

# Contact of Civilizations, 1521–1721

The story of Texas begins many thousands of years before the birth of Christ. Between 12,000 and 40,000 years ago nomads from Asia trekked from present-day Siberia to present-day Alaska, entering North America in a series of distinct migrations. As they hunted for edible plants and animals, the nomads crossed broad fields of ice that spanned the Bering Strait during this long period of intermittent low sea levels. Even after the Bering Sea finally reclaimed this bridge of ice, other Asians managed to navigate the waters of the strait to arrive in the new continent. More such migrations followed but ultimately ceased, cutting off the early voyagers from humankind elsewhere on Earth.

Scientists now agree that American Indians descended from a relatively small number of parent migrants who contributed to the “founding” gene base. Once the ancestors of the American Indians were cut off from other Asians, natural selection and genetic mutation produced distinctive physical types.

Through the ages, these ancient nomads dispersed throughout the vast lands of North and South America. As bands struck out in different directions in search of fresh sources of game and vegetation, different cultural and linguistic patterns appeared. These cultural patterns further evolved over time as New World peoples began to develop agriculture, around 7000 BC. Once prehistoric societies learned to till the soil and harvest plants, human beings began to exercise some control over nature and develop strong ties to the land. Family units eventually formed into complex social and political organizations. Religious figures emerged as leaders or spiritual advisers, and gender roles became more clearly defined. As each group adapted in order to survive in its local environment, distinctive customs and practices developed, as evidenced by the different types of housing, decoration, clothing, and tools used by the people of particular regions.

## The Diversity of New World Cultures

Various groups and cultures spread throughout all regions of the New World. Though historians disagree over population estimates, most concur that more people lived in what

we now know as Latin America than remained in North America. At the time of Columbus's voyage in 1492, roughly 12 million people lived north of the line dividing present-day Mexico and the United States; between this boundary and the Isthmus of Panama lived an estimated 35 million people; finally, some 60 million people inhabited the continent of South America and the Caribbean Islands.

Of the pre-Columbian civilizations, that of the Maya has generally been considered the most intellectually advanced. Situated in what are today the Yucatán Peninsula and Guatemala, the Maya, during the height of their civilization (about AD 300 to AD 900), made brilliant advances. For example, the Maya's discovery of the zero cipher, well before Arab mathematicians introduced the concept to Europe in the thirteenth century, helped them make significant achievements in architecture, astronomy, and calendrics. Speculation lingers as to why the Mayan civilization declined. A deadly disease may have spread throughout the population, natural catastrophes may have produced food shortages, or a social revolution to undermine the ruling class may have hastened their demise.

Another major civilization thrived for a time at Anáhuac (Valley of México), this of the Toltecs, who raised a mighty empire at Tula until drought and famine forced them to desert their capital city. In 1215, new barbarians named the Méxica, but more commonly known as Aztecs, arrived from unknown parts in the north and built upon the collapsed Toltec empire by establishing themselves in Tenochtitlán, today's Mexico City. One of the cleanest and most populous cities in the world at the time of its "discovery" by explorers from the Old World, Tenochtitlán contained pyramids, royal palaces, and other large structures, homes for the several social classes, canals crafted from stone that served as waterways for canoes, botanical gardens and zoos, and causeways connecting the island city to the mainland. Although the Aztecs had a warlike disposition and a penchant for human sacrifice, they abided by strict codes of morality, esteemed education, adhered to an honest and efficient system of legal and political administration, and excelled in various branches of the arts.

In South America another civilization flourished at the time of the European conquest of the Western Hemisphere. Embracing an area extending from today's Ecuador to Chile, the Inca civilization had its headquarters in Cuzco, in present-day Peru, and ruled through a remarkably efficient system of civil administration. A road system superior to any in Europe at the time enabled government officials to carry out their responsibilities, laborers to travel throughout the empire to maintain public works, and soldiers to move quickly in order to protect the realm and suppress rebellions. Unsurpassed by other Native American civilizations in architectural skills, the Incas designed and built structures that flexed with the tremors of earthquakes, resuming their original forms after each jolt. The Incas also possessed advanced scientific skills. Amazingly, archaeological findings point to their apparent success in performing brain surgery.

The Indian tribes that inhabited the North American continent generally developed less sophisticated civilizations. The Northeast Woodlands Indians, found from the Ohio Valley to the Atlantic Ocean and southward to Chesapeake Bay, lived in loghouse villages or in wigwams and survived by farming corn, squash, and beans nearby their homes, or by hunting deer and wild fowl and fishing from canoes. Among the most famous of the Woodlands tribes was the Iroquois, who despite their renown as warriors organized the famous League of the Iroquois. The League, considered the most effective Indian alliance north of the Aztec Empire, succeeded in ending the chronic bloody conflicts among its member tribes.

South of the Woodlands tribes, stretching from the Atlantic Coast to the Mississippi Valley and even into East Texas, lived a culture group that maintained ties to mound-building societies of a past age. These were the Choctaws, Seminoles, Chickasaws, Creeks, and Cherokees—later referred to by Anglo Americans as the “Five Civilized Tribes” because they adopted Euro-American ways. The most famous of the descendants of the mound builders were the Natchez. At the time of the European exploration of the area, trappings of the classic Natchez era remained evident in villages along the lower Mississippi River. These villages surrounded temple mounds and ceremonial council houses, the identifying traits of the ancient mound builders.

A third advanced culture group that flourished at the time of Europeans’ arrival in the Western Hemisphere was located roughly from what is now West Texas to Arizona, and north as far as southern Colorado. Here the Hopi and Zuñi created a distinctive cultural heritage (Figure 1.1). These tribes, who belonged to a group that Spaniards referred to collectively as Pueblos, resided in planned towns consisting of stacked, apartment-type complexes, sometimes two or more stories high. For defensive purposes, the Pueblos built their adobe villages into rock walls or upon steep mesas and structured them so as to oversee the spacious streets and squares below. In the fifteenth century, the Pueblos cultivated corn and other crops, developed irrigation canals, used cotton to make clothing, and lived much in the same manner as did the European peasant of the same period.



**Figure 1.1** White Shaman. Cave art of the prehistoric inhabitants of the Pecos River area. Credit: Amistad National Recreation Area.

## The Indians of Texas

Anthropological evidence reveals that before the Europeans arrived, a number of distinct culture groups lived in the varied geographical areas of what is now Texas. Such pre-horse people shared numerous characteristics, certainly the result of evolutionary processes, adaptation to historical situations, and common responses to environmental factors. Generally, Native Americans bonded around self-reliant bands or extended families. Leaders rose through the ranks, gaining their positions by a proven display of bravery, wisdom, or special attributes. Their religion embraced the supernatural; today, it would be said that they were animistic. They thought, for instance, that natural objects—whether the galaxy, Earth's geographical landscape, the flora or fauna—had an existence that paralleled that of humans and could be summoned for help in times of need. These culture groups recognized social/gender distinctions. Women cared for the household: cooking, preserving foods for later use, and fashioning animal skins into clothing. Women maintained a close contact with the land, cultivating it, foraging for edible products, and gathering clay from which they made cooking utensils or wares to be traded with other Indian nations.

