

7/8 World History

Week 27

Age of Exploration & Conquest of the Americas

Monday

Do Now

What do you remember about Muslim Spain? What do you know about Portugal?

Objective

Students will understand the Spanish Reconquista.

Students will analyze the geography of the Age of Exploration.

European Exploration

- When it comes to geography, the Renaissance is also known as the **Age of Exploration**.
- Prior to this time, European knowledge of the outside world was limited mostly to Europe itself, North Africa, and the Middle East.
- With increased trade during the Renaissance, though, European merchants began travelling long distances more often than ever before.
- After the Crusades and the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans in 1453, many Europeans no longer wanted to do business with Muslims. This led many European nations to start **trying to find a sea route to Asia, so they could trade directly with India and China without having to pass through Muslim kingdoms**.
- One of the first European kingdoms to pursue this idea was a small one on the very edge of Europe: Portugal.



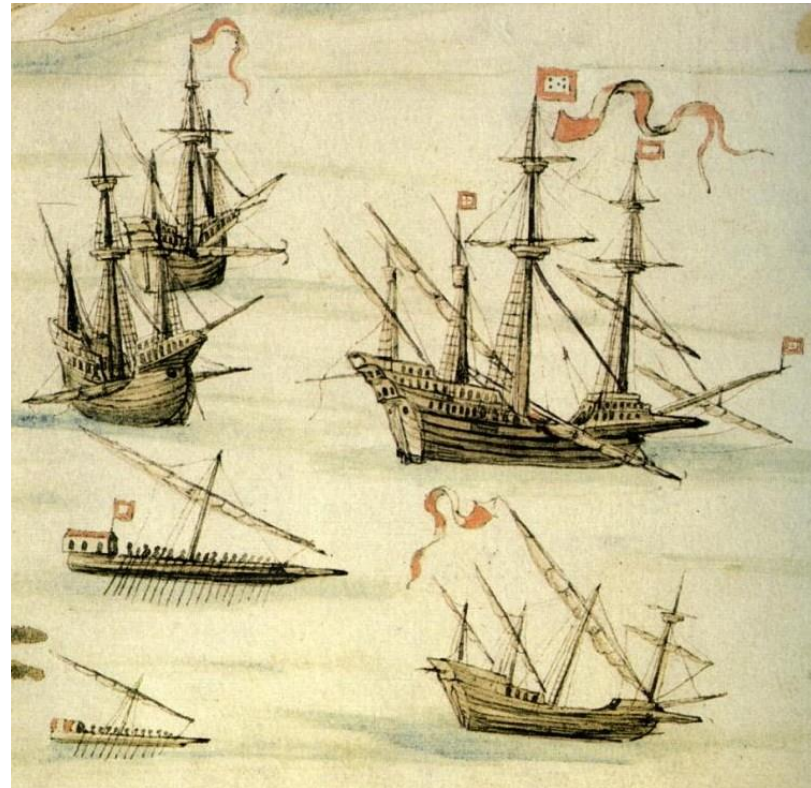
A map of Europe from the year 1154

Reconquista

- After the Muslims conquered Spain in the 8th century, most Christians living there either converted to Islam or continued being Christian and distrusting their Muslim rulers.
- Around the 11th century, when Europe was shifting from the Dark Ages to the Middle Ages, Muslim power in Spain also began to weaken. Groups of Christians on the outskirts of Spain began to revolt and recapture territory from the Muslims. This process was known in Spanish as the **Reconquista** ("Reconquest").
- As the Christians got enough land to establish small kingdoms, they began to coordinate their attacks and capture more land. By the mid-1100's, the Muslims controlled only the bottom half of Spain. By the year 1300, they only controlled the southeastern corner of Spain, centered around the city of Granada.
- Although the Christian kingdoms coordinated their attacks, they mostly remained separate from each other, which caused a linguistic split. The western kingdoms of Portugal and Galicia began to speak differently from the eastern kingdoms of Castile and Aragon.



