



PERIOD 1 (1491-1607) ➔ On a North American continent inhabited by American Indians, contact among the peoples of Europe, the Americas, and West Africa created a New World.

The College Board has identified the following **KEY CONCEPTS** for Period 1 (1491-1607). The total items (multiple-choice, short answer, and longer essay) related to Period 1 on the APUSH National Exam comprise approximately 5 percent of the test. Use the concepts to strategically frame and guide your personal review plan. Are you able to “make sense” of each statement? Could you generate a written response (short-answer or long) to each statement? Can you add meaningful supportive data to each statement? Can you recall a certain episode in history that would serve well as an example of the situation described by each statement? The bold-faced concepts are generally more encompassing; the others seem to lean toward specificity. Do not allow yourself to be intimidated. You cannot possibly know every square inch of the material.

Before the arrival of Europeans, native populations in North America developed a wide variety of social, political, and economic structures based in part on interactions with the environment and each other.

As settlers migrated and settled across the vast expanse of North America over time, they developed quite different and increasingly complex societies by adapting to and transforming their diverse environments.

European overseas expansion resulted in the Columbian Exchange, a series of interactions and adaptations among societies across the Atlantic Ocean.

The arrival of Europeans in the Western Hemisphere during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries triggered extensive demographic and social changes on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

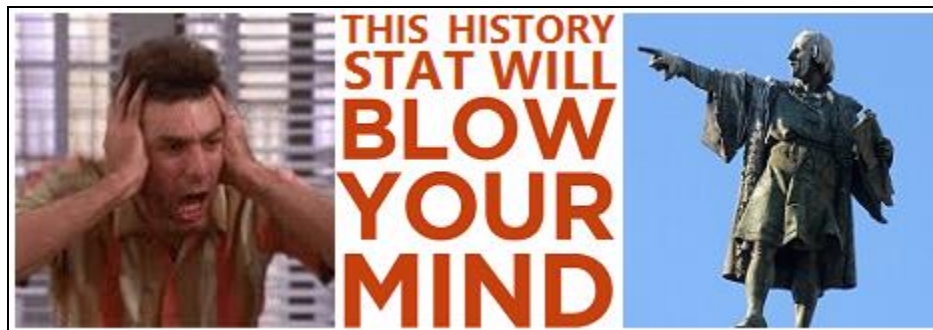
European overseas expansion into the Western Hemisphere caused intense social/religious, political, and economic competition in Europe and the promotion of empire building.

Contacts among American Indians, Africans, and Europeans challenged the worldviews of each group.

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European overseas expansion and sustained contacts with Africans and American Indians drastically altered European views of social, political, and economic relationships among and between white and nonwhite peoples.

Native peoples and Africans in the Americas strove to maintain their political and cultural autonomy in the face of European challenges to their independence and core beliefs.



The arrival of Europeans in the Western Hemisphere, ignited by Christopher Columbus's accidental discovery of "new" land in 1492, brought on a clash of cultures commonly referred to as the "Columbian Exchange." It was the circa 1500 version of the natural occurrence in history any time two foreign cultures come into contact for the very first time. The process involves swap of tangible things (such as animals, crops, pottery, weapons, and so forth), ideas and technology (such as farming know-how, military strategy, and so forth), and germs (bacteria and disease, in other words). The results are always mixed, with plenty of positive and negative outcomes (some short-term and others long-lasting). [Within 50 years of Spanish arrival, the native population in Hispaniola \(present-day Dominican Republic and Haiti\) declined from one million to perhaps as few as 200.](#) Although unfortunate, the decimation was not intended genocide. While a good portion of the natives were victims of armed aggression and many others were enslaved, the tragic loss of life owing to infectious disease was unavoidable (unless, of course, there was never to be a meeting of peoples in Europe with peoples of the Americas). To think that Columbus somehow knowingly embraced a diabolical mission of extermination as the underlying objective of his trans-Atlantic voyage is skewed reasoning.