Certain shared traits notwithstanding, Native American civilizations in pre-Columbian Texas were quite diverse. Several of the peoples had different places of origin, some tracing their lineage to culture groups in the modern-day U.S. South, northern Mexico, or the Rocky Mountain region. No common language united Native American groups in Texas. While some made war with or raided neighboring groups regularly, most preferred to avoid conflict and lived in terror of attacks by aggressors. Numerous peoples preferred a sedentary life, while others maintained a nomadic existence. Adaptation to local environment tended to separate one culture group from another. Thus, one Texas tribe might build villages (and reside in permanent dwellings constructed of cane and grass—Figure 1.2) and rely on farming, while another might stay on the move, living in portable shelters such as hide teepees as they migrated seasonally to gather wild vegetation or pursue game, trapping their prey and killing it with clubs and other crude weapons. Region also determined a group's economy, as livelihoods might turn on agriculture, hunting big game such as the American bison (commonly known as buffalo), or perhaps a mixture of both combined with intertribal trade.

### The Coastal Indians

Along the coast of southern Texas and in parts of the Trans-Nueces lived the Karankawa and Coahuiltecan peoples. Both groups had common roots in modern-day northern Mexico: the Coahuiltecan were tied linguistically and otherwise to the Native inhabitants of Coahuila. The Karankawas and the Coahuiltecan lacked formal political organization; social life revolved around the family, extending into small autonomous bands (related by kin) presided over by a chieftain. Their religious life was primitive, and they believed that supernatural entities governed the cosmos.

Their respective environments of marshy terrain close to the Gulf Coast and the chaparral of the brush country were harsh ones. The territory of the Karankawa extended along a thin area running down the coast from Matagorda Bay (some archaeologists believe even as far north as the Lower Brazos River region) to Corpus Christi Bay, while the Coahuiltecan lived in the Gulf Coast Plain and much of what is today considered South Texas.



**Figure 1.2** Over 1,200 years ago, a group of Caddo Indians known as the Hasinai, who were part of the great Mound Builder culture of the southeast, built a village and ceremonial center 26 miles west of present-day Nacogdoches. Shown here is a reproduction of a typical Caddo house like those found here at this Mound site. Courtesy of the Caddoan Mounds State Historic Park, Texas Parks and Wildlife.

Both tribes moved frequently, their migrations generally corresponding to the change of seasons. Over the years, the nomadic Karankawas and Coahuiltecan had learned the ecology of their respective regions well; they knew when nature produced its greatest yields and the precise grounds where such bounties lay. Indeed, they tended to live in the same general site during one part of the year before moving on to another favorite camp. To guarantee a reliable and abundant food supply, during the fall and winter months the Karankawas stayed close to the coast, where they relied heavily on shellfish, aquatic plants, and waterfowl, but also hunted deer and even alligators. For life along the bays and lagoons, the Karankawas built small canoes from tree trunks and made nets, an assortment of traps, lances, and bows and arrows. The Coahuiltecan also preferred to inhabit specific locations during the winter, places where they could expect to find abundant roots and other easily attainable foodstuffs. During the spring and summer, the Karankawas moved inland to the coastal prairies and woodlands. There they relied less on marine life (though numerous rivers and creeks still provided them with fish) and more on land animals—among them deer, rabbits, prairie fowl, and occasionally buffalo—and the annual offerings of nuts, beans, and fruits produced by indigenous trees and shrubs. During the warmer seasons, the Coahuiltecan foraged for nature's yields over the large expanse of South Texas. They took advantage of the spring rains, catching fish trapped in receding pools of water, and hunting deer, lizards, birds, fish, and insects and gathering mesquite beans, prickly pears, pecans, and roots. Dome-shaped wigwams covered by animal skins or improvised wind-breaks served as the most common type of Karankawa and Coahuiltecan housing. When it came time to move, they simply dismantled their shelters, taking them and other useful items with them.

## The Northeast Texas Indians

East of the Trinity River, tribes related to the Indians of the Mississippi Valley prospered, among them the Caddos. Many centuries before Europeans had realized the existence of the New World, people roamed the lower Mississippi River expanse in quest of edible plants and small game. Sometime around AD 800, however, these hunting-and-gathering peoples turned to farming, cultivating a variety of vegetables, among them beans, squash, and their major staple—maize, or corn. Around AD 1200, the Mississippian civilization reached its high point of cultural growth and tribal strength before entering a gradual decline. The Caddo Indians of Texas constituted the westernmost flank of Mississippian culture, owing much to it in the way of farming, village life, and religion, though the Caddos had also borrowed cultural traits from tribes to the west (in New Mexico) and the south (Mexico). While Mississippian culture in general was in a state of decline when Columbus sailed from Spain, Caddoan civilization was persevering.

Caddo settlements extended from the Trinity River, due north past the Red River, and as far east as the Mississippi River. Stable communities—consisting of isolated rural villages—were generally located on the best farming lands in the region. Close to sources of fresh water (primarily rivers and streams), the Caddos constructed dome-shaped homes from grass and cane. As many as four families shared one such domicile, for Caddo home life apparently revolved around multifamily dwellings. With fields surrounding their settlements, the Caddos had easy access to their principal source of sustenance. Like peoples in the other parts of the world at the time, the Caddos planted twice a year—in the spring and early summer. Notably, Caddo society entrusted the role of agricultural production to women, who through experience and with good judgment tended the plants (generally corn, squash, and beans), rotated the crops as needed, fertilized the soil (with the droppings of wild animals native to eastern Texas), then carefully stored the excess harvest for use during lean times.

Chiefs known as the *xinesí* presided over Caddo society, both as political and religious leaders. Serving in a hereditary position, the *xinesí* (whose authority extended over several Caddo communities) mediated between his followers and a supreme deity—the world's creator who influenced both good and bad things in life—and led religious celebrations, ceremonies, and festivals. In Caddo society, the *xinesí* was a person whose high status demanded respect from tribal members who looked up to him as a powerful figure able to determine such phenomenon as a successful sowing; as such, the *xinesí*'s wishes and directives were to be followed unquestionably. Under the supervision of the *xinesí*, the Caddos constructed impressive temple mounds (signature traits of their Mississippian kin) that served both as storehouses and places in which to conduct important meetings and ceremonies. Below the *xinesí* in the Caddo religious order were lesser medicine men who attended to the spiritual and physical needs of the people. Adept in the use of medicinal herbs and various folk remedies, these healers treated a multitude of wounds and illnesses.

