

WC 358-371 PP 376-383: "Voyage to Africa"

**Chronology**

1420-44	Portuguese colonize Canary and Azores island chains
1488	Bartolomeu rounds Cape of Good Hope
1492	Columbus lands in Hispaniola
1497-9	Vasco de Gama reaches India
1511-15	Portuguese venture into Indonesia
1513	Balboa reaches Pacific Ocean
1522	Magellan circumnavigates the planet
1521	Cortez conquers Aztecs
1533	Pizarro conquers Incas
1542	Bartolomé de las Casas publishes a critique of Spanish colonialism

<b>Star Terms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prince Henry the Navigator</li> <li>• Ferdinand Magellan</li> <li>• conquistadors</li> <li>• Bartolomé de las Casas</li> <li>• Atlantic Slave Network</li> </ul>	<b>Geog. Terms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portugal</li> <li>• Aztec Empire</li> <li>• Inca Empire</li> <li>• Cape of Good Hope</li> <li>• Philippines</li> <li>• Indian Ocean</li> </ul>
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A. 15<sup>th</sup> century Spanish galleon

A caravel is a kind of sailing vessel that was widely used during the Age of Exploration. The caravel was an improvement on older ships because it could sail very fast and also sail well into the wind (windward). Caravel planking on the hull replaced thinner, less effective planking. Caravels were broad-beamed ships that had 2 or 3 masts with square sails and a triangular sail (called a lanteen). They were up to about 65 feet long and could carry roughly 130 tons of cargo. The great naval powers of Europe used galleons and similar ships in campaigns of exploration and conquest in Africa, Australia, the Orient and the Americas. During the 1400s, Portugal



and Spain became international sea powers, engaging in trade and exploration of distant lands using these ships. The technology and engineering of these sailing ships made significant advances in the Spanish galleon of the 15th and 16th centuries.

## B. Sagres Naval School, Portugal (1418)

In 1418, Henry “the Navigator” founded the first school for oceanic navigation along with an astronomical observatory at Sagres, Portugal on the southwestern-most point of Portugal, Cape Saint Vincent. The institute, best described as a fifteenth century research and development facility, included libraries, an astronomical observatory, ship-building facilities, a chapel, and housing for staff. The institute was designed to teach navigational techniques to Portuguese sailors, to collect and disseminate geographical information about the world, to invent and improve navigational and seafaring equipment, to sponsor expeditions, and to spread Christianity



around the world. Henry brought together some of the leading geographers, cartographers, astronomers, and mathematicians from throughout Europe to work at the institute.

## C. Spanish conquistadors capture Tenochtitlan (1521)

Upon arrival in North America, Hernando Cortes founded the colony of New Spain in Mexico. On November 8, 1519, he challenged the native forces and entered Tenochtitlan, taking the Aztec leader, Montezuma, hostage. This event led to an Aztec uprising that culminated in La Noche Triste. The Aztecs drove the Spaniards out in July of 1520. Men from both sides, as well as many Aztec treasures, were lost as a bridge collapsed during the desperate flight of the Spaniards. Nevertheless, Cortes survived, and led the final attacks on Tenochtitlan. Throughout the



war, the Spaniards were aided by the gruesome advantage of disease, for the Europeans brought ailments that the Aztecs had no immunity to. It is estimated that three-quarters of the native population died of violence or diseases like small pox and measles in just the first century of the conquest. Finally, the Aztec capital fell on August 13, 1521. After capturing Tenochtitlan, the Spaniards destroyed the city, and built Mexico City on top of it. Just as Tenochtitlan was destroyed, most of the Aztec civilization was destroyed with the European Conquest.