

**CHAPTER 20 Section 1 (pages 553–559)**

# Spain Builds an American Empire

## BEFORE YOU READ

In the last chapter, you read about European exploration in the East.

In this section, you will study the Spanish and Portuguese exploration of the Americas.

## AS YOU READ

Use the web below to show some of the results of Spanish conquest.

### TERMS AND NAMES

**Christopher Columbus** Italian explorer who landed in the Americas  
**colony** Land controlled by another nation

**Hernando Cortés** Conquistador who defeated the Aztec

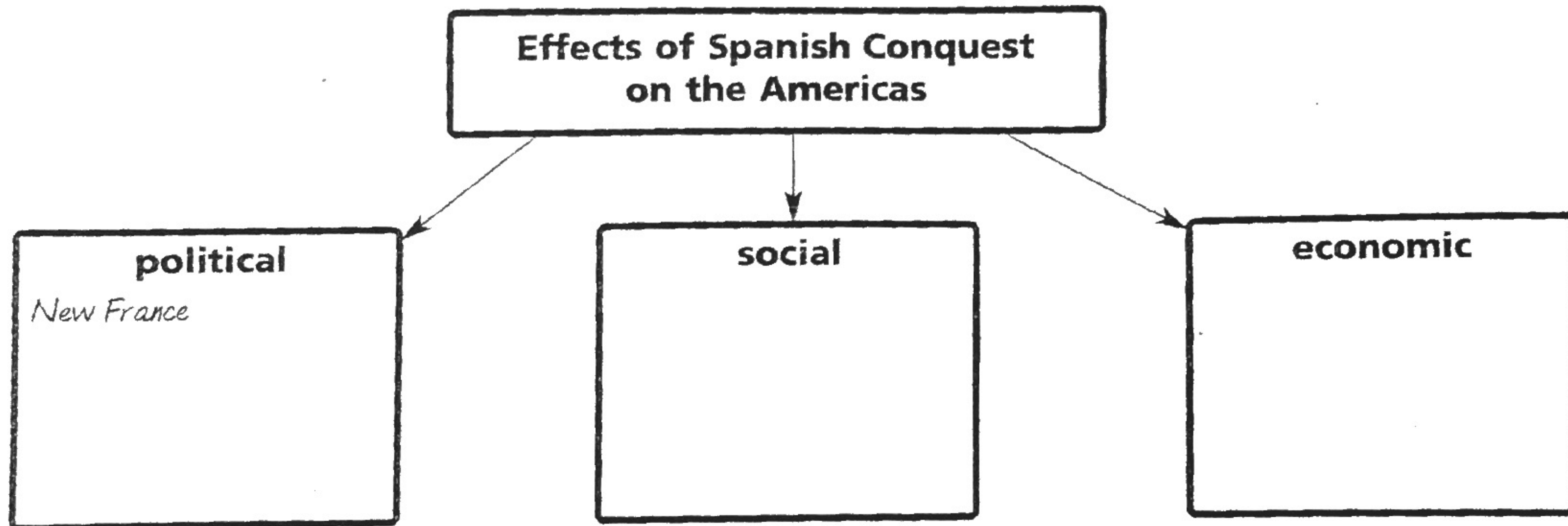
**conquistadors** Spanish explorers in the Americas

**Francisco Pizarro** Conquistador who defeated the Inca

**Atahualpa** Last Incan emperor

**mestizo** Person with mixed Spanish and Native American blood

**encomienda** System of mining and farming using natives as slave labor



## The Voyage of Columbus

(pages 553–554)

*How did the voyage of Columbus change the Americas?*

In 1492, **Christopher Columbus**, an Italian sailor, led a voyage for Spain. He sailed west hoping to reach Asia. Instead, he landed in the Americas. Columbus thought that he had reached the East Indies in Asia. He misnamed the natives he met there, calling them Indians. He claimed the land for Spain. From then on, Spain began to create **colonies**. Colonies are lands controlled by another nation.

In 1500, a Portuguese explorer claimed Brazil. In 1501, Amerigo Vespucci explored the eastern coast of South America. He said that these lands were a new world. Soon after, a mapmaker showed the lands as a separate continent. He named them America after Vespucci.

Other voyages gave Europeans more knowledge about the world. Balboa reached the Pacific Ocean. Ferdinand Magellan sailed completely around the world.

1. Which voyages gave Europeans new knowledge of the world?

---



---

## Spanish Conquests in Mexico

(pages 554–556)

### *Why did Spain conquer the Aztecs?*

**Hernando Cortés** was one of the Spanish conquistadors, or conquerors. In the 16th century, they began to explore the lands of the Americas. They were seeking great riches. In 1519, Cortés came to Mexico and defeated the powerful *Aztec Empire* led by Montezuma II.

#### 2. What was the main goal of Cortés in his conquests?

---

## Spanish Conquests in Peru

(pages 556–557)

### *How did Spain build an empire?*

About 15 years later, **Francisco Pizarro** led another Spanish force. It conquered the mighty *Inca Empire* of South America, led by **Atahualpa**, the last of the Incan emperors. Once again, the Spanish found gold and silver. By the mid-1500s, Spain had formed an American empire that stretched from modern-day Mexico to Peru. After 1540, the Spanish looked north of Mexico and explored the future United States.

The Spanish lived among the people they conquered. Spanish men married native women. Their children and *descendants* were called **mestizo**—people with mixed Spanish and Native American blood. The Spanish also formed large farms and mines that used natives as slave labor. This system was known as *encomienda*.

One large area of the Americas—Brazil—was the *possession* of Portugal. In the 1830s, colonists began to settle there. Colonists built huge farms called *plantations* to grow sugar, which was in demand in Europe.

#### 3. Give two examples of conquistadors and explain what they did.

---

---

## Spain's Influence Expands

(page 558)

### *Where did Spain hope to gain more power?*

Soon Spain began to want even more power in the Americas. It started to look at land that is now part of the United States. Explorers like Coronado led expeditions to the area. Catholic priests went along.

#### 4. What area did Coronado explore?

---

## Opposition to Spanish Rule

(page 559)

### *Who opposed Spanish rule?*

Spanish priests began to make some protests, however. One thing they criticized was the *encomienda* system. A monk named Bartolomé de Las Casas and others successfully called for the end of the system.

Native Americans also resisted new or continued Spanish rule. One of the most serious *rebellions* occurred in New Mexico. A Pueblo leader named Popé led a well-organized effort. It involved about 17,000 warriors and drove the Spanish back into New Spain for 12 years.

#### 5. What challenges to their power did the Spanish face?

---

---