Governing individual Caddo communities (also through hereditary right) were the *caddí*. Such rulers were members of the upper stratum. While all but disqualified from holding office, a commoner might elevate himself to a leadership position through feats of bravery on the battlefield. Ostensibly, the Caddo administrators ruled efficiently, for at the time the Spaniards began their exploration of Texas, the Caddo world prospered. Lieutenants enforced the policies determined by the *caddí*, directing commoners in their tasks

of tilling the soil, building shelters for all concerned, and seeing to the public good, which included defending the nation from outside threats. War was not, however, integral to Caddo culture. Indeed, they undertook attacks on neighboring tribes primarily as a social pressure valve, a way to let eager young men act out their bravado, or as opportunities for anyone wishing to rise in social status.

The Caddos granted women rights and recognitions not generally accorded by European societies of the era. Their society was a matrilineal one, meaning that authority was handed down, both in families and in the larger clan, through the mother's line, so women held a distinct and influential place in kinship networks, within which they molded Caddo social conduct, privileges, and duties. Women also could influence individuals' economic, political, and social standing as they related to the broader group. Finally, it was women who classified others vis-à-vis the clan—as, for instance, friend or foe. In such a kin-based civilization, Caddo women gave advice on matters of intertribal trade and relations, including terms of war and peace. Ordinarily, women's presence among visiting Indian delegations symbolized peace; their absence from such teams conveyed hostility.

Although they primarily relied on farming for their sustenance, the Caddos supplemented their diet through other means. In addition to gathering roots, nuts, and fruits, another task assigned to women, Caddo men hunted the native game of eastern Texas: turkeys, rabbits, or quail in the summer; deer and bear (useful for lard, clothing, and shelter) in the fall and winter; and buffalo (present on the western rim of the Caddo confederacy) when the supply of other foods grew scarce during the colder months. Comfortable in their stability and self-reliance, the Caddos also engaged in extensive trade. Eventually the Caddo world served as a hub for those bringing goods from as far away as New Mexico, northern Mexico, and the Mississippi Valley. The Caddos welcomed many trading partners, bartering their baskets, tools, decorative art, and weapons for certain types of vegetables, furs, and other luxury items not otherwise available to them in East Texas.

### The Jumano Indians

Another group inhabiting Texas in the final years of the fifteenth century was the Jumanos, who inhabited the Trans-Pecos area (Figure 1.3). Ethnographers and other scholars still disagree over the distinct features of Jumano culture. Opinions also differ as to what specific peoples (or tribes) made up the Jumanos, what linguistic groups they derived from, and the precise regions they occupied. Some studies note that the term *Jumano*, as used by the first European observers, delineate those descendants of the Tanoan-speakers, a linguistic group from New Mexico, or those tribes that made their living as traders and traveled as far east as the South Plains of Texas. To some anthropologists, the word *Jumano* identifies people of a shared cultural background, and not necessarily a general grouping of people with a common language or a specific livelihood.

Recent research presents the Jumanos as descending from the Jornada line of the Mogolón, a people indigenous to modern-day Arizona, New Mexico, and neighboring regions. Sometime in the mid-fifteenth century, part of the Jornada tribe began migrating eastward toward the Trans-Pecos, ultimately establishing permanent settlements in the West Texas river valleys such as El Paso, but more specifically in the region that the Spaniards later referred to as *La Junta de los Ríos* (the confluence of the Rio Grande and the Rio Conchos). Quite plausibly, the whole of western Texas became the domain of the Jumanos—more militant tribes such as the Apaches and Comanches would not enter the region until



**Figure 1.3** This famous panther is an outstanding example of the prehistoric art of the Lower Pecos people. Credit: Amistad National Recreation Area.

sometime in the seventeenth century—for what were most certainly Jumano settlements (many of them temporary) have been found beyond the fertile river valleys. In any case, the Jumano civilization stretched from eastern New Mexico and perhaps into Oklahoma, and south to northern Chihuahua in Mexico, with its easternmost appendage extending into the South Plains. In these hinterlands, they made a living by farming and hunting.

At La Junta de los Ríos and other permanent settlements, the Jumanos worked irrigated produce gardens, cultivating traditional farm crops such as maize, beans, and squash. The Rio Conchos and the Rio Grande provided them with a variety of fish. Jumano communities resembled those used by their kinspeople in New Mexico—clustered single-family dwellings constructed of reeds and grass formed a village, over which a chief ruled. Such farm hamlets were indicative of the branch of the Jumanos that had opted for a sedentary life, though certain village members left on seasonal hunting expeditions.

Hunting nearly full time became the unique trait of the nomadic Jumanos of the West Texas plains. Living in transient camps, this branch of the Jumano people roamed the vast grasslands throughout the spring and fall in pursuit of a variety of game: from snakes, fish, and birds, to deer, antelope, rabbits, armadillos, and, naturally, the indispensable buffalo, which furnished them with meat for food and hides for shelter and clothing. During winter, the hunters relocated near the more permanent villages of their farming relatives, launching the hunting cycle anew in the spring.

Both the sedentary and nomadic Jumanos earned reputations among the Spaniards (who entered the world of the Jumanos in the seventeenth century) as accomplished merchants—as noted above, some Europeans used the word Jumano synonymously with trader. La Junta de los Ríos served as a distribution hub for provisions, trade items, and



intelligence coming in from northern Mexico, the Indian villages of the upper Rio Grande, the world of the Coahuiltecan, or from the exchange marts of the Caddos. The nomadic Jumanos appear to have made commerce as much a part of their way of life as was hunting, establishing trading villages on the plains as centers of exchange. In these posts, they bartered products manufactured or acquired by the tribespeople—bows and arrows, pearls, and animal furs and hides. But they also traveled widely to exchange horses (stolen from local ranches in northern New Spain), buffalo products, and foodstuffs for vegetables and fruits raised by local tribes, woolen textiles or pottery produced in New Mexico, or wares and foods available through the Caddos' own commercial network.

### The Plains Indians

Strikingly different from the aforementioned Native American tribes were the Apaches, Comanches, Wichitas, and Tonkawas. None of these Indian peoples—all of whom would play important parts in Texas history during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—lived in Texas in pre-Columbian times. Their origins may be traced to the northern Rocky Mountain region of the present-day United States. The Apaches, for instance, were related linguistically to tribes in Canada and Alaska, while the Comanches had originally made their homes in the valleys of the upper Yellowstone and Platte rivers. No one knows when exactly these tribes commenced their pedestrian migration into the Great Plains (the geographical expanse immediately east of the Rocky Mountains) and the Southwest in the pursuit of buffalo. Historians do know that these Plains Indians found new power in the horse (acquired in the seventeenth century from raids upon fledgling Spanish settlements or by capturing wild herds), for they learned to ride horseback with great skill while hunting buffalo, conducting warfare, or relocating to newer locales.