- The kingdom of Portugal quit participating in the Reconquista once they won back all the land they wanted, which gave them the opportunity to begin searching for a route to Asia sooner than the other Spanish kingdoms, who were still trying to kick out the Muslims.
- The Portuguese decided to search for a route to Asia **by going south, around Africa**. They had no idea how far Africa extended, though, so different explorers sailed gradually further and further south, establishing trade relationships with cities on the coast of West Africa.
- The Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias finally reached modern South Africa in the 1480's. From there, another Portuguese explorer named Vasco de Gama sailed up the coast of East Africa, then across the ocean to India, becoming the first European to reach East Asia by the sea.



Medieval Portuguese ships

- By the year 1490, two of the largest Spanish kingdoms had united through the marriage of **Queen Isabella** of Castile with **King Ferdinand** of Aragon (shown right). One of the main purposes of this union was to finally defeat the last Muslims of Spain, **which they finally did in 1492**.
- Now that the Reconquista was complete, they turned their attention to exploration in order to compete with Portugal.
- Because it would be difficult to use the same route as the Portuguese, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella decided to try to find another way to Asia. Knowing they were looking for another route, an Italian merchant named Cristoforo Colombo (called **Christopher Columbus** in English) gave them a radical new proposition: **to sail across the Atlantic Ocean**. He knew this was possible because Nicolaus Copernicus had proven that the Earth was round.
- After setting off from Spain funded by Ferdinand and Isabella, Columbus and his men finally reached an area of tropical islands filled with brown-skinned natives, which he incorrectly believed to be India, hence giving the natives the name "Indians."
- It took several years for Europeans to figure out that this was, indeed, an unknown land, and not East Asia.



- Explorers Map Activity

Exit Ticket

Why was Portugal able to start exploring new routes to Asia earlier than the Spanish?

Homework

Christopher Columbus reading & questions

Tuesday

Do Now

What do you remember about syncretism? Name as many examples as you can think of, both from this class and your own knowledge.

Objective

Students will understand the meaning and significance of the Columbian Exchange.

European Exploration Quiz

1. Which European kingdom was the first to find a sea route to Asia?
2. In what year was the Reconquista completed?
3. What kind of prize was the first man to spot land on Columbus' voyage supposed to receive?

European Exploration Quiz

1. What was the process of Christians in Spain reconquering Muslim territory called?
2. Name at least 1 of the 2 rulers who funded Columbus' first voyage.
3. Which of the following words best describes Columbus' first impressions of Native Americans: violent, sickly, shy, or terrifying?

- Conquest of the Caribbean & Columbian Exchange readings

Exit Ticket

Which items from the Columbian Exchange do you think were the most important? Why?

