The Colonization of the Western Hemisphere

1. The Spanish arrived in the Caribbean and soon realized that it did not have the riches necessary to sustain them (i.e. spices, silks)
   1. Turned to mining the limited amounts of gold located in the Caribbean
   2. Spanish unable or unwilling (probably unwilling) to do this themselves, so they forced the Taino people to do it.
      1. Called the *encomienda* system - gave the Spanish settlers (or *encomenderos)* the right to compel Taino to work, in return, the Spanish would look after the Taino’s health and safety and convert them to Christianity
         1. Really just a brutal slave system - the people that would ensure the safety of the Taino were in Spain
      2. Eventually the Spanish needed to raid communities to replace workers that died from working or disease - Taino population plummeted from 4 million in 1492 to a few thousand in 1540
   3. The Caribbean in a crossroads
      1. Not much luck mining in the Caribbean, but the Spanish soon found huge silver deposits in Mexico and Peru and most of the Spanish interest centered on this region
      2. The Caribbean eventually became an important area for growing cash crops and the Spanish (followed by the English, French and Dutch) started cash crop plantations there.
         1. One problem, the Spanish managed to kill off most of the native population there - imported African slaves to do the labor.
      3. By 1700, the Caribbean had a small European administrative class and a huge population of African slaves.
2. Spanish Conquest of South America
   1. First to fall was the Aztec between 1519 and 1521.
      1. Hernan Cortez led a group of about 400 soldiers to Tenochtitlan. During the skirmish, the Aztec emperor Motecuzoma was killed, but the *conquistadors* were driven off.
      2. Cortez then built ships and starved the city into surrender - the last emperor was tortured into giving up Aztec treasure. He remained silent and was executed in 1525.
      3. While the Spanish had advantages, they were limited in numbers
         1. The Spanish were successful because they managed to make alliances with other people the Mexica had made enemies of.
            1. These people gave the Spanish soldiers, supplies and native knowledge of the area.
            2. It didn’t really save them from the Spanish, though.
      4. Aztec also fell because they were weakened by smallpox and other epidemic disease (like mumps and/or measles)
   2. Next were the Inca between 1532 and 1533
      1. Francisco Pizzaro landed in Central America and marched south to Peru with about 600 soldiers
      2. Conquered the Inca in a similar fashion vis-a-vis Cortez in Mexico
         1. Internal rebellion - conflict between brothers in ruling house over who’s in charge
         2. Tricked many of the leaders into attending a “conference,” during which the Spanish killed most of them
         3. Looted Cuzco and took everything of value from the city
         4. Smallpox weakened the empire’s defenders
3. A shift in administration
   1. Early in this process, the leaders of the expeditions were in charge and gave out land to their soldiers to buy loyalty or reward success
   2. However, by 1570, Spanish territory becomes directly administered by the Spanish government and bureaucrats replaced the *conquistadors*
   3. Two large territories - Mexico (or New Spain) and Peru (or New Castile)
      1. The top administrators were viceroys - the king’s representative
         1. Subject to *audiencias* or independent review boards who reviewed decisions and heard appeals - brought some to the Spanish king
         2. In practice, this was difficult to enforce and the viceroys ruled independently
            1. “I obey but I do not enforce” - more information required
   4. Rapid building of cities - Spanish liked living in them, even though most of their money came from rural plantations farther from the cities.
4. Spanish Society in the New World
   1. Mestizo society - a multicultural society in which people of varied ancestry lived together under European or Euro-American dominance
   2. Most of the settlers were male - 85% or higher - which led many of them to form relationships with native women and a mixed or *mestizo* community was formed.
      1. This was more likely to happen in less urban areas, there were more European women in cities and they were the most like Europe
   3. Very hierarchical - formed a caste system in Spanish colonies
      1. Peninsulares - Spanish from Spain
         1. Creoles - Full-blooded Spanish, born in Americas
            1. Below this came a series of mixed race categories
            2. Mestizo (Peninsulare and N.A)
            3. Mulato (Peninsulare and African)
            4. Zambo (N.A and African)
      2. All told, there were at least 16 different classifications and each was ranked above or below some other classification, depending on your parents and their classifications
      3. Recognized 3 pure races - European, Indian and African and treated them a little better than mixed race people (full-blooded NA were treated better than mixed race, but not much)