A number of forces ultimately led the Plains Indians toward Texas. Mounted warfare produced winners and losers; the Comanches—the most successful because of their high mobility and unmatched riding skills—became such a terror on the Plains that the Apaches (namely the groups known as the Lipans and the Mescaleros) by the late seventeenth century began heading south to take refuge in Texas. So did the Wichitas from Oklahoma and Central Kansas, though they sought haven from their enemies attacking them from the upper Mississippi Valley. The Comanches, meantime, continued expanding their nomadic hunting grounds southward, pursuing buffalo on horseback, fighting the hated Apaches, and bolstering their pony herds by rounding up wild horses. For their part, the Apaches in their retreat southward threw so many lesser Texas tribal units into disarray that in Central Texas there formed a disparate group of refugees that collectively came to be known as the Tonkawas. As with the Apaches, the Tonkawas were no match for the Comanches, who by the early 1700s had arrived in Texas to become the dominant force in the northern, central, and western regions of the province.

In Texas, the Apaches, Comanches, Wichitas, and Tonkawas depended on the buffalo for almost all their essential items, including food, shelter, clothing, weapons, and tools. Using bows and arrows, the Plains Indians effectively hunted not only buffalo but also deer, antelope, turkeys, and other wild game. Small garden plots, however, provided a secondary source of food, and some of these bands raised maize and other vegetables including squash and beans. They also gathered berries and other domestic fauna such as agave, from which they made intoxicating beverages. Additionally, wild plants gave them herbs, fruits, and other products that they consumed themselves and used in barter.

The Plains Indians lacked any pan-tribal political structure, so families formed the basic social foundation. Groups of families under a chief composed working units that served to defend the people or to retaliate against other groups for wrongs inflicted. In some cases, their livelihood depended as much upon preying on other tribes who had items they needed for sustenance as it did upon reaping nature's bounty. Fiercely independent, the Plainspeople held religious views that allowed for individual relationships with deities; their faith in a single, all-powerful being was only ephemeral. Shamans, or religious figures, exerted no great authority among the wanderers of the Plains, as they mainly served to heal the infirm.

## The Iberian Legacy

The first white people with whom the indigenous inhabitants of Texas competed for political and economic advantage came from the Iberian Peninsula—a part of Europe in which history had departed in substantive ways from that of the rest of the continent. The early history of Spain, however, does not belie this difference. Like the rest of Europe, the Iberian Peninsula had come under the rule of the Greeks and later was subsumed by the Roman Empire. From the Romans, Spaniards derived their language, law, customs, religious faith, and the name of their country—*Hispania*. When Spain, along with the rest of Europe, fell to the barbarians in the fifth century, the Visigoths swept over the peninsula and superimposed their way of life over that which the Romans had instilled. Like other Europeans, the Iberians then began forging new lifeways that combined the Roman influence, the newer Germanic contributions, and evolving Christian beliefs, for in Spain, as elsewhere, the Visigoths ended up assimilating the religion, language, and form of government of the people they had conquered.

### The Muslim era and the reconquista

What chiefly separated the history of the Iberian peoples from that of the rest of western Europe was the conquest of Spain by Muslims from northern Africa (Arabic or Berber peoples known loosely as the Moors) who sought to spread their Islamic faith. Partly because of the Muslim domination of the peninsula, which began in AD 711, feudalism did not attain maturity in Christian Spain. The constant state of warfare to oust the Muslim intruders equalized social distinctions, thereby blurring class differences then prevalent in northern Europe. In each Christian state, furthermore, the war bolstered the role of the king as the military leader responsible for the *reconquista* (reconquest), the term generally used to refer to the centuries of struggle to regain Spain from the Muslims. Following a tradition used by the Moorish invaders, Christian fighters surrendered one-fifth of the spoils of their conquests to the monarch—a custom that granted further power and wealth to the Crown. Since the Muslims were among the world's best-connected merchants, their influence helped Spain enjoy brisk economic activity with the Islamic world. Numerous Spanish cities became commercial hubs as their merchants developed prosperous ties with their counterparts in Africa, the several Mediterranean countries, and the Muslim world of the Middle East. Even Iberians who earned their living from the soil participated in the economic good times, as they sold their produce in domestic as well as export markets.

## Castile and the legacy of the reconquista

Efforts to resist the aggressors and reconquer the motherland molded Spanish culture during the Middle Ages. Of the several Christian states that individually or jointly sought to push back the Moors, none excelled Castile, the heartland of Spain stretching from the peninsula's northern lands south to the central plateau. Castile's campaign to expel the Muslim interlopers turned into a way of life that accentuated the warrior hallmarks of valor, tenacity, intrepidity, and survival at any cost—traits embraced by the *conquistadores* (conquerors) whatever their social station.

Through time, moreover, the Castilian reconquista assumed the aura of a religious crusade. The discovery in 900 of what Spaniards believed to be the burial site and body of the apostle Santiago (St. James the Great) in northern Spain, inspired Spanish religious fervor, for St. James supposedly had brought Christianity to Iberia. The reconquista prompted the Crown to bestow the role of ally upon the Catholic Church, and, in turn, the Church's preaching in support of this cause rendered numerous social and political privileges to the clergy. By the thirteenth century, Catholic religious orders such as the Franciscans and Dominicans engaged in proselytizing activity among the Spanish Muslims.

The reconquista also encouraged the raising of sheep in agrarian Castile, for the Castilians found that sheep produced higher and quicker profits than did their crops. And unlike crops, herds could be moved quickly out of harm's way during the constant warfare. When stockmen imported merino sheep from northern Africa in 1280, the Iberians bred them with their native stock. The new strain produced such a superior grade of wool that merchants in the international market eagerly sought the product, which brought handsome profits.

Cattle raising also flourished in the reconquered areas of southern Castile. In Andalucía, lords raised breeds of cattle that became widely known for the fine quality of their beef and hides. Seasonally, *vaqueros*, mounted herders, drove the stock cross-country from the northern summer grazing lands to winter in southern pastures. The *vaqueros* developed a distinctive dress and equipment, as well as cattle-ranching traditions and practices such as the *rodeo* (roundup) and the branding of calves for identification purposes, which were later transplanted to areas that came under Spain's dominance.

Compared to other various European urban centers that experienced economic downturns, Spain's cities witnessed a good deal of development, for in the process of reconquest, towns held down and consolidated the gains of battle. In return for their assistance in helping to regain territory from the Muslim "infidels," towns received charters by which the king guaranteed townspeople the protection of their individual possessions and privileges and permitted them a semblance of self-governance. During this period, city inhabitants came to belong to *ayuntamientos* (city councils), which elected town officials. Furthermore, they organized *hermandades* (brotherhoods) responsible for maintaining the peace. This new form of municipal government replaced the old Roman administrative structure that had broken down following the arrival of the Muslims.

