



1512
Africans are
brought to
Hispaniola

1527
Las Casas
defends the
native
peoples

1540
Coronado explores
the Southwest

Life in New Spain

PREVIEW

Focus on the Main Idea

Spain gained great wealth from the settlement and growth of New Spain.

PLACES

Hispaniola

PEOPLE

Hernando de Soto

Estéban

Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca

Francisco Vázquez de Coronado

Juan Ponce de León

Bartolomé de Las Casas

VOCABULARY

society

plantation

encomienda

missionary

mission

You Are There

It is 1540. Spanish conquistador Hernando de Soto and about 700 men are traveling through what is now Georgia. They are searching for Cofitachiqui (koh FEE tah CHEE kee), a rich American Indian city they have heard about. De Soto and his soldiers meet a young Native American woman. They call her “the Lady of Cofitachiqui.” De Soto asks her about the freshwater pearls she has with her. The young woman takes the men to a building that contains many more pearls.

De Soto is interested in more than pearls. He hopes that this land may hold as much gold as Cortés found in Mexico. The Spaniards demand that the woman help them find gold. But “the Lady of Cofitachiqui” escapes, and de Soto continues his explorations without finding the treasure he seeks.



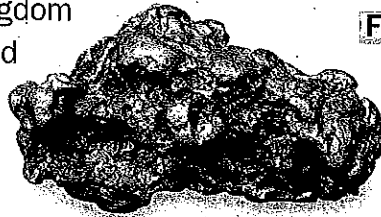
Sequence As you read, sequence the major events in the Spanish attempt to build New Spain and explore North America.

The Search for Gold

The story you just read was told by a member of **Hernando de Soto's** expedition. It was one of many stories that the Spanish told about gold and other riches in the Americas.

One story was about a rich kingdom called Cíbola (SIH boh lah), located far to the north of Mexico. It was told by **Estéban** an African sailor who had been enslaved.

Estéban had survived a shipwreck off the coast of Texas with the conquistador **Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca** (day BAH cah) in 1528. They traveled for eight years through what is now the Southwest region of the United States.



► Gold nugget

Three years later, Estéban joined another expedition to find Cíbola. But he did not find the kingdom. Estéban was killed by the Zuni people in what is now New Mexico.

The legend of Cíbola did not fade. The governor of New Spain decided to send

Francisco Vázquez de Coronado

(koh roh NAH doh) to find the cities. He did not find the cities of Cíbola either, because they did not exist. The Fact File on

this page shows the routes of Coronado and other Spanish explorers of North America.

REVIEW Sequence these events: Estéban is killed, Estéban is shipwrecked, and Estéban travels in the Southwest. 🔄 **Sequence**

FACT FILE

The Spanish Explore to the North, 1513–1542

By the middle 1500s Spain had sent several expeditions to explore the lands that would one day become the United States.

Francisco Vázquez de Coronado
Explored the American Southwest in 1540.

Hernando de Soto
Became the first European to reach the Mississippi River in 1540.

Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca
Explored what is now Texas in 1528.

Juan Ponce de León
Landed on the Florida peninsula in 1513.

Society in New Spain

By the end of the 1500s, most of the fighting between native peoples and conquistadors north and south of Mexico City had ended. The Spanish gained enough control to move colonists into these lands. The map on this page shows New Spain in 1600.

A new way of life, and a new society, was developing in New Spain. A **society** is a group of people forming a community.

At the top of colonial society were the **peninsulares** (pay neen soo LAH rays). These were people born in Spain. The name was based on the geography of Spain, which is located on a peninsula. Next were **creoles** (kray OH lays), people of Spanish background who were born in the Americas. Under the creoles were the **mestizos**, the largest group in New Spain society. A mestizo is a person with Indian and Spanish background. People who had no Spanish ancestors, such as

Indians and Africans, held the lowest position in this society.

