# CHAPTER 1 – COLLIDING WORLDS (1450-1600)

**Exploration & Conquest** 

#### Portuguese Expansion

- -1394-1460 CE **Henry the Navigator** (prince of Portugal) establishes navigation school, innovation of caravel sailing ship, and sponsors voyages that lead to colonization of Madeira & Azore Islands and trade expeditions to West African coast
- -By 1500 CE, Europeans establish **plantations** in Canary & Cape Verde Islands, Sao Tome off African Coast (wine, dyes, sugar)
- -Europeans maintain fortified coastal trading posts, as interior remained hostile due to native resistance & prevalence of disease
- -1488 CE Explorer **Bartolomeu Dias** rounds Cape of Good Hope at southern tip of Africa
- -1498 CE Vasco da Gama reaches India & returns with spices; establishes Portuguese military/trading presence in Indian Ocean
- -Portuguese, then Dutch, would replace Arabs as leaders of Asian commerce (advantage: gunpowder)

#### African Slave Trade

-African slavery a norm before European contact; bondage tied to debt, as exchange for food, war captives, concubines

-700-1900 CE - Estimated 9 million sold in Tran-Saharan slave trade

-Europeans transition from prioritizing gold/commodities to slaves, who could populate their sugar plantations as forced laborers

-1474 CE – Spanish monarchs **Ferdinand** of Aragon & **Isabella** of Castile marry and unite Spain

-1492 CE – Spanish crown concludes **Reconquista** – expulsion of Muslims from Spain. Also agrees to sponsor **Christopher Columbus** 

-Spanish Inquisition – Program initiated by Catholic Church & Spanish crown to hunt/torture/expel/convert suspected heretics

#### 1. Columbus and the Caribbean

- -Genoese mariner **Christopher Columbus** lobbies for 6 years to gain sponsorship of a voyage west across Atlantic Ocean to reach Asia
- -Aug 1492 CE Columbus leaves with 3 Spanish ships on 6 week journey; lands in Bahamas but mistakes it for West Indies ('Indians')
- -Columbus makes 3 additional voyages through 1504 CE, settling 1,000+ men & cattle/horses in West Indies, gaining tribute from local Taino/Arawak tribes, converting natives to Christianity, yet never finding any evidence of vast quantities of gold of Asia
- -1500 CE Amerigo Vespucci's exploration of South America's coast offers proof that new continents are a "new world", not Asia

#### 2. The Spanish Invasion

- -1513 CE Juan Ponce de Leon discovers Florida; Vasco Nunez de Balboa crosses Panama to see Pacific Ocean
- -Hundreds of conquistadores poised to travel to New World for chances at riches, titles, and in the name of faith ("Gold/Glory/God")
- -1519 CE Hernan Cortes leads 600 men across Yucatan Peninsula into Mexico; gains Aztecs' tribal enemies as allies, and marches on capital Tenochtitlan. Emperor Montezuma welcomes them (believing them gods), only to be captured/killed in Aztec rebellion.

-1521 CE – Aztec Empire crumbles, disoriented without leader and amidst widespread disease (smallpox) natives had no immunity to

-1524-1535 CE – **Francisco Pizarro** kidnaps/ransoms/kills Incan Emperor **Atahualpa**; 168 conquistadores/horses defeat Inca warriors

-1500-1800 CE – Demographic disaster in Americas, as native populations suffer near 90% loss due to conquest and disease

#### 3. Cabral and Brazil

-1500 CE – **Pedro Alvares Cabral** drifts off African coast to Brazil; King Dom Joao III sends settlers in 1530's to stake Portugal's claims

-Sugar plantations established, first utilizing Native Americans, then imported Africans as laborers; conditions brutal

