Unit 2

EXPLORING BORDERLANDS

Contact and Conflict in North America

Authors and Works

Featured in the Video:

Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain* (history, exploration narrative)

Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, *The Relation of Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca* (exploration narrative, captivity narrative, hagiography)

Americo Paredes, *George Washington Gomez* (novel), *With a Pistol in His Hand: A Border Ballad and Its Hero* (cultural criticism, music history)

Gloria Anzaldúa, *La Frontera/Borderlands: The New Mestiza* (memoir, poetry, cultural criticism, political theory)

Discussed in This Unit:

Christopher Columbus, letters

Bartolomé de las Casas, *The Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the Indies* (history, protest literature)

Garcilaso de la Vega, *The Florida of the Inca* (history, folklore)

Samuel de Champlain, *The Voyages of Sieur de Champlain*, *The Voyages and Discoveries* (histories, exploration narratives)

John Smith, *The General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (history, captivity narrative, exploration narrative), *A Description of New England* (exploration narrative, promotional tract), *New England's Trials* (history, exploration narrative)

Adriaen Van der Donck, *A Description of New Netherland* (promotional tract)

Overview Questions

- What is a *mestizo/a*? How has *mestizo/a* identity and consciousness altered and developed over the past four centuries?
- What kinds of relationships did European explorers and colonizers have with the Native Americans they encountered in the New World? What stereotypes and conventions did they rely on to represent Indians in their narratives?
- How did European colonizers use their narratives to mediate their relationships with authorities back in Europe?
- How do writings that originated in South America, Mexico, the West Indies, and Canada fit into the American canon? Why have writings in Spanish, Dutch, and French been absent from the canon for so long? What responsibilities do we have as readers when we read these works in translation?
- How do concepts of writing and literacy differ among cultures? How did these differences shape the colonial experience?
- How does bilingualism affect *mestizo/a* narratives?
- What characterizes a "borderland" or "contact zone"? What boundaries are challenged in a border region? How have conceptions of borderlands and contact zones changed over time?
- What differentiates assimilation, acculturation, and transculturation? Which of these terms seems most appropriate for the colonial experiences described in the texts for this unit?
- How did the Spanish, French, Dutch, and English approaches to colonizing the New World differ? How did those differences affect European–Native American relationships in different regions of the Americas? How did differences among native cultures in Mesoamerica, Florida, Virginia,

the Middle Atlantic, and New France affect contact between Native Americans and colonizers?

- How did the first European explorers envision the New World? How did their preconceptions affect their experiences in the Americas?
- Why do early narratives of the New World so frequently invoke the language of wonder? What narrative strategies did explorers and colonizers use to describe their experience of wonder?
- Most of the texts discussed in Unit 2 can be characterized as belonging to more than one genre. Why do texts that represent border and contact experiences so often combine different genres? What is the effect of this genre blurring?
- How are early *mestizo* texts influenced by the oral tradition and pre-Conquest literary styles?
- What kinds of images of America did the European writers featured in Unit 2 construct to promote colonization and settlement? What kinds of natural resources and environmental factors did they extol in their accounts of the New World?
- How did European writers justify taking over Native American lands and resources?
- How are Native American women characterized in colonizers' and *mestizos'* narratives? What archetypes and legends have developed about relationships between native women and European colonizers?

Learning Objectives

After students have viewed the video, read the headnotes and literary selections in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, and explored related archival materials on the *American Passages* Web site, they should be able to

1. explain the commercial, political, and religious structures and goals that underwrote European colonial ventures in the New World;
2. discuss the effects European colonization had on Native American populations in North and South America;
3. describe the differences among the Spanish, English, French, and Dutch models of colonization;
4. discuss the formation of *mestizo/a* identity and its development in America since the sixteenth century;
5. identify primary differences among Native American cultures in Mesoamerica, Florida, Virginia, and New France and describe the hallmarks of their pre-Conquest literary traditions.

Instructor Overview

After the Spanish explorer Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca was shipwrecked and stranded in the present-day southwestern United States, he spent years living among Native American groups while seeking out his own countrymen. When he finally encountered a group of Spaniards, he was surprised to realize that they did not seem to recognize him as European: "They were dumbfounded at the sight of me, strangely undressed and in company with Indians. They just stood staring for a long time, not thinking to hail me or come closer." At the same time, he found that his Indian companions refused to believe that he was of the same race as the "Christian slavers," or Spanish colonists, whom they associated with exploitation, cruelty, and enslavement. Somehow, in the process of living among the Indians and mixing their culture with his own European customs, Cabeza de Vaca had created a hybrid identity for himself that was neither wholly Indian nor wholly European. His unique experience was a product of the complex culture of the "contact zone," which scholar Mary Louise Pratt has characterized as an "interactive" and "improvisational" space where groups geographically and historically separated from one another come into contact and establish relationships. As Cabeza de Vaca's experience makes clear, contact and conquest were not one-way experiences in which Europeans simply imposed their will on passive Native Americans. Instead, contact is always characterized by intersecting practices and perspectives, even if power relations are often unequal. As diverse groups of Europeans explored, settled, and exploited the New World of North and South America in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, they came into contact with diverse groups of Native Americans, creating contact zones from present-day Canada to the

Caribbean. The dynamic, fluid cultures that arose out of the contact zones were marked by antagonism and violence as competing groups struggled for power. These contact zones could, however, also give rise to vibrant new traditions forged out of cooperation and innovation.

Unit 2, "Exploring Borderlands: Contact and Conflict in North America," examines the contact zones and colonial experiences of European explorers and the Native Americans they encountered. The unit also pays special attention to the way the contact zone between present-day Mexico and the southwestern United States evolved into a hybrid border region that continues to be influenced by the legacies of the different groups who first struggled there for dominance in the sixteenth century. After hundreds of years of war, intermarriage, trade, slavery, and religious struggles, a complex, syncretic culture has flourished in the space that marks the current U.S./Mexico border. As conquerors and conquered merged, a new *mestizo* identity (a blending of Indian, European, and African heritage) was created and continues to find expression in the work of contemporary Chicano and Chicana writers of the "borderland" region. Unit 2 explores a wide variety of contact and border experiences, including narratives by Christopher Columbus, Bartolomé de las Casas, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, Garcilaso de la Vega, Samuel de Champlain, John Smith, Adriaen Van der Donck, Americo Paredes, and Gloria Anzaldúa. The unit provides contextual background and classroom materials designed to explore the multiple and diverse ways these writers represented encounters between cultures in contact zones and borderlands.

The video for Unit 2 focuses on four writers who challenge the geographical, cultural, political, and racial boundaries in the U.S./Mexico border region: Bernal Díaz del Castillo and Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca wrote as Spanish footsoldiers who witnessed the brutal tactics of conquest and subjugation visited upon Native Americans. Writing centuries later, Americo Paredes and Gloria Anzaldúa protest the continued oppression and marginalization of people of *mestizo* ancestry in the United States. Their work also explores the dynamic, inclusive potential of the hybrid culture of the border region. All of these writers articulate the tensions inherent in power relations in border regions, as well as the possibility for the formation of new identities in these interactive spaces.

In its coverage of these writers and their texts, the video introduces students to the complexity of the concept of the "border" and of cultural and racial boundaries more generally. How do the texts in Unit 2 represent the violence and exploitation that were part of the European exploration of the New World? What kinds of beliefs and expectations did European colonizers bring with them to the Americas? How did the sophisticated and varied cultures of native peoples impact the settlements Europeans created in America? How do European writers represent the experiences and cultures of indigenous peoples? How does gender complicate power relations in contact zones and borderlands? How has *mestizo* identity transformed over time? Unit 2 helps answer these questions by offering suggestions on how to connect these writers to their cultural contexts, to other units in the series, and to other key writers of the era. The curriculum materials help fill in the video's introduction to contact zones and borderlands by exploring the works of writers who articulated other, diverse experiences, such as Samuel de Champlain (who wrote as a French colonist in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Canada), Adriaen Van der Donck (who described the Dutch colonial experience in New Netherland), and Garcilaso de la Vega (who drew on his mixed European and Incan heritage to write histories of Indian/Spanish interactions).

The video, the archive, and the curriculum materials situate Unit 2's writers within several of the historical contexts that shaped (and continue to shape) their texts: (1) the formation of the U.S./Mexican border and the impact of "borderlands" and boundaries on American culture; (2) Native American modes of writing and representing history, including contact histories; (3) traditional archetypes of Mexican and Mexican American femininity; (4) the discourse of "wonder" in contact narratives; and (5) metaphors of romance and eroticism that are common to conquest narratives.

The archive and curriculum materials suggest how the writers and texts featured in Unit 2 relate to those covered in other *American Passages* units: How does *mestizo/a* culture challenge dominant contemporary ideas about the origin of America

and American identity? How did the history writing and *historias* of contact experiences shape subsequent American texts? How have concepts of Native American and Chicana femininity evolved over time? How have "borderlands" shaped American culture and politics? How do concepts of writing and literacy differ among cultures? How has transculturation shaped the American experience?

Student Overview

After the Spanish explorer Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca was shipwrecked and stranded in the present-day southwestern United States, he spent years living among Native American groups while seeking out his own countrymen. When he finally encountered a group of Spaniards, he was surprised to realize that they did not seem to recognize him as European: "They were dumbfounded at the sight of me, strangely undressed and in company with Indians. They just stood staring for a long time, not thinking to hail me or come closer." At the same time, he found that his Indian companions refused to believe that he was of the same race as the "Christian slavers," or Spanish colonists, whom they associated with exploitation, cruelty, and enslavement. Somehow, in the process of living among the Indians and mixing their culture with his own European customs, Cabeza de Vaca had created a hybrid identity for himself that was neither wholly Indian nor wholly European. His unique experience was a product of the complex culture of the "contact zone," which scholar Mary Louise Pratt has characterized as an "interactive" and "improvisational" space where groups geographically and historically separated from one another come into contact and establish relationships. As Cabeza de Vaca's experience makes clear, contact and conquest were not one-way experiences in which Europeans simply imposed their will on passive Native Americans. Instead, contact is always characterized by intersecting practices and perspectives, even if power relations are often unequal. As diverse groups of Europeans explored, settled, and exploited the New World of North and South America in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, they came into contact with diverse groups of Native Americans, creating contact zones from present-day Canada to the Caribbean. The dynamic, fluid cultures that arose out of the contact zones were marked by antagonism and violence as competing groups struggled for power. These contact zones could, however, also give rise to vibrant new traditions forged out of cooperation and innovation.

Unit 2, "Exploring Borderlands: Contact and Conflict in North America," examines the contact zones and colonial experiences of European explorers and the Native Americans they encountered. The unit also pays special attention to the way the contact zone between present-day Mexico and the southwestern United States evolved into a hybrid border region that continues to be influenced by the legacies of the different groups who first struggled there for dominance in the sixteenth century. After hundreds of years of war, intermarriage, trade, slavery, and religious struggles, a complex, syncretic culture has flourished in the space that marks the current U.S./Mexican border. As conquerors and conquered merged, a new **mestizo** identity (a blending of Indian, European, and African heritage) was created and continues to find expression in the work of contemporary Chicano and Chicana writers of the **borderland** region. Unit 2 explores the multiple and diverse ways that writers have represented encounters among cultures in contact zones and borderlands, from the fifteenth to the twenty-first century.

Video Overview

➢ **Authors covered:** Bernal Díaz del Castillo, Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, Americo Paredes, Gloria Anzaldúa

➢ **Who's interviewed:** Gloria Anzaldúa, author; Juan Bruce-Novoa, professor of Spanish and Portuguese (University of California, Irvine); Maria Herrera-Sobek, professor of Chicana studies (University of California, Santa Barbara); Sonia Saldívar-Hull, professor of English (University of Texas, San Antonio); Elliot Young, assistant professor of English (Lewis and Clark College)

➢ **Points covered:**

- The U.S./Mexico border region is an area with a long and complex history of challenging racial, political, cultural, and geographical boundaries. Contemporary Chicano/a literature and culture arise out of a literary history that begins with the narratives of Spanish exploration. Spaniards Bernal Díaz del Castillo and Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca were eyewitnesses to the vibrant pre-Conquest indigenous cultures that existed in the area, as well as to the brutal realities of the sixteenth-century Spanish conquest that devastated it. These writers helped begin a uniquely Latino and American literary tradition. After centuries of cultural and racial integration, twentieth-century critics and creative writers Americo Paredes and Gloria Anzaldúa have re-examined the history of the borderlands from the perspective of the *mestizo/a*.
- Bernal Díaz del Castillo served as a footsoldier in Hernán Cortés's campaign to conquer Mexico between 1519 and 1521. Many years later, he wrote about his unique perspective on the Conquest in his *True History of the Conquest of New Spain*. His narrative was one of the first accounts of Doña Marina, or La Malinche, the native woman who served as Cortés's translator, negotiator, and mistress. Doña Marina is a conflicted and contradictory figure within the tradition of Chicano/a literature: some see her as a traitor who sold out her own people to the Spanish, while others argue that she is better understood as an effective mediator between cultures.
- Cabeza de Vaca sailed to the New World in 1527 as part of a Spanish expedition to Florida. After being shipwrecked, he wandered for nine years among the Indians of the present-day U.S. Southwest before finding his way back to a Spanish settlement. In the process he became acculturated to Native American practices and learned Native American languages, thus becoming the first cultural *mestizo* in the region.
- Three hundred years after Cabeza de Vaca, Americo Paredes committed himself to studying and celebrating the legacy of *mestizo* culture in the border region. He collected and recorded the Chicano musical tradition of the *corridos*, subversive songs that narrate the struggles of Mexican heroes against Anglo oppression. His novel, *George Washington Gomez*, tells the story of a Chicano coming of age in the borderlands.
- Gloria Anzaldúa built on Paredes's legacy of Chicano activism to empower Chicana and *mestiza* women. Her 1987 book, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, gives voice to women of mixed identity and challenges traditional racial, cultural, linguistic, and gender boundaries. She has been part of the movement to recuperate and redefine Doña Marina as a heroine and inspiration to Chicanas.

PREVIEW

- **Preview the video:** Home to pre-Conquest indigenous peoples, European conquistadors, and *mestizos* of mixed racial and cultural background, the U.S./Mexico border region has long been a site of contact, conflict, and new beginnings. It is a place where geographical, cultural, political, and racial boundaries are challenged and restructured. Contemporary Chicano literature and culture arises out of a literary history that begins with the narratives of Spanish exploration. In the sixteenth century, Bernal Díaz del Castillo served as a footsoldier in the army of conquistadors that devastated the Aztec Empire in central Mexico. Much later, as an old man, he wrote about his experiences and offered insights into the Conquest from the perspective of a humble soldier. His narrative provides one of the earliest accounts of the controversial figure of Doña Marina, or La Malinche, the native woman who served as Cortés's mistress, interpreter, and negotiator. Doña Marina became a key symbol in the oral and literary traditions of later generations of Chicanos. Another Spanish soldier of the sixteenth century, Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, had a very different experience in the New World. Sailing to the Americas in 1527 as part of a Spanish expedition to Florida, he was shipwrecked off the coast of Texas. During his nine years in the border region, Cabeza de Vaca evolved into what some critics have called "the first cultural *mestizo*" and hence the first writer of Chicano literature. By learning the languages and becoming familiar with the culture of the many Native American tribes among which he moved, he constructed a mixed identity for himself. Centuries later, that mixed identity has become common in

Video Overview (*continued*)

the border region. By the late twentieth century, people of mixed Spanish/Anglo/Indian/African blood who lived in this region began protesting the extent to which their culture had been marginalized by dominant Anglo society. Americo Paredes contributed to this movement by collecting and recording the musical border ballad tradition of the *corridos*, subversive songs about Chicano heroes who resist Anglo oppression. Building on Paredes's legacy, contemporary writer Gloria Anzaldúa explores the positive, inclusive possibilities that a mixed background offers to *mestizos* and *mestizas*. Protesting oppression based on race, class, and gender, she has given a voice to *mestiza* women inhabiting the borderlands and redefined the role of women as envisioned by Bernal Díaz del Castillo and other earlier writers.

- **What to think about while watching:** How has the southwestern border region changed over time? What political and social issues have shaped the literature of the borderlands? What is the relationship between the conquerors and conquered? How do these writers articulate an ideal of a mixed and inclusive identity? How does the Chicano notion of "*historia*" complicate traditional Anglo ideas about the distinction between history and fiction? What traditional stereotypes have been applied to *mestiza* women? How have women restructured and redefined the identities open to them in the borderlands?
- **Tying the video to the unit content:** Unit 2 expands on the issues discussed in the video to further explore the complex contact and conflict between different groups in different geographical border regions and contact zones. The curriculum materials offer background on Spanish, French, Dutch, and English writers and texts not featured in the video. The unit offers contextual background to expand on the video's introduction to the political issues, historical events, and literary styles that shaped the literature created in the borderlands.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE VIDEO

	How do place and time shape literature and our understanding of it?	***What is an American? How does American literature create conceptions of the American experience and identity?***	***How are American myths created, challenged, and reimagined through these works of literature?***
Comprehension Questions	What are borderlands? What boundaries besides geographical ones are challenged in border regions?	What is a *mestizo/mestiza*?	Who was Doña Marina, or La Malinche?
Context Questions	How does Cabeza de Vaca's almost anthropological account of his time among the natives resonate with Americo Paredes's sociological/anthropological approach to recording the traditional musical and folk traditions of Chicano culture?	How might Bernal Díaz's description of Tenochtitlán have inspired Chicano activists' ideas about Aztlán and its culture?	How do *corridos* celebrating the exploits of Gregorio Cortez invoke and rewrite the legacy of Hernán Cortés the Spanish conquistador?
Exploration Questions	How have Native American, *mestizo*, and *mestiza* identity changed over the course of hundreds of years of contact and conflict between groups in the U.S./Mexico border region?	How has *mestizo* culture challenged dominant European American ideas about the origins of America? What does the term *Chicano* mean? Where does it come from? How does it differ from the terms Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish American? Which of these terms do you feel is most appropriate for the writers featured in the video and why?	What modes of protest do you think are most effective at enabling an oppressed group to challenge stereotypes and limitations imposed by the dominant culture?

TIMELINE

	Texts	Contexts
1490s	Christopher Columbus, "Letter to Luis de Santangel Regarding the First Voyage" (1493)	Columbus sails from Spain for the New World, arrives in the Bahamas and claims the land for Spain (1492) Jews expelled from Spain by order of Ferdinand and Isabella (1492) Publication of the first Spanish Grammar, *Gramática de la Lengua Castellana*, by Antonio Nebrija (1492) New World divided between Spain and Portugal by the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494) Bartolomé de las Casas sails with Columbus on his third voyage to America after receiving a law degree from the University of Salamanca (1498)
1500s		Martin Waldseemüller coins the name "America" on a map of the New World (1507)
1510s		Bartolomé de las Casas named "Protectorate to the Indians" after returning to Spain to petition the Crown for humane treatment of Native Americans (1516) Spanish-Aztec wars; Cortés conquers the Aztecs in Mexico (1519–21)
1520s	*Codex Boturini* (c. 1521–40?)	Explorer Giovanni da Verrazano is first European to enter New York Harbor (1524) Spanish explorers import first Africans as slaves to America, South Carolina (1526)
1530s	*Huejotzingo Codex* (1531)	La Virgen de Guadalupe appears to Juan Diego, an Incan Indian who had recently converted to Catholicism (1531)
1540s	Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, *The Relation of Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca* (1542)	
1550s	Diego Muñoz de Camargo transcribes the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* (c. 1550) Bartolomé de las Casas, "The Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the Indies" (1552)	Bartolomé de las Casas debates with Juan Gines de Sepulveda; Casas argues that the Spanish conqests in the New World are unjust and inhumane (1550–51)
1560s	Bernal Díaz del Castillo begins his three-volume work *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain* (c. 1568, published in 1632)	

TIMELINE *(continued)*

	Texts	Contexts
1570s	Fray Bernardino de Sahagún completes the *Florentine Codex* (1577)	
1580s	Thomas Harriot, *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1588)	Sir Walter Raleigh and his English expedition reach "an island" and name it "Virginia" in honor of Queen Elizabeth (1584) John White named governor of colony at Roanoke Island, founded by Walter Raleigh (1587)
1590s	Theodor de Bry's *Grand Voyages* (six volumes) (1590–96)	
1600s	Garcilaso de la Vega, *The Florida of the Inca* (1605)	Samuel de Champlain makes his first voyage from France to Eastern Canada (1603) Jamestown colony established in Virginia (1607) Champlain founds Québec, to become the French capital in North America (1608)
1610s	Samuel de Champlain, *The Voyages of Sieur de Champlain* (1613)	
1620s	John Smith, *The General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (1624)	First Dutch settlers arrive in New Netherland (1624)
1640s	Adriaen Van der Donck, *A Description of New Netherland* (c. 1645) First publication of the story of the legend of La Virgen de Guadalupe (1648)	
1890s	*Lienzo de Tlaxcala* (1890)	Chicanos forced from their lands due to settlers arriving in Southwest to mine and develop land (1890–1900) Spanish-American War (1895–1902)
1940s	Americo Paredes, *George Washington Gomez: A Mexicotexan Novel* (1940; published in 1991)	The Fair Employment Practices Act helps eliminate discrimination in employment (1941) "Zoot Suit" riots take place in southern California (1943)
1980s	Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987)	The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) creates a means through which some undocumented workers can become legal (1986) 70 percent of Hispanic female-headed households have children living in poverty (1987)

AUTHOR/TEXT REVIEW

Christopher Columbus (1451–1506)

In his 1828 biography of Christopher Columbus, American author Washington Irving styled Columbus as the archetypal American hero. Walt Whitman similarly lauded Columbus as an early mystic and religious seeker in his poem "Prayer of Columbus." Other authors and thinkers have not always agreed with these nineteenth-century hagiographies. In fact, Columbus has inspired controversy since he developed his bold plan to establish a new trade route to the eastern lands of India and Japan by sailing west from Europe. Although he failed in his attempt to reach Asia, he did land in the Bahamas and the Caribbean, where he laid the foundation for European colonization of that region. Since the fifteenth century, cultural commentators have argued over the nature of Columbus's accomplishment; his management of the Spanish colonies established in the Caribbean, his treatment of the native Indians who lived there, and especially his claim to the status of "discoverer" of America have provoked a variety of reactions ranging from adulation to censure. Columbus's reputation has long been troubled by the fact that his successes in navigation and exploration cannot be separated from the legacy of exploitation and violence that mark European involvement in the New World. Any account of his writings and his deeds must begin with the acknowledgment that Columbus's "discovery" of the Americas led to the destruction of as much as four-fifths of the native population of the region.