## Los Reyes Católicos

The two Iberian kingdoms of Castile and Aragón united in 1479, when Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragón, married since 1469, inherited the thrones of their respective dominions. Seeking to consolidate their power over the whole peninsula, the monarchs

swiftly pressed for the pacification of the countryside and the subordination of the nobles, the Church, and the military orders, which had gained power during the final stages of the reconquista. The couple's strategy for accomplishing their plans proved shrewd and inventive—even cunning. In order to suppress criminal activity, for instance, Isabella co-opted the medieval institution of the *hermandad*, turning what had begun as municipal brotherhoods to defend mutual interests—ironically against the nobility—into a standing army for the Crown. Political gains made by individuals at the local level during the reconquista thus receded as *los reyes católicos* (the Catholic kings) began the task of molding Spain into a sovereign nation.

With a semblance of peace and unity restored domestically, the monarchs turned their attention to foreign policy. By the fifteenth century, technological advances enabled Spain to expand its commerce. Much of the new technology came from Portugal, where Prince Henry the Navigator had made brilliant strides in map making and ship building in an effort to see his own country be the first to probe the African coastline, establish sea routes to the Orient, and find a friendly ally for a besieged Christian Europe. As fate determined, it was Portugal's rival, Spain, that used Henry's inventions to discover a world completely unknown to Europe.

## Columbus

In 1492 Isabella gave consent to the Italian mariner Christopher Columbus to sail under the flag of Spain in a westerly course to the East Indies. Columbus's principal motives were economic and political gain, but a desire to spread his religion also prompted him. If successful, he would achieve great things for Spain and Latin Christendom.

From the port of Palos in southern Spain, Columbus, in command of three caravels, steered toward the Canary Islands, already claimed and colonized by the Spaniards. After reprovisioning there, the crews headed into the strong Atlantic seas never before sailed by Europeans. The admiral reckoned he would reach the Orient in thirty days, tap its riches, and in the process establish new allies and trading partners for the Christian world and open vast new lands for religious proselytizing. On October 12, 1492, after more than a month at sea, Columbus sighted land. But he had not reached Asia, as he had assumed he had; rather he came ashore on the modern-day Bahamas. He named the first island on which he stepped *San Salvador* (Holy Savior).

## The conquistadores

Following Columbus's grand find, Spain proceeded swiftly to transform the "New World," as the Europeans had dubbed it, into colonies that would provide the Spaniards with the elusive riches they had hoped to reap by finding a shortcut to the Orient. Now a new wave of conquistadores, who in many ways resembled those who had reclaimed the peninsula from the Muslims—having ousted the last of the Moors from Granada in 1492—took the initiative for the acquisition and subordination of new dominions. Characteristics of the traditional conquistador—courage and tenacity, but also callousness, a propensity toward violence, religious zeal, and a desire for gold and glory—typified those who led the conquest of the New World.

Columbus himself played a major part in the takeover of the Caribbean Islands, but the exploration, and exploitation, of the New World proved too vast for one man's energies. Numerous explorers thus left what had been labeled the "West Indies" for fresh explorations, among them was Vasco Núñez de Balboa. Balboa ultimately crossed the Central American Isthmus, and in 1513 he claimed the Pacific Ocean on behalf of the king of Spain. In the same year, Juan Ponce de León reached Florida, bringing the North American peninsula into the Spanish sphere, though the Spaniards did not succeed in settling the region until the 1560s. The expedition to establish control over modern-day Mexico was spearheaded by several intriguing war campaigns led by Hernán Cortés, who by 1521 had conquered and plundered Montezuma's Aztec empire, paving the way for the ruthless domination of the rest of Mexico. In Peru, conquest of the Incas fell to an unlettered conquistador named Francisco Pizarro, who arrived there in 1532, eventually executed the emperor, and despoiled buildings and shrines of their treasures throughout Inca settlements. Blood, rapine, and plunder marked the Spaniards' path through Peru, as it had their swath through Mexico.

### **Looking for Fortunes in Texas**

Just as the atmosphere of fifteenth-century Spain helped to mold the ruthless nature of the exploring Spaniards, so, too, did it shape their desire to find riches and amass fortunes. Many people in late medieval Europe still believed in romantic tales of mythic adventure, and books describing fantastic places of great riches and enchantment stimulated Spanish hopes of finding the fabled land of the warlike Amazon women, of the opulent Seven Cities, and the legendary Fountain of Youth. The very real treasures (gold and silver, principally) that the conquistadores did find in Mexico and in Peru only encouraged their people's convictions that the dreams of lore were indeed realizable in the New World.

It was this search for great fortune that led the Spaniards to the land now known as Texas (Figure 1.4). The earliest European penetration of what was to become Texas occurred accidentally in 1528, shortly after Pánfilo de Narváez led 400 men into Florida. Landing first near today's Sarasota Bay, Narváez took three-fourths of his crew ashore with him to investigate stories of a golden land. Narváez and his men were left stranded on Florida's west coast, however, after miscommunications prompted his ships to depart for Cuba without them.

Improvising, Narváez and his fellow castaways killed their mounts, fashioning five small boats from the horse hides, in which they hoped to float along the Gulf Coast and eventually reach Mexico. But on a spit of land close to the western portion of modern-day Galveston Island, the Spaniards were shipwrecked and forced to brave the winter of 1528–29. Enslaved by a band of coastal Indians, only a handful of the Spaniards, among them Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca and Estevanico, a Moorish slave, survived into the spring. After years in bondage, and with their number now down to four, Cabeza de Vaca persuaded the others to escape and follow him. Posing as "medicine men" as they traveled, the Spaniards undertook a remarkable odyssey that led them across the Rio Grande, at a spot northwest of present-day Roma, Texas, then on through northern Mexico and eventually back into Texas, near today's Presidio. From there they trekked along the east bank of the Rio Grande, toward a site some seventy-five miles below El Paso, then back across the Rio Grande into Mexico and, finally, into the Spanish frontier town of Culiacán, in the western province of Sinaloa.

