threatened neighbors

E. Most tribes remained small, scattered
1. Women farmed while men hunted, fished, gathered fuel, etc.
2. Authority to women (matrilineal cultures such as Iroquois)

F. Natives respected the land

Through ingenious agricultural skills, some native tribes rose above others and created great civilisations. There were also some matrilineal cultures that were rather successful.
• Did the traders try sailing the other direction, run into the Americas, and awkwardly turn around?

• Reasons sailors didn’t like West Africa: northerly winds and south-flowing currents

1. Nature had spiritual properties
2. Massive forest fires in order to create better hunting habitats (deer)—led to open, park-like woodlands
3. Small tribes scattered about

IV. Indirect Discoverers of the New World

A. AD 1000: Norse seafarers arrive in modern Newfoundland
   1. Called in Vinland after the grapes that grew there
   2. Soon abandoned settlements
   3. Europeans expand into the world

B. Christian crusaders
   1. 11-14th centuries: reclaim “Holy Land”
   2. Asian goods: silk, perfume, draperies, spices (especially sugar)
   3. Routes for goods were long, hard and costly
   4. Another way was sought

V. Europeans Enter Africa

A. 1295; Marco Polo returns from China
   1. Tales of pink pearls and golden pagodas
   2. People yearn for Asian riches, but sailors refused to sail around Africa
   3. Caravel (ship that sailed closer to the wind), new route toward Azores
   4. Hard to penetrate Africa before

B. Portuguese: trading for gold, slaves
   1. Slave trade boomed
   2. Wealth discovered in the Indies
   3. Spain gains sudden strength

VI. Columbus Comes upon a New World

A. 1450: Printing Presses introduced

B. Christopher Columbus
   1. Three small ships and a motley crew set out for an adventure

The Americas were stumbled upon by a few explorers before Columbus, but he was the first explorer to take note of the New World. Before that, many Europeans caught the Gold Fever and lusted exotic riches, many of which were discovered later in the New World.
• New World discovery impacted these four continents in many ways, good and bad
• The *encomienda*: Christianisation of Natives (basically slavery)

3. Huge failure: had reached Americas, not the Indies
4. Discovery impacted four continents:
   a. Europe: markets, capital, technology
   b. Africa: labor
   c. Americas: raw materials (metals, soil, etc.)

VII. When Worlds Collide
   A. New plants, animals for Europeans
      1. Rattlesnakes, potatoes, maize, beans, etc.
   B. New plants, animals for Natives
      1. Horses, cattle, pigs, sugar cane
      2. Sadly, many weeds and illnesses also crossed over

VIII. The Spanish *Conquistadores*
   A. Spanish took control of New World
      1. Europeans got richer
      2. Explored, expanded, conquered Natives
      3. Caribbean Islands (West Indies): supplies stored, rest for men, etc. before taking on the continent

IX. The Conquest of Mexico
   A. 1519: Hernán Cortés sets sail for Mexico from Cuba
      1. Found two interpreters: Spanish castaway and Malinche (woman slave)
         a. Malinche learned Spanish, was baptized
      2. Unrest in Aztec empire, tales of gold and riches in Tenochtitlán
      3. Burned his ships and his troops advanced
   B. Aztecs believed Cortés to be a god, welcomed him
      1. The Spaniards’ lust for gold and riches festered, and the Aztecs attacked
      2. 13 August 1521: Cortés laid siege on city, Aztecs capitulated
      3. Small pox ravaged the city
      4. Thus the Aztecs were defeated, and their numbers dwindled, and their city razed

The Spaniards began to imperialize the Americas, settling in the Bahamas to catch their breath after the long sea journey, and then they would take various native tribes. They also traded ideas and goods with the natives.
As news of the New World and its riches spread to Europe, many more nations wanted a piece of the wealth; various explorers set out to discover more of the new lands. Spain’s hold on the New World continued to spread, and they greatly affected the natives in good and bad ways. In the end, the Spaniards began to intermarry with the natives to blend the separate cultures in preparation for the future Spanish speaking nations in the area.

X. The Spread of Spanish America

A. 1551: Spanish influence spread
   1. Cathedrals, printing presses, universities (Mexico City and Lima)

B. The rest of Europe became eager for the new World’s riches
   1. 1497: Giovanni Caboto explored Northeastern coast
   2. 1524: Giovanni da Verrazano travelled to eastern seaboard
   3. 1534: Jacques Cartier journeyed up St. Lawrence River
   4. 1565: Spanish fortress erected in St. Augustine, Florida

C. 1540s: Spaniards’ power reaches North
   1. 1609: Santa Fe in province of New Mexico
   2. Christianity spread
   3. 1680: Popé’s Rebellion (Natives took the capital)
   4. 1716: Spanish settlements in Texas
   5. California casually ignored until 1769 (Christianisation of Natives)

- Negative effects of Spanish: killed, enslaved, infected Native
- Positive effects: huge empire, fused separate cultures together, lay foundation for Spanish-speaking nations, intermarriage with Natives

The group of Natives and Spaniards ascended from the death, and the people were proud of their heritage.