[7508] Vve. Turgis, *Depart de Christophe Colomb* (c. 1850–1900), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-2029].

Columbus was born in Genoa, but left Italy as a young man to train as a sailor and navigator. Although many of his contemporaries dismissed his plan to sail westward as impracticable and misguided, Columbus eventually convinced King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain to finance an exploratory voyage in 1492 (the same year as the publication of the first Spanish *Grammar*, a text which is often credited as essential to the colonization of the New World). Five months after setting sail from Granada, Columbus and his crew landed in the Bahamas and immediately claimed possession of the land for Spain by reading a proclamation that was certainly incomprehensible to the natives already living there. Columbus recorded his impressions of the voyage, the islands, and the natives in a logbook and in letters that he sent to his backers in Spain. Impressed with Columbus's inflated claims about the rich natural resources and wealth of the islands, Ferdinand and Isabella published his letters in Europe to assert their possession of this territory. Anxious to secure their control before other European powers could move into the region, the Spanish monarchs quickly sent Columbus on a second voyage of exploration and conquest in 1493.

Columbus returned to the island he had named Hispaniola to discover that all of the Spanish settlers he had left behind were dead, presumably because they had antagonized the native Taino Indians. The Tainos, who inhabited present-day Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico, are descendants of the

Arawaks and the early peoples of Mesoamerica. Although they had no calendar or writing system, the Tainos had a rich oral culture and were known for their ceremonial ball courts and their complex religious cosmology. Columbus attempted to enslave them and establish a new Spanish colony in Hispaniola, but the settlement soon devolved into rancor and violence after Columbus left to explore other islands in the region. He was forced to return to Spain in 1496 to settle the many political disagreements in which he had become embroiled. Upon his return to Europe, Columbus found his reputation tarnished by reports of his poor management of the colony and by his decision to enslave the Tainos. Nevertheless, he convinced the Spanish monarchs to fund a third voyage, begun in 1498. On this journey he reached the South American mainland, which he came to believe was the earthly paradise of Eden described in the Bible. This belief must have been severely tested when he returned to Hispaniola to find relations between the Indians and the Europeans in crisis and the settlers in open revolt against Columbus's inflexible management style. Refusing to recognize him as their leader, the colonists placed him under arrest and sent him back to Spain.

Although the Spanish court stripped him of all political authority, Columbus managed to obtain funding for a fourth and final voyage to the New World (1502–04), during which he explored Central America, was shipwrecked on Jamaica, and came to believe that God had spoken to him directly. Eventually rescued, he returned to Spain with his health ruined and his reputation damaged. He died in 1506, bitter about his colony's failure to provide him with the wealth and recognition he expected.

Unfortunately, the most important record of Columbus's explorations, his journal, has been lost. Contemporary scholars have access to only a transcribed version composed by Bartolomé de las Casas approximately forty years after Columbus's death. Columbus's letters, however, were translated and widely reprinted in his lifetime and thus provide more authoritative accounts of his experiences, as well as evidence of the way written travel accounts came to underwrite imperial pretensions to empire and conquest. Tellingly, many of Columbus's letters borrow from earlier travel narratives that described Asian and East Indian culture, thus interpolating the peoples and places he encountered into preexisting mythic categories. In many ways, Columbus's letters tell us more about the worldview and expectations of Renaissance Spaniards than about Native American peoples as they "actually were" in the fifteenth century.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Ask your students to imagine that they have been sent to cover Columbus's landing in Guanahani from the perspective of a present-day journalist. How would a journalist striving for objectivity recount Columbus's initial encounter with the Indians? What kind of evidence could this journalist gather about how the Europeans might have appeared to the Indians? You might point out the line

from Columbus's "Letter to Luis de Santangel" in which he declares, "I have taken possession [of the island] for their highnesses, by proclamation made and with the royal standard unfurled, and no opposition was offered to me." Ask students to think about how the Arawaks might have perceived this act. Would they have understood Columbus's proclamation (read in Spanish)? Or the significance of the banner he "unfurled"? Why might they have decided against offering any opposition?

■ Ask your students to compare Columbus's descriptions of the islands' plants, natural features, and native inhabitants in the first and second letters featured in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. While the first letter is filled with the language of wonder and insists on the fertility and diversity of natural productions, the second letter is considerably less sanguine. Rather, Columbus seems preoccupied by the political strife created by the fractious colonists and by his resentment that his explorations have not generated great personal wealth. Ask students to consider what political project each letter was intended to serve. Why might Columbus insist that "Española is a marvel" in the first letter, and then portray it as an "exhausted," unhealthy place populated by "cruel savages" in his later account?

■ One of the cartographic innovations during the Renaissance was a more "objective" mapping style that used latitudinal and longitudinal lines. Some historians have argued that this mode of visually representing landscapes and landmass corresponds to more "scientific" narrative descriptions of the natural resources and characteristics of the New World. Have your students examine some of the early European maps featured in the archive and compare their visual styles to Columbus's narrative descriptions. What does his style of description have in common with the maps? Do your students agree with the idea that Columbus was attempting to create a kind of "verbal map" for the recipients of his letters?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: In his "Letter to Luis de Santangel," Columbus declares that he has "taken possession" of the islands for "their highnesses" Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. What procedures does Columbus follow in order to take possession? What kind of attitude toward the native inhabitants' rights underlies the ritual of possession that Columbus employed?

Comprehension: Why does Columbus open his "Letter to Ferdinand and Isabella Regarding the Fourth Voyage" with the statement that he cannot think of the Caribbean colonies without weeping? What has led to his disillusionment?

Context: Although Bartolomé de las Casas presented himself as a faithful and careful transcriber of Columbus's journals, scholars have been skeptical about the accuracy of his transcription of these documents. Given the attitudes about colonization that inflect Casas's *Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the Indies*,

COLUMBUS WEB ARCHIVE

[1368] Konrad Kolble, *Replica of a Map of the Americas with Portraits of Christopher Columbus, Amerigo Vespucci, Ferdinand Magellan and Francisco Pizarro around Border* (1970), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-89908]. Konrad Kolble's facsimile of a map published in 1600 by Theodor de Bry.

[2830] Simon Grynaeus and Johann Huttich, Detail from map in *Novus Orbis Regionum ac Insularum Veteribus Incognitarum* [Basle: Johann Hervagius, 1532] (1532), courtesy of the Jay I. Kislak Foundation, Inc. Map with detail of Native Americans practicing cannibalism. Scholars continue to debate whether indigenous peoples in the Americas practiced cannibalism, as the first explorers and colonizers claimed they did.

[2877] Mercator, *Orbis Terrae Compendios Descripto* (1587), courtesy of the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library/University of Georgia Libraries. Gerard Mercator was the most famous mapmaker after Ptolemy. His "Mercator Projection," while no longer considered good for global viewing, is still useful for navigation.

[6555] Thomas Nast, *A Belle Savage* [*Columbia Receiving Congratulations from All Parts of the World*] (1876), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-105127]. This engraving, dating from the nation's first centennial, shows Columbia holding congratulatory papers from such foreign leaders as William Von Bismarck and Alexander II.

[7399] Cortes(?), *La Gran Ciudad de Temixtlan* (1524), courtesy of the Newberry Library, Chicago. This map of the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán is often attributed to Cortes. It is European in style, but the map-view contains information suggesting a native source.

[7508] Vve. Turgis, *Depart de Christophe Colomb* (c. 1850–1900), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-2029]. This lithograph shows Columbus and his crew leaving the port of Palos, Spain, bound for the New World, with a large crowd gathered to see the spectacle.

[7511] Anonymous, *Landing of Columbus* (c. 1860–80), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-4188]. This lithograph shows Columbus and members of his crew displaying objects to Native American men and women on shore.

[7512] George Schlegel, *Columbus Reception by the King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain after His First Return from America* (c. 1870), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-96536]. This lithograph shows Columbus kneeling in front of the king and queen, who are surrounded by courtiers. Armed men and Indians look on.

[8344] Enrico Causici and Antonio Capellano, *Christopher Columbus* (1824), courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol. One of the sculptural reliefs in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol. The figure of Columbus looms large in U.S. cultural history, despite his exploitation of the native peoples he encountered on his voyages.

[8345] Randolph Rogers, *Columbus before the Council of Salamanca, 1487* (1860), courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol. Columbus at the Council of King Ferdinand presenting a chart from an unsuccessful voyage in order to gain support for his theory regarding a new route to India. On the sides are statuettes of Columbus's friend Juan Perez de Marchena and King Henry VII of England, a patron of navigation, both of whom agreed with Columbus's theory.

what kind of bias might he have brought to the project of transcribing Columbus's experiences? How might his attitudes toward the Indians have differed from Columbus's?

Context: How do Columbus's descriptions of the natural resources he finds on the islands compare to John Smith's accounts of the plants and animals he found in New England? How do these explorers and colonizers deploy similar rhetoric in their accounts of the abundance and fertility of the New World? Do they value the same natural commodities? How do their visions of the economic possibilities of these two different regions compare?

Context: Columbus is clearly aware that the lands he "discovered" already have native Indian names. In his "Letter to Luis de Santangel," for example, he explains that the Arawak Indians call their island "Guanahani." Yet Columbus seems to have no reluctance about renaming the islands he visits, sometimes for religious reasons (San Salvador) and sometimes after Spanish royalty (Fernandina). Why does he feel justified in renaming the islands? What might he have hoped to accomplish in bestowing these Spanish names? How might his act of discovering and naming relate to the biblical account of Adam naming objects in Eden in the Book of Genesis?

Exploration: Columbus Day (the second Monday in October) has been celebrated as a national holiday since the early twentieth century. What are Americans supposed to be celebrating on that day? Should Americans continue to observe Columbus Day? Does the fact that the holiday was first instituted by Italian immigrant groups seeking to solidify their position in American society affect your assessment of its significance?

Exploration: How does the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century obsession with the figure of "Columbia" (discussed in Unit 4) relate to the actual experiences of the historical Columbus? Why might he have been an attractive figure to Americans immediately after the Revolutionary War? Why do you think they consistently allegorized and feminized their representations of Columbus?

Bartolomé de las Casas (1474–1566)

Sometimes celebrated as the "conscience" of Spanish colonization, Bartolomé de las Casas was one of the first Europeans to recognize and protest the cruel treatment of Native Americans at the hands of their conquerors. By drawing on his considerable political, legal, and ecclesiastical connections, he became a powerful and eloquent —if ultimately unsuccessful—force in agitating for Indian rights.

While growing up and studying in the Spanish city of Seville, Casas closely followed news of the **conquistadors** and their exploits in the New World. His father and uncle joined Columbus's second expedition to the Indies in 1498, and his father returned with an Arawak Indian slave who must have provided the young Casas with details about the Caribbean world. In 1502, Casas joined Nicolas de

Ovando's expedition to Hispaniola, where he participated in the brutal conquest of the Indians and received land and slave labor in return for his services under the ***encomienda***, or slave system. After over a decade of overseeing Indian slaves, Casas experienced a dramatic change of heart, perhaps precipitated by his decision to join the Dominican Order of Catholic priests. He became convinced that the Spanish *encomienda*, or slave system, was unjust and un-Christian, and he soon devoted himself to working toward its abolishment. While his commitment to Indian rights made him unpopular with many Spanish colonists and leaders, Casas never again wavered in his conviction that Native Americans deserved to be treated with respect and humanity. While he at one point advocated using African slaves to replace Indian labor, he later realized the hypocrisy of his proposal and renounced the idea, instead opting to oppose the enslavement of any peoples.

In 1515, Casas took his case to the Spanish court and was formally appointed "protector of the Indians." He also attained a commission to found an experimental colony on the coast of Venezuela based on principles of peace. The colony soon foundered, and Casas returned to Hispaniola, where he served as a friar in a monastery. By the 1530s he was again drawing on his political connections to legislate for protection of Native Americans, eventually persuading Pope Paul III to denounce the enslavement of Indians and convincing Charles V of Spain to make the practice illegal in Spanish colonies. Appointed bishop to the church of Chiapas, Mexico, in 1544, Casas encountered widespread, bitter, and violent resistance to his reform efforts. When Charles V retracted the ban on Indian slavery in the Americas in 1547, Casas returned to Spain. Until his death at the age of ninety-two, he continued his crusade by serving as attorney-at-large for the Indians in the Spanish courts and by publishing moving accounts of their tragic plight.

Casas's monumental *History of the Indies* and *The Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the Indies* are among his most important writings. In these works, Casas offered a devastatingly vivid exposé of the brutality of the Spanish slave system. He also drew on his intimate knowledge of Indian culture to combat the popular argument that the natives were so docile, submissive, and mentally inferior as to be "natural slaves." The *Brief Relation* was widely translated and republished throughout Europe in Casas's lifetime, and its impassioned denunciation of the cruelty of the Spanish colonizers contributed to the perception (popular in Protestant countries) that the Spanish were especially violent and barbaric in their treatment of natives. Although he intended his work to spur reform, Casas's participation in the creation of the so-called **Black Legend** of Spanish colonial atrocities served mainly to make him extremely unpopular in Spain and may have fueled the equally problematic imperial pretensions of Protestant countries such as England and the Netherlands. Colonizers from these nations self-righteously justified their own repression and exploitation of Native Americans by arguing that their methods were more humane than those of the Spanish.

[2832] Bartolomé de las Casas (John Phillips, trans.), Illustration from *The Tears of the Indians* (1656), courtesy of the Robert Dechert Collection, Annenberg Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania.

CASAS WEB ARCHIVE

[2831] Bartolomé de las Casas, Frontispiece to *The Tears of the Indians (las Casas): Being an Historical and True Account of the Cruel Massacres and Slaughters of above Twenty Millions of Innocent People; Committed by the Spaniards* (1656), courtesy of the Annenberg Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. The English authorities used this 1656 translation to legitimize their conquest of Spanish Jamaica. Oliver Cromwell's nephew translated this volume.

[2832] Bartolomé de las Casas (John Phillips, trans.), Illustration from *The Tears of the Indians* (1656), courtesy of the Robert Dechert Collection, Annenberg Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. This illustration details some of the atrocities committed by Spanish colonizers. Despite his intentions, Casas's work ultimately helped Protestant colonizers justify their own mistreatment of native peoples; they reasoned that their actions were not as reprehensible as those of the Spanish.

[7368] Anonymous, Sheet from the *Huejotzingo Codex* [1 of 8] (1531), courtesy of the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division. In 1531, the people of Huejotzingo asked conqueror Hernán Cortés to initiate a lawsuit against the high court of New Spain concerning the unjust use of indigenous labor and tribute. As part of this petition, eight pages of drawings were made on amatl (fig bark); these drawings are known today as the *Huejotzingo Codex*.

[7372] Anonymous, Sheet from the *Huejotzingo Codex* [6 of 8] (1531), courtesy of the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division. In 1531, the people of Huejotzingo asked conqueror Hernán Cortés to initiate a lawsuit against the high court of New Spain concerning the unjust use of indigenous labor and tribute. As part of this petition, eight pages of drawings were made on amatl (fig bark); these drawings are known today as the *Huejotzingo Codex*.

[7681] Anonymous, *Image of Bartolomé de las Casas* (1886), courtesy of *Narrative and Critical History of America*, Volume II (c. 1884–89), ed.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Have your class examine the painting from the 1531 *Huejotzingo Codex* featured in the archive. This codex served as evidence in a legal action brought by the Huejotzingo of Central Mexico to protest the heavy taxation they faced from their Spanish conquerors. This pictorial representation records the commodities and resources the Huejotzingo had already contributed to support Spanish expeditions: the eight small figures beneath the colored picture of the Madonna and child represent the slaves the tribe had sold in order to pay for the gold that went into making a banner for the Spanish expedition, while the rows of abstract shapes represent other commodities contributed to the campaign. After you have analyzed and interpreted the *Huejotzingo Codex* with your class, ask them to think about how the Spanish court might have responded to this document as a piece of legal evidence. Though it is an extremely sophisticated example of Native American record keeping and pictorial expression, it seems unlikely that Spanish judges would have appreciated its logic or understood its import without the explanation written in Spanish that accompanied it. Have students compare these paintings to the representation of slavery and the conquest given in Casas's writings. What is the significance of his commitment to giving written expression to the injustices perpetrated against the Indians?

■ Students are sometimes startled by the graphic nature of Casas's accounts of Spanish atrocities. Gleefully drowning children, dismembering pregnant women, and torturing captives over smoldering fires, the Spanish conquerors in Casas's narrative engage in shocking brutality. Ask your students to consider why Casas might have chosen to represent so vividly the horror of the Spanish Conquest from the Indian point of view. How does his description reverse common European stereotypes about the "savagery" of American Indians? What kind of audience does he assume will read his work? Why might he think these accounts of violence will persuade them? Why does he consistently refer to the torture and murder of women and children? How effective is his strategy? You might have your students examine the graphic images of brutality that accompanied the English translation of Casas's work, entitled "Tears of the Indians," as they consider these questions.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What is the "Black Legend"?

Comprehension: What motivated the Spanish to act with such cruelty toward the Indians, according to Casas?

Comprehension: On what grounds does Casas attack Indian slavery? Why do you think he might have initially felt that replacing Indian slaves with African slaves was an acceptable alternative?

Context: Examine the frontispiece and illustration from the 1656 Protestant English translation of Casas's *Brief Relation* featured in the archive. How do the English publishers retitle Casas's *Brief*

Relation? What does the frontispiece's description of the contents of the book emphasize? What is the significance of the verse from Deuteronomy printed at the base of the page? How might the illustrations change or intensify a reader's reaction to Casas's narrative?

Context: According to a common European belief first coined by Aristotle and later adopted by Christian philosophers, the universe was structured according to immutable hierarchies. These hierarchies existed along the so-called **Great Chain of Being**, spanning from the dimensions of "non-being" (rocks and minerals) and extending through plants, animals, and man, all the way to God, as the representative of the highest form of "being." Within the category of "man," important hierarchies existed that separated more primitive peoples from more "cultured" or "advanced" societies. The following diagram shows the hierarchies of man as conceptualized in the Great Chain of Being:

Corporeal Man —— Man of Instinct —— Man of Feeling —— Thinking Man

How do you think Casas and his critics might have been influenced by the concept of the Great Chain of Being? Where do you think most Europeans felt Indians belonged on the chain? Where would Casas place them?

Context: In his *Brief Relation*, Casas challenges the popular notion that the Indians regarded European conquerors as divine gods: "[The Christians] committed other acts of force and violence and oppression which made the Indians realize that these men had not come from Heaven." How does Casas's insistence that the Indians do not revere or worship their conquerors compare to the opposite claims made by writers like Columbus, Cabeza de Vaca, and John Smith? What assumptions and justifications underwrite European accounts of Indians hailing them as powerful supernatural beings? How does this issue relate to European ideas about the "Great Chain of Being"?

Exploration: How do Casas's efforts to persuade readers of the evils of Indian enslavement compare to nineteenth-century abolitionists' efforts to convince Americans of the evils of African enslavement? How do Casas's narrative strategies compare to those adopted by writers like Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Harriet Jacobs?

Exploration: In his tract "The Bloody Tenet of Persecution," Puritan Roger Williams (Unit 3) invokes many of the arguments employed by Casas in order to refute the claims of minister John Cotton that the Algonquians living in New England should not enjoy the same privileges as the British. What view of the Narragansett Indians is embedded in Roger Williams's *A Key Into the Language of America?* What place does Williams give them in Puritan hierarchies? On what grounds does Williams make these claims?

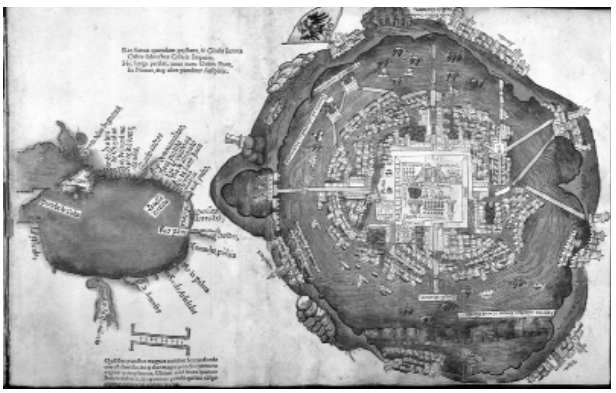
Justin Winsor, published by Boston and New York Houghton Mifflin and Company, The Riverside Press, Cambridge. Engraving of a young and determined-looking Casas writing at his desk, with a cross around his neck.