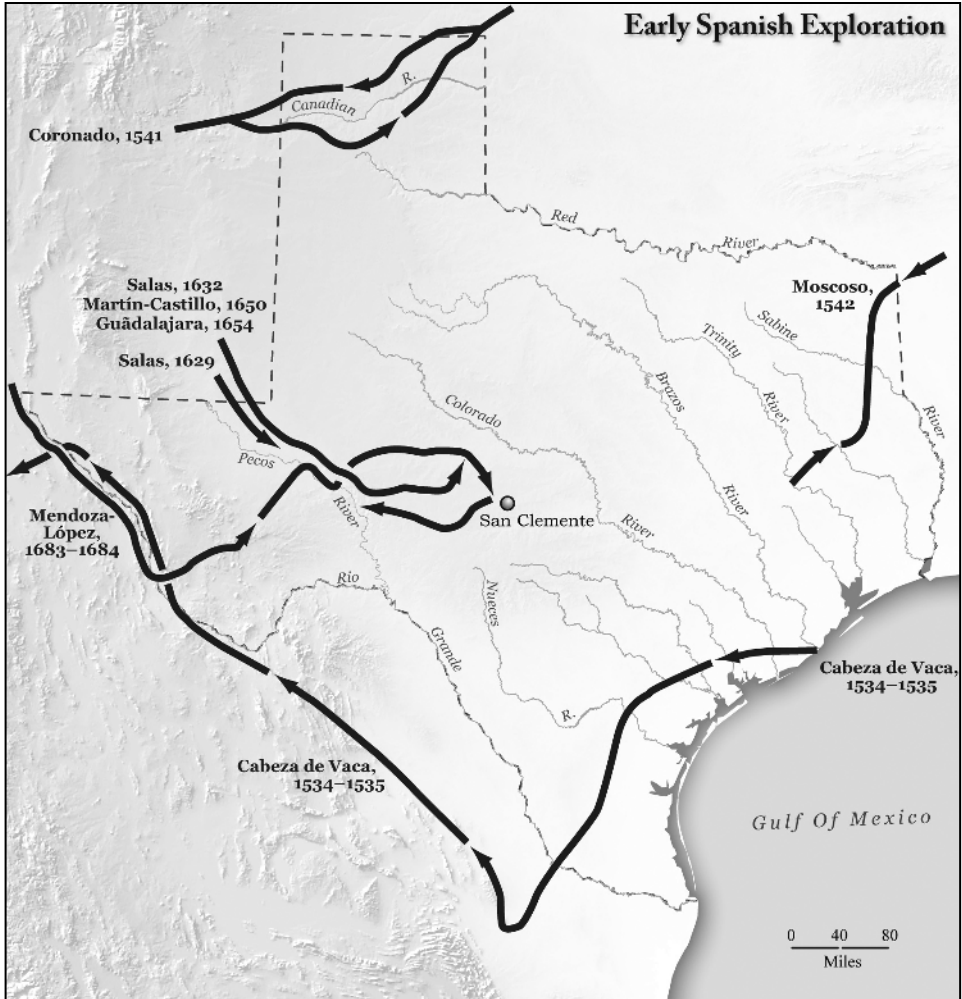


Figure 1.4

Upon his arrival in Culiacán in 1536, Cabeza de Vaca had much to tell, including tales of riches existing in the lands somewhere north of those he had roamed. To confirm his reports, the Crown in 1539 dispatched Friar Marcos de Niza to the northern lands, with Estevanico accompanying him as a scout. In present-day western New Mexico, the friar, supposedly viewing a Pueblo Indian town from a distant hilltop, reported upon his return of having seen a glittering city of silver and gold. Niza's fabulous vision may be accounted for by the reflective quartz imbedded in the walls of the adobe dwellings sparkling in the sunlight, but Spanish officials interpreted his testimony as evidence of the existence of the fabled Seven Cities. Their general location was deemed *Cíbola*, a term meaning buffalo, which the Spaniards had heard the Indians use and now applied as a place-name to the pueblos of the Zuñis.

Historians question whether or not Niza actually traveled as far as *Cíbola*, but whatever the truth, Niza's report raised expectations among the Spaniards, and the viceroy assigned Francisco Vázquez de Coronado to lead a follow-up expedition. Coronado arrived in Zuñi



**Figure 1.5** *Coronado on the High Plains* by Frederic Remington. Copied from a reproduction in *Collier's Magazine*, December 9, 1905. University of Texas at San Antonio.

country the next year, only to discover that Niza's glittering cities were, indeed, merely adobe complexes. Conflict soon brewed with the Pueblos, for Coronado and his troops mistreated the villagers and inflicted numerous indignities upon them, even burning some Pueblo people at the stake. After this, newly generated tales of a golden kingdom called Gran Quivira induced other parties of Spaniards to venture out upon the Great Plains, but as they crossed what we know today as the Texas Panhandle, none saw anything of value to themselves or the Crown.

At first, Coronado refused to be disillusioned, continuing his search for Gran Quivira near the land of the Wichita tribes in Kansas (Figure 1.5). But two years of futile searching finally convinced him to return to Mexico, and his reports of the absence of riches in the lands he had traversed discouraged further exploration of the north for another half-century.

While Coronado was exploring the Plains, another expedition, this one led by Hernando de Soto, made its way from Florida to Alabama and across the southeastern Mississippi Valley, tracking down rumors of gold treasures and civilized cities. This quest also proved fruitless, and De Soto, despairing of his failure, took ill with fever and died in the spring of 1542. His party, now situated on the Mississippi River, was taken over by Luis de Moscoso de Alvarado, who opted to march west in hopes of reaching Mexico. During their trek, the Spaniards entered eastern Texas and may have ranged as far west as the Trinity River, near present-day Houston County. Frustrated that they had not yet managed to reach Mexico, Moscoso and his men returned to the Mississippi, building crude boats and floating downstream and then westward along the Gulf Coast. Destiny forced the sailors ashore near present-day Beaumont. Two months later, the 300 men arrived in the Spanish town of Panuco, Mexico, with, of course, no reports of having found riches. This report further dampened the Spaniards' desire to explore Texas.

## Competition for the North

By the early part of the seventeenth century, Spain's New World dominion extended nearly 8,000 miles, from southern California to the tip of South America. But Spain could claim no monopoly over the world discovered by Columbus, for several other European countries now competed for their share of colonies in the Western Hemisphere. The Dutch laid claim to the Hudson Valley and New Netherlands, the settlement that later became part of the English colony of New York. The French, meantime, founded Quebec in Canada and launched the occupation of Nova Scotia. As time passed, French traders pushed southwestwardly into the Great Lakes area, and by the 1650s they had infiltrated the general region around what is today the state of Wisconsin.

The most determined of the seventeenth-century efforts were those of the English, who explored along the Atlantic Coast north of the lands chartered by Ponce de León, Pánfilo de Narváez, and Cabeza de Vaca. By the 1640s, the English empire had established solid possession of the Atlantic seaboard between northern Florida and New England. Britain now prepared to expand its mainland North American empire west, toward areas that the Spaniards regarded as exclusively their own.

## Colonizing baggage

Spain held an edge over its European competitors in skills required for colonization, for by the seventeenth century the trappings of Spanish civilization (much of it a legacy of the reconquista) were well in place throughout much of Latin America and ready for relocation to North American frontiers. Responsible for coordinating settlement was an autocratic king, who since the conquest of the Aztecs had passed along royal orders to political bureaucracies responsible for the day-to-day affairs in Spain's respective New World colonies. Although these field officials tended to mold royal directives and laws to fit local circumstances, they implicitly recognized the king's right to set policy and their duty to acknowledge his decisions.

