CHAPTER 2

**Contact and Settlement, 1492–1660**

**Learning Outcomes**

* 1. Explain the reasons Europeans explored lands outside Europe, and trace the routes they followed.

**Objectives**

1. Explain the role that economics and religion had in European exploration.
2. Describe the routes the Europeans traveled on their explorations.
   1. Describe the founding of Europe’s first colonies in the New World.

**Objectives**

1. Explain the reasons for Portuguese and Spanish exploration, and describe Spain’s unique plan for its lands in the New World.
2. Describe some of the major impacts the Spanish had on the native peoples they encountered.
3. Give reasons for England’s desire for colonies and discuss its failed attempts at Roanoke.
   1. Trace the expansion of England’s holdings in the southern colonies.

**Objectives**

1. Provide an overview of the founding of Jamestown in Virginia.
2. Describe the early years in Maryland and discuss political developments there.
   1. Outline the reasons for and timing of England’s founding of colonies in New England.

**Objectives**

1. Explore the role of religion in the settlement of Massachusetts and its early colonial politics and society.
2. Discuss the role of Roger Williams in the establishment of Rhode Island.

**Chapter Summary**

Beginning in the fourteenth century, Europeans took advantage of the new technologies developed during the previous century, especially the nautical advances made during the Hundred Years’ War, when large parts of central Europe became battlegrounds that required circumvention. They did so for at least two reasons: (1) to alleviate a trade deficit and (2) to spread Christianity.

After Columbus’s voyage, Spain claimed possession of all of North America. Predictably, the Portuguese protested Spain’s claim. To prevent open conflict between the two Catholic nations, Pope Alexander VI intervened. In 1493, he drew a line on a map that extended from north to south, proclaiming that all land east of the line belonged to Portugal, all land west of it to Spain. The effect of this line, called the Line of Demarcation, was to grant all of Brazil to Portugal, while Spain had claim to Central and North America.

In the early sixteenth century, Spanish conquistadors, mostly minor nobleman, led private armies to the New World. They enslaved the Indians in Spanish-controlled lands, although no one actually owned another human being.

Between 1519 and 1521, Hernan Cortés led an expedition of six hundred men against the Triple Alliance (better, if incorrectly, known as the Aztecs) in Mexico and their ruler, Montezuma. The great Aztec civilization fell into Spanish hands within two years of Cortés’s arrival, and, to Cortés’s delight, so did the Aztec’s gold and silver. The Spanish built Mexico City on the ruins of the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlan.

In 1532, Francisco Pizarro and his army of just 168 men encountered the tremendous Inca Empire of Peru. Pizarro kidnapped the Inca leader, amassed a huge fortune by ransoming his life, killed him anyway, and seized the Inca capital of Qosqo.

By the middle of the 1500s, Spanish conquistadors controlled numerous areas surrounding the Gulf of Mexico. There were five principal results of this initial Spanish conquest: (1) financial, (2) biological, (3) racial, (4) religious, and (5) geopolitical. The most important result was the Columbian Exchange, in which agricultural products, domesticated animals, and microbial diseases crossed over from one civilization to the other, creating a vast “exchange” that changed the world forever, for good and for ill.

Like the Spanish and the Portuguese, French explorers, too, had been searching for the fabled route to the Orient. The French never found this nonexistent route, but they did find valuable products, mainly furs, that they could return to France. They remained a small but sturdy presence in North America, with holdings that extended great distances but vanished quickly after challenges from the more entrenched English throughout the 1700s. The Dutch too quickly got into the game of New World colonization. By the late sixteenth century, they had concentrated the settlements in the Caribbean, trying to win a share of the wealth created in the sugar colonies.

By the middle of the 1500s, the English disinclination toward exploration began to change. There were religious, social, economic, and geopolitical motives for this transition.

In 1585, Sir Walter Raleigh and his men established his base at Roanoke, on the outer banks of modern-day North Carolina, a region lacking mineral wealth. Frustrated in their search for New World gold and silver, Raleigh’s men abandoned the colony within a year and returned to England.

It was in 1607 that the English established their first lasting colony in the land that became the United States: Jamestown, in present-day Virginia. Jamestown eventually succeeded, and its success depended on two things—Indian relations and tobacco. The English settlers, badly in need of food, relied on a group of six Algonquian villages known as the Powhatan Confederacy. The relationship between Powhatan’s tribe and the Virginians was sometimes violent, especially when crops were limited.