[9042] Laura Arnold, *The Great Chain of Being* (2003), courtesy of Laura Arnold. From the beginning of the Middle Ages through the early nineteenth century, "educated Europeans" conceived of the universe in terms of a hierarchical Great Chain of Being with God at its apex. In many ways, this hierarchy, still pervasive in Western theology and thought, stands in opposition to Native American and other belief systems that view the human and spirit worlds as co-existing on a horizontal plane.

Bernal Díaz del Castillo (1492–1584)

Bernal Díaz del Castillo was born in the Castile region of Spain in 1492, the same year that Christopher Columbus landed in the West Indies and declared himself "discoverer" of the New World. Coming of age in the exciting era of Spanish exploration and colonization, Díaz took advantage of an early opportunity to leave Europe for the Americas and joined an expedition bound for the colony of Darien (present-day Panama) in 1514. When he found the colony to be unstable and pervaded by political turmoil, he left for Cuba with a small contingent of other colonists. Although he based himself in Cuba, Díaz continued to join exploring parties in the region, eventually signing on with Hernán Cortés as a footsoldier in the Conquest of Mexico.

Because he saw the Conquest from the perspective of a common soldier rather than a nobleman or officer, Díaz formed different impressions of events than his superiors did. Much later in his life, he decided to write an account of those impressions, intending to offer a corrective to what he saw as the distortions and half-truths perpetuated by other historians. (Significantly, Díaz's work also serves as a corrective to Cortés's "great man" view of history in that it emphasizes the role of the ordinary footsoldier and lauds the role of natives such as La Malinche. Historians have argued that this is one of the first truly American histories in that it resonates with the democracy that would flourish later in the Americas.) Although Díaz claimed that he lacked eloquence and skill as a writer, his prose is vibrant and realistic and provides important insights into the clash between cultures that he witnessed. He offers convincing portraits of many of the central participants in the Conquest, including Cortés, Montezuma, and Doña Marina (La Malinche), and never shies away from representing the violent and destructive realities of war. His account of the beauty, wealth, and eventual devastation of the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán provides valuable evidence about traditional Aztec life and culture as well as insight into the experiences of soldiers on the ground during the siege of the city. Díaz's interest in and sympathetic portrayal of Doña Marina, the native woman who acted as translator, political negotiator, and mistress for Cortés, gives readers insight into the life of the woman who later took on mythical status as "*La Chingada*" ("the violated one").



[7399] Cortés(?), *La Gran Ciudad de Temixitlan* (1524), courtesy of the Newberry Library, Chicago.

Unlike some of the other conquistadors, Díaz did not gain wealth or fame as the result of his participation in the Conquest (at least according to his own account). The Crown endowed him with a modest *encomienda*, a grant that allowed the grantee to command Indians to labor for and pay tribute to him—in effect, a system of slavery. Díaz lived on his *encomienda* in Guatemala until his death at the age of ninety-two.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Díaz's narrative is infused with the language of wonder and invocations of the "Marvelous." He relies extensively on the narrative convention of claiming awestruck wordlessness: "I cannot attempt to describe [the wonders I saw]"; "I do not know how to describe this first glimpse of things never heard of, seen or dreamed before"; "with such wonderful sights to gaze on we did not know what to say." Ask your students to examine the text for moments when Díaz attempts to convey his sense of wonder. How successful is he? What narrative strategies besides the pose of wordlessness does he use? When does he describe the people and things he encounters as "other," and when does he draw parallels to their European counterparts? Be sure to point out that Díaz's invocation of wonder is used both to celebrate and to censure Aztec culture: he describes not only the beauty of Tenochtitlán (present-day Mexico City), but also the violent Aztec ritual of sacrifice and cannibalism in terms of wonder.

After you've discussed Díaz's participation in the discourse of wonder, ask your students to think about an object, place, or event that seemed radically new, striking, or awesome to them when they first saw it. Ask them to write their own account of their experience of "wonder." After they've finished writing, discuss their work as a class and talk about the difficulties they had finding words to convey their emotions and to describe accurately what they saw.

■ As the title *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain* indicates, Díaz claimed that his narrative was the simple, unvarnished truth. As he put it, "That which I have seen and the fighting I have gone through, with the help of God I will describe, quite simply, as a fair eyewitness without twisting events one way or another." As literary critic Stephen Greenblatt has pointed out, Díaz's pose of authenticity and accuracy should not be taken at face value. (Crucially, the Spanish word ***historia*** means both "history" and "story," highlighting the extent to which any so-called "objective history" is always a subjective story inflected by personal biases and agendas.) Ask your class to think about how Díaz constructs the rhetorical device of his own neutrality in his *historia*. Then ask them to try to locate moments when the narrative is clearly not a dispassionate transcription of reality, but rather a personal and partisan account. You might look at Díaz's famous description of witnessing his countrymen being ritually sacrificed and cannibalized by the Aztecs on the altar of their god Huichilobos. How do Díaz's horror and personal fear affect his account of what he saw? How do his Christian beliefs color his narrative? How might an Aztec warrior's perspective on this scene be different? As contemporary readers, how might our knowledge of the destructiveness and brutality of European actions in the New World affect our understanding of this scene?

DÍAZ WEB ARCHIVE

[3699] Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva-España* (1632), courtesy of the Jay I. Kislak Foundation, Inc. Although Bernal Díaz del Castillo composed his *True History* in the late sixteenth century, it was not published until the seventeenth; the title page of the first edition is shown here.

[7399] Cortés(?), *La Gran Ciudad de Temixitlan* (1524), courtesy of the Newberry Library, Chicago. This map of the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán is often attributed to Cortés. It is European in style, but the map-view contains information suggesting a native source.

[7402] Anonymous, *Cortés, Montezuma and Doña Marina*, from the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* Facsimile (1890), courtesy of the University of California, Berkeley, and the Bancroft Library. The *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* employs the *res gestae* strategy and provides an interesting counterpoint to the *Florentine Codex*. Here Cortes is depicted with Montezuma and Doña Marina.

[7561] Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, *Florentine Codex*, Book 12, plate 45 (1500–99), courtesy of the School of American Research and the University of Utah Press. This plate shows Spanish soldiers leading Montezuma into the great palace. The *Florentine Codex* was illustrated by Aztec scribes in a style that reflected a mixture of pre-Conquest manuscript traditions and European illustration conventions.

[7368] Anonymous, Sheet from the *Huejotzingo Codex* [1 of 8] (1531), courtesy of the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division. In 1531, the people of Huejotzingo asked conqueror Hernán Cortés to initiate a lawsuit against the high court of New Spain concerning the unjust use of indigenous labor and tribute. As part of this petition, eight pages of drawings were made on amatl (fig bark); these drawings are known today as the *Huejotzingo Codex*.

[7575] Anonymous, *Florentine Codex*, Libro 12, plate 2 (1500–99), courtesy of the School of American Research and the University of Utah Press. This plate shows Spanish soldiers marching. Book 12 of the *Florentine Codex* depicts the deeds of Cortés and the conquest of Mexico as it was described to Sahagún by Nahuatl-speaking elders and nobility.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What kinds of tensions and conflicts divide the Spanish camp? What distinctions does Díaz's narrative draw between different members of Cortés's army? How do class and rank affect individual Spaniards' feelings about the Conquest?

Comprehension: How does Díaz describe the city of Tenochtitlán? Compare his description to the map of Tenochtitlán featured in the archive. What aspects of the map match up with Díaz's description? How is the map different from Díaz's account? How does the bird's-eye perspective of the map compare to Díaz's narrative *historia*?

Context: The *Florentine Codex* (parts of which are featured in the archive) is a manuscript containing a hand-written version of the encyclopedic account of Aztec society assembled by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún. Beginning in the 1540s, Sahagún asked questions of groups of Nahuatl-speaking elders (presumably all male) from the heart of the former Aztec empire and had them record their responses. The book was illustrated by Aztec scribes in a style that reflected a mixture of pre-Conquest manuscript traditions and European illustration conventions. Compare the pictographic representations of the Conquest from Book 12 of the *Florentine Codex* to Díaz's account in the *True History*. In what points do these two histories agree? How do their different genres and styles (pictorial representations, narrative description) affect their perspective and representation of events?

Context: In their narratives, both Bartolomé de las Casas and Bernal Díaz describe the destruction and violence the Spanish visited on native cultures in the Americas, but their attitudes toward that violence seem quite different. How does Díaz's account compare to Casas's?

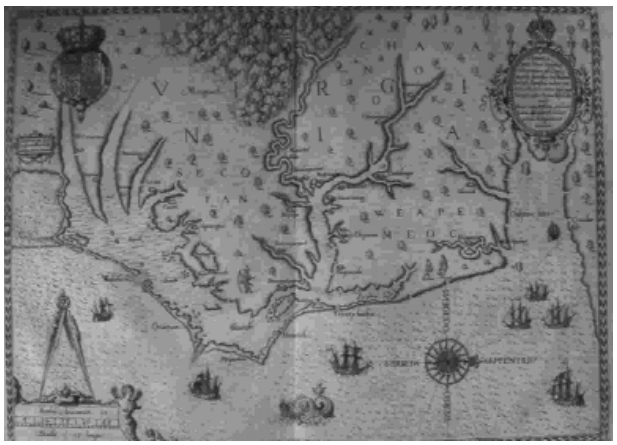
Exploration: Is it possible for a person claiming to be an eyewitness to write a "true history" of an event? What would constitute a "true history"?

Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca (c. 1490–1558)

Often called the first culturally **Chicano** or *mestizo* writer, Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca composed his *Relation* to narrate his extraordinary experience as a Spaniard who became integrated into Native American culture in the New World. Part hagiography, part captivity narrative, and part adventure story, the text recounts his ordeals from shipwreck to enslavement and details his rise to prominence as a trader and healer among various Native American groups. In the process, the *Relation* reveals the complex modes of acculturation through which Cabeza de Vaca forged a new, hybrid identity.

When Cabeza de Vaca set sail with Panfilo de Narváez in 1527 on an expedition to chart the Gulf Coast, he probably believed himself to be embarking on an auspicious career. He was a descendant of a noble family and had been chosen to serve as Emperor Charles V's representative and treasurer on an enterprise that seemed poised to

garner wealth and fame. But whatever hopes Cabeza de Vaca held for his future must have been shattered when Narváez, an incompetent leader, lost the ships under his command through a series of misadventures and left his crew marooned in Florida. After a plan to construct new ships ended in a disaster at sea, Cabeza de Vaca and the few other survivors from the expedition found themselves shipwrecked on the coast of present-day Texas and enslaved by the Han and Capoque clans of the Karankawa Indians. Cabeza de Vaca responded to his predicament (and freed himself from slavery) by learning the Native Americans' language and adapting himself to their culture, though he never relinquished his hope of eventually finding a Spanish outpost and being reunited with his countrymen. To this end, he began traveling north and west through North America, drawing on his skills as a trader and especially as a healer to ingratiate himself with the various tribes he encountered. Combining Christian rituals with traditional Native American customs, Cabeza de Vaca operated as a shaman, or spiritual healer, and acquired fame, respect, and power for his ability to heal and comfort the sick. The *Relation*'s account of his successful melding of different cultural and spiritual traditions reveals the importance of improvisation, adaptation, and flexibility to the process of acculturation.



[7672] Anonymous, *New World Map*, from Thomas Hariot, *Admiranda Narratio Fida Tamen, de Commodis et Incolarum Ritibus Virginae* (1555), courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania, Jay I. Kislak Foundation, Inc.

Cabeza de Vaca and a small group of other survivors from the Narváez expedition reached present-day New Mexico in 1535. They gathered a large contingent of Native American followers and headed south to Mexico, hoping to find a Spanish settlement there. But when they eventually encountered a group of Spaniards, Cabeza de Vaca was appalled by their eagerness to enslave the natives and soon found himself in conflict with them. In his narrative, he ironically refers to these Spanish settlers by the same disparaging term the Indians used: "Christian slavers."

Cabeza de Vaca finally returned to Spain in 1537, where he continued to speak out against the conquistadors' mistreatment of Native American peoples. He wrote the *Relation* both to boost his own reputation and to offer his insights into Spanish colonial policy. In 1540 he received a grant from the emperor to lead an expedition to what is today Paraguay and help found the Rio de la Plata colony there. The other Spanish colonists in the region, however, were more interested in acquiring wealth than in upholding Cabeza de Vaca's enlightened policies toward the Indians. In 1545, they overthrew his government, arrested him, and sent him back to Spain in chains. Spanish authorities then exiled him to North Africa and forbade him ever to return to America.

CABEZA DE VACA WEB ARCHIVE

[2819] Alvaro Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, Frontispiece to second edition of *La Relacion y Comentarios del Governador Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, de lo Acaescido en las Dos Jornados que Hizo a las Indias* (1555), courtesy of the Jay I. Kislak Foundation, Inc. Sometimes considered the first captivity narrative, Cabeza de Vaca's account of his shipwreck and travels through Florida and northern Mexico is to some degree modeled after medieval romances.

[7672] Anonymous, *New World Map*, from Thomas Hariot, *Admiranda Narratio Fida Tamen, de Commodis et Incolarum Ritibus Virginae* (1555), courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania, Jay I. Kislak Foundation, Inc. European encounters with the New World presented a host of logistical problems for explorers; among them was the absence of cartographic data about the vast lands that were now being colonized. Early travelers contributed data that enabled the creation of maps like this one, which offer testimony to the various ways in which geographic space was conceived of during the era of early exploration.

[8766] Maria Herrera-Sobek, Interview: "De Vaca" (2002), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Maria Herrera-Sobek, professor of Chicana studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, discusses de Vaca as a foundational figure for Chicanos.

TEACHING TIPS

■ At the conclusion of the excerpt from the *Relation* in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, Cabeza de Vaca explains that the Indians refused to believe that he and his group were of the same race as the "Christian slavers" they encountered in Mexico. Their "naked and barefoot" appearance as well as their gentleness and generosity seemed to separate them, in the Indians' minds, from other Spaniards. Ask your students to look at this segment of the narrative carefully, examining it for indications of Cabeza de Vaca's own racial and national identification. Does he see himself as "of the same people" as the Christian slavers? How has his identity as a European and as a conquistador altered over the course of his time among the Indians? To get at the issue of Cabeza de Vaca's hybrid identity, you might ask your students to chart his interesting use of pronouns in this concluding section of the *Relation*. When does he use "we" and "they"? Whom does he include when he refers to "we" and "us"?

■ In the section entitled "Our Life among the Avavares and Arbadaos," Cabeza de Vaca explains that exposure to the southwestern sun caused the members of the European group to "shed our skins twice a year like snakes." After pointing out the physical and mental transformation implied in this image of skin-shedding, ask your students to find other moments where Cabeza de Vaca symbolically indicates that he is undergoing a kind of metamorphosis. His accounts of acquiring a taste for native foods and his use of birth imagery might be good places to start this discussion.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: How does Cabeza de Vaca survive among the various Native American groups he encounters? What skills does he draw on and develop? What strategies does he use to fit into native communities?

Comprehension: Why does Cabeza de Vaca come into conflict with Spaniards he encounters in Mexico? Why does he refer to his encounters with them as "confrontations" and "falling-outs"?

Context: How does Cabeza de Vaca's account of his experiences as a prisoner of the Malhados compare to John Smith's narrative of his imprisonment among the Chesapeake Bay Indians? What do the strategies they use to escape enslavement have in common? In what ways do their tactics for dealing with the natives differ? Who do you think was ultimately more successful?

Context: When Cabeza de Vaca traveled through what is now the southwestern United States and northern Mexico, there was of course no official border between the two areas. Nonetheless, do you think he might have had a sense of himself as inhabiting a kind of "borderlands"? In what ways?

Context: When Spanish colonists arrived in the Americas, they sometimes encountered *berdaches*—Native American males who cross-dressed and performed female sex and social roles. While this form of transvestism was often widely accepted in native cul-

tures, it frightened the Spanish. In his narrative, Cabeza de Vaca writes of the "soft" native men of Florida who dressed and worked as women. Why might the *berdache* have been so threatening to the Spanish? What notions of masculinity and femininity are implicit or explicit in the narratives about the conquest? How do the *berdaches* threaten (or reinforce) this gendered system?

Exploration: The captivity narrative has sometimes been called the first distinctly American genre, since it grew out of the cultural collision of colonists and America's native peoples. Literary critics and historians sometimes read the *Relation* as part of the captivity narrative genre (discussed in Unit 3). Do you think this is appropriate? What does Cabeza de Vaca's narrative have in common with Mary Rowlandson's account of her captivity among the Indians?

Exploration: Read Chicana poet Lorna Dee Cervantes's poem "Visions of Mexico While at a Writing Symposium in Port Townsend, Washington." How does her poem about her feelings of both closeness to and alienation from Mexican culture compare to Cabeza de Vaca's narrative? How does Cervantes's exploration of the meaning of the colonial experience and its relation to writing resonate with Cabeza de Vaca's struggles with this issue?

Garcilaso de la Vega (1539–1616)

One of the first American writers of mixed ethnic heritage, Garcilaso de la Vega signaled his *mestizo* identity by proudly appending the title "El Inca" to his name. He was descended from the Inca royal family through his mother, the princess Chimpu Ocllo, who was the granddaughter of one of the last Incan emperors. After the Spanish conquered the Incan dynasty in Peru, Chimpu Ocllo converted to Catholicism, assumed the name Isabel Suarez, and married Sebastian Garcilaso de la Vega, one of the Spanish conquistadors. Growing up as the child of this interracial marriage, Garcilaso de la Vega became fluent in both Spanish and the Inca language Quechua and acquired a detailed knowledge of Incan imperial history as well as the history of the Conquest.

[7329] C. Colin, *Ferdinand Cortés and Hernando de Soto in the Camp of the Inca at Caxamalca. The Order of His Court and the Reverence with Which His Subjects Approached His Person, Astonished the Spaniards* (c. 1902), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-104362].

After the death of his father in 1560, de la Vega journeyed to Spain to claim his inheritance. While he was never officially recognized as the son of a conquistador, he gained prestige by fighting in the wars of the Alpujarras. He eventually settled in Cordoba, where he studied Christianity and devoted himself to the pursuit of religion and literature. Most of his writings are historical narratives of the New World, including two volumes on Incan culture entitled *Commentarios Reales*, or *Royal Commentaries*, which draw on stories he learned from his mother and her

relatives. Recuperating Indian traditions in the language of the colonizer, de la Vega's Incan histories are extraordinary testaments to the sophistication and civilization of pre-Conquest Peru. De la Vega's other work, *The Florida of the Inca* (1605), is a romanticized and fictionalized account of the de Soto expedition and of native life in Florida at the time of contact. (Importantly, de la Vega himself never went to Florida, so he compiled his account by synthesizing and drawing on other explorers' oral and written narratives.) De la Vega's *mestizo* background provided him with a unique perspective on the history of Europeans in the New World, and, like his other writings, *The Florida of the Inca* reflects his commitment to mediating between two different cultures.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Ask your students how they would characterize the genre of de la Vega's account of Juan Ortiz. Is this conventional history? In what ways does it resemble a fable or fictional narrative? Remind your students that de la Vega was himself drawing on eyewitness oral accounts when he composed this work. Given this information, ask them to consider how the tale of Juan Ortiz resonates with the conventions of other narratives that derive from oral traditions (you might point them to the Native American tales featured in Unit 1).

■ It is sometimes difficult to ascertain whether de la Vega's sympathies lie with the conquistador figures or the Indians in his histories. Ask your students which characters in the Juan Ortiz narrative seem sympathetic. How do race and religion seem to impact de la Vega's characterization of the historical actors in this drama? In order to get your students to think deeply about this issue, you might ask them to rewrite Juan Ortiz's story from the perspective of one of the other characters, such as the cacique Hirrihigua, the eldest daughter, or Mucoco.

DE LA VEGA WEB ARCHIVE

[2591] Theodor de Bry, *A Noblewoman of Pomeiock [Indian Woman and Young Girl]* (1590), courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. This engraving shows a native woman of the Virginia town of Pomeiock carrying a clay vessel, while a child holds a rattle and a doll. The woman resembles the female figures painted by Renaissance artists like Botticelli.

[2890] Robert W. Weir, *Embarkation of the Pilgrims* (1844), courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol. This painting shows Pilgrims praying on the deck of the *Speedwell* as it departs from Holland, on July 22, 1620, on its way to meet the *Mayflower* in England. The rainbow on the left symbolizes divine protection and hope.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Why does the cacique Hirrihigua bear such enmity toward Juan Ortiz? What motivates his brutal treatment of his Spanish captive?

Comprehension: During the Renaissance the status of Native Americans was much debated: it was not uncommon to question whether they were fully human or even if they had souls. What criteria does Garcilaso de la Vega use to laud the Florida Indians? What do these criteria tell us about his perspective on what constitutes a fully human or even a "civilized" people? How does his definition of essential humanity compare to that of the conquistadors?

Comprehension: What is the role of Christianity and paganism in the narrative of Juan Ortiz? Which characters exemplify Christian qualities? How does de la Vega complicate traditional European ideas about Native American morality and religion?

Context: How does Juan Ortiz's story compare to John Smith's account of his own salvation through the intervention of Pocahontas? Why do you think Pocahontas's story has received so much more attention and is so frequently retold? What is the effect of de la Vega's decision not to record Hirrihigua's daughter's name?

Context: Both Juan Ortiz and Cabeza de Vaca were stranded in North America as a result of the ill-fated Panfilo de Narváez expedition. How do Juan Ortiz's experiences compare to Cabeza de Vaca's?