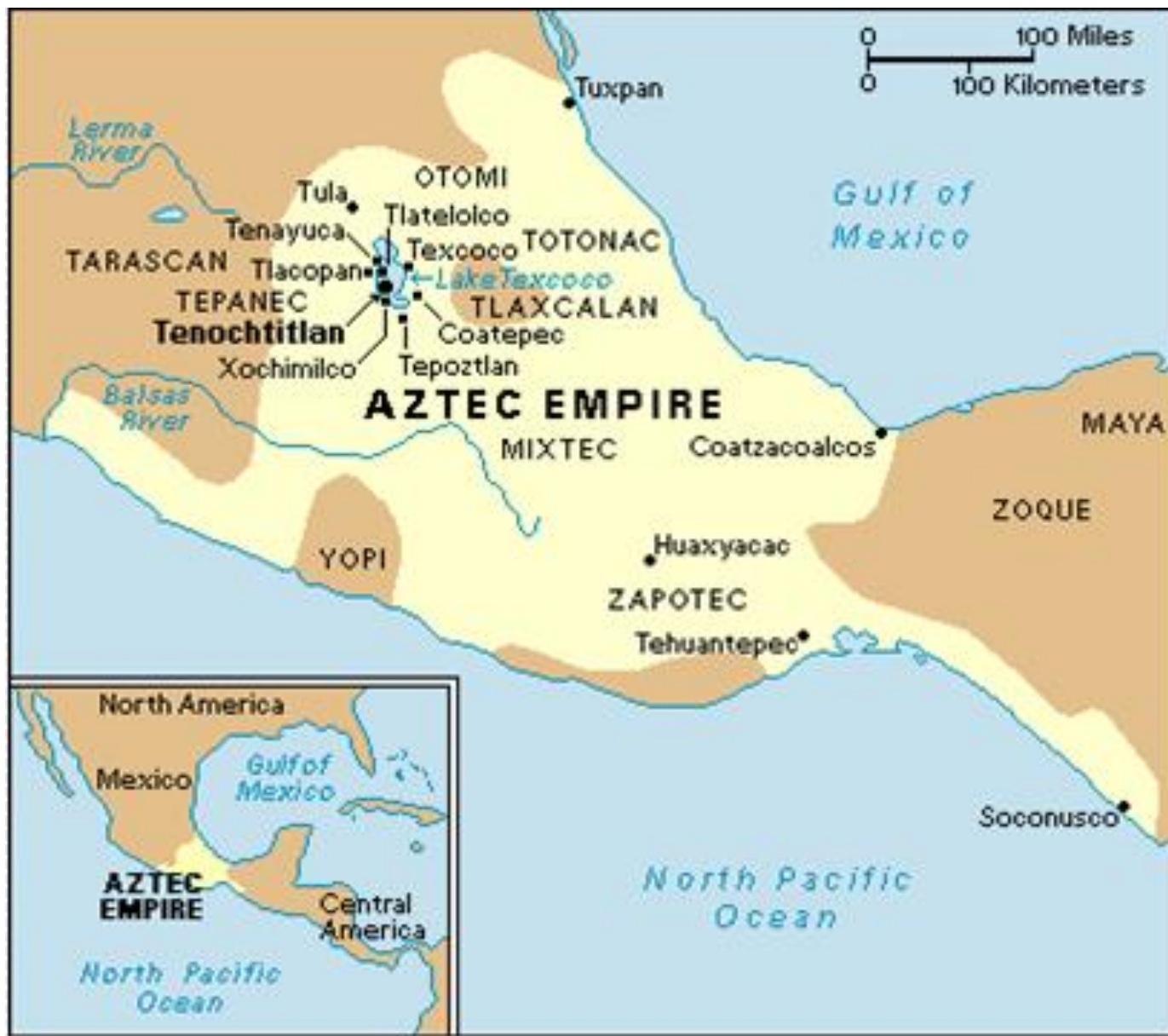
Block Day

Do Now

What do you remember about the Aztec
(Mexica) civilization?