The success of tobacco made Jamestown a more appealing place to be. But cultivating tobacco required labor. To meet this need, early tobacco growers attempted to follow the Spanish model and force Indians to work in their fields. In 1619, Dutch traders imported a small number of Africans to Jamestown, who performed much of the backbreaking work of establishing a town. The result was the expansion of a system of labor called indentured servitude, in which English and Irish poor sold their labor for four to seven years to a farmer who would fund their voyage across the Atlantic.

Following Virginia’s success, in 1632 the king of England granted the region that is now called Maryland to George Calvert, a lord whose aristocratic name was Lord Baltimore. Although Lord Baltimore and his sons at first attempted autocratic rule over Maryland, they quickly opted to create a legislature in the model of the House of the Burgesses, which allowed the colonists a good amount of self-rule. Self-rule had its problems, though—as more Protestants came over from England and openly rebelled against being ruled by Catholics, Lord Baltimore realized that he must protect his fellow Catholics. The result was one of the major landmarks in the history of liberty—the Toleration Act of 1649, which granted freedom of worship to anyone who accepted the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Although Maryland and Virginia prospered, mainly due to tobacco, life on the Chesapeake was generally miserable. Virginia and Maryland remained a collection of tiny villages made up of numerous small farms worked by indentured servants.

Despite the harshness of life in the colonies, the promise of wealth and freedom fueled England’s desire for more colonies, for two main reasons. The first was financial. The second was religious.

In order to escape the Church of England and worship according to their understanding of the Christian faith, a group of Separatists departed from England. First, they went to Holland; then, after receiving a land grant from the Virginia Company of London, they sailed on the ship Mayflower in 1620, destined for Virginia. The winter winds caught them, and they were blown off course, landing in present-day Massachusetts on a site they called Plymouth.

Encouraged by the developments at Plymouth, English Puritans sought to formalize Massachusetts as a royal colony and colonize it themselves. Led by John Winthrop, 1,000 Puritans set out for their religious haven of Massachusetts; between 1630 and 1640, 25,000 more followed, melding with the Separatists who were already there. Winthrop told them before they arrived, “We shall be as a city upon a hill [and] the eyes of all people are upon us.”

In Massachusetts, the town’s land was often parceled out to families depending on each family’s size and needs. The persistent demands of religious orthodoxy rankled some settlers, and one of the biggest troublemakers was Roger Williams, the minister of Salem, Massachusetts, who hoped for a “purer” form of religion than even the Puritan founders had institutionalized. Most importantly, he suggested that there should be a clear division between the practice of religion and the politics of state. He left Massachusetts with a small band of followers, walking to what is today Rhode Island and founding the town of Providence.

New England’s growth led to the confrontation with the land’s inhabitants, the tribes of Indians. The result was a series of bloody battles collectively called the Pequot War, in which the supposedly pious New Englanders effectively exterminated the tribe, gruesomely killing men, women, children, and the elderly.

**Chapter Outline**

I. Exploration and Discovery

* 1. The Eastern Route: The Portuguese

B. The Beginnings of European Slavery

C. The Western Route: The Spanish

D. Predecessors and Followers

II. Early Settlements and Colonization

* 1. Portuguese
  2. Spanish

1. Spanish Expansion into North America

* + - 1. Cortés and Mexico
      2. Pizarro and Peru
      3. The Caribbean
      4. Florida
      5. The American Southwest

2. Results of Spanish Conquest

* + - 1. Financial
      2. Biological
      3. Racial
      4. Religious
      5. Geopolitical
  1. French
  2. Dutch
  3. English: Planting Colonies, Not Marauding for Wealth

1. Sir Walter Raleigh and Roanoke

2. Lessons of Roanoke

III. England Founds the Southern Colonies, 1607–1660

* 1. Virginia: Jamestown
     1. Jamestown Finally Succeeds

a. The Powhatan Confederacy

b. Tobacco

* + 1. Jamestown Grows
    2. Consequences
       1. Increased Hostility with Indians
       2. Change to Royal Control
  1. Maryland: Founding and Politics

C. Life on the Chesapeake

IV. Founding the New England Colonies, 1620–1660

* 1. Massachusetts
     1. Settlement
     2. Expansion
     3. Politics
     4. Society
  2. Rhode Island
     1. New England in the 1660s
  3. Continued Expansion and Indian Confrontation