Context: Garcilaso de la Vega praises the beauty of the native women in Florida, and even places them on the level of Cleopatra. What significance does the physical beauty of native peoples play in de la Vega's (or conquistadors') account? What is the rhetorical value of comparing the women to the Egyptian queen? Compare Garcilaso de la Vega's portrait of Native American women to those composed by other colonists, conquistadors, and engraver Theodor De Bry.

Context: De la Vega's narrative points to the often shaky distinction between "history" and "fiction" during the Renaissance. (In fact the Spanish word for history, *historia*, is also the word for story.) What parts of *The Florida of the Inca* seem to be the result of imagination rather than eyewitness testimony?

Exploration: While de la Vega's account of Juan Ortiz's relationship with Hirrihigua's daughter is one of the earliest descriptions of an interracial relationship between a European and a Native American, it certainly was not the last. Interracial relationships and romances between Native Americans and Europeans or European Americans fascinated nineteenth-century American writers as well. How does Juan Ortiz and Hirrihigua's daughter's story compare to later fictional interracial romances (such as Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, Child's *Hobomok*, or Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*)?

Exploration: Pan-Indianism usually refers to the nonviolent liberation philosophy of Native Americans and is based in part on the belief that Native Americans share a collective spiritual reality and certain essential cultural attributes that distinguish them from European Americans and other groups. In the preface to *Florida*, de la Vega makes an early move toward pan-Indianism when he claims that his Incan ancestry allows him to present a unique and more truthful perspective on the de Soto expedition and on the native peoples of Florida, although he had never set foot in Florida and presumably never spoke to a native Floridian. What evidence could you use to substantiate de la Vega's claim? What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of Pan-Indianism as a rhetorical and political strategy?

Exploration: Eight paintings grace the Capitol rotunda in Washington, D.C., each of which depicts a key moment in the discovery and independence of the United States. One of these is William Powell's *Discovery of the Mississippi by Hernando de Soto,*

[7329] C. Colin, *Ferdinand Cortés and Hernando de Soto in the Camp of the Inca at Caxamalca. The Order of His Court and the Reverence with Which His Subjects Approached His Person, Astonished the Spaniards* (c. 1902), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-104362]. The Spanish Conquistadores discovered a complex, highly developed society when they arrived in Peru. This image depicts an Incan court ritual that particularly impressed the Spanish. Garcilaso de la Vega's *Commentarios Reales* (Royal Commentaries) tells an Incan version of the conquest of Peru.

[8340] John Gadsby Chapman, *Baptism of Pocahontas* (1840), courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol. Pocahontas was the daughter of Powhatan, a powerful chief of the Algonquian Indians near colonial Virginia. Although her life has been much romanticized, it is known that she married Englishman John Rolfe in 1614. Before their marriage, Pocahontas converted to Christianity and was baptized and christened Rebecca.

[8359] William H. Powell, *Discovery of the Mississippi* (1855), courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol. At the center of this painting is Hernando de Soto, riding a white horse. In 1541 de Soto, a Spanish explorer, became the first European to see the Mississippi River. The painting shows Native Americans watching de Soto's approach, as a chief offers a peace pipe.

[8365] John Vanderlyn, *Landing of Columbus* (1847), courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol. Columbus is shown raising the royal flag in order to "claim" Guanahani, the West Indies island he renamed San Salvador, for Ferdinand and Isabella. As natives look on from behind a tree, crew members search for gold in the sand.

1541 A.D. There are three other images of discovery: *Landing of Columbus*, by John Vanderlyn, *Baptism of Pocahontas*, by John Chapman, and *Embarkation of the Pilgrims*, by Robert Weir. All were painted between 1840 and 1853. To what extent do these images still represent what we might consider the four key moments in the discovery of the United States? Would the de Soto expedition still play so large a role if these paintings were to be created today?

Samuel de Champlain (c. 1570–1635)

Often called the "Father of New France," Samuel de Champlain was a leader in exploring and claiming vast areas of North America for France. Born in the town of Brouage on the Atlantic coast of France, Champlain learned the arts of seafaring, navigation, and cartography early in his life. Because he was passionately interested in, as he put it, "obtain[ing] a knowledge of different countries, regions, and realms," Champlain accepted a post as commander of a Spanish trade ship that sailed to the West Indies and to New Spain in 1599. After returning to France, he was named "geographer royal" to the king and was sent to Canada as part of a 1603 expedition commissioned to confirm and further the North American discoveries made in the mid-1530s by Jacques Cartier. On this trip, Champlain and his party sailed up the St. Lawrence River to the site of present-day Montreal, where they helped establish the valuable fur trade with Native Americans that would become the central commercial enterprise of New France. In 1604, Champlain returned to Canada to explore the coastal areas that make up the present-day Maritime Provinces and New England. On another journey on the St. Lawrence in 1608, Champlain founded Quebec City, which eventually became the French capital in North America.

[2846] Samuel de Champlain, Illustration from *Les Voyages du Sieur de Champlain Capitaine Ordinaire pour Le Roy en la Nouvelle France es Années 1615 et 1618* (1619), courtesy of the Robert Dechert Collection, Annenberg Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania.

Champlain was soon appointed lieutenant general of the colony. Hoping to further French land claims and commercial interests, he sent delegates to explore as far west as the Great Lakes region. His scouts learned Native American customs and languages and established friendly relations with the Huron and Montagnais Indians in particular. The French eventually joined with these Indian allies to fight their traditional enemy, the Iroquois, in sustained conflict. Champlain recorded his experiences in New France in four books, which combine illustrations, maps, personal narrative, geographical and natural description, history, and ethnographic insights into Native American life. His combination of pictorial and verbal description lends his work an unusually vivid quality that literary critic Gordon Sayre has described as a "distinctive narrative storyboard effect."

In 1629, invading British troops unexpectedly captured Quebec and Champlain was taken to England as a prisoner. When a diplomatic treaty returned Canada to the French in 1632, Champlain was reinstalled as lieutenant general. He died three years later in Quebec on Christmas Day.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Ask your students to pay close attention to the incident in Chapter VIII of *The Voyages of Sieur de Champlain* in which French sailors and Indians have a violent skirmish over possession of some large iron kettles. In this passage, Champlain narrates the way cultural misunderstandings and the ill-considered actions of a few individuals can ignite destructive, large-scale confrontations. Have your students outline the progression of events and the actions that lead to the escalation of the fight. Who are the principal actors? What motivates them? What kinds of communication difficulties cause and exacerbate the situation? How do the French and Indian leaders ultimately diffuse the tension? Is the situation resolved satisfactorily for all parties? It might be useful to ask your students to compare Champlain's account of this encounter with some English and Spanish narratives of violent confrontations with Native Americans (William Bradford, John Smith, Christopher Columbus, or Bernal Díaz del Castillo, for example).

■ In *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean,* J. Brian Harley and David Woodward argue that "maps are graphic representations that facilitate a spatial understanding of things, concepts, conditions, processes, or events in the human world." Have your students examine Champlain's "Map of New France," which is featured in the archive. How does this map help facilitate Champlain's view of New France and the Americas more generally? What key concepts and processes are represented in Champlain's map? You might call attention to details such as how he pictorially represents the landscape and the relative scale of the various pictures. How does Champlain depict Native Americans? Plants and animals? Natural resources? Europeans? How does the map differ from current maps? After you have discussed Champlain's map, ask your students to borrow his techniques to produce a map of their own city, their neighborhood, or an area they have visited recently. Discuss their maps as a class.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What kinds of misunderstandings and disagreements do Champlain and his party have with the Native Americans they encounter? How do they communicate? What kind of strategies do they use to diffuse tension?

Context: In Chapter VIII of *The Voyages of Sieur de Champlain*, Champlain describes the problems he has communicating with Native Americans. He finds that he cannot get answers to questions because "we did not understand their language, although they attempted to explain by signs." Later, he credits Etienne Brulé for his skill as both a cultural and a linguistic interpreter between the Indians and the French. John Smith, on the other hand, never mentions the language barrier that must have complicated his dealings with the Native Americans in Virginia, nor does he mention the presence of interpreters. Why might

CHAMPLAIN WEB ARCHIVE

[1365] Anonymous, *The Battle of Ticonderoga* (1609), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-108526]. This illustration depicts the French explorer Samuel de Champlain and his Native American allies fighting the Iroquois on the Ticonderoga Peninsula in 1609. As seen in the illustration, Champlain's mechanical firearms overpowered the Iroquois.

[2846] Samuel de Champlain, Illustration from *Les Voyages du Sieur de Champlain Capitaine Ordinaire pour Le Roy en la Nouvelle France en Années 1615 et 1618* (1619), courtesy of the Robert Dechert Collection, Annenberg Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. This engraving, made during one of Champlain's voyages, shows Huron funerary practices.

[2869] Samuel de Champlain, *Carte Geographique de la Nouvelle Franse . . . Faict Len 1612* (1612), courtesy of the Osher Map Library, University of Southern Maine. Samuel de Champlain mapped the region from the St. Lawrence Valley through the Georgian Bay and Lake Ontario and along the Atlantic coast to Cape Cod between 1603 and 1616. This map, which uses Native American mapping techniques, shows Lake Ontario and Niagara Falls.

[3191] Samuel de Champlain, *Sketch of Wampanoag Wigwams at Plymouth* (1605), courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. The Wampanoag, meaning "Eastern people," probably numbered around 12,000 just before contact. They lived in small bands in beehive-shaped huts loosely clustered into villages, as shown in this sketch. English settlers in the Plymouth colony originally modeled their dwellings after these highly efficient native homes but soon abandoned them in favor of more "proper" British-style housing.

Champlain and Smith have narrated their encounters with Native American languages so differently? How do their different accounts of linguistic communication shape their descriptions of their own positions within Native American communities?

Context: How does Champlain's concern with developing the fur trade compare to the Spanish explorers' interest in finding gold and setting up *encomiendas* in America? How might the differences in the production, trade, and value of these different commodities have led to substantive differences between the French and the Spanish settlements?

Context: How does Etienne Brulé survive the hostile Indians who torture him and are "prepared to put him to death"? Does Champlain's narrative of Brulé's "miraculous" escape describe divine intervention, or is he implying that Brulé simply benefited from a fortuitously timed thunderstorm? How does Champlain's narration of the role of prayer and religious icons in French interactions with natives compare to Columbus's or Díaz del Castillo's descriptions of Spanish religious practices during the Conquest?

Exploration: Both Champlain and William Bradford narrated their contact experiences with Native Americans on the coast of present-day Massachusetts. How do their accounts differ? What do they have in common? How do their descriptions of the coastal landscape and the area's natural resources compare?

Exploration: To what extent is the history of New France important for understanding American colonial history? Why do you think Champlain's voyages were not depicted in one of the four scenes of U.S. discovery in the Capitol Rotunda? (The four scenes are of Columbus, de Soto, Pocahontas, and the Pilgrims, and they date from the 1840s to 1850s.) Would Champlain's voyages be included today if the Rotunda paintings were replaced?

John Smith (1580–1631)

A consummate self-promoter, John Smith would be delighted with the privileged position that his adventures in Virginia have assumed within American mythology. The subject of a Disney animated film and popular legend, as well as scholarly inquiry, Smith and his writings have come to be regarded as representative of the colonial Virginia experience.

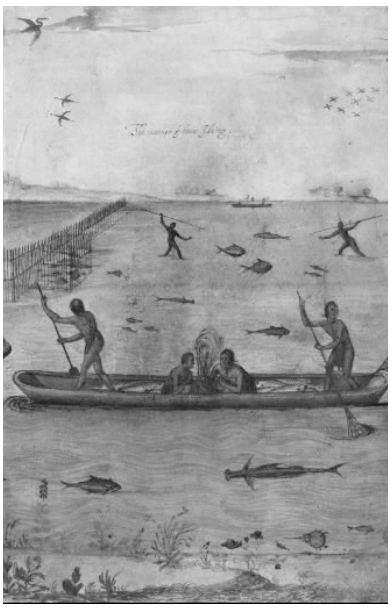
Despite his rather ordinary beginnings as the son of a yeoman farmer in England, Smith early hurled himself into a life of adventure. Upon his father's death in 1596, he journeyed to continental Europe and volunteered as a soldier in the Dutch fight for independence from Spain. After completing his tour of duty, he sailed on a privateer in the Mediterranean and then joined the Austrian army to fight against the Turks in Hungary and Romania. Wounded in battle, Smith was taken captive and held in slavery until he murdered his Turkish master and escaped. He made his way back to England in 1604.

Given Smith's history of daring exploits, it is perhaps not surpris-

ing that the Virginia Company, a group of investors interested in colonizing England's holdings in North America, selected him to serve on an expedition to form a settlement in Virginia. But while Smith's qualities of strength, boldness, self-sufficiency and stubbornness may have made him a good soldier, they did not always suit him to the project of community building at Jamestown. He quickly alienated most of the aristocratic members of the expedition and was nearly executed for insubordination. Still, his willingness to work hard, combined with his sheer ability to survive in the difficult climate and environment, made him valuable to the colony. After surviving a particularly virulent outbreak of illness that killed off many of the other members of the company, Smith successfully organized the remaining colonists into units to build shelters and fortifications. He also negotiated with Native Americans for food and other supplies. In recognition of his contributions, Smith was elected president of the Virginia colony's council in 1607.

Smith soon established himself as the most knowledgeable colonist at Jamestown on the geography of the region and the customs of the Native Americans who lived there. Although he understood that diplomatic relations with the natives were necessary to the survival of the colony, he never acknowledged the Native Americans he encountered as equals or as friends. He believed that his mission entailed making Virginia safe for colonial expansion at any cost, and he was perfectly willing to use deception and force to gain advantage over Powhatan and the Chesapeake Bay tribe. Even Smith's famous account of his rescue by the Indian princess Pocahontas does not offer a positive view of native culture. Instead, he portrays Pocahontas as alone among her tribe in her possession of "civilized" graces and insinuates that she welcomed European colonization.

Two years after becoming president of the Virginia colony's council, Smith was injured in an explosion and was forced to return to England. He made several subsequent brief voyages to the northern portions of the Virginia colony (an area for which he coined the name "New England"), but he never again returned to Jamestown or settled in North America. Although his offers to serve as an adviser in the new American colonies (including Plymouth) were consistently rebuffed, Smith devoted the rest of his life to writing about the New World and promoting exploration and colonization there. He wrote and compiled two works on Virginia (1608, 1612) and two works on New England (1616, 1620), eventually revising and combining them into *The General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (1624). All of Smith's writings are concerned both with encouraging colonial expansion and with fashioning his own image as the ideal colonist.



[1900] John White, *The Manner of Their Fishing* (c. 1585), courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Your students will probably be anxious to discuss Smith's account of his rescue by Pocahontas since the story has assumed the

status of a foundational American myth. (It is no accident a painting of Pocahontas being baptized hangs inside the Rotunda of the Capitol and that a sculpture of Pocahontas saving Smith hangs over the west door to the Rotunda today.) It is important to emphasize that Smith revised his story about his relationship with Pocahontas: in his initial narrative of the episode in his 1608 *True Relation* he does not mention her role in helping him escape captivity and avoid execution. It is only in the *General History*, written sixteen years after Smith's encounter with Powhatan, that he celebrates Pocahontas's intervention on his behalf. Some literary critics and historians have argued that Smith's inclusion of Pocahontas in the later narrative represents an effort to capitalize on her status as a celebrity in England. After she had converted to Christianity, married John Rolfe, traveled to England, and been presented at Court, Pocahontas was revered as an assimilated and fully Anglicized Native American—the ideal colonial subject. Thus, Smith's anxiousness to assert a significant relationship with her might be just one more example of his commitment to self-promotion. Ask students to think about what other reasons Smith might have had for revising his account in this way. What assumptions about Indian-European relations, gender, and politics underwrite this story? Why has the story achieved archetypal status? You might ask your class to generate a list of other examples of this trope of an attractive young woman intervening on behalf of her colonizer (for example, La Malinche, Sacajawea, and even contemporary news stories about women who defect from China, the Middle East, and other countries to be with American men). Why is this story continually repeated and celebrated? What kind of fantasy about American power does it represent?

■ Ask your class to analyze the role of literacy in Smith's relations with the Native Americans of Virginia. You might look, in particular, at his account of the native peoples' wonder at his "talking paper" when he demonstrates his ability to communicate with other colonists through writing. How do writing and literacy become emblems of European power for Smith? How might this status impact his relationship to his own text?

■ Ask your class to analyze the role of technology in colonization and in Smith's relations with the Native Americans of Virginia as presented in his narrative. For example, you might have students focus on Smith's description of his demonstration of a compass:

> Much they marveled at the playing of the fly and needle, which they could see so plainly and yet not touch it because of the glass that covered them. But when he demonstrated by that globe-like jewel the roundness of the earth and skies, the sphere of the sun, moon, and stars, and how the sun did chase the night round about the world continually, the greatness of the land and sea, the diversity of nations, variety of complexions, and how we were to them antipodes and many other such like matters, they all stood as amazed with admiration.

Here Smith indulges in a fantasy of the Indians' simultaneous bewilderment and understanding—they are awestruck by the unfamiliar instrument and do not understand the physical structure of glass, yet they seem to grasp Smith's complicated explanation of the cosmos. You might play up the unintentional humor of this moment. One wonders what exactly the Indians thought of Smith's operations with the compass, and what kind of response they were really expressing when Smith took them to be "amazed with admiration." Ask your students to think about why Smith is so invested in attributing the experience of wonder to the natives and why he problematizes that wonder with an assertion of transparency and communication.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What vision of colonial commerce does Smith offer in his description of New England's potential? How does Smith's model of colonial labor and trade differ from the model most Spanish colonizers adopted in Mexico and South America? For example, what kinds of commodities and economic potential does Columbus seem to value in his letters to the Spanish monarchs?

Comprehension: What problems does Smith have with the other English colonists in the Virginia Company? How does he represent his own leadership abilities? What role do class and nobility play in his leadership and in the colony in general?

Context: How does Smith mobilize the "discourse of wonder" in his narrative? At what point does he experience wonder himself? When does he displace the experience of wonder onto the natives he encounters?

Context: One of the models for heroic conduct that influenced Smith's self-fashioning was the figure of the knight or knight-errant, a traveling man of honor committed to helping people (often women) in trouble through his brave acts. One of the most popular and influential knight stories of Smith's day was Miguel Cervantes's story of Don Quixote, a middle-class man who becomes a knight-errant and works on the side of chivalry, the good, and endangered maidens. What knightlike traits does Smith possess? What does Smith gain rhetorically from placing himself in this tradition?

Context: Why does Smith interrupt his narrative in *The General History* with passages of translated classical verse? What general rhetorical purpose do classical allusions play in the narrative?

Exploration: Like later colonial leaders William Bradford and John Winthrop (Unit 3), Smith hoped to secure the stable establishment of an English colony in America and his own authority within it. How do Smith's attempts to consolidate his own authority compare to Bradford's and Winthrop's? How do the conflicts and tensions between colonists in Jamestown compare to the conflicts and tensions within Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay?

SMITH WEB ARCHIVE

[1900] John White, *The Manner of Their Fishing* (c. 1585), courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. One of John White's drawings not taken directly from real life: he shows a dip net and spear (daytime fishing techniques) and a fire in a canoe (used to attract fish at night). White combined disparate New World fishing methods in this and other paintings.

[2467] Anonymous, *Pocahontas* [reproduction of 1616 original] (c. 1900–1920), courtesy of the Library of Congress. Pocahontas, baptized as "Rebecca" before marrying John Rolfe, is shown in her English garb. The original of this painting was by William Sheppard, dated 1616, at Barton Rectory, Norfolk, England.

[2591] Theodor de Bry, *A Noblewoman of Pomeiock [Indian Woman and Young Girl]* (1590), courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. This engraving shows a native woman of the Virginia town of Pomeiock carrying a clay vessel, while a child holds a rattle and a doll. The woman resembles the female figures painted by Renaissance artists like Botticelli.

[3232] John Gadsby Chapman, *Baptism of Pocahontas, 1614* (c. 1837), courtesy of the Library of Congress. The Virginia Company instructed its governors to make conversion of the native population to Christianity a prime objective. Pocahontas, daughter of Powhatan, head of the Powhatan Confederacy, was the most famous early convert. She was baptized in 1614.

[7727] Anonymous, *How They Took Him Prisoner in the Oaze, 1607* (1629), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-99524]. This image details the capture of a " heroic" John Smith by Native Americans. The caption reads: "Captain Smith bindeth a savage to his arme, fighteth with the King of Pamaunkee and all his company, and slew 3 of them."

Exploration: One of the models of the ideal conqueror for Spanish and British colonists alike was the Roman emperor Julius Caesar, who wrote his autobiographical commentaries *The Gallic War* in the third person and referred to himself as "he." What impact does Smith's choice of a third-person narrator have on *The General History*? Which other explorers use this strategy? How does Smith's narration compare to Henry Adams's self-conscious use of the third person in *The Education of Henry Adams* (Unit 9)? Why do you think Smith used first-person narration in his accounts of New England?

Adriaen Van der Donck (1620–1655)

Adriaen Van der Donck began his professional life studying law at the University of Leyden in the Netherlands. Then, in 1641, he changed the course of his career by accepting a commission to travel to the Dutch commercial colony in America (present-day New York) to administer the estate of the wealthy patron Kiliaen Van Rennselaer. Van der Donck's assignment—to stifle the fur trade and instead promote agricultural settlement in Van Rennselaer's land in the Hudson Valley—soon brought him into conflict with the Dutch colonists, who were more interested in lucrative fur trapping and hunting than in farming. Uncomfortable with the climate of "great strife, uproar, quarreling . . . [and] mutual discord," as he put it, Van der Donck decided to leave Van Rennselaer's employment in 1646 and strike out on his own. After negotiating with the governor of New Netherland, William Kieft, he received a grant from the Dutch West India Company to purchase an estate just north of Manhattan. There, at the junction of the Hudson and Nepperhan Rivers, Van der Donck built one of the first saw mills in North America. His success and his status as an educated gentleman prompted settlers in the region to refer to him as "Jonk Herr" ("young gentleman," or "young nobleman"). Eventually, the name evolved into "Yonkers," now the name of a city north of Manhattan.