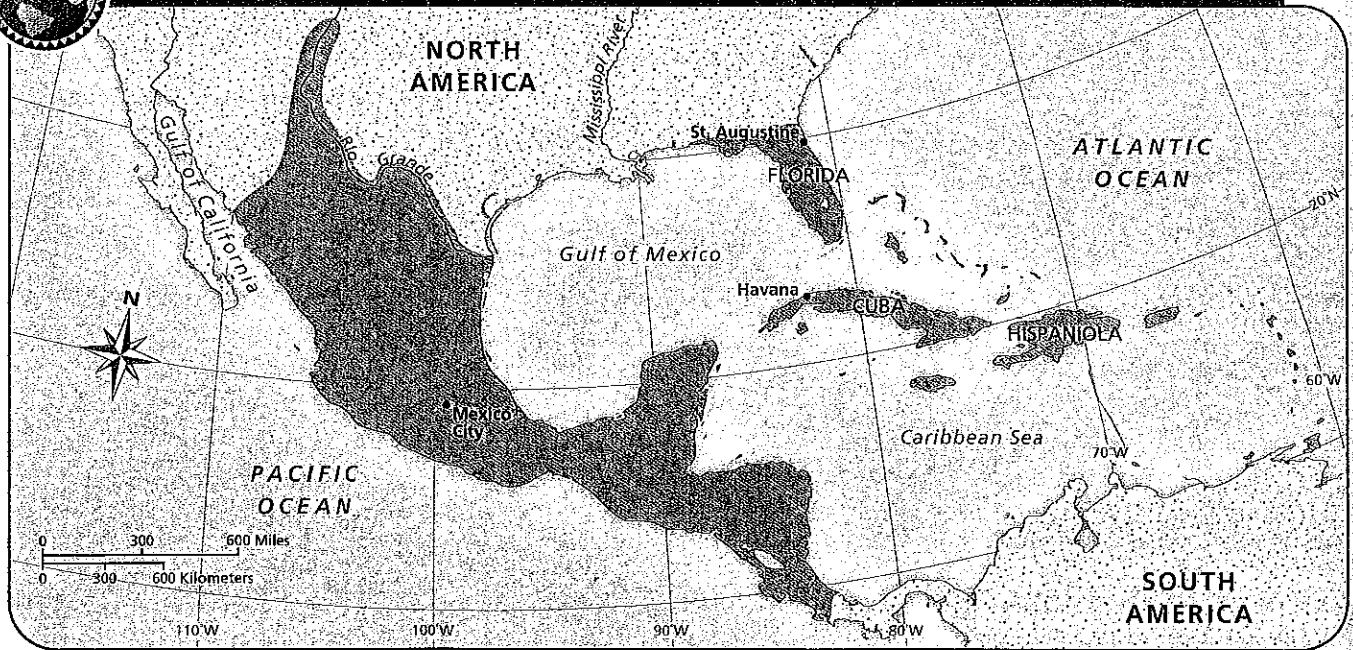
The peninsulares were wealthy and powerful. Some owned **plantations**, or large farms with many workers who lived on the land they worked. Other peninsulares received grants called **encomiendas**. An **encomienda** (en koh mee EN dah) granted a peninsulare control of all of the native peoples who lived on an area of land. The encomienda owners could put the native peoples to work. They were supposed to care for the native peoples and convert them to Christianity. In return, the native peoples had to give the encomienda owners crops that they grew and other goods.

In the cities, colonists became merchants and shopkeepers or worked for the colonial government. Others had small businesses, such as making furniture or clothing.

REVIEW Describe the main idea of the paragraphs on this page about New Spain society. **Main Idea and Details**



New Spain, 1600



► New Spain, shown in orange on this map, was established to rule lands claimed by Spain in North America.

MAP SKILL Use Latitude and Longitude At about what latitude and longitude is Mexico City located?



► The Spanish built missions throughout Mexico to teach the native peoples about Christianity.

More Changes for Native Peoples

Many encomienda owners put native peoples to work as farm workers, miners, and servants. The native peoples had to work without pay and did not always have enough to eat. They could be beaten and forced to work long hours.