V. Looking Ahead…

**Suggested Lecture Topics**

1. The First Explorers: Their Motives, Their Discoveries, and Their Rewards
2. African Slavery Begins
3. Spanish Exploration, Conquest, and Legacy in the Americas
4. The Columbian Exchange and its Global Impact
5. The Experiences of the French Mountain Men and Fur Traders
6. The Difference in Motivation and Policies Among the Lead Colonizing Nations
7. English Colonization: Early Miscalculations, Mistakes, and Mysteries
8. Jamestown: The Reconstructed Village
9. Life in Early Virginia and Maryland
10. The Arrival of the Puritans: “We Shall Be as a City upon a Hill”
11. Overlooked

(2-2). There were four reasons why the English increased their explorations in the mid-1500s:

a. Religious

b. Economic

c. Social

d. Geopolitical

Assign one of the following historical figures/characters to students in groups: A high-ranking English Protestant minister, Queen Elizabeth I, a wealthy English investor, an English cotton producer, a younger son of a noble, an impoverished English man/woman, Francis Drake, or a high-ranking English admiral. Have the students role play the assigned characters. Their goal is, using the Reasons Why box and information from the text, to argue why English expansion is in their best interests, from the perspectives of their assigned character. Grade students according to their use of historical data and information, adding additional points for enthusiasm and creativity.

(2-1) Europeans sought to explore lands outside Europe primarily for two reasons:

a. To alleviate a trade deficit

b. To spread Christianity.

Have the class divide themselves into two groups. Have the two groups take up one reason each that is mentioned above as their respective topics. Ask students to do an online research about their topics. Have each group present their findings to the class.

**The Reasons Why…**

**Research Topics—Projects and Papers**

Students might choose to complete a project to be presented in class or to write a more traditional research paper. Or instructors could decide which they prefer to have them do. Below are a few topics that are relevant to this chapter. Instructors may also choose to develop their own topics.

1. Detail the impact of the Columbian Exchange on cuisine across the globe. Examine the adaptation of American agricultural products abroad (the potato in Ireland, corn in numerous nations, etc.). In smaller classes, create a potluck where students must bring in a dish that was a product of the Columbian Exchange.
2. Changes in England that put people on the move: Prepare a chart listing the most important reasons for European explorations and settlement. Produce the chart in an outline form, with the most significant aspects first.
3. Prepare brief biographical sketches of several of the most important early settlers of Jamestown. Look for both men and women. Try to extrapolate how different their daily lives actually were from the common settler.
4. Solve the mystery of the vanished colony of Roanoke: Ask students to research the various theories and explanations for this. They should try to discover some things that they did not already know.
5. Jamestown—The Reconstructed Village: This should be an instructor-led classroom study. Use the Internet to get to the virtual Jamestown site (<http://www.virtualjamestown.org/>). Instructors should study it beforehand, so that they can guide their students through the site in a convenient way.
6. Compare and contrast the Virginia and Massachusetts colonies. Topics covered could include economics, religion, society, climate, systems of labor, and relations with Native Americans.

**Additional Resources**

*Promotion and Possession: The English Colonies.* The University of Pennsylvania Library: Exhibits.

<http://www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/rbm/kislak/promotion/newengland.html>

*Exploration: The Fur Trade and Hudson’s Bay Company*. Canadiana.ca

<http://www.canadiana.ca/hbc/intro_e.html>

*European Exploration of the Southwest and the Caribbean.* National Park Service.

<http://www.nps.gov/seac/hnc/outline/07-exploration/>

*Historic Jamestowne*. Jamestown Rediscovery.

<http://www.historicjamestowne.org/learn/>

**Primary Source Discussions**

**Assignment Name: Vasco da Gama**

*Introduction*: As trade between different parts of the known world progressed through the centuries, European adventurers made their way overland to an area they called the “Far East.” The journey was long, grueling, and expensive. Traders were gone for months at a time and sometimes were never heard from again. They traversed rugged terrain that taxed all of their resources. Supplies had to be purchased whenever and wherever they could be found, and local headmen required goods or currency as payment for crossing their lands. Yet these Europeans were willing to make the journey because they dreamed of the enormous profits to be made from exotic goods. Eventually explorers turned to the oceans, and Vasco da Gama headed a sailing expedition to India under the patronage of the King of Portugal.

*Visit URL*: http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1497degama.asp

[Read the firsthand account of da Gama’s travels in 1497–1498](http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1497degama.asp) and then take the brief quiz to check your understanding.

*Reflection Questions*:

1. How successful would you consider da Gama as a leader of men?

2. In what ways do you think the Portuguese expedition underestimated the peoples they met?

3. How would you assess the attitudes of the Calicut King and da Gama toward each other? How did this situation affect the Portuguese efforts at establishing trade agreements?