Objective

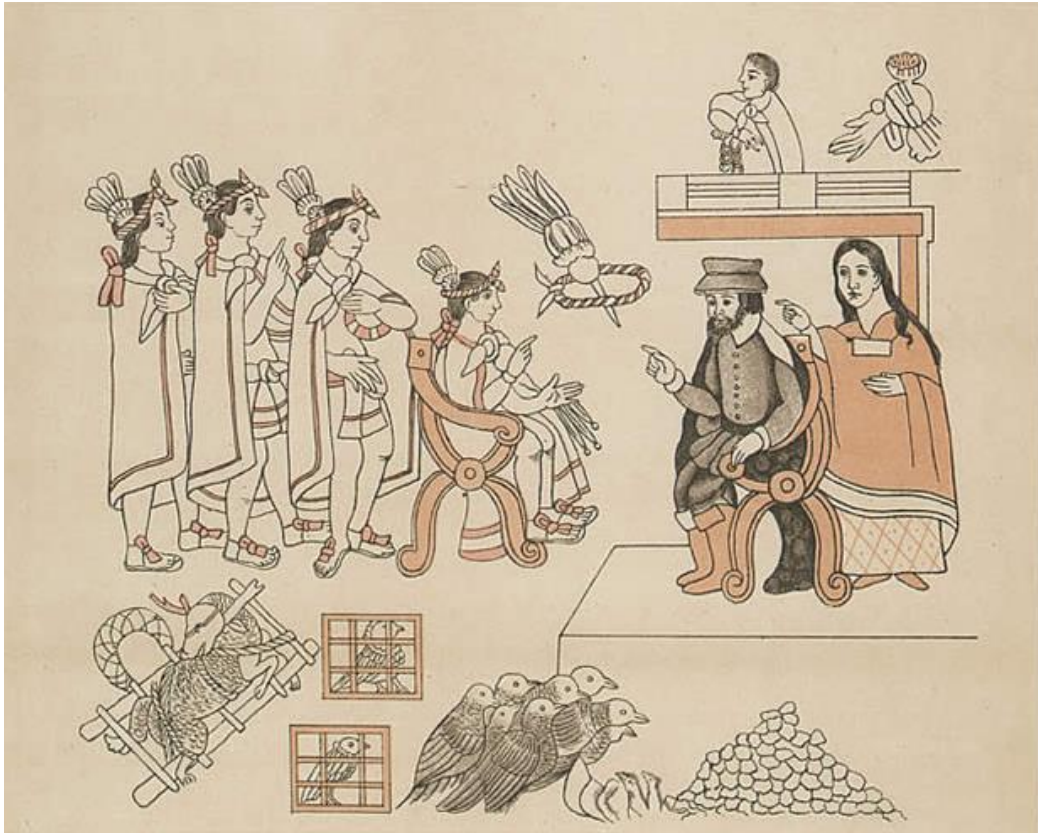
Students will consider the theory that
geographical advantages resulted in the
Spanish victory over Native Americans in
the new world



In 1492, when Columbus was exploring and conquering the Caribbean, the Aztec (Mexica) Empire was at its height.



- In 1519, tragedy struck the Mexica when Hernan Cortés, a Spanish military officer, arrived on the Atlantic coast of Mexico with the intent of conquering the Aztecs, whose wealth he had already heard of from other Native Americans



Hernan Cortés and La Malinche (right) talking with Aztec rulers

- When Cortés arrived on the coast of Mexico, he found many tribes willing to help him conquer the Mexica, who were their rulers. They did not realize, at the time, what would happen if he was successful.
- In Tabasco, the local rulers gave a woman to Cortés, later called La Malinche, who would be his interpreter because she spoke the Nahuatl language. She later had a son with him, Martín, who is the first known mestizo (mix of European and Native American ancestry)
- By the time Cortés arrived at Tenochtitlan in November 1519, the city was huge, with about 300,000 inhabitants
- The largest city in Spain at this time had only 30,000 people.

- The ruler of the Aztecs at that time, Moctezuma II, welcomed Cortés and his men into the city and threw a huge feast in his honor, because some priests thought he might be the god Quetzalcoatl come to life.
- Soon after, Moctezuma swore loyalty to Cortés. Historians are not sure whether this was from belief in Cortés as a god, or if it was because he saw how much stronger Cortés and his men, with their horses and guns, were than his own troops
- For the next 6 months, Cortés used Tenochtitlan as his headquarters while he conquered the surrounding countryside