   4. Very Patriarchal - but to different degrees
      1. European women were oppressed, but could use their informal influence to get advantages other women couldn’t
      2. Native women had to take low wage employment, but were less oppressed than their European counterparts
      3. African women were slaves and treated like the male slaves and were seen as equal to them.
   5. Spanish economy
      1. Heavily based on silver mining - mita system
         1. Villages had to give over young men (1/7 of the total) to work in the mines for a few months every year - horribly dangerous work
            1. Mothers sometimes maimed their sons to get them out of the work
         2. Silver made Spain crazy rich, but also led to a worldwide depression (more on that later)
      2. Hacienda system also profitable - arose out of encomienda system
         1. Spanish would give NA some money to buy land and supplies, NA worked off the loan
         2. Ridiculous terms of the loan made it so that NA could never pay it all back - called land peonage
   6. Some resistance to Spanish rule - Pueblo revolt led to 12 years of independent rule in Northern Mexico (1680), larger Tupac Amaru revolt in 1780 in South America
      1. Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala wrote to the king of abuses in 1615, but the King never saw it.
5. Portugal was involved too
   1. Spanish/Portuguese rivalry led the Pope to get involved to prevent a war - had both parties sign the Treaty of Tordesillas (1493)
      1. Divided up the known world - everything on the eastern side of the line was Portuguese, western was Spanish
   2. Line when through Brazil, so the Portuguese managed to get a piece of South American - Brazil still speaks Portuguese today
      1. Not much interest in Brazil, but eventually Portuguese set up profitable sugar plantations on the coast
      2. Eventually built up and the King of Portugal actually moved the capital to Rio de Jeneiro in 1807 to escape Napoleon
   3. Portuguese economy
      1. Sugar based economy - relied on African slave labor
         1. Primary labor force in Brazil, additional labor force in Spanish
      2. Center of economy was the Engenho (engine) - complex process of producing sugar and molasses - both an agricultural and industrial process
         1. Needed unskilled labor to work fields and skilled labor to make sugar
      3. Those that could run these enterprises were giving almost complete independence
         1. Difficult to do so and turnover was high
      4. A lot of labor turnover, too - average lifespan of a sugar plantation worker was 5 years; 1 ton of sugar = 1 life
         1. Needed a lot of slaves as native people fled to the interior of Brazil, into the jungles
6. Other European Colonization
   1. English took the east coast of North America, Northern Canada and some Caribbean Islands
      1. Started large agricultural colonies that were not initially successful
      2. Disruptive towards native populations
         1. Did not view “ownership” of land the same way that NA did - NA were basically hunting and gathering; limited agriculture
         2. British believed that if you weren’t using the land, you didn’t own it and felt the NA land was up for grabs
         3. Pushed the NA further and further away from their lands - set up fences and disrupted NA hunting
      3. Very strict society - no mixing of races and this created a very virulent racism towards NA and Africans
      4. Economy based on cash crop agriculture
         1. Tobacco’s popularity in Europe (grows well in SE North America), but also sugar, indigo, rice and cotton - grows well in Caribbean
         2. Indentured servitude was important to the English economy - those without a future in Europe worked for several years without pay for passage to NA
         3. Slavery was also important, more in the southern colonies, but all the colonies benefited indirectly from slavery - cheap supplies and such
   2. France took a lot of Central North America and some Caribbean Islands
      1. These were sparsely populated territories, mostly populated with fur trappers and Catholic missionaries
      2. As a result, the French had good relations with NA, as they were not really disruptive to their society
         1. There were also more French women, relative to men and society was much less structured than other European societies
         2. Fur trappers had relationships with NA women, but often formed families and married them
            1. Mixed race offspring called Metis - mixed in French, became more important in Canadian history later on
   3. In any event, NA were eventually displaced through conflict and disease and replaced by Europeans (English, Dutch, French, Irish, Germans) and Africans
      1. Tried hard to maintain their lifestyles and played the Europeans against each other
      2. Worked until the English took over most of NA after the 7YW - no one to play the English off against each other
7. One word about religion
   1. Syncretism - taking pieces of two things and creating a new thing
      1. Virgin of Guadalupe important example - Christian ideas merged with ideas from native Mexican religions - still important today in LA Christianity.
      2. Powerful idea of Mexican nationalism, separate from Spain and Catholicism
   2. Saints also accepted, as they were seen as similar to traditional gods with their feasts