4. From the descriptions of the natives given in these journal entries, write a brief summary of how you think one of the sailors might describe them to friends when he arrives back in Portugal.

5. How well do you think da Gama carried out his mission? What might he have done differently in order to be more successful?

**Assignment Name: Columbus’s Letter to Gabriel Sanchez**

*Introduction*: In October 1492, Christopher Columbus discovered the first of many islands in the Caribbean. He believed that he had reached the East Indies, but he had, of course, discovered a “New World.” Later excursions would bring further discoveries. Between his first and second voyages to the New World, Columbus made one expedition to the east to search for islands off the coast of India. His quest was successful and, while on his return voyage, he penned a letter to King Ferdinand’s treasurer. The letter described his adventures and the natural resources he had found in the islands.

*Visit URL*: http://wadsworth.cengage.com/history\_d/special\_features/ilrn\_legacy/waah1c01c/content/amh1/readings/columbus.html

Read the [letter to Gabriel Sanchez](http://wadsworth.cengage.com/history_d/special_features/ilrn_legacy/waah1c01c/content/amh1/readings/columbus.html), and then take the brief quiz to check your understanding.

*Reflection Questions*:

1. Why do you think this expedition by Columbus is so little known today?

2. If you were King Ferdinand, how plausible would you have found Columbus’s description of his voyage? Do you think kings usually believed everything their explorers told them?

3. According to Columbus, how important had God been to his success? Can you cite instances that appear to be at odds with modern day Christian ideals?

4. Columbus claimed every island upon which he landed for the King of Spain, and he noted that none of the natives resisted. Provide some reasons why the natives would have made no resistance, given the circumstances.

**Assignment Name: Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico**

*Introduction*: The Spanish victory over the Aztecs was aided by the fact that the natives believed Cortés to be their god, Quetzalcoatl, who was predicted to return at the same time that the Spaniards arrived. Thus their first meetings with Cortés and his men were amiable, even exultant. Montezuma was clearly excited that he had lived to see the god’s return. In this account, Aztecs who survived the first massacre describe those first meetings, as well as the massacre that took place during a religious festival. Cortés has been soundly condemned for his actions, but usually the condemnation comes from the world at large. Seldom do we hear the voices of those who were there to experience the treachery firsthand.

*Visit URL*: http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/aztecs1.asp

Read the document, [An Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico](http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/aztecs1.asp), and then take the short quiz to check your understanding.

*Reflection Questions*:

1. Describe Montezuma’s initial reaction to the arrival of Cortés. How does Cortés use this welcome to lull Montezuma into a false sense of security?

2. The person providing the account of the massacre appears to be speaking almost mechanically. What would account for such a reaction?

3. How would Cortés justify his actions if he were alive today?

**Assignment Name: St. Augustine**

*Introduction*: St. Augustine, Florida, has the distinction of being the oldest lasting settlement in North America. The Spaniards, who conquered the fort from the French, named the place in honor of St. Augustine, on whose day—August 28, 1565—they took control. The leader of the venture was Pedro Menendez de Aviles y Alonso de la Campa (usually referred to simply as Menendez). The admiral was extremely competent but not always scrupulous about obeying orders. He had spent almost two years in prison on that offense before being called on by King Philip II of Spain to secure the coast of Florida, a land claimed by Spain almost half a century earlier.

Bringing Christianity in the form of the Roman Catholic faith was of paramount importance to the chaplains and priests who accompanied Menendez on his mission. One of those priests, Francisco Lopez de Mendoza Grajales, wrote a detailed account of the group’s experiences, reprinted here as a part of the *Modern History Sourcebook*.

*Visit URL*: http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1565staugustine.asp

Read the document, [Founding of St. Augustine](http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1565staugustine.asp), and take the brief quiz to check your understanding.

*Reflection Questions*:

1. How does the chaplain exhibit his belief in the power of God to protect the mission?

2. Why were the Spaniards so bent on the destruction of the Protestants they encountered?

3. In this account, Calvinists were put to death by Roman Catholics who viewed them as heretics. What modern parallel do you see in the Islamic world today?

4. The writer repeatedly refers to “miracles” and “favors” given to the crew by God. Provide examples, and analyze why it was so important to these men to have the blessings of God.

5. In comparison to earlier descriptions of Native Americans you have read in this chapter, how do you think the writer viewed the natives with whom he came into contact?