[2642] John Heaten, *Van Bergen Overmantel* (c. 1730–45), courtesy of the New York State Historical Association.

Van der Donck once again found himself at the center of political controversy when he clashed with the new governor of the colony, Pietr Stuyvesant, who arrived in New Netherland in 1647. Van der Donck wrote a lengthy formal complaint against the governor, entitled *Remonstrance of New Netherland*, and sailed back to the Netherlands to personally deliver it to government authorities in 1649. While residing in Europe, Van der Donck completed another work, the *Description of New Netherland*. This detailed account of the native inhabitants, plants, animals, and other natural resources of the colony was a **promotional tract**, meant to encourage immigration from the Netherlands and to defend Dutch imperial claims against rival European powers such as the French, Swedish, and English. Van der Donck returned to his adopted land in 1653 and died on his estate two years later.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Ask your students to pay attention to the way Van der Donck uses the discourse of the "sublime" (see Unit 4) to describe the landscape and natural productions of the Dutch colony. His descriptions of the beached whales, the power of the Great Falls on the Mohawk River, and the "grand and sublime" spectacle of bush burning all work to convey a sense of awesome natural power to the reader. Strikingly, Van der Donck's invocations of the sublime often end on a warning note: the beached whales die and infect the river; the waterfall leads to the destruction of an Indian family traveling by canoe; and the bush fires destroy gardens and homes. Ask students to think about what kind of relationship Van der Donck's narrative constructs between humans and the natural world. Why does he consistently offer ominous hints of danger? How might his narrative of the sublime complicate his book's efforts to serve as a promotional tract encouraging settlement?

■ Have your students compile a list of the anecdotes Van der Donck uses in the course of his description of New Netherland. (You might need to explain that an anecdote is a short account of a specific, often unusual or humorous, occurrence. It offers more personal, subjective insights than general descriptions of nature, geography, or communities.) After your students have charted Van der Donck's anecdotes, ask them to think about when and why he decides to rely on a specific story to supplement his narrative description. What kind of authority do anecdotes bring to his narrative? What issues and topics seem to demand the relation of specific stories? Do the anecdotes support or challenge Van der Donck's general claims about life in New Netherland?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: In "Why This Country is Called New Netherland," Van der Donck is concerned with proving that the region was "first found or discovered by the Netherlanders." What evidence does he provide to refute other nations' potential claims to the Dutch colony?

Context: How does Van der Donck describe his own and other Dutch colonists' relationships with Native Americans in the region? When does he draw on Indian oral traditions to bolster his own historical account of New Netherland? When do the Dutch colonists rely on (and adopt) Indian knowledge and skills? How does Van der Donck's account of the relationship between colonists and natives compare to accounts by representatives of other European groups in North America, such as Samuel de Champlain or John Smith?

Context: How does Van der Donck's frequent discussion of "sublime" natural occurrences (such as waterfalls and bush fires) compare to the discourse of the "marvelous" as it appears in early contact narratives (such as those by Columbus, Smith, or Bernal Díaz del Castillo)?

VAN DER DONCK WEB ARCHIVE

[2630] Anonymous, *Nieu Amsterdam* (c. 1643), courtesy of the Historic Hudson Valley, Tarrytown, New York. This engraving shows two traders, possibly a married couple, standing with their wares in the foreground, while one of the earliest views of what was to become Manhattan can be seen in the background.

[2637] Joost Hartgers, *T' Fort Nieuw Amsterdam op de Manhatans* [Hartgers' View] (c. 1626), courtesy of Historic Hudson Valley, Tarrytown, New York. This engraving shows Native American and European boats navigating the waters around present-day New York City. The Dutch fort, complete with a windmill, is at the center of the image.

[2642] John Heaten, *Van Bergen Overmantel* (c. 1730–45), courtesy of the New York State Historical Association. This vibrant depiction of colonial life in New York emphasizes the area's Dutch roots. The Dutch-style structures include a New World Dutch barn, hay barracks, and a farmhouse with parapet gables and a pan-tiled roof.

[3694] Thomas Cole, *The Falls of the Kaaterskill* (1826), courtesy of the Warner Collection of the Gulf States Paper Corporation. Cole was one of the first American landscape artists and a founder of the Hudson River School of painting. Romantic depictions of wilderness became popular as the United States continued its westward expansion.
[9042] Laura Arnold, *The Great Chain of Being* (2003), courtesy of Laura Arnold. From the beginning of the Middle Ages through the early nineteenth century, "educated Europeans" conceived of the universe in terms of a hierarchical Great Chain of Being with God at its apex. In many ways, this hierarchy, still pervasive in Western theology and thought, stands in opposition to Native American and other belief systems that view the human and spirit worlds as co-existing on a horizontal plane.

Exploration: Compare Van der Donck's description of the falls to Thomas Cole's nineteenth-century masterpiece *The Falls of the Kaaterskill*. How does each create a sense of grandeur and awe? How do their visions of the sublime differ?

Exploration: How does Van der Donck's description of life in the New Netherland colony compare to the accounts of English colonists living in New England (such as William Bradford or John Winthrop) around the same time? How does Van der Donck's portrait of the Dutch relationship with Native Americans compare to Puritans' accounts of their interactions with native tribes?

Exploration: What is the role of timber in a European colonial or frontier settlement? How does Van der Donck's description of the abundance of lumber and of the settlers' and Indians' manner of dealing with the woods that are "always in our way" compare to James Fenimore Cooper's descriptions of the role of the woods in *The Pioneers*? How do these two writers characterize settlers' and natives' efforts to clear the land of woods and brush? How does each writer describe the effects of forest fires?

Exploration: Nineteenth-century writer Washington Irving (Unit 6) claimed in his fiction that the Dutch origins of New York could still be felt in the regional culture and geography. What, according to Van der Donck, are the essential attributes of New Netherland and of its Dutch colonizers? How does his portrait of New Netherland compare to Irving's nostalgic and mythic presentation of the area's Dutch ancestry in stories such as "Rip Van Winkle"?

Americo Paredes (1915–1999)

Born in the town of Brownsville on the border between south Texas and Mexico, Americo Paredes became an eloquent interpreter of the complicated, bicultural society that had grown out of the conflicts and tensions of this region. As the title of his second volume of poetry indicates, he found his identity *Between Two Worlds*. Paredes's pioneering work recording and elucidating Chicano folklore, as well as his commitment to furthering the field of Mexican American studies, left a lasting legacy that has inspired many writers and scholars interested in border cultures.

Paredes received his early education in Brownsville's public schools and at the local community college. He began writing poetry and fiction in the late 1930s. His novel *George Washington Gomez: A Mexicotexan Novel*, a bitter coming-of-age story of a Mexican American man who experiences discrimination in his childhood and copes by eventually renouncing his culture, was completed in 1940 but was not published until 1991. At the start of World War II, Paredes was sent overseas with the U.S. Army, where he served as a reporter for *The Stars and Stripes* and as an administrator for the International Red Cross.

After returning to Texas, Paredes entered college at the University

of Texas at Austin. When he received his Ph.D. in folklore and Spanish in 1956, he became the first Mexican American student to earn a doctoral degree at that institution. Paredes wrote his dissertation on the story of the Mexican American folk hero Gregorio Cortez. In the late nineteenth century, Cortez avenged the unprovoked death of his brother at the hands of Anglo rangers (*rinches*) by killing a white sheriff. Cortez then successfully evaded the posses sent to capture him by drawing on his connections within the Chicano community and by skillfully navigating the southwestern landscape. When the *rinches* began punishing the Mexicans who helped Cortez, he surrendered himself to spare his people any further suffering. The story of Cortez, with its emphasis on heroic protest and resistance in the face of Anglo oppression, became legendary among Mexican Americans in the Texas border region and inspired many stories, drawings, and especially songs that celebrated Cortez's life and martyrdom. Paredes's dissertation, entitled *With a Pistol in His Hand: A Border Ballad and Its Hero*, explored the political and cultural importance of the Cortez story and of the ballads, or *corridos* (see Unit 5), which it inspired. This pioneering study of the development of folklore and the importance of conflict in border regions became enormously influential and has gone through over eight printings.

Paredes joined the faculty at the University of Texas in 1957. During his thirty-year teaching career, he was involved in the creation and administration of the Mexican American studies program and the Center for Intercultural Studies of Folklore and Ethnomusicology. His scholarship and creative work were instrumental in the movement to define and proclaim a unique "border identity" for people living in the land caught between the United States and Mexico, which has long been characterized by conflict and tension.

[6573] Anonymous, Cover art for Americo Paredes's *With a Pistol in His Hand* (1958), courtesy of the University of Texas Press.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Read the Gregorio Cortez *corrido* aloud with your students. Ask them to think about what made Cortez such a heroic figure to Mexican Americans living in Texas. How does Cortez display his heroism? You might have them generate a list of qualities and characteristics that describe Cortez. After thoroughly discussing the *corrido*, ask your students to compare its plot, characterization of its hero, and themes to those of a contemporary song that they like.

■ Ask your students to think about the significance of the fact that Gregorio Cortez shares his name with the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés. Does Gregorio Cortez have more in common with Cortés or with the Aztecs he conquered? How might the creation of a specifically Mexican American Cortez challenge or build on the legacy of Cortés the conquistador?

■ Have students draw a map of the town in which George Washington Gomez lives, including the major landmarks and locales that Gomez visits. What distinguishes this as a border town? How is space divided in the town both symbolically and literally?

PAREDES WEB ARCHIVE

[5936] Jose Guadalupe Posada, *Corrido: Fusilamiento Bruno Martinez* (1920s), courtesy of Davidson Galleries. Political and social statements played an important part in Posada's art. This Mexican Revolutionary-era print shows a *charro* bravely facing a group of onrushing *federales*. The title translates as *The Execution of Bruno Martinez*.

[6573] Anonymous, Cover art for Americo Paredes's *With a Pistol in His Hand* (1958), courtesy of the University of Texas Press. Paredes's *With a Pistol in His Hand* tells the story of Gregorio Cortez, an early-twentieth-century border hero who lives in folk memory on both sides of the Rio Grande in "El corrido de Gregorio Cortez."

[6575] Marcos Loya, *Americo Paredes with Guitar* (2001), courtesy of UCLA. This painting of Americo Paredes was done by Marcos Loya two years after Paredes's death. Loya is himself an accomplished Chicano guitarist.

[6581] Americo Paredes, Sheet music: *Gregorio Cortez* p.1 (n.d.), courtesy of the General Libraries, the University of Texas at Austin, © 2002. Cortez was a border hero who lives on in folk memory and whose story was told by Americo Paredes in *With a Pistol in His Hand*. The second page of the sheet music can be seen in the *American Passages* Archive [6583].

[7747] Danny Lyon, *Fifth and Mesa in the Second Ward. El Paso's "Barrio"* (1972), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Photograph by Danny Lyon for the Environmental Protection Agency's *Documerica* project. Lyon, one of the most creative documentary photographers of the late twentieth century, photographed the Rio Grande Valley and the Chicano barrio of South El Paso, Texas.

[9064] Anonymous, *El Corrido de Gregorio Cortez* (c. 1910), courtesy of Pedro Rocha and Lupe Martínez. Text of Cortez *corrido*. This *corrido* takes as its subject the murder of an Anglo-Texan sheriff by a Texas Mexican, Gregorio Cortez, and the ensuing chase, capture, and imprisonment of Cortez.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What is a *corrido*? Why do you think the story of Gregorio Cortez was such a popular subject for ballads?

Comprehension: What different names does the protagonist of *George Washington Gomez* go by? What is the significance of each name? When does he adopt different names in different situations?

Context: How does Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* both borrow from and challenge Paredes's definition of Mexican American *mestizo* identity? How does her description of the obstacles and prejudices that Chicana women face compare to Paredes's narrative of the obstacles and prejudices faced by a Chicano man like George Washington Gomez?

Context: Compare the vision of American masculinity as presented in *corridos* such as "The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez" with that presented in the narratives of Spanish and British colonial authors such as Cabeza de Vaca, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, and John Smith. What attributes do these men share? In what ways do the *corridos* present a new or different notion of American manhood?

Context: Gloria Anzaldúa calls the border "*una herida abierta*," or, "an open wound." What is Paredes's implicit or explicit definition of the border? Do he and Anzaldúa agree on the experience of border life?

Exploration: Why do you think an "outlaw" figure like Gregorio Cortez became a folk hero in the border region? Can you think of similar rebel or outlaw contemporary figures who have acquired hero status? If so, in what contexts are they celebrated? Among what groups? When is rebellion against authority perceived as acceptable and even heroic?

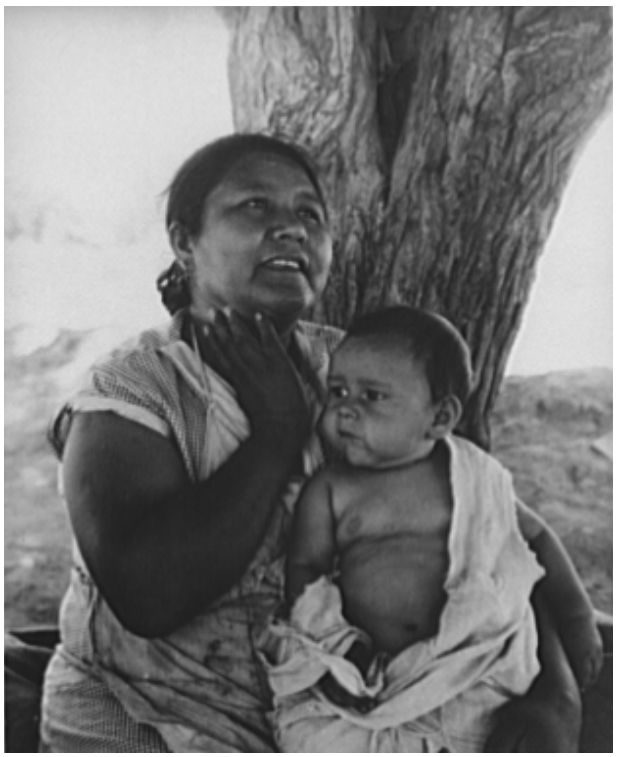
Gloria Anzaldúa (b. 1942)

Gloria Anzaldúa's work is fundamentally concerned with articulating what she calls a "new *mestiza* consciousness," an identity characterized by hybridity, flexibility, and plurality and focused on the experiences of Chicanas (Mexican American women) and particularly *mestizas* (Chicana and Mexican women who have mixed Native American and Spanish heritage). Writing fiction, poetry, memoirs, and literary and cultural criticism (sometimes all within the same text), Anzaldúa has helped define and lend authority to women of color as well as gays and lesbians, whom she identifies as empowered by the inclusiveness and expansiveness of *mestiza* identity.

Anzaldúa was born on a ranch in south Texas, near the border of Mexico. In her youth, she and her family labored as migrant agricultural workers. Although she felt stifled by the confines of a traditional Chicano home life in which gender roles tended to be rigid and rather limiting, Anzaldúa early found what she calls "an entry into a different way of being" through reading. Defying everyone's expectations, she went to college and earned a B.A. from Pan American University, an M.A. from the University of Texas at Austin,

and did graduate work at the University of California at Santa Cruz. She has taught high-school English, been involved in education programs for the children of migrant workers, and taught creative writing and literature at a number of universities. A prolific writer, Anzaldúa has published stories, poems, critical theory, children's books, and a novel (*La Prieta*). Her work appears in both mainstream publications and alternative presses and journals. Anzaldúa's complex identity as a woman, a Chicana, a *mestiza*, and a lesbian is reflected in her pioneering contributions to gender studies, Chicano studies, queer theory, and creative writing. Her 1987 book, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza,* stands as a manifesto of her ideas about culture and identity construction.

Because she believes that language and identity are inextricably linked, Anzaldúa's writing often engages in daring narrative innovations intended to reflect the inclusivity of the *mestiza* identity: by shifting between and combining different genres, points of view, and even languages, she attempts to represent the *mestiza*'s propensity to "shift out of habitual formations . . . [and] set patterns." In this way, her narrative literalizes her ideal of "border crossing." Her writing thus works against hegemonic structures that limit individual expression or impose stereotypes based on race, gender, nationality, or sexual orientation. Composed partially in untranslated Spanish and slipping between poetry and prose, Anzaldúa's texts consistently articulate her commitment to making writing a vehicle for personal freedom and political activism.



[5394] Dorothea Lange, *Mexican Mother in California* (1935), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF34-000825-ZC].

TEACHING TIPS

■ Students who do not read or speak Spanish may be frustrated by Anzaldúa's inclusion of words, phrases, and sentences in untranslated Spanish, and even students with a background in what Anzaldúa calls "Standard Spanish" may have difficulty understanding her use of regional Chicano dialects and Chicano slang known as *Caló*. Ask your students to pick a page of Anzaldúa's prose or poetry and look up the Spanish vocabulary both in a traditional Spanish dictionary and in a dictionary of Chicano Spanish such as *The Dictionary of Chicano Spanish/El diccionario del español chicano* by Roberto A. Galván and Richard V. Teschner. Ask your students to write a journal entry discussing why Anzaldúa challenges her readers in this way. What kind of audience is she hoping to reach? What kind of experience is she trying to provide for readers? What message does Anzaldúa send about the relative importance of English, Castillian Spanish, and *Caló*?

■ Ask your students to think about the significance of the title

ANZALDÚA WEB ARCHIVE

[5394] Dorothea Lange, *Mexican Mother in California* (1935), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF34-000825-ZC]. New Deal photographer Dorothea Lange captured many images of the hardships endured during the Great Depression. Here, a Mexican migrant worker living in California explains, "Sometimes I tell my children that I would like to go to Mexico, but they tell me, 'We don't want to go, we belong here.'"

[7084] Mirta Vidal, Cover of *Chicanas Speak Out* (1971), courtesy of Duke University. Chicana authors, including Cherrie Moraga and Lorna Dee Cervantes, protested definitions of womanhood and American identity that did not include Chicana heritage and life.

[7338] Jorge Gonzalea Camarena, *Visit Mexico* [poster] (c. 1940–50), courtesy of the Library of Congress, American Memory. A pretty young Mexican woman is shown holding out a bowl of tropical fruits in this poster, which was intended to encourage U.S. tourists to vacation in Mexico.

[7605] Anonymous, *Unidentified Woman Finishes Defiant Message* (1973), courtesy of the Denver Public Library. A young woman with long hair, wearing bellbottoms, scrawls out a message which reads, "We are not beaten . . . and we do not intend to be beaten or driven as such. . . . What has happened here is but the sound before the fury of those who are oppressed."

[8215] *American Passages, Gloria Anzaldúa—Critic/Poet/Writer* (2002), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Photograph of Anzaldúa, whose works explore what it means to be of mixed descent, as well as a lesbian, in the United States.

[8756] Eliot Young, Interview: "Chicano Literature" (2002), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Elliot Young, assistant professor of English at Lewis and Clark College, discusses the role of Chicano and Chicana literature in American history.

Borderlands/La Frontera, the work from which the passages in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature* are drawn. Have your class discuss the importance of Anzaldúa's choice to incorporate both English and Spanish in the title and the significance of the slash, which itself functions as a kind of border within the title. How does the title reflect Anzaldúa's concern with articulating multiple perspectives and celebrating inclusivity? Anzaldúa has claimed that the capitalization of the word "Borderlands" throughout her text is a means of indicating that the border is less a physical place and more a state of mind or a cultural experience for *mestizas*. Ask your students to list and discuss the different kinds of psychological, cultural, sexual, racial, and spiritual borders that the text explores.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What is a Chicana? A *mestiza*? What does Anzaldúa mean when she calls for "a new *mestiza* consciousness"?

Context: Examine the "Visit Mexico" poster featured in the archive. What relationship does the poster seem to posit among Mexico, women, and food? Examine the portions of *Borderlands/La Frontera* in which Anzaldúa discusses cooking and the cultivation of corn. How does Anzaldúa restructure Chicanas' relationship to food and fertility? How does her comparison of *mestizas* to indigenous corn and her lyrical description of a woman making tortillas challenge the poster's image of a woman invitingly offering up a bounty of fruit?

Context: What traits and values characterize the "new *mestiza*" as Anzaldúa conceives of her? How does the new *mestiza* compare to the ideals of femininity expressed in the three traditional representations of women in Mexican culture, La Virgen de Guadalupe, La Malinche, and La Llorona? How might Anzaldúa's work help readers understand these traditional figures differently?

Context: Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca has sometimes been called "the first *mestizo*" because he had a hybrid identity influenced by and oriented within both native and European cultures. How does de Vaca's narrative of the "first *mestizo*" experience compare to Anzaldúa's narrative of the "new *mestiza*"? How do these two writers articulate their intercultural and interlinguistic abilities? How do they benefit from their status as hybrid? When does their hybridity become problematic for them?

Context: Gloria Anzaldúa is not the first person to acknowledge the power of sexual deviance to shape people's experience of a "contact zone." Spanish exploration accounts and art representing the Conquest are rife with descriptions of the *berdaches*—Native American males who cross-dressed and performed female sex and social roles. What does Anzaldúa argue is the relationship between the "queer" and the borderlands? Compare Anzaldúa's notion to the role that transgendered figures play in Cabeza de Vaca's narrative.

