

## Section

# 4

## Consequences of Spanish Exploration

### Main Ideas

1. Juan de Oñate founded the colony of New Mexico.
2. Interaction between Europeans and American Indians changed both societies.
3. The Columbian Exchange brought both devastating disease and useful horses to North America.

### Why It Matters Today

The transfer of plants and animals between the Americas and other parts of the world greatly changed people's lives. Use current events sources to find information about the worldwide exchange of goods or ideas today.

### Key Terms and People

- Juan de Oñate
- epidemics
- Columbian Exchange
- mustangs

## The Story Continues

In January 1598 Juan Pérez de Bustillo left Mexico with his wife and children. With more than 500 other settlers, they headed north into the Chihuahuan Desert. The settlers brought supplies for a colony as well as thousands of animals. Water was often scarce. During one long dry stretch, the thirsty colonists prayed for a miracle. Suddenly, a rainstorm arose, forming pools of water. The grateful colonists named the spot Socorro del Cielo, or “Aid from Heaven.”



**TEKS:** 2B, 8A, 9C,  
21B, 21C, 22D

### myNotebook

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes on the effects of Spanish exploration on both Europeans and American Indians.



## Oñate Finds New Mexico

After the Coronado and de Soto–Moscoso expeditions, Spanish officials lost interest in northern New Spain. The region had not produced any gold or other valuable metals. Yet rumors of marvelous golden cities to the north did not go away. In the late 1500s these tales again drew Spanish explorers to the Pueblo region in New Mexico. A few of these travelers also entered Texas. Some of the explorers who made the trips greatly exaggerated the region's potential wealth.

Between 1550 and the 1590s, settlement in New Spain had been slowly spreading northward. King Philip II of Spain wanted to control this expanding settlement. He decided to colonize the land of the Pueblo Indians. By doing so, he also hoped to increase Spain's wealth and spread Christianity to the Pueblo.



*Juan de Oñate traveled across the rugged and dry terrain of the Texas Panhandle during his expedition.*

## GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

### The Reformation

While the Spanish were spreading the Catholic faith in the Americas, Catholicism was under attack in Europe. In 1517 a Catholic priest named Martin Luther listed the problems he found with the Church. Luther posted his list on the door of a church in Wittenberg, Germany. The event led to a religious reform movement called the Protestant Reformation. In time, this movement resulted in the development of Protestant churches.

**What event sparked the Reformation?**

To accomplish this mission, King Philip granted **Juan de Oñate** (ohn-YAH-teh) the right to settle and govern the colony. Oñate was from a wealthy Spanish family that had profited from silver mining in Mexico. The colony he was sent to establish was to be named New Mexico.

In early 1598 Oñate led more than 500 colonists north across the Chihuahuan Desert. The settlers struggled through the hot, dry land. When they reached the Rio Grande after three months in the desert, it seemed like an oasis with its shady willow trees and cool water. The thankful settlers held a feast to celebrate their survival. The area where they celebrated was located in a narrow pass between two mountain ranges. It therefore became known as El Paso del Norte, or the Pass of the North. Near what is now San Elizario, Texas, Oñate claimed the entire area drained by the Rio Grande for Spain.

The colonists continued upriver until they reached several Pueblo villages north of where Santa Fe, New Mexico, lies today. There they built the first Spanish settlement in New Mexico. Life in the colony was hard. The settlers had few comforts and found no gold. Oñate decided to explore northeast toward Quivira, in hopes of finding treasure where Coronado had failed. In 1601 Oñate set out with a small group across the Texas Panhandle. Like Coronado, he failed to find any gold.

The lack of treasure in Texas and the surrounding areas caused the Spanish to lose interest in the region. Few explorers entered the area for the next 80 years. The New Mexico colony continued to thrive, though. Travelers moved regularly between New Mexico and Mexico, passing through El Paso del Norte. Eventually, in 1689, a group of friars decided to establish a settlement along the route. This was the first settlement in the Trans-Pecos, which became part of Texas more than 100 years later.

**Reading Check Finding the Main Idea** What did Juan de Oñate accomplish in 1598?

## The Effects of Spanish Exploration

Although the Spanish failed to find gold, their exploration of Texas was important. It gave Spain a strong claim to the area. The Spanish also gained valuable knowledge about the land and people of Texas. In addition, Texas served as a buffer between Spanish settlements to the south and American Indians and other, later European colonies.

At the same time, Spanish exploration greatly changed the lives of American Indians in Texas. During their travels, European explorers unknowingly spread diseases such as measles and smallpox. Although most Europeans recovered from such illnesses, American Indians often died because they had never been exposed to these diseases. **Epidemics**, or widespread outbreaks of disease, killed thousands of American Indians. In time, many Indians in Texas died from European diseases and from conflicts with Europeans.