One type of encomienda was run by Roman Catholic missionaries. A **missionary** teaches his or her religion to others who have different beliefs. The priests built missions throughout New Spain. A **mission** is a religious settlement where missionaries live and work. The purpose of these missions was to teach native peoples about Christianity.

Missionaries also taught them some European farming practices, such as raising cattle and sheep. The native peoples had to give up their traditional ways of life and become

Christians. On some missions, they were treated cruelly.

A priest named **Bartolomé de Las Casas** (day las KAH sahs) spoke out against the mistreatment of native peoples under the care of the church. In 1527, Las Casas wrote angrily about what he had seen in the encomiendas.

“[The native peoples] die or lead lives harsher than death. They have been split into shares as if they were herds of cattle or sheep; that is, [divided] among the Spaniards and assigned by a specific number to each to become their slaves.”

The efforts of Las Casas had some success. He persuaded Spain to pass laws in 1542 saying that native peoples must be paid for their work. These laws were not enforced, however, and later were canceled. You will read more about Las Casas in the Biography feature on page 151.

REVIEW Compare the life of native peoples in the missions and other encomiendas.
Compare and Contrast

Slavery in the Americas

Despite the efforts of Las Casas, slavery did not end in the Americas. The Spanish first brought enslaved Africans to the Caribbean island of **Hispaniola** in 1512. The Spanish enslaved Africans to replace the native peoples who were dying in large numbers from disease and overwork.

At first, Las Casas supported bringing Africans to New Spain to work in place of native peoples. Later, he wrote that Africans should not be enslaved, either. But, gradually, the enslavement of captured Africans became an important part of the colonial economy. On Hispaniola alone, there were 12,000 enslaved Africans by 1574. Like the native peoples, African slaves on the *encomiendas* and plantations died from overwork and mistreatment. You will read more about slavery in later chapters.

The profits from colonial plantations and mines created great wealth for Spain. In the 1600s these riches helped make Spain one of the most powerful countries in the world. As you will read, the power of Spain would eventually come to an end.

REVIEW In what ways did native peoples and African workers create great wealth for Spain? **Cause and Effect**

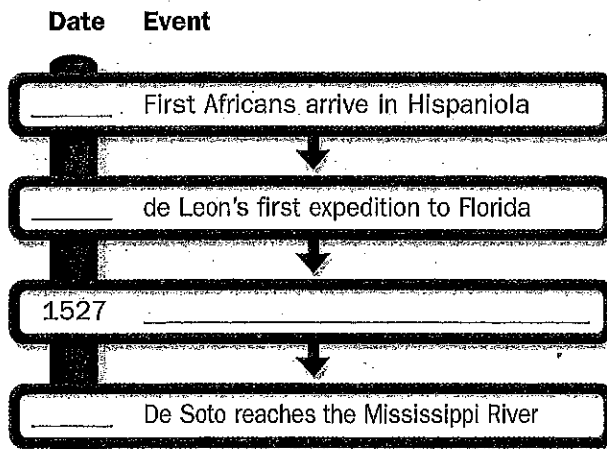
Summarize the Lesson

- **1512** The Spanish took the first African slaves to Hispaniola.
- **1527** Roman Catholic priest Bartolomé de Las Casas defended the rights of native peoples.
- **1540** Francisco Vásquez de Coronado began a search for gold through the southwest part of what is today the United States.

LESSON 3 REVIEW

Check Facts and Main Ideas

1. **Sequence** On a separate sheet of paper, fill in either the missing dates or the missing events from this time line.



2. How did stories about Cíbola affect Spanish explorers?
3. How did the structure of **society** in New Spain benefit the Spanish?
4. How did conquest by the Spanish change life for native peoples?
5. **Critical Thinking: Point of View** Summarize the point of view of Las Casas about native peoples on the **encomiendas**.

Link to Geography

Interpret Maps Look at the map on page 147. Which explorer traveled along the shore of the Gulf of Mexico?