The king, however, did not act haphazardly in bringing Indian lands under the Spanish flag. To the contrary, he oversaw an orderly process of expansion and settlement by employing those agencies already proven effective against the Muslims or tested on the frontiers of the New World. The military garrison and fort called the *presidio*, the roots of which lay in the Roman concept of *praesidium* (meaning a militarized region protected by fortifications), for example, was initially employed in the last half of the sixteenth century as protection against the Chichimeca Indian nations that inhabited the north-central plateau of New Spain. From the Indian frontier north of Mexico City, the core government deployed the presidio into other regions, each fort under the direction of a presidial commander acting in behalf of the governor and whose authority outweighed that of local civilian officials. The presidio served many functions. It was a place for prisoners to complete their sentences, and it provided a walled courtyard in which to conduct peace talks with representatives of restive Indian tribes. More important, as a garrison for soldiers trained and equipped for frontier warfare, the presidio protected another frontier institution—the mission—guarding the friars in the mission compounds as they attempted to pacify and instruct newly converted congregations of Native peoples.

The practice of conducting missionary activity among the Muslim occupiers had been used in Spain during the reconquista, and it evolved into the system found in the Mexican north in the 1580s. Priests of different Catholic religious orders (such as the Franciscans





**Figure 1.6** Mission San José, San Antonio, Texas Prints and Photograph Collection CN 08004, The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin.

or the Dominicans) staffed the missions, performing various functions relevant to exploration, conquest, and Christianization (Figure 1.6). The missionaries sought to convert the Indians to Catholicism, establish friendly relations with hostile tribes, and, by their fortified presence at the mission, assist in retaining conquered territories for the Crown.

Missionaries acted for the government in a tradition traceable to medieval times, when the reconquista became a joint enterprise between the Crown and the Church. As Ferdinand and Isabella acquired the right to make appointments to religious positions (the *patronato real*) in the 1480s, the alliance between the king of Spain and the pope became even closer. By the time of the conquistadores, the Crown had won the right to regulate the Church in its American colonies (including making such decisions as where Church edifices would be erected), sponsor evangelical forays into pagan lands, and decide which religious order would take priority in missionizing particular regions. With these powers, the Crown controlled the pattern of Church activities in the New World, though doctrine and dogma remained strictly the domain of the clergy.

In their further efforts to Europeanize new lands, the Spaniards also used the civilian settlement, another institution employed during the reconquista to hold recently reconquered territory. As the Spaniards advanced northward from Anáhuac, they used civilian settlements to populate frontier regions and integrate the hinterlands and their resources into the kingdom. By this time, the Spaniards had devised extensive laws governing the location, layout, and defense of urban outposts. Again, these laws generally derived from previous experiences in urban settlement during the reconquista. According to these plans, the town plat was square and included one or more rectangular plazas, the main one constituting the town center, with outlying streets crossing one another at right angles. The east side of

the central plaza was designated for church edifices, the west side for government and public buildings. This arrangement facilitated daily routines: the idea was to use the morning light for mass and other church operations, and then allow government officials to work late into the evening using the afternoon sun. Lots allocated to residents also conformed to the pattern of perpendicular streets oriented to the four cardinal directions. Lands surrounding the new urban sites were designated as public property that all residents could use to sustain themselves and their livestock. Other ordinances stipulated that sites for new municipalities be chosen only after thought had been given to matters of sanitation, the proximity of food resources, local weather patterns, and the prospects afforded for self-defense against raids by hostile Indians. *Pobladores* (settlers) made every effort to adhere to these regulations, but the contingencies of the moment many times dictated otherwise. In Texas, therefore, plans did not always follow the letter. Officials who belonged to a bureaucratic structure, the roots of which went back to the reconquista, governed these new municipalities.

The Spaniards also utilized the *rancho* (ranch) to help them claim unsettled areas. Stockmen and farmers invariably accompanied frontier expeditions, and, over the course of time, they played supportive roles in the Christianizing of the Indians and the defense of settled territories. *Rancheros* (ranchers) provided settlements with resources otherwise absent on the frontier, such as beef, pork, and wool, along with useful byproducts such as hides and tallow. This helped the missionaries retain Indian convertees who otherwise might have chosen to run off in search of wild game more palatable to their diet than the friars' normal fare. The ranchers also helped presidial soldiers, not only by providing them with meat but by furnishing them with live animals necessary for farm work, freighting, and, of course, military expeditions of all kinds.

These, then, were the traditional institutions that the Spanish employed, albeit in a modified form, to settle the contemporary American Southwest, while the Dutch, English, and French sought footholds in the region east of the Mississippi River. Spain renewed its efforts to colonize New Spain's Far North because of the prospects of finding wealth, a persistent desire to Christianize the settled Indians reported by Coronado, and the need to protect the expanse from foreign encroachment, for by the late 1570s and 1580s, English pirates such as Sir Francis Drake began sailing along the California coast. In 1598, therefore, Don Juan de Oñate led an expedition into what would become Nuevo México; the operation resulted in the founding of Santa Fe in 1609. The establishment of this permanent settlement initiated the Spanish government's quest to impose its imperial authority over Texas.

Spain's initial and strongest competition in the colonization of Texas came not from rival European empires but from indigenous nations of the region. As of the late seventeenth century (and later for that matter), Native American peoples comprised the land's political and economic (as well as demographic) powers. In actuality, several Indian nations vied to claim the wide expanse, all of them competing for its natural (animal and plant) resources, material bounties (such as captives, guns, and livestock), or for the control of trade networks or potential intertribal coalitions. In their aim to settle Texas, therefore, the Spaniards found themselves one player among many—all intent on gaining dominion of the province's resources.

## Western Texas

For years, Jumano Indians had traveled to the Pueblo country in New Mexico to conduct trade. In 1629, the Jumanos asked the Spaniards they met there to visit them in their West

Texas lands and instruct them in the religion to which they had been introduced by the “Lady in Blue.” According to some Church historians, this personage was the Spanish nun Madre María de Ágreda, who asserted that she had spiritually visited New World lands through miraculous bi-location. Whatever the truth to the mystery surrounding this figure, the Spaniards responded to the invitation with an expedition to Jumano country in 1629 commanded by Fray (Father) Juan de Salas, and another one in 1632 led by the Franciscans.

Their desire to proselytize Native Americans notwithstanding, the Spaniards also held interests in more mundane things in Jumano country: namely, freshwater pearls (found in mollusks living in the western tributaries of the Colorado River) and the countless buffalo on the West Texas plains. Also appealing to them was the possibility that Jumano country might become a base for trading with the Caddo Indians; the eastern tribes, according to the Jumanos, comprised a wealthy population of many villages. In 1654, therefore, Diego de Guadalajara returned to Jumano country in search of pearl-bearing *conchas* (shells) in the present-day forks of the Concho River of West Texas. At that time, however, Spanish officialdom lacked the resources to pursue their plans to trade with East Texas Indians through the Jumanos.