The spread of diseases from Europe to the Americas was part of the **Columbian Exchange**. This term refers to the transfer of plants, animals, and diseases between the Americas and other continents. The Columbian Exchange is so named because it began with Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas in 1492. The Spanish brought to the Americas new plants and animals, such as bananas, cattle, and horses. When they returned to Europe, explorers took back American plants and animals, such as corn, peanuts, and turkeys.

**Reading Check Summarizing** What is the Columbian Exchange, and how did it affect Texas Indians?

## The Rise of a Plains Horse Culture

The wild offspring of the horses the Spanish brought to the Americas became known as *mesteños*, or **mustangs**. In the 1600s American Indians in Texas began obtaining mustangs through trade and raids. As you read in the previous chapter, horses greatly changed Indian life, particularly on the plains. Using horses, Indians could move their belongings more easily. Some Indians became more nomadic, or mobile, as they used horses to follow the buffalo herds. On horseback, Indians became more effective hunters and fighters. They could ride deep into enemy territory, strike quickly, and then vanish into the plains.

Spaniards in New Mexico first recorded seeing Apache Indians riding horses in 1659. The sight horrified the Spanish—they had lost an important military advantage. They were no longer the only ones in the area with horses. The rise of a plains horse culture marked the start of a new phase in Spanish-Indian relations and warfare.

**Reading Check Identifying Cause and Effect** What led to the development of a Plains Indian horse culture, and how did this development affect the Spanish?



### Texas Mustangs

The small horses brought by the Spanish to the Americas were tough and able to live off the land. In time, some escaped, and their wild offspring were called mustangs. By the mid-1800s more than 2 million mustangs roamed the North American grasslands. Hunting later decreased this number to as low as 20,000. A 1971 federal law protecting wild horses on public lands has helped restore the mustang herds. **How do mustangs represent the Spanish heritage of Texas?**



## The Apaches Dominate the Plains

The Apaches in Texas and New Mexico had initially been friendly to the Spanish. While traveling through the Texas Panhandle, the explorers Coronado and Oñate both had met groups of Apaches. A member of Coronado's force described them.

### TEXAS VOICES



"These folks live in tents made of the tanned skins of the cows [buffalo]. They travel around near the [buffalo], killing them for food. . . . They have better figures [than other Indians], are better warriors, and are more feared. They travel like the Arabs [nomads], with their tents and troops of dogs loaded with poles. . . . These people eat [the buffalo's] raw flesh and drink [its] blood. . . . They are a kind people and not cruel."

—Pedro de Castañeda, quoted in *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States, 1528–1543*

After the Spanish began settling among the Pueblos, their relationship with the Apaches changed. The Apaches, who had raided the Pueblos for years, began to view the Spanish as enemies. Bands of Apaches raided the New Mexico settlements, taking horses and supplies. They proved unstoppable on horseback, despite the Spaniards' superior weapons. The Apaches soon ruled the Texas Plains, which the Spanish called *Apachería*, meaning "Apache land."

The conflict between the Spanish and the Apaches was one of many between Europeans and American Indians. The Spanish and other Europeans saw American lands as theirs to claim. American Indians—who had lived on this land for generations—saw it as their home. In Texas, clashes between these two points of view would continue for over a hundred years.

**Reading Check Contrasting** How did relations between the Apaches and the Spanish change?



## Section 4 Review



hmhsocialstudies.com  
ONLINE QUIZ

### 1. Define and explain:

- epidemics
- Columbian exchange
- mustangs

### 2. Identify and explain

the significance of the following in Texas history:

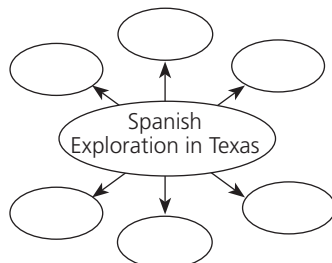
- Juan de Oñate

### 3. Locate on a map:

- Panhandle

### 4. Summarizing

- Copy the diagram below. Use it to list the effects of Spanish exploration in Texas.



### 5. Finding the Main Idea

- What did Juan de Oñate achieve, and how did his travels affect Texas?
- How did the Spanish benefit from their exploration of Texas?

### 6. Writing and Critical Thinking



**Analyzing Information** Write one paragraph explaining positive and one paragraph explaining negative effects of the Columbian Exchange in Texas.

Consider the following:

- the transfer of new animals and plants
- the spread of European diseases