Period 1, 1491-1607: A New World of Many Cultures.

Peopling: During the period 1491-1607 significant changes occurred in the native populations, the impact of Spanish and Portuguese exploration introduced new crop and livestock that had an effect on Native settlement patterns and also spread deadly diseases like smallpox to natives which led to a significant decrease in their population. The unavailability of Natives caused the encomienda system to be replaced with slavery.

Environment: Europeans brought a variety of livestock and crops such as corn and pigs to the New World. They also brought small pox and measles. The natives managed through survive through their surroundings. Great plain Indians were nomadic and most western Indians had permanent settlements.

Beliefs and Culture: The European conquest of natives, like the conquering of Aztecs by Hernan Cortes and the Conquering of the Inca by Francisco Pizzaro secured Spain’s initial supremacy the Americas. Europeans poorly understood natives they encountered in the Americas which led to a belief in white superiority to justify their subjugation if Indians and Africans. Despite the superior attitude Europeans had toward the Indians and Africans, intermixture still occurred and a caste system was introduced.

Identity: The cultural interaction between colonizing groups led to a “dividing of the Americas” firstly between Spain and Portugal where the Pope drew a vertical north south line on the map called the ‘Line of Demarcation.” Spain held land west of the Line Portugal held land to the east of the line. English claims to land didn’t come around in till around 1497. Subpopulation like Africans still developed cultural and linguistic adaptations in the western hemisphere which resulted in various degrees of cultural preservation and autonomy.

Politics and Power: The factors behind competition included limited human resources and varying relationships with Natives. The Natives and Africans and Native American strive to maintain a political and cultural autonomy in spite of European advances against them. The Spanish missionary efforts to convert Indians especially caused conflict with Indians in their attempt to change the Natives religion, gender roles, family and the relationship between people and the environment.

Work and Technology: Europeans and the original inhabitants of the Americas developed vastly different cultures over the millennia. The contact between them resulted in the Columbian Exchange, a transfer of plants, animals, and diseases from one side of the Atlantic to other side of the globe for the first time.

America in the World: Imperial competition of resources shaped the settlement patterns of the Europeans in the New World. The Spanish settlements were based on the limited mineral resources and strong opposition from American Indians, so the Spanish settled in the areas of Florida, New Mexico, Texas, & California. The English however settled in area with a dense native population, in an effort to utilize to natives as a labor force. The French who contrasted largely from the other two, kept an effort to maintain good relations with Indians seeing their potential as economic and military allies.
Top Ten Terms

Maize: Maize, a term for corn, had an important role during the last 15th century, impacting much of the new world. Native Americans demonstrated and shared maize with the Europeans and other new world explorers. Maize being a significant crop played a role in much of Native American’s lives and was a key crop for nutrition.

Religious Conflicts: Violence and Discrimination against religious groups took place in the late 14th century and impacted the new world. The Catholics, Muslims, and Mormons all had a role. The religious conflicts resulted in violence amongst the groups. Marriage helped the Catholics.

Encomienda System: This was a legal system used by the Spanish to regulate Native Americans and rewarded Spaniards for Services to the crown. Primarily used in 1493 in the New World amongst Spanish and Native Americans. This systems was to dominate Native Americans during the colonization of America and Rewarded Individual Spaniards for services to the Crown. This had been used to trade Indians to certain colonist in exchange of promise to Christianize them.

Caste System: An intermixture among Spanish settlers, Africans, and Native Americans a class structure that is determined by Birth. During 1491-1607 the America’s used this system within the People living there.

White Superiority: The Idea that the white race is inherently superior to other races, that whites should have control over the people of other ethnicities. 1491-1607 in the Americas and Europe, the Whites used this as a means to provide a basis for the promotion of Slavery.

Spanish Exploration: Spanish’ exploration to the New World, in search of Gold, Glory, and God. 1494, the Spanish came to the New World, and sent Conquistadores ships loaded with Gold and Silver back to Spain from Mexico and Peru. They increased their Gold Supply by more than 50%, making Spain the richest and most powerful nation in Europe. Their success led to other nations seeking to colonize America in search for Gold and Power.

Spanish Traders: These trades came from Europe to gain profit such as gold and labor. This was in the late 1400’s in the Americas, consisting of the Spanish from Spain. They also recruited slaves for Labor in the Americas.

European Exploration: This was exploration to the New World from the Europeans resulting in harsh Treatments of Native Americans. North and South America, Europeans. Most Europeans looked down on Native Americans as inferior. This led to forced labor among the Native Americans from the Spanish, which ended up killing many. The solders intermarried with Native Americans as well as with the African Americans. This developed a rigid class system consisting of pure blooded Spaniards.

Feudalism: The nobility held lands from the crown in exchange for military service. The peasants were obligated to live on their Lords land and give him homage and food. This was primarily used in the late 1400’s in Europe and the New World amongst colonist and Europeans. The colonization of the New World began following the system of Government, but soon switched to capitalism.
Review Questions

1. Compare and contrast the living conditions in Europe and the “New World” from 1409-1607.
2. Explain how European emigration and internal migration affected the Native Americans during the Colonial Era.
3. To what extent did exploration during 1409-1607 cause change or continuity in European’s way of life and European rule.
4. Explain to what extend the discovery of the Americas by Columbus was a turning point in American history.