Exploration: Do writers have a responsibility to make their work clear and easily understandable for readers? When might it be artistically or politically important for a writer to use languages or styles that might be unfamiliar to readers?

Exploration: Compare Anzaldúa's use of polyvocality in her poem "El sonavabitche" to Sarah Piatt's use of polyvocality in "The Palace-Burner" or "A Pique at Parting" (Unit 9). How does each poet use polyvocality to articulate her consciousness of her own status as a woman? How do they use polyvocality to register protest? Do you find one of the poems easier to understand? Why?

Exploration: In recent years queer writers and activists have sought to break down traditional ideas of normal and deviant and to argue for a more fluid notion of identity and sexuality. Compare Anzaldúa's use of the term *queer* and her construction of a queer identity to the notions of lesbianism developed by poets Audre Lorde and Adrienne Rich (Unit 15).

Suggested Teaching Pairings

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND JOHN SMITH

Both Columbus and Smith wrote not only in order to promote colonization of the New World but also to celebrate their own accomplishments and solidify their position as leaders and even legends. While they had extremely different ideas about the kinds of labor and commodity extraction that should characterize their respective colonies, they had many personal qualities in common. Domineering and stubborn men, they were both controversial and sometimes decidedly unpopular figures within the colonies that they helped to found. At the close of their careers, both were frustrated by what they perceived as the lack of appreciation, respect, and financial compensation they had received from the monarchies and companies that had supported their expeditions. It might be useful to compare the defensive, frustrated tone of their later writings, and to explore the reasons why, despite their disappointments, neither ever completely gave up on the potential of the New World. Significantly, both have been presented in subsequent literature, art, and popular culture as archetypal American men who exemplify a particular kind of American heroism and masculinity.

BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS AND BERNAL DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO

Casas and Díaz both wrote narratives designed to serve as revisionist histories to other conquistadors' accounts of the Conquest of Mexico. Both narratives offer horrifying descriptions of the brutality and violence that characterized the Spanish Conquest, but to different ends. While Casas intended his descriptions to serve as protests and to incite reform, Bernal Díaz seems matter-of-fact about the

necessity of violently quelling native opposition and condemns what he saw as the inherent savagery already within Aztec culture. Despite their different attitudes toward the Indians, both Casas and Díaz record important insights into pre-Conquest indigenous culture.

ÁLVAR NÚÑEZ CABEZA DE VACA AND GARCILASO DE LA VEGA

Cabeza de Vaca and de la Vega have been described as among the earliest *mestizo* writers. While Cabeza de Vaca was more a "cultural" *mestizo*, because he was not actually of mixed racial background, de la Vega was the child of an interracial marriage and was raised biculturally. Both writers lay claim to the authority of native views and knowledge, and both were interested in the role of the "white captive" who is at least partially acculturated into native society. They both left the Americas and spent their later years in Europe and, in Cabeza de Vaca's case, in North Africa. Despite their physical distance from the New World, they wrote extensively about the effects of colonization and tried to serve as advocates for the native populations which were being exploited and destroyed.

SAMUEL DE CHAMPLAIN AND ADRIAEN VAN DER DONCK

Champlain and Van der Donck offer insight into the colonial practices of France and Holland during the age of exploration and colonization. Their accounts of the importance of fur and lumber provide an interesting counterpoint to the Spanish interest in gold, slaves, and spices. While Champlain was a well-respected governor and important leader in his colony, Van der Donck occupied a more tenuous position among his countrymen, a distinction that colors their narratives. You may want to guide students toward a discussion of why the Spanish American and British American colonies, rather than French or Dutch, have been seen as having a greater impact on the shape of American culture. Is such a view justified or does it merely reflect regional bias?

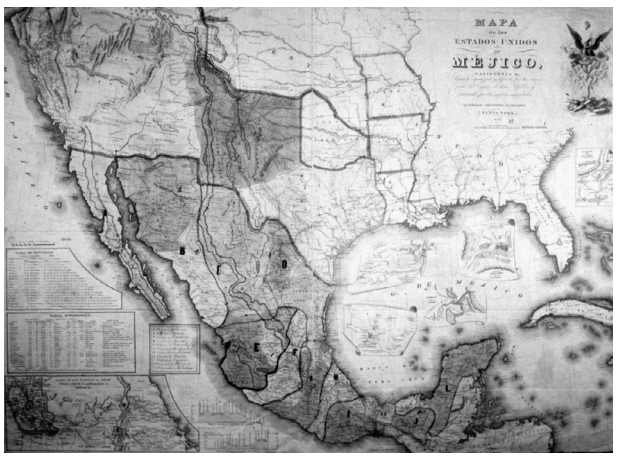
AMERICO PAREDES AND GLORIA ANZALDÚA

Paredes and Anzaldúa represent the twentieth-century Chicano/a and *mestizo/a* movements to celebrate the geographical and cultural heritage of the borderlands between the United States. and Mexico. Both express the plurality of their mixed identity by working in multiple genres—Paredes in musicology, fiction, and cultural criticism and Anzaldúa in poetry, memoir, political theory, and cultural criticism. Anzaldúa offers a feminist and queer reworking of the concerns that occupied Paredes and other early Chicano activists. Her work is dedicated to providing a voice to oppressed women of color in the border regions and to exploring the role of queers in Chicano/a culture and in the construction of America more broadly.

CORE CONTEXTS

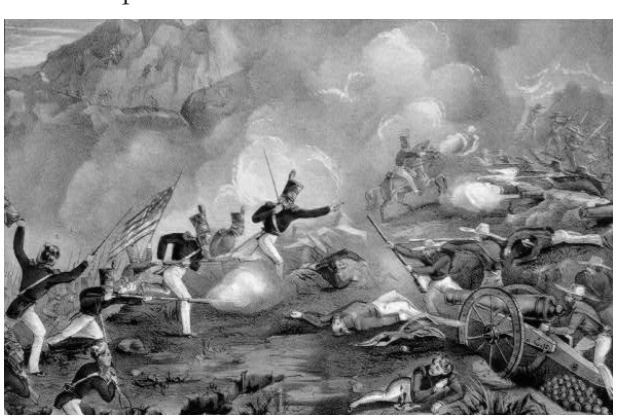
Shared Spaces: Contact Zones and Borderlands

Gloria Anzaldúa has compared the U.S./Mexico border to an "open wound" that violently splits homes, bodies, and cultures. But while the physical demarcation of the border may be a space of divisiveness and pain, the regions on either side of the border—the "Borderlands," as Anzaldúa calls them—are vibrant, dynamic places of creation and innovation. Artistic, political, and cultural practices in the borderlands blend pre-Conquest, Indian, and European heritage to form new, syncretic traditions. (In perhaps the best-known example of this syncretism, the unique version of Catholicism found in the American Southwest and Mexico incorporates pre-Conquest Indian beliefs, figures, and symbols into European Catholic rituals and tenets.) Because the geographic placement of a national border is always arbitrary and artificial, the zones on either side of it contradict the notion that people and cultures can be kept separate or distinct from one another. Instead, borderlands are permeable places where traditions interconnect and cultures overlap. They are spaces marked by conflict, violence, and hatred, but they can also produce cooperation, innovation, and hybridity.



[5615] Anonymous, *Disturnell Map of Mexico* (c. 1850), courtesy of the Benson Latin American Collection, the University of Texas, Austin.

When European explorers first landed in the New World, they crossed previously intact boundaries, bringing cultures that had been separated geographically and historically into contact with one another for the first time. Scholar Mary Louise Pratt has coined the term **contact zone** to describe the space of this kind of meeting. As Pratt puts it, a contact zone is an area in which previously separated peoples "come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict." Although unequal power relations characterized contact zones in the New World, with Europeans usually asserting dominance over native peoples, contact is never a one-way phenomenon. The interactive, improvisational nature of contact necessarily creates subjects who are impacted by relations with one another within a mutually constituted experience. The concept of **transculturation** usefully expresses the complicated power relations at work within the contact zone. A term coined by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, transculturation refers to a process through which "members of subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted by a dominant culture." Transculturation emphasizes the agency involved in cultural change, as well as the loss that accompanies cul-



[5761] N. Currier, *The Battle of Sacramento* (1847), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-1966].

[6587] Walter Barnes Studio, *A Young Paredes with His Guitar* (n.d.), courtesy of the University of Texas, Austin.

"SHARED SPACES" WEB ARCHIVE

[5615] Anonymous, *Disturnell Map of Mexico* (c. 1850), courtesy of the Benson Latin American Collection, the University of Texas, Austin. Although the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo officially ended the expansionist Mexican-American War in 1848, disputes continued between the Mexican and United States governments concerning, among other issues, the border of Texas.

[5761] N. Currier, *The Battle of Sacramento* (1847), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-1966]. Americans charge against Mexicans during the battle near Rancho Sacramento, just north of Chihuahua, Mexico, on February 28, 1847. The heroism and forcefulness of the American soldiers contrast with the limpness of the Mexican forces and reflect American biases.

[6387] Jose Suarez, *Corrido: Venimos de Matamoros* [We Come from Matamoros] (1939), courtesy of the Library of Congress, American Memory. The alternate title for this Spanish-language *corrido*, which features vocals and guitar accompaniment, is "Bandit

tural acquisition. In these ways, "transculturation" differs from the older terms "assimilation" and "acculturation," which emphasize a more one-way transmission of culture from the colonizer to the colonized, from the dominant to the marginalized. The concept of transculturation makes clear that different groups living in contact zones do not share the *same* experience or necessarily see their relationship with one another in the same way. One need only examine the markedly different perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico offered by the Indian-authored codices and European-authored narratives to appreciate the profound disjunctions and misunderstandings that separated indigenous peoples and European colonizers. It is precisely these disjunctions—the presence of multiple, diverse, and often hostile viewpoints—that give rise to the dynamism of contact zones.

Eventually, centuries of war, intermarriage, rape, slavery, and disease created a mixed culture in what had once been the contact zone of the New World. As conquerors and conquered merged, a new *mestizo* identity (a blending of Indian, European, and African heritage) was created in South America, Mexico, and what is today the southwestern United States.

By the nineteenth century, *mestizo* culture in northern Mexico was changed dramatically when European Americans began moving into the areas bordering and within Mexico, eventually annexing Texas for themselves. After the Mexican-American War, the United States and Mexico adopted the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), which settled the location of the boundary between the nations at the Rio Bravo (or Rio Grande) River. The new boundary ran through the center of what had once been the Mexican province of Nuevo Santander, separating people who had long thought of one another as neighbors. Unhappy with what felt like an unnatural boundary, people in the region continued to cross the river to trade, travel, entertain one another, and practice their religion.

In the early twentieth century, the United States began to create and enforce stricter regulations in an attempt to control trade and movement over the border. In times of economic hardship, the United States deported Mexican and Mexican American workers, even deporting American citizens of Mexican descent during the Great Depression of the 1930s. (Ironically, the government performed a radical about-face and began encouraging Mexican workers to cross the border when the United States suffered from a labor shortage during World War II.) Despite rigid regulations, people on both sides of the border did and continue to collaborate on resisting and finding ways around the rules that order trade and social relations between Mexico and the United States. The borderlands have always been spaces of subversion, giving rise to patterns of illegal immigration and smuggling. These kinds of challenges to border regulations are recounted and celebrated in the *corridos*, or border ballads, that are sung in the region (see Unit 5).

As the stories recorded in the *corridos* testify, government regula-

tions can never control the permeability of the borderlands. Music, food, language, fashion, and religious practices unite people on both sides of the border in everyday cultural experiences, and the borderlands continue to be spaces of dynamic transculturation and innovation. The *mestizo* identity formed within this space is always in flux, reflecting the complexity and diversity of border culture. Contemporary *mestizo* and *mestiza* writers like Gloria Anzaldúa strive to represent the breadth and hybridity of life in the borderlands, developing innovative narratives that reflect the decentered, many-sided quality of life in the region. In this way, *mestizo* identity challenges the artificial boundary imposed by the official border; in Anzaldúa's words, "the skin of the earth is seamless."

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What is a "contact zone"?

Comprehension: What are "borderlands"?

Comprehension: What is transculturation? Why is it important for understanding the Chicano borderlands?

Comprehension: Historically, what kinds of conflict have been central to the culture of the U.S./Mexico border region?

Context: Listen to some of the *corridos* in the archive. What values do they espouse? How do they represent life in the borderlands?

Context: When Cabeza de Vaca traveled through what is today the American Southwest, there were no national borders, but he certainly experienced contact, and participated in intercultural trade, with a variety of Indian groups. How might Cabeza de Vaca's narrative be understood as a prehistory to the culture that would eventually develop in the borderlands? How does the absence of a clear national border make his experience different from that of later inhabitants of the borderlands?

Context: Do a close reading of the photo of the El Paso Barrio. What landmarks attest to the hybrid nature of the neighborhood? To what extent does the photo depict a scene of radical inequality and conflict, and to what extent is it celebratory of the neighborhood's culture?

Exploration: Why do Americans have such different attitudes toward the Canadian and Mexican borders? Is there a border culture around the Canadian border?

Exploration: What characteristics might some neighborhoods in cities that are not near the Mexican border share with the borderlands? Does a location have to be on an actual national border to be characterized by hybridity, conflict, and cultural and commercial trade?

Exploration: Should the seventeenth-century Massachusetts Puritan colonies be considered contact zones? Why or why not?

Trouble on the Rio Grande Border 1915."

[6587] Walter Barnes Studio, *A Young Paredes with His Guitar* (n.d.), courtesy of the University of Texas, Austin. This photograph shows Americo Paredes strumming his guitar. Paredes devoted a good deal of his life to the study of Mexican border ballads, or *corridos*.

[6708] Judith F. Baca, *Pieces of Stardust* (1992), courtesy of the Social and Public Art Resource Center. Baca is an acclaimed muralist whose work is based on the belief that art can be a forum for social dialogue.

[6709] Judith F. Baca, *350,000 Mexican Americans Deported* segment from *The Great Wall of Los Angeles* (c. 1980), courtesy of the Social and Public Art Resource Center. Since 1976, muralist Baca has worked as the founder and artistic director of the Social and Public Art Resource Center in Los Angeles. She has headed a number of large-scale projects dealing with interracial relations.

[7584] Anonymous, *Florentine Codex*, Book 12, plate 40 (1500–99), courtesy of the School of American Research and the University of Utah Press. One of a series of plates showing Spanish soldiers marching from Itztapalapan to Tenochitlan. Assembled in the 1540s by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, the *Florentine Codex* contains a mixture of Nahuatl (the language of the Aztec peoples) and pictographic illustrations describing Aztec society and culture.

[7746] Danny Lyon, *Young Men of the Second Ward, El Paso's Classic "Barrio" Near the Mexican Border* (n.d.) courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration. Photograph by Danny Lyon for the Environmental Protection Agency's *Documerica* project. Lyon, one of the most creative documentary photographers of the late twentieth century, photographed the Rio Grande Valley and the Chicano barrio of South El Paso, Texas.

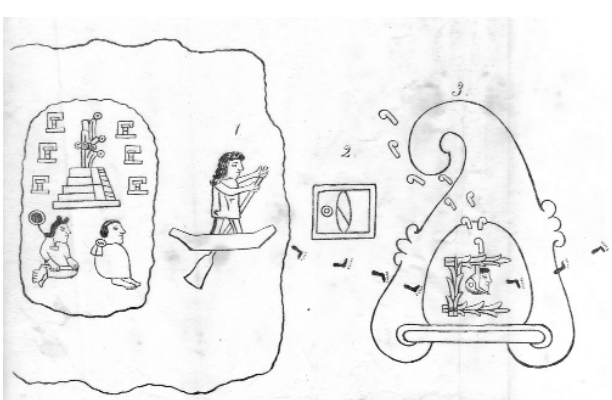
[7750] Danny Lyon, *Chicano Teenager in El Paso's Second Ward. A Classic "Barrio" Which Is Slowly Giving Way to Urban Renewal* (1972), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration. Another Lyon photo for the Environmental Protection Agency's

Documerica project. Lyon photographed the Rio Grande Valley and the Chicano barrio of South El Paso, Texas.
[7942] José Suarez and Joe K. Wells, *Corrido de las Elecciones de Brownsville* (1939), courtesy of the Library of Congress [AFC 1939/001 2610b1]. Audio file of a *corrido* composed by Benino Sandoval, based on the true story of Carlo Guillen, a noted bandit.
[7974] Janjapp Dekker, *Sandra Cisneros with Virgen de Guadalupe Boots* (n.d.), courtesy of *El Andar Magazine*. Here, Cisneros wears boots with pictures of La Virgen de Guadalupe, a vision of the Virgin Mary that appeared to an Indian convert in the sixteenth century.
[9061] N. Currier, *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe: Our Lady of Guadalupe* (1848), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-2890]. This image shows a fairly Anglicized version of La Virgen de Guadelupe, buoyed by an angel.

Writing without Words: A Native American View of Culture and the Conquest

While European writing systems rely primarily on phonetic alphabets, the written records of Native Americans used a combination of phonetic, pictographic, and ideographic transcription. For example, the Sioux recorded their exploits on buffalo hides, Algonquian and Iroquioan peoples used wampum, the ancient Incans used a complex knotting system called *quipu*, and Mayans often painted and carved their glyphs on their architecture. The Mesoamerican Aztec (or Nahua) peoples tended to preserve records in accordion-style books that were fashioned from animal skin or fig bark (*amatl*) and kept in vast libraries. After the Spanish Conquest these records were often painted on cloth. Today, these books are often referred to as ***lienzos***, the Spanish word for linen, or as **codices**, a term that highlights the fact that they were written by hand, rather than printed. Originally the codices were written purely in indigenous scripts, but after the Conquest they were often combined with Nahuatl or Spanish written in the Roman alphabet. An elite class of scribes drawn primarily from Mesoamerican nobility created the codices. When the Spaniards entered the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán in 1519, they systematically burnt the libraries and destroyed the codices, at least in part out of fear of what they contained. The few surviving pre-Conquest records and the six hundred remaining codices, written just after the Conquest, continue to stun readers with their visual and verbal beauty and provide an important counternarrative to the stories told by the Spanish conquistadors.

Aztec histories are another primary resource for understanding indigenous culture and life in New Spain. Scholar Elizabeth Boone has identified three primary genres of Aztec histories: cartographic histories, *res gestae*, and annals. Cartographic histories such as the *Codex Boturini* organize Aztec histories around a geographic narrative. The *Codex Boturini* tells the story of the migration legend of the Aztec peoples as they left their homeland Atzlán ("land or place of wings" or "land of herons") in the present-day southwestern United States in 1 Tecpatl (1064 C.E.) and moved south to finally settle in Tenochtitlán in the Valley of Mexico (around 1325 C.E.). The opening sequence of the codex depicts an archetypal Aztec man and the goddess Chimalma (identified by the round shield attached by a line to her head) sitting on the far left in the Aztec homeland of Aztlán. From here we see the Aztecs leaving by boat in the year 1 Tecpatl (1 Flint) to travel to the cave of Curl Mountain (Colhuacan), where the god Huitzilopochtli was discovered. Footprints mark the direction the people traveled, and tonguelike scrolls ascend heavenward to mark the directions given by the god. This cartographic history differs from Western maps in several key ways: while Aztec maps tend to be relational,



[7801] Anonymous, *Codex Boturini* [sheet 1] (c. 1521–40?), from *Codex Boturini: An Inquiry into the Origin of the Antiquities of America*, by John Delafield, courtesy of the University of Oregon.

participatory, and situational, Western maps from the same period tend to be objective, distanced, and abstract.

A second important genre in Mesoamerican history is *res gestae*, or "deeds done." These histories focus on the accomplishments of either the Aztecs as a group or an individual great personage. Two important post-Conquest manuscripts that employ the *res gestae* strategy are Book Twelve of the *Florentine Codex* and the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*. Assembled in the 1540s by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, the *Florentine Codex* contains a mixture of Nahuatl (the language of the Aztec peoples) and pictographic illustrations describing Aztec society and culture. Book Twelve depicts the deeds of Cortés and the Conquest of Mexico as they were described to Sahagún by Nahuatl-speaking elders and nobility. The book was illustrated by Aztec scribes in a style that reflected a mixture of pre-Conquest manuscript traditions and European illustration convention. For example, speaking is represented by a small, curled speech-scroll moving between people, an icon used in pre-Conquest manuscripts. The *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* provides an interesting counternarrative to the *Florentine Codex*. Transcribed in the mid-sixteenth century by Diego Muñoz de Camargo, a first generation *mestizo*, the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* is based on wall paintings depicting the arrival of Cortés and the fall of Tenochtitlán recorded in the homes of Tlaxcalan royalty. These paintings served as a mnemonic device for poets who sang the story of the Conquest. Tlaxcala was a rival city-state of Tenochtitlán; consequently, the narrative lauds the role of the Tlaxcalans, as well as Doña Marina, in enabling the conquest of the Aztec capital.

[7125] Anonymous, *Florentine Codex*, plate 50 (1500–99), courtesy of the School of American Research and the University of Utah Press.