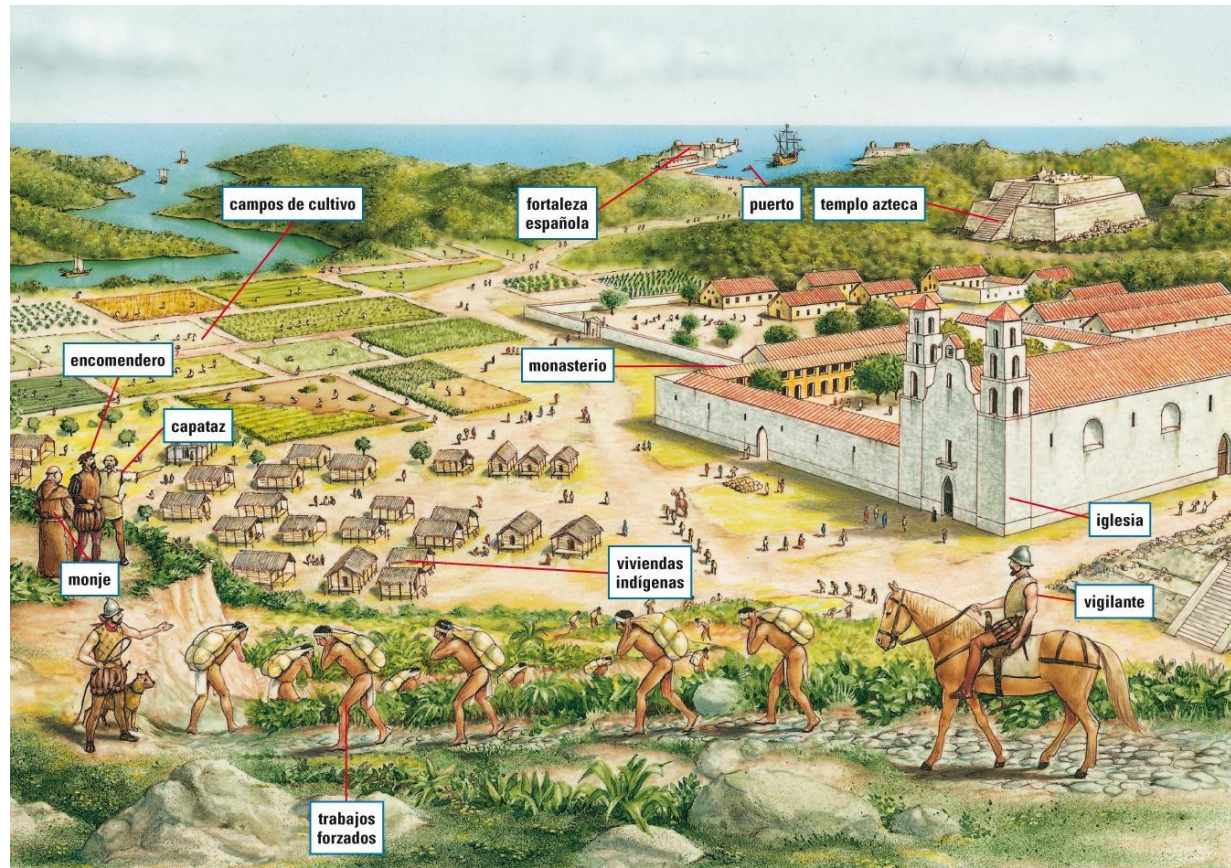




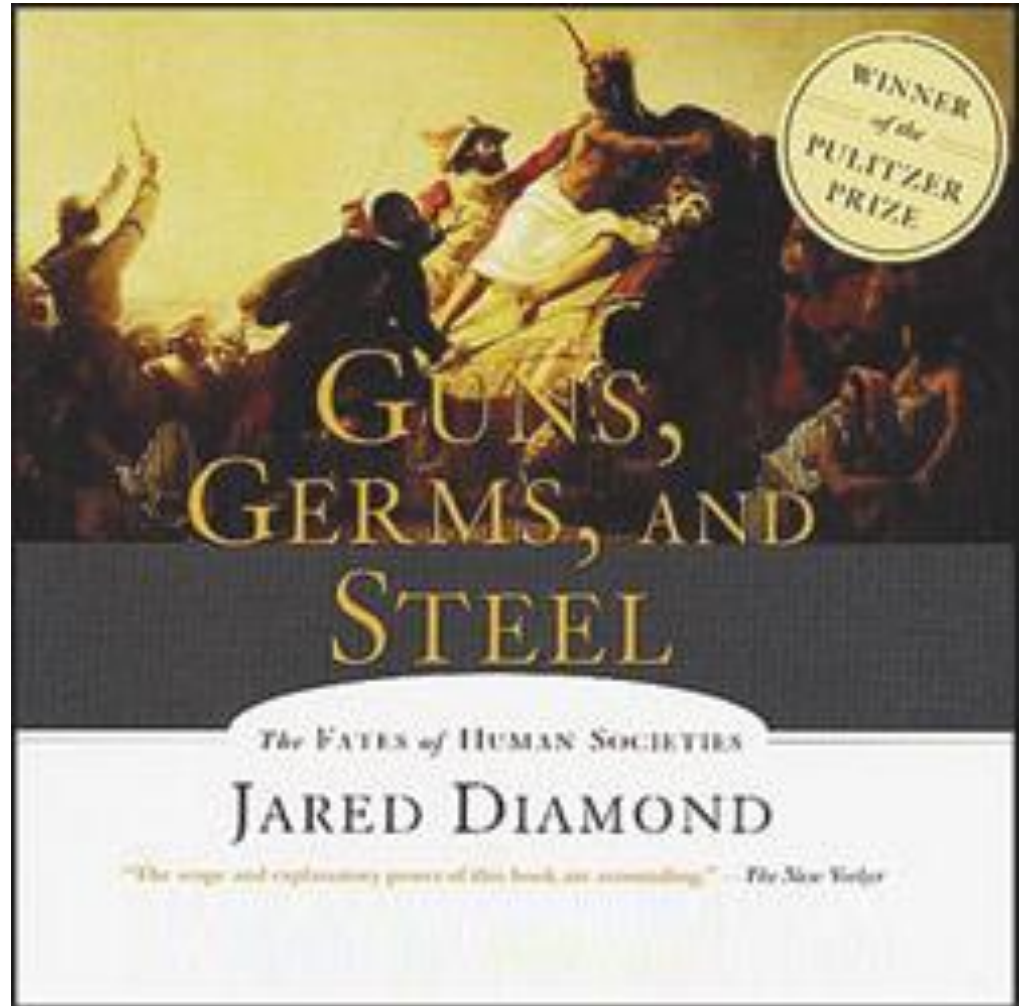
The only remaining ruins of Tenochtitlan in the center of Mexico City

- **On May 20, 1520, the Aztecs were celebrating a religious ceremony in their capital of Tenochtitlan.**
- **The entire city was gathered for this sacred ritual, including noble families, religious leaders and priests, and important government officials**
- **In the middle of the ceremony, Cortes's men slaughtered nearly every single nobleman, priest, and government official to the horror of the crowd**
- **The Spanish leader in charge later claiming they overheard plans to revolt against the Spanish**
- **The angry and horrified crowd began to protest in open rebellion. Hernan Cortés came back to find the city in chaos, and tried to control the situation, but the Spanish were eventually forced to flee the city.**
- **By the time Cortés returned to conquer Tenochtitlan almost a year later, more than half the people had died from an outbreak of smallpox. After a long, bloody battle, the city fell on August 13, 1521**

- After the Spanish conquered Tenochtitlan, the remaining Aztecs mostly fled to the north and south
- Those who remained were caught up in an abusive system called **encomienda**.
- Encomienda was a system in which wealthy Spaniards forced natives to farm their land for free, in exchange for “protection”
- This “protection” included teaching Natives the Spanish language, and teaching them Christianity, often forcing them to convert. Natives who refused were often given extreme punishments or even killed.



- But why were the Spanish able to so easily conquer such a strong, prosperous civilization as the Aztecs?
- This video about the conquering of the Inca explains the three factors that led to a Spanish victory: Guns, Germs, and Steel
- This idea came from a UCLA geography professor named Jared Diamond
- <http://youtu.be/0s3uf10PWNY>



Exit Ticket

How did guns, germs, and steel
advantage European conquerors in
the New World?

Homework

Start DBQ #2

Friday

Do Now

Which of the 6 documents did you find the most interesting or helpful so far? Which of the 6 did you find the most confusing or difficult to understand?

Objective

Students will verbalize their analyses of DBQ #2 documents in order to think through what evidence to incorporate in their essays.

Socratic Seminar

Exit Ticket

What new ideas or details did you hear today that you plan to incorporate into your DBQ essay?

Homework

Finish DBQ #2 (THIS IS A TEST GRADE) Due Monday. Late essays lose 10% (one letter grade) per day.