A third genre in Mesoamerican histories is the annals, which organize their narratives around yearly events, such as payments of tribute and which record the calendar year. Years appear in Aztec writings as icons with a double-bordered square. One of the most common recurrent year glyphs is 1 Tecpatl (1 Flint)—symbolized by a small double circle next to a long oval with a diagonal line (a flint knife). 1 Flint was a crucial year for the Aztecs as it was the year in which many great undertakings began, including the migration from Atzlán. Tribute records such as those found in the *Huejotzingo Codex* are helpful for understanding the material culture of the Aztecs as well as the transformation from Aztec empire to the *encomienda* system after the Conquest. To a certain extent, other codices emphasize a temporal progression as well. For example, phonetic year glyphs in squares accompany the travels of the Aztec throughout the *Codex Boturini*. These glyphs, along with Aztec calendars, reminded the Aztecs of the cyclical nature of time and the recurrence of cycles of conquest and destruction. Thus the Aztecs often recorded the Spanish Conquest not as the end of an era, but merely as a predictable catastrophe that echoed earlier troubles and would be followed by a period of renewal and power.

[8015] Anonymous, *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* [title page] (1890) from *Homenjae a Cristobal Colon. Antiguedades Mexicanas; Publicadas por la Junta Colombina de Mexico en el Cuarto Centenario del Descubrimiento de America*, courtesy of the University of Oregon.

"WRITING WITHOUT WORDS" WEB ARCHIVE

[3191] Samuel de Champlain, *Sketch of Wampanoag Wigwams at Plymouth* (1605), courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. The Wampanoag, meaning "Eastern people," probably numbered around 12,000 just before contact. They lived in small bands in beehive-shaped huts loosely clustered into villages as shown in this sketch. English settlers in the Plymouth colony originally modeled their dwellings after these highly efficient native homes, but soon abandoned them in favor of "proper" British-style housing.

[5214] Anonymous, Iroquois wampum belt (n.d.), courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Wampum, usually found in bead form and made from quahog shells found along the southern New England coast, was an important item for exchange and political dealings among Indians. After European settlement, it came to be used as a type of currency.

[6276] Willis Laurence James, *I'll Fly Away* (1943), courtesy of the Library of Congress [AFS 7043b1]. This African American Sorrow Song provides an interesting counterpart to the Nahuatl (Aztec) songs about the conquest of Tenochtitlán (Mexico City). Both traditions helped bind a community together and express the traumas of life under colonial rule.

[7125] Anonymous, *Florentine Codex*, Plate 50 (1500–99), courtesy of the School of American Research and the University of Utah Press. Here, the Spanish are shown looting Moctezuma's treasure house. Assembled in the 1540s by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, the *Florentine Codex* contains a mixture of Nahuatl (the language of the Aztec peoples) and pictographic illustrations describing Aztec society and culture.

[7370] Anonymous, Sheet from the *Huejotzingo Codex* [4 of 8] (1531), courtesy of the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division. In 1531, the people of Huejotzingo asked conqueror Hernán Cortés to initiate a lawsuit against the high court of New Spain

Meso-American writings are complemented by a rich and beautiful poetic tradition that was preserved primarily through oral transmission. Most Nahuatl (Aztec) poetry can be categorized as epic, dramatic, or lyric. Miniature epics such as "Foundation of Mexico in 1325" provide an intriguing view into life in the Aztec empire and are useful companions to the history recounted in the *Codex Boturini*. Lyric poems such as "I cry, I am sad . . ." provide examples of some of the broader aesthetic hallmarks of Aztec verse: most importantly, expressive metaphors, the use of parallel phrases in which the second half echoes the first half ("I cry, I am sad"), and the notion of *in Xóchitl, in Cuícatl* ("the flower, the song"). On the Aztec calendar, Xochiquetzal, the goddess of flower and song, is also the goddess of the arts and symbolized creation, nobility, and life. Through her, songs become a form of spiritual communication of which flowers are only one reminder. Dramatic poetry such as the "Hymn of the Dead" give us insights into the songs that might have accompanied the wall paintings in Tlaxcala or that were sung in Tenochtitlán after the fall. These songs provide a useful parallel to the Sorrow Songs sung by African American slaves in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Unit 7). Like African American Sorrow Songs, these poems helped bind a community together and express the traumas of life under colonial rule.

In the twentieth century, Aztec culture and literature have played an important role in the formulation of Chicano nationalism and the style of Chicano poetry. In March 1969, Chicano nationalists drafted "El Plan Espiritual de Atzlán" (The Spiritual Plan of Atzlán). For Chicano nationalists, reclaiming an Aztec heritage is more than a way to acknowledge the long-standing claim of Mexican Americans to Atzlán, the southwestern United States. It is also a way to lay claim to a history of power, aesthetics, and one of the greatest cultures that has ever existed; hence many Chicano writers include references to Aztec history, literature, and culture in their own writings. In *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Gloria Anzaldúa claims her work is built upon "*Tlilli, Tlapalli*: The Path of the Red and Black Ink" created by the Aztecs. For Anzaldúa, the Aztecs represent an alternate aesthetic heritage upon which her work can be based. Along with Anzaldúa, Corky Gonzales, Pat Mora, Lorna de Cervantes (Unit 15), Francisco X. Alarcón, and Cordelia Candelaria are only a few of the Chicano/a writers who have placed themselves in this rich literary tradition.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What are the main genres of Mesoamerican history? What is an example of each?

Comprehension: What are some of the genres and hallmarks of Aztec poetry? How was this poetry originally used in Aztec culture?

Context: Use the genres of Aztec history to categorize Spanish writings about the Conquest. Do the works of Garcilaso de la Vega,

Columbus, de las Casas, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, and Cabeza de Vaca resemble cartographic histories, annals, or *res gestae*? What do these genres tell us about the focus of history in Spanish American culture? How is this focus similar to or different from Aztec historical values?

Context: Compare the excerpts from the *Florentine Codex* and the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* found in the archive. Who or what is the focus of each work? Through what pictorial conventions do the works develop this emphasis?

Context: How do the pictorial texts featured in the archive compare to European texts in which writing is accompanied by illustrations? Might we consider Samuel de Champlain, who is noted for the "storyboard" quality of his illustrated narratives, to be using a form of pictorial writing? Why or why not?

Exploration: Compare "The Ruin of Mexico in Tlatelolco" to African American Sorrow Songs such as "I'll Fly Away" (Unit 7). How would you characterize the aesthetic of these two traditions? What sorrows does each group express? Where does their hope lie?

Exploration: Compare the view of the Conquest of Mexico presented in the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*, the *Florentine Codex*, the "Hymn of the Dead," and the "The Ruins of Mexico in Tlatelolco" with the Conquest of California by Anglos in the works of María Amparo Ruiz de Burton and John Rollin Ridge (Unit 5). What was the Conquest like for the conquered people in these texts? How are the modes of conquest similar and different?

Exploration: Compare the Nahuatl poetry in the archive with the poems of Lorna Dee Cervantes (Unit 15), Alberto Ríos (Unit 12), and Gloria Anzaldúa. What Aztec influences do you notice in either the style or the content of the contemporary poets?

Exploration: What do pictographic and ideographic writing systems gain from their ability to communicate visually as well as phonetically?

Exploration: How do the pictographic writings of Native Americans indigenous to Mexico and South America compare to the pictographic, autobiographical records composed by North American Indians (see the Core Context "Moving Pictures: Native American Self-Narration" in Unit 8)?

Model Women: La Virgen de Guadalupe, La Llorona, and La Malinche as Archetypes of Mexican Femininity

In Mexican culture, female identity has traditionally been structured around three principal archetypes: La Virgen de Guadalupe (a vision of the Virgin Mary that appeared to an Indian convert in the sixteenth century), La Llorona (a woman who, after being spurned by her lover, killed her children), and La Malinche (the Indian woman who served as Hernán Cortés's translator, negotiator, and mistress during the Conquest of Mexico). While these figures have usually

concerning the unjust use of indigenous labor and tribute. As part of this petition, eight pages of drawings were made on amatl (fig bark); these drawings are known today as the *Huejotzingo Codex*.

[7561] Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, *Florentine Codex*, Book 12, plate 45 (1500–99), courtesy of the School of American Research and the University of Utah Press. This plate shows Spanish soldiers leading Montezuma into the great palace.

[7586] Anonymous, *Florentine Codex*, Book 12, plate 68 (1500–99), courtesy of the School of American Research and the University of Utah Press. This plate is one of five which portray the massacre of participants in the Feast of Uizilopochtli. The *Florentine Codex* was illustrated by Aztec scribes in a style that reflected a mixture of pre-Conquest manuscript traditions and European illustration conventions. For example, speaking is represented by a small curled speech scroll moving between people, an icon used in pre-Conquest manuscripts.

[7801] Anonymous, *Codex Boturini* [sheet 1] (c. 1521–40?) from *Codex Boturini: An Inquiry into the Origin of the Antiquities of America*, by John Delafield, courtesy of the University of Oregon. Cartographic histories such as the *Codex Boturini* organize Aztec histories around a geographic narrative. The *Codex Boturini* tells the migration legend of the Aztec peoples as they left their homeland *Atzlán* ("land or place of wings" or "land of herons").

[8015] Anonymous, *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* [title page] (1890) from *Homenjae a Cristobal Colon. Antiguedades Mexicanas; Publicadas por la Junta Colombina de Mexico en el Cuarto Centenario del Descubrimiento de America,* courtesy of the University of Oregon. The *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* provides an interesting counternarrative to the *Florentine Codex*. Transcribed in the mid-sixteenth century by Diego Muñoz de Camargo, a first-generation *mestizo*, the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* is based on wall paintings depicting the arrival of Cortés and the fall of Tenochtitlán recorded in the homes of Tlaxcalan royalty.

[9090] *I Cry, I Am Sad* (n.d.), courtesy of *La Literatura de los Aztecas*, by Angel M.

Garibay and Cheyenne Jones, translator. This lyric Nahautl poem shows some of the most pervasive aesthetic attributes of Aztec verse, including expressive metaphors and the use of parallel syntax.

[9091] *The Ruin of Mexico in Tlatelolclo* (n.d.), courtesy of *La Literatura de los Aztecas*, by Angel M. Garibay and Cheyenne Jones, transllator. Nahautl poem. The Aztecs had a rich and beautiful poetic tradition that was preserved primarily through oral transmission.

represented a very limited spectrum of possibilities for women, Guada-lupe, La Llorona, and La Malinche have also shown themselves to be flexible myths. They have been manipulated and restructured to meet the political and spiritual needs of different cultural moments in Mexican history.

Since her appearance in the sixteenth century, La Virgen de Guadalupe has been one of the most powerful symbols of Mexican national identity and pride. According to a legend first published in 1648, La Virgen de Guadalupe appeared several times in 1531 to Juan Diego, an Indian who had recently converted to Catholicism. She appeared on a hill outside Mexico City and spoke to him in his native language of Nahuatl, instructing him to lead his community in building a shrine to her on the hill. When the bishop of the Catholic Church in Mexico City demanded physical proof of Juan Diego's vision, the Virgen appeared to him again and told him to gather roses in his *tilma*, or peasant cloak, and to bring them to the bishop as evidence. When Juan Diego unwrapped his *tilma* to present the flowers to the bishop, he found the Virgen's image imprinted on the fabric. The *tilma* with La Virgen de Guadalupe's image hangs in the Basilica in Mexico City, where it is an object of pilgrimages and veneration. Today, the image of La Virgen—a young woman with dark hair, an olive complexion, humble downcast eyes, her hands clasped in prayer, and an angel at her feet—is reproduced on everything from T-shirts to candles to bumperstickers to tattoos.

In the colonial era, La Virgen de Guadalupe was celebrated as a long-suffering, loving mother and heralded as a symbol of obedience, forgiveness, and peace. The circumstances of her appearance were cited as evidence of Mexico City's favored status as an outpost of the Spanish empire. More recently, she has lost some of her passive, colonial attributes and evolved into an emblem of liberation, national pride, and Indian heritage. *Mestizo* activists have celebrated the Virgen's ties to Tonantzin, a pre-Conquest Aztec earth mother deity. In their view, La Virgen de Guadalupe is best understood as an amalgamation of Christian and pre-Columbian religious imagery, since she appeared to Juan Diego on a hill that had originally served as the site of a shrine to Tonantzin, wears a cloak decorated with astral symbols sacred to the Aztecs, and has a dark complexion and some Native American facial features. Feminists including Gloria Anzaldúa and Sandra Cisneros have celebrated La Virgen de Guadalupe as a mystical, life-giving earth mother who symbolizes the power of womanhood and provides an alternative to more patriarchal spiritual figures.

[7124] Anonymous, *Florentine Codex*, plate 49 (1500–99), courtesy of the School of American Research and the University of Utah Press.

Just as the image of La Virgen de Guadalupe has been manipulated and transformed to accommodate different political and cultural needs, the myth of the female phantom La Llorona has taken on many forms within Mexican culture. Translated as "The Weeping Woman," La Llorona began as an oral legend about a ghostly woman who can be heard wailing for her lost children. In some versions of the story, La Llorona is doomed to wander and weep to expiate her own guilt for murdering her children. The motivations for the mur-

ders range from depression or anger at being abandoned by their father (who is sometimes portrayed as an Anglo), to the need to conceal an illegitimate birth, to a selfish rejection of motherhood. In other versions, she is portrayed as a loving mother who loses her children in a tragic accident or to foul play. She is almost always represented as wandering near lakes and rivers, since in most versions of the myth her children died by drowning. At its most basic level, the story serves as a cautionary tale to keep young children away from dangerous bodies of water. At the same time, it constructs an archetype of failed motherhood and tragic femininity.

In some versions of the La Llorona story, the phantom woman appears in the streets of cities and towns and lures young men into following her, usually with tragic consequences. In these versions she represents a dangerous feminine sexuality, out to punish or destroy male pursuers just as she destroyed her children. Occasionally, La Llorona is conflated with the spirit of La Malinche, who is wailing because she is remorseful about having betrayed the native Mexican people by assisting Cortés. These versions of the myth reinforce stereotypes of women and women's sexuality as untrustworthy and traitorous.

The fact that La Llorona has been frequently conflated with La Malinche testifies to the symbolic importance of the Malinche legend. Identified as a slave, a princess, a *mestiza*, a cultural and linguistic translator, a mother, and a traitor, the figure of La Malinche functions as a powerful amalgamation of anxieties about race, gender, class, and nationality. According to Bernal Díaz del Castillo's account of La Malinche (whom he calls by her Spanish name, Doña Marina), she was born into a royal family but sold into slavery when her mother and stepfather decided her existence might threaten their son's position as sole heir to their throne. They gave La Malinche to a group of itinerant traders from Xicalango, who then sold her to a Tobascan chief, who in turn gave her as a gift to the conquistador Hernán Cortés. Since she had lived among so many different tribes, La Malinche had an extraordinary facility with native languages. Her rapid acquisition of Spanish made her an extremely valuable asset to Cortés, who called her *"mi lengua"* ("my tongue" or "my language") and used her to negotiate with the tribes he encountered on his march through Mexico. She also became his secretary, mistress, the mother of his child, and eventually the wife of one of his officers.

While European explorers' portraits of La Malinche are mostly positive, Mexican and Chicano writers have traditionally seen her as a traitor who sold out her own people to help Cortés destroy the Aztec Empire and conquer all of Mexico for Spain. Both she and Martín, the *mestizo* son she had by Cortés, are often viewed with contempt for embracing foreign domination and turning their backs on their native culture. In actuality, La Malinche's role was probably far less important to the fall of the Aztec Empire than Cortés's military skills, the Aztec chief Montezuma's weakness, the military contributions of rival indigenous tribes, and the spread of European

[9061] N. Currier, *nuestra Señora de Guadalupe: Our Lady of Guadalupe* (1848), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-2890].

diseases that decimated native populations. In any case, La Malinche had been repeatedly sold among tribes as a slave and thus probably did not perceive any particular group as "her people." Indeed, she may have felt that she was working with Cortés to conquer groups she herself identified as enemies for holding her in slavery.

Despite the facts of La Malinche's involvement with Cortés and the Conquest, she has functioned for centuries as a scapegoat for the destruction of Native American cultures in Mexico. Writer and critic Octavio Paz, for example, saw La Malinche as the central representative of a negative tradition of subjugation and cultural impoverishment that began with the Conquest. Assigning the pejorative name *"La Chingada"* ("the violated one"), Paz associated her with a history of shame, violation, and defamation. She is a symbolic reminder that indigenous people were "violated" by Spanish invaders, and that a woman enabled this violation (importantly, the word *"malinchista"* has come to mean "traitor" in Spanish). In this reading, La Malinche acquires the mythical status of a "Mexican Eve," who has brought about the "fall" of her people through her own selfishness or heedlessness.

Recently, feminist cultural critics have begun to resist such portraits of La Malinche, both because they are historically inaccurate and because they promote misogynistic attitudes toward women. Instead, they have attempted to rehabilitate the myth of La Malinche in order to celebrate her strength, flexibility, intelligence, and extraordinary skill at mediating between cultures. As a figure of mediation, she provides a model to *mestizas*, whose identity is built upon balancing a complex, multifaceted heritage. Chicana writer Cherrie Moraga has written a play about La Malinche, and she is a popular and recurrent figure in Chicana poetry.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Why do some critics understand La Virgen de Guadalupe as an amalgamation of Christian and indigenous pre-Columbian religious traditions? What characteristics mark her as a particularly Native American figure?

Comprehension: Why was La Malinche so valuable to Cortés? In what ways did she help him in his drive to conquer the Aztecs?

Context: How does Bernal Díaz del Castillo represent La Malinche in *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*? How does his portrayal of her role in the Conquest compare to later representations of her "betrayal"?

Context: Examine the drawings of La Malinche with Cortés in the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* featured in the archive. How does the *Lienzo* portray La Malinche's work as Cortés's *"lengua"* or "tongue"? What other roles does Malinche seem to occupy in the drawings' representation of her position within Cortés's army?

Context: Compare the notions of womanhood present in Garcilaso de la Vega's *Florida of the Inca* to those at work in the narratives of Bernal Díaz del Castillo and Cabeza de Vaca. What role does

"MODEL WOMEN" WEB ARCHIVE

[1375] Theodor de Bry, *The Widows Approach the Chief* (1591), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-75947]. A large group of new widows supplicate their chief, as Spanish soldiers stand in the background.

[7124] Anonymous, *Florentine Codex*, plate 49 (1500–99), courtesy of the School of American Research and the University of Utah Press. This plate shows a Spanish soldier looting the treasure house of Moctezuma. The *Florentine Codex* was illustrated by Aztec scribes in a style that reflected a mixture of pre-Conquest manuscript traditions and European illustration convention.

[7338] Jorge Gonzalea Camarena, *Visit Mexico* [poster] (c. 1940–50), courtesy of the Library of Congress, American Memory. A pretty young Mexican woman is shown holding out a bowl of tropical fruits in this poster, which was intended to encourage U.S. tourists to vacation in Mexico.

[7368] Anonymous, Sheet from the *Huejotzingo Codex* [1 of 8] (1531), courtesy of the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division. In 1531, the people of Huejotzingo asked conqueror Hernán Cortés to initiate a lawsuit against the high court of New Spain concerning the unjust use of indigenous labor and tribute. As part of this petition, eight pages of drawings were made on amatl (fig bark); these drawings are known today as the *Huejotzingo Codex*.

[7399] Cortes(?), *La Gran Ciudad de Temixtlan* (1524), courtesy of the Newberry Library, Chicago. This map of the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán is often attributed to Cortés. It is European in style, but the map-view contains information suggesting a native source.

[7402] Anonymous, *Cortés, Montezuma and Dona Marina*, from the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* Facsimile (1890), courtesy of the University of California, Berkeley, and the Bancroft Library. The *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* employs the *res gestae* strategy and provides an interesting counterpoint to the *Florentine Codex*. Here Cortés is depicted with Montezuma and Dona Marina.

[7974] Janjapp Dekker, *Sandra Cisneros with Virgen de Guadalupe*

each of these authors envision for women in the New World? What sorts of feminine behavior do they valorize?

Context: How does Gloria Anzaldúa's construction of a "new *mestiza* consciousness" challenge the traditional archetypes of Mexican femininity?

Exploration: The figures of La Virgen de Guadalupe, La Llorona, and La Malinche have historically structured the identities and opportunities available to Mexican and Chicana women. What kinds of archetypes shape the lives of women of other ethnicities in America?

Exploration: In Sandra Cisneros's novel *Woman Hollering Creek*, the creek of the title is named for La Llorona. Why do you think Cisneros makes this reference? How does *The House on Mango Street* (Unit 16) address the issue of cultural stereotypes about Mexican women? To what extent does it revise or accept these stereotypes?

Exploration: Compare the poetry of Lorna Dee Cervantes and Gloria Anzaldúa. How does each revise the myths and ideals that structure Chicana identity?

Boots (n.d.), courtesy of *El Andar Magazine*. Here, Cisneros wears boots with pictures of La Virgen de Guadalupe, a vision of the Virgin Mary that appeared to an Indian convert in the sixteenth century.

[9061] N. Currier, *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe: Our Lady of Guadalupe* (1848), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-2890]. This image shows a fairly Anglicized version of La Virgen de Guadeloupe, buoyed by an angel.

EXTENDED CONTEXTS

Working Wonders: The Experience of "*La Maravilla*/ The Marvelous" in New World Encounters

Bernal Díaz del Castillo begins his *True History of the Conquest of New Spain* with an avowal that he will accurately and authentically describe the conquistadors' experiences in the Aztec Empire: "That which I have myself seen . . . with the help of God I will describe, quite simply, as a fair eyewitness, without twisting events one way or another." As Díaz del Castillo's narrative progresses, however, his promise of full disclosure is troubled at times by his inability to explain or articulate his responses to the radically unfamiliar sights. As he records his approach to the great Aztec city of Tenochtitlán, for example, his powers of description are immobilized by an intense experience of wonder at encountering a spectacle that no European had ever before seen. As he puts it, "We were astounded. . . . Indeed, some of our soldiers asked whether it was not all a dream. . . . It was all so wonderful that I do not know how to describe this first glimpse of things never heard of, seen, or dreamed of before." This experience of astonishment and an accompanying inability to find words to express the experience is characteristic of narratives that depict the first contact between Europeans and indigenous peoples in the New World. As scholar Stephen Greenblatt has claimed, "wonder" is "the central figure in the initial European response to the New World, the decisive emotional and intellectual experience in the presence of radical difference." Narratives that told of the wonder Europeans felt at encounters with the "marvelous" (a

[7511] Anonymous, *Landing of Columbus* (c. 1860–80), courtesy of the Library of Congress.

[2840] John Smith, Illustration from the *Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles . . .* (1632), courtesy of the Robert Dechert Collection, Annenberg Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania.

"WORKING WONDERS" WEB ARCHIVE

[1366] Theodor de Bry, *A Chief of Roanoke* (1590), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-89909]. Full-length, front and back view of a Native American chief, with a river scene in the background.

[2518] Theodor de Bry, *The Town of Pomeiock* (1590), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-54018]. Like many of de Bry's engravings, *The Town of Pomeiock* is based on a watercolor by John White, who accompanied Sir Walter Raleigh on his expedition to found a colony at Roanoke. The engraving shows a native town enclosed by a circular pole fence with two entrances.

[2840] John Smith, Illustration from the *Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles . . .* (1632), courtesy of the Robert Dechert Collection, Annenberg Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. This image shows a scene from Smith's captivity among the Native Americans of Virginia and his subse-

term the Spanish explorers frequently used to represent objects that were radically new or beyond description) could have aspects of horror, pleasure, desire, or fear, but the overwhelming impression was one of amazement and awe.

In narratives of New World exploration, the experience of wonder is triggered by unfamiliarity, and often by a sense of excess, or extreme beauty, or strangeness. The "marvelous" cannot be fit into existing categories of knowledge, leaving viewers almost paralyzed and unable to decide whether they should love, hate, repudiate, or embrace the sight at which they are marveling. When explorers protested that they could not find language to describe the marvelous sights of the New World, those protestations might reflect a sincere loss for words. Nonetheless, such claims could also serve as a useful rhetorical strategy. The discourse of wonder worked at times to represent extreme horror to readers and to dehumanize the natives. Bernal Díaz's gruesome description of the cannibalistic Aztec ritual he witnessed, for example, uses his horror to convey the barbarity of the native Mexicans. Moreover, expressions of wonder could serve as a means to aggrandize the explorers' own deeds and experiences. Columbus acted with calculation in promoting his own reputation and the importance of his expedition when he extravagantly claimed in his letters to Spain that the New World was "fertile to a limitless degree," that the islands he had seen were all "beyond comparison," and "most beautiful, of a thousand shapes . . . and filled with trees of a thousand kinds." His final comment, *"Española es una maravilla"* ("Hispaniola is a marvel"), testifies to the value of what he found and disarms skeptics who might try to detract from his accomplishments. Sometimes, the impulse to promote their discoveries in the New World led narrators to attempt to translate their experiences of wonder into terms of non-wonder—that is, to graft the familiar onto the unfamiliar in order to sell their audiences on the worth of what they found. When Columbus talks about the birds, animals, plants, and resources he found on the islands, he often compares them to their corresponding objects in Europe in order to make his experiences intelligible to his audience. When he writes of hearing nightingales singing on Hispaniola, for instance, he attempts to create a sense of comforting familiarity within the strangeness of the New World: in fact, nightingales are not native to the West Indies, and Columbus could not have heard any singing.

Some exploration narratives displace the experience of wonder onto the natives. Bernal Díaz's claims that the Indians viewed the in Spanish as *"Teules,"* or gods, conveys the difficulty the natives had in reconciling the Europeans with any existing conceptions they had of the earthly or the human. Similarly, Samuel de Champlain recounts that a group of hostile North American Indians freed explorer Etienne Brulé because the unfamiliar necklace he wore (and a fortuitous thunderstorm) convinced them he had divine powers. John Smith used his knowledge of writing and navigational technologies to inspire wonder in the Indians he encountered in Virginia. While it is difficult to know precisely what Native Americans felt when they

first encountered Europeans, since almost all of the accounts of such moments were written by Europeans, it seems likely that they did experience a feeling of wonder when faced with the radical unfamiliarity of European culture. This sense of astonishment may have been one of the few things the Europeans and the Indians could recognize as something they had in common at the moment of contact.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What kinds of sights were considered "marvels" New World explorers?

Context: Examine the de Bry engravings of Native Americans in Virginia featured in the archive. How do the engravings portray people who were, for European viewers, radically unfamiliar? Do the pictures convey a sense of wonder or do they allow viewers to fit the people depicted into knowable categories? How does the artist make the Indians look more familiar to Europeans? How does he represent their "otherness"?

Context: Compare the descriptions of *"la maravilla"* (the marvelous) in Columbus and Bernal Díaz del Castillo's narratives. What are some of the rhetorical advantages of presenting America as marvelous? Whom are the writers trying to persuade and of what?

Exploration: The vision of the Americas as a place of wonder and marvel had important religious implications in that it helped solidify the notion that America was a type of New Jerusalem, an idea that was of particular importance to the New England Puritans (Unit 3). What role do religious associations of the New World play in the writings of the conquistadors? How do these compare to the religious associations at work in Puritan writings?

Exploration: What is the relationship between the experience of wonder and the experience of encountering the "sublime" (discussed in Unit 4)? To what extent has the view of the American landscape and peoples as "marvelous" been crucial to the construction of American identity over time?

quent and legendary rescue by Pocahontas. This event was a central focus of his historical narrative. The full illustration of this panel is available in the *American Passages* Archive [2839].

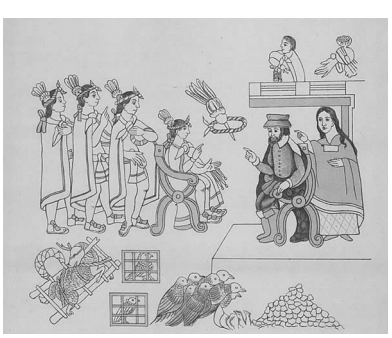
[7399] Cortés(?), *La Gran Ciudad de Temixtlan* (1524), courtesy of the Newberry Library, Chicago. This map of the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán is often attributed to Cortés. It is European in style, but the map-view contains information suggesting a native source.

[7420] Theodor de Bry, *A Weroans, or Chieftain, of Virginia* (1590), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-53338]. This engraving shows full-length, front and back portraits of a Native Virginian chief holding a bow and arrow. In the background is a hunting scene.

[7511] Anonymous, *Landing of Columbus* (c. 1860–80), courtesy of the Library of Congress. This lithograph shows Columbus and members of his crew displaying objects to Native American men and women on shore who seem overcome with curiosity and wonder.

The Romance of Colonization

In his narrative of his third voyage to the Indies, Christopher Columbus arrived at the conclusion that the western hemisphere is not spherical, but "resembles the half of a round pear with a raised stalk . . . like a woman's nipple on a round ball." Columbus's conviction that he had found the "nipple" of the world in the West Indies is perhaps best understood as a particularly fantastic example of the convention of figuring European exploration in terms of an erotic encounter between masculine, European conquerors and the feminized land and peoples of the New World. The prevalence of gendered language in exploration narratives reveals an operative fantasy of the New World as a "virgin bride," beautiful, unspoiled,



[7402] Anonymous, *Cortés, Montezuma and Dona Marina*, from the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* Facsimile (1890), courtesy of the University of California, Berkeley, and the Bancroft Library.

[5245] Salvador Brquez, *Dolores del Rios as Ramona* (1928), courtesy of the *Los Angeles Times*.

passive, and welcoming. By portraying themselves as "lovers" rather than conquerors, European explorers were able to rationalize their forceful—and often violent and brutal—conquest of American lands as an inevitable sexual consummation, desired by both parties involved. Conflating American land with its native inhabitants, this fantasy of conquest as romance relegates both land and Indians to the status of possessions, objects of value but without agency.

The complicated erotics beneath the rhetoric of colonization becomes most visible in the popular and recurring myth of the beautiful Indian maiden or princess who breaks with her own culture in order to affirm her loyalty to, and love for, a European man. One prototype of this myth is Garcilaso de la Vega's narrative of Juan Ortiz's relationship with the daughter of the Indian chief Hirrihuiga. In its celebration of a native woman's decision to disobey her father and rescue a European captive from execution at the hands of her tribe, de la Vega's narrative propounds a fantasy of Indian acceptance of white superiority and Indian willingness to give up traditional culture for European culture. Hirrihuiga's daughter's name is left unrecorded, thus highlighting her status as a generic and mythic ideal of native compliance.

John Smith's story of his rescue at the hands of Pocahontas is probably the most famous and most often retold example of the European tendency to figure conquest as romance. The fact that Pocahontas went on to marry a white man, bear his child, convert to Christianity, travel to England, and assimilate to Anglo culture makes her an ideal figure on which to build a fantasy of native assent to colonization. The story of her decision to fling her body between Smith and the Indian executioners' weapons has become a foundational national myth in the United States. Because it portrays traditional male Native American culture as cruel and barbaric—and glosses over the violence of European conquest by rendering Smith as passive and showing an Indian herself disrupting her tribe's ritual execution—the story symbolically justifies European destruction of Indian culture. The enduring cultural appeal of this national myth is attested to by the paintings and sculptures of Pocahontas that hang in the United States Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., and the success of contemporary representations of her life, such as Disney's 1995 animated film, *Pocahontas*. Crucially, the idealization of romantic relationships between Indian women and their conquerors evades the historical reality that many Native American women were raped, tortured, and murdered by European invaders.

"THE ROMANCE OF COLONIZATION" WEB ARCHIVE

[1369] Theodor de Bry, *Florida Indians Planting Seeds of Beans or Maize* (1591), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-3186]. This engraving shows Timucua men cultivating a field while Timucua women plant corn or beans.

[1371] Theodor de Bry, *Exercises of the Youths* (1591), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-37992]. This engraving shows Native American men shooting arrows, running races, and throwing balls at a target on top of a tall pole.

[1900] John White, *The Manner of Their Fishing* (c. 1585), courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. One of John White's drawings not taken directly from real life: he shows a dip net and spear (daytime fishing techniques) and a fire in a canoe (used to attract fish at night). White combined disparate New World fishing methods and a mix of species in this and other paintings.

[2467] Anonymous, *Pocahontas* [reproduction of 1616 original] (c. 1900–1920), courtesy of the Library

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Why did European explorers and conquerors like to portray the New World as a "virgin bride"? What was at stake in their use of this image?

Context: Examine the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century illustrations of Native American youths featured in archive. How are the Indians portrayed? What kinds of physical characteristics do the artists idealize? How do these drawings participate in the mythologizing of New World inhabitants?

Context: How do the cultural myths that surround La Malinche in Mexico participate in, complicate, or challenge prevalent European and European American fantasies of the romance and erotics of colonization?

Exploration: The story of Pocahontas's rescue of John Smith still resonates in American culture; in 1995, Disney released a successful animated film based on this myth. Why is this story still so appealing to American audiences? How has it been reworked to reflect different values and beliefs in different periods of American culture?

ASSIGNMENTS

Personal Creative Responses

1. *Artist's Workshop:* Draw your own pictographic representation of an event that has been important in your life, using the codices featured in the archive for inspiration. How will you organize the information you wish to present? How will you indicate the chronology of events? The principal characters?
2. *Journal:* Imagine that you are present in the West Indies, Virginia, or Canada when Europeans first land in the area and come into contact with the Native Americans who live there. Write your own account of the contact experience from the perspective of either a European colonizer or an Indian.
3. *Poet's Corner:* Drawing on Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera* for inspiration, compose a personal narrative in which you switch between poetry and prose. How does the use of both genres affect your narrative? What difficulties did you encounter in trying to write both poetry and prose in the same text?
4. *Doing History:* Using a dictionary of Aztec pictographic and phonetic symbols or Donald Robertson's *Mexican Manuscript Painting of the Early Colonial Period*, interpret one of the pieces of pictorial writing in the archive. How does this form of storytelling differ from that Western historiography?
5. *Multimedia Project:* Imagine that you have been asked to make a presentation on the role of women in borderlands and contact zones. What archetypes of femininity structure representations of women? How are women redefining their roles in borderlands?

of Congress. Pocahontas, baptized as "Rebecca" before marrying John Rolfe, is shown in her English garb. The original of this painting was by William Sheppard, dated 1616, at Barton Rectory, Norfolk, England.

[2591] Theodor de Bry, *A Noblewoman of Pomeiock* [*Indian Woman and Young Girl*] (1590), courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. This engraving shows a native woman of the Virginia town of Pomeiock carrying a clay vessel, while a child holds a rattle and a doll. The woman resembles the female figures painted by Renaissance artists like Botticelli.

[3232] John Gadsby Chapman, *Baptism of Pocahontas, 1614* (c. 1837), courtesy of the Library of Congress. The Virginia Company instructed its governors to make conversion of the native population to Christianity a prime objective. Pocahontas, daughter of Powhatan, head of the Powhatan Confederacy, was the most famous early convert. She was baptized in 1614.

[5245] Salvador Brquez, *Dolores del Rios as Ramona* (1928), courtesy of the *Los Angeles Times*. Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* failed to improve treatment of California Indians as she had hoped it would. Instead, the story's romantic depiction of California's Hispanic heritage became firmly entrenched in the mythology of the region.

[7125] Anonymous, *Florentine Codex*, Plate 50 (1500–99), courtesy of the School of American Research and the University of Utah Press. Here, the Spanish are shown looting Moctezuma's treasure house. Assembled in the 1540s by Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, the *Florentine Codex* contains a mixture of Nahuatl (the language of the Aztec peoples) and pictographic illustrations describing Aztec society and culture.

[7402] Anonymous, *Cortés, Montezuma and Doña Marina*, from the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* Facsimile (1890), courtesy of the University of California, Berkeley, and the Bancroft Library. The *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* employs the *res gestae* strategy and provides an interesting counterpoint to the *Florentine Codex*. Here Cortés is depicted with Montezuma and Doña Marina.

[7429] John White, *The Manner of Attire and Painting Themselves, When They Goe to Their General Huntings or at Theire Solemne Feasts* (c. 1585), courtesy of The British Museum. Portrait of an Algonquian Indian (either Secotan or Pomeiooc) from Virginia. Elite families and chiefs were elaborately decorated with paint, beads, and quills to signal their status and power. The body markings are painted for specific occasions, rather than permanently tattooed. The pose, taken from sixteenth-century European portraits, emphasizes the importance of the sitter and the occasion.

Using the *American Passages* archive and slide-show software, create a multimedia presentation in which you explore the opportunities and limitations women have faced when cultures come into contact and conflict.

Problem-Based Learning Projects

1. Imagine that the parties in conflict during the Conquest of Mexico have decided to resolve their differences by hosting a diplomatic summit rather than using force against one another. Divide into groups representing the various parties involved (Cortés, Doña Marina, common footsoldiers like Bernal Díaz del Castillo, Montezuma, Aztec soldiers, and indigenous tribes who had been previously conquered by the Aztecs). Prepare for the summit by making a list of your concerns and demands; then meet as a group and begin the process of diplomacy. How will you resolve territorial disputes? How will you resolve conflicts over resources? Over religion? How will you form a government that will enable all groups to live peacefully in the region? Should some individuals or groups be expelled from the region? If so, whom? Groups may wish to form strategic alliances with one another to carry their points.
2. You have been asked to create a museum honoring the life and legacy of Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca. Form a committee to draw up plans for the museum. Where will you locate it? What kinds of artifacts, images, and information will you feature within it? What points about Cabeza de Vaca's life will you highlight? Who will be your target audience?
3. The indigenous people who inhabited Mexico before the Spanish Conquest have decided to bring La Malinche to court to try her for what they see as her traitorous role in helping the Spanish conquistadors. Divide into groups and prepare her prosecution and defense.

GLOSSARY

Black Legend A widespread perception (especially popular in Protestant countries) that the Spanish colonizers were barbaric in their treatment of the natives. According to this myth, Spanish conquistadors were driven mainly by a lust for gold, and their claims that they were spreading Christianity in the New World were merely hypocritical justifications for their actions. Bartholomé de las Casas's *Brief Relation*, intended to spur reform in Spain, contributed to the spread of the so-called Black Legend in Northern Europe. Colonizers from other European nations often used the Black Legend to self-righteously justify their own repression and exploita-

tion of Native Americans by arguing that their methods were more humane than those of the Spanish.

borderlands The regions on either side of a national border, characterized by their tendency to foster creation and innovation. Because the geographic placement of a national border is always arbitrary and artificial, the zones on either side of the border contradict the notion that people and cultures can be kept separate or distinct from one another. Instead, borderlands are permeable places where traditions interconnect and cultures overlap. They are spaces marked by conflict, violence, and hatred, but they can also produce cooperation, innovation, and hybridity.

Chicano/Chicana Men and women of Mexican American descent living in the United States. After the United States took possession of California, Texas, and other portions of the Southwest through the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848, Mexicans living in the region were deprived of their property and civil rights. In the late twentieth century, activists in the Chicano movement began to fight against this kind of discrimination. Part of their protest involved reclaiming and celebrating their unique history, language, and mixed Mexican and American heritage.

codex, codices Historical records preserved by the Mesoamerican Aztec (or Nahua) peoples in accordion-style books fashioned from animal skin or fig bark (*amatl*) and kept in vast libraries. After the Spanish Conquest these records were often painted on cloth. Today, these books are often referred to as *lienzos*, the Spanish word for linen, or as codices (codex in the singular), a term that highlights the fact that they were written by hand, rather than printed. Originally the codices were written purely in indigenous scripts, but after the Conquest these were often combined with Nahuatl or Spanish written in the Roman alphabet. An elite class of scribes drawn primarily from the Mesoamerican nobility created the codices. When the Spaniards entered the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán in 1519, they systematically burnt the libraries and destroyed the codices, at least in part out of fear of what they contained. The few surviving pre-Conquest records and the six hundred remaining codices written just after the Conquest continue to stun readers with their visual and verbal beauty and to provide an important counternarrative to the stories told by the Spanish conquistadors. Because we do not know who wrote, drew, and compiled the codices, they are usually named after the scholars and historians who have explicated them.

conquistadors Spanish explorers and soldiers who were sent to conquer indigenous populations, claim territory, and establish settlements in Mexico and South America in the sixteenth century. Many conquistadors journeyed to the New World in the hopes of acquiring vast fortunes by exploiting the resources there.

contact zone Term coined by scholar Mary Louise Pratt to describe the space of meeting between two cultures that had previously been separated geographically and historically. As Pratt puts

it, a contact zone is an area in which previously separated peoples "come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict." Although unequal power relations characterized contact zones in the New World, with Europeans usually asserting dominance over native peoples, contact is never a one-way phenomenon. The interactive, improvisational nature of contact necessarily creates subjects who are impacted by relations with one another within a mutually constituted experience.

encomienda The system of forced tributary labor established by the Spanish in their colonies in Mexico and South America. Conquistadors like Bernal Díaz del Castillo were issued grants which gave them control over native populations who were expected to pay them in food, resources, and labor. While the grantee was supposedly obligated to protect, educate, and respect the freedom of the Indians in his *encomienda*, in reality the system quickly degenerated into the equivalent of slavery.

Great Chain of Being According to a common European belief first coined by Aristotle and later adopted by Christian philosophers, the universe was structured according to immutable hierarchies. These hierarchies existed along the so-called "Great Chain of Being," spanning from the dimensions of "non-being" (rocks and minerals) and extending through plants, animals, and man, all the way to God, as the representative of the highest form of "being." Within the category of "man," important hierarchies existed that separated more primitive peoples from more "cultured" or "advanced" societies. The following diagram shows the hierarchies of man as conceptualized in the Great Chain of Being:

Corporeal Man —— Man of Instinct —— Man of Feeling —— Thinking Man

European explorers and conquerors often deployed the Great Chain of Being to explain and make sense of the New World, as well as to justify their pretensions to superiority within it. They tended to structure promotional tracts around the Great Chain of Being, emphasizing the extent to which natural resources were "naturally" at the service of superior men. They also tended to characterize America's indigenous peoples as inhabiting a lower position on the scale of the "hierarchies of man" within the Great Chain of Being.

historia In Spanish, the word *historia* means both "history" and "story," highlighting the extent to which any so-called "objective history" is always a subjective story inflected by personal biases and agendas.

lienzo The Spanish word for "linen," often applied to Mesoamerican codices.

mestizo/mestiza Men and women of mixed Indian, European, and African heritage. The *mestizo* identity has gained prominence in the American Southwest, where *mestizos* have proudly reclaimed their Native American heritage and identity that often went unac-

knowledged in the Chicano movement. *Mestizo* identity is characterized by plurality and inclusiveness.

promotional tract A detailed account of the natural resources, plants, animals, and native inhabitants of a newly colonized area, intended to encourage immigration and solidify imperial claims. Such tracts were often structured by the notion of the Great Chain of Being.

transculturation A term coined by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz that refers to a process in which "members of subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted by a dominant culture." Transculturation emphasizes the agency involved in cultural change, as well as the loss that accompanies cultural acquisition. In these ways, "transculturation" differs from the older terms "assimilation" and "acculturation," which emphasize a more one-way transmission of culture from the colonizer to the colonized, from the dominant to the marginalized. For Ortiz, transculturation was a necessary concept for understanding Cuban and Spanish American culture more generally.

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