Finally, approaches to West Texas were made in 1683 and 1684. By now, the Spaniards resided a bit closer to the Jumanos, for the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, in which the Pueblo tribes attacked and destroyed the Spanish settlements of the upper valley of the Rio Grande, had caused much of the Spanish population of New Mexico to take refuge in El Paso (modern-day Juárez), where a Franciscan mission, which sheltered a small band of Jumanos, had existed since 1659. From this distressed and impoverished civilian settlement the Spaniards returned to West Texas when the Jumano Chief Juan Sabeata asked that priests be sent to his land in West Texas and, parenthetically, for assistance in countering threats from the Apaches. Responding to Sabeata’s request, Spanish authorities dispatched an expedition led by Juan Domínguez de Mendoza and Fray Nicolás López down the Rio Grande from El Paso to today’s Ruidosa, Texas, then into the San Sabá River area, where they established themselves at Mission San Clemente. From temporary quarters there, the expedition’s men slaughtered some 4,000 buffalo. In fact, Sabeata’s primary motive in luring the Spaniards into Jumano country may have been to get the Spaniards to protect his people from the Apaches while the Jumanos hunted buffalo. The Jumanos then planned to carry Spanish goods and trade them with the Caddos of East Texas. But the Spaniards’ motivations went beyond converting Indians and shielding Sabeata from the Apaches. Aside from the previously mentioned desire to find pearls, acquire new sources of food or raw products (such as hides), and to establish trading links with the Caddos, they sought to bring relief to the starving civilian community in El Paso. They also surmised that exploring West Texas might lead to an alternative site for settlement, for the El Paso region seemed unable to produce basic necessities. Whatever the motives for all involved, the Spaniards left after six weeks of hunting in San Clemente, returning to El Paso with a bounty of buffalo hides, promising the Jumanos to return at a later date.

### Eastern Texas

The Spaniards did not revisit the Jumanos in West Texas, for they became preoccupied with increased French activity close to the Gulf of Mexico. By the early 1670s, the French were

actively exploring the middle of the North American continent from their bases in Canada, and now they planned to install a string of trading stores and forts to stretch all the way from the Great Lakes to the mouth of the Mississippi. They made important headway in doing so when in 1682 René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, traveled down the Mississippi and asserted title to all of the lands drained by the great river for France.

Promptly, La Salle made plans to lay more than symbolic claims to the Mississippi River basin. Intending to found a warm-water port for the French fur trade at a site above the mouth of the Mississippi River (or perhaps, as some historians contend, plant a post there to help France capture some of the gold mines in northwestern New Spain), he left France at the head of four ships (the *Aimable*, the *Joly*, the *Belle* and one seized by Spanish privateers in Haiti). La Salle and his colonists, which included some women and children, arrived in the Gulf of Mexico late in 1684 (the same year that the Spaniards were active among the Jumanos in West Texas). Charting his course on the limited navigational knowledge of the seventeenth century and a reliance on hypothetically drawn maps, La Salle supposed that the Río Escondido (the modern-day Nueces River in South Texas) was actually the celebrated Mississippi River, so in February 1685 he ended up on the Texas coast at Matagorda Bay. Following the wreck of the *Aimable*, his crew sailed back to France on the *Joly*, leaving La Salle in unknown territory with only one ship and his original 180 colonists rapidly diminishing.

On Garcitas Creek (in today's Victoria County), La Salle founded a temporary colony. While his remaining ship (the *Belle*) lay at anchor in Matagorda Bay with the supplies destined for his Mississippi venture, the Frenchman undertook an exploration in late 1685 into the Texas interior to determine the reaches of Spanish settlements. This expedition brought his party toward the Rio Grande and into the trans-Pecos region, with disastrous results. To La Salle's dismay, the *Belle* had wrecked during this absence, and to salvage something for his ambitious enterprise, the tired explorer, at the head of a seventeen-man party, decided to turn northward in the hope of reaching Fort Saint-Louis on the Illinois River (which he had established earlier) and from there send word of his plight to France. This gambit also proved unsuccessful, and in March 1687 La Salle died near the Trinity River at the hands of his own frustrated men, five of whom in 1688 succeeded in reaching France via Quebec. In early 1689, Karankawa Indians wiped out the survivors (about twenty-three) at La Salle's fledgling settlement (known erroneously in Texas history as Fort St. Louis; in actuality, there never did exist a site or garrison in Texas that went by that name), sparing only a few children whom the Spaniards later recovered.

As unimpressive as it was, the French activity in the area nonetheless alerted the Spaniards to the danger of losing Texas and prompted them to initiate the exploration of the eastern periphery of the northern frontier of New Spain. Starting in 1686 and continuing until 1690, the Crown dispatched Alonso de León (north from Nuevo León) on several expeditions, his fourth one in 1689 taking him to the remains of La Salle's ill-fated colony on the Garcitas. The next year, the Spaniards explored past that location and made contact with the Caddo world, long regarded by the Spaniards as "the great kingdom of the Tejas" due to legends extolling the prosperity and magnificence of the Caddos.

Actually, the Caddos of what is now East Texas (Caddo communities spread into modern-day northwestern Louisiana) consisted of about 10,000 people; among those belonging to the Caddo nation were the Hasinai Indians, whom the Spaniards referred to as the *Tejas*, the Spanish rendition of the Hasinai word for friend, from which the state of Texas is named. Encircled by tribes hostile to their way of life, the Caddos stood prepared to defend their territory against any group that might try to encroach on it. The Caddos,

however, confidently accepted the Europeans upon their arrival, for they saw them as potential allies and trading partners. The fact that the image of the Virgen de Guadalupe accompanied De León and the Spaniards as they approached Caddo villages helped introduce them as friends, for in the Caddo kinship gender-based system, women symbolized peaceful intent. The Caddo leaders responded by sending parties of men, women, and children to greet the Europeans (such was their standard ritual whenever outsiders neared their communities) as their own indication of friendship. Following this reception, the Caddos invited the visitors into their village, where women (in exercise of their matrilineal roles) brought to the ceremonial courtyard foodstuffs—the fruits of their toil as agricultural laborers. The Spaniards, for their part, reciprocated with gifts such as garments, blankets, and tobacco.

With trust thus established, Caddo and Spanish expedition leaders set about discussing matters of mutual benefit. The Caddos offered no resistance when De León and Fray Damián Massanet moved to set up two missions (one of them being San Francisco de los Tejas, the first Spanish mission in Texas, 1690) among the Caddos. The Spanish perceived the Tejas (Caddos) as a particularly stable tribe that adhered to religious beliefs that recognized the existence of but one supreme being. Moreover, they ascertained that the Caddos traded widely, exchanging their bows and pottery, as well as salt and other goods, with representatives of other bands, among them the Jumanos. So many Indians from such great distances arrived in the Caddo villages in order to barter that the priests quickly envisioned the Caddo kingdom as the ideal setting for disseminating the Christian message in New Spain's Far North.

Despite these seemingly auspicious circumstances, the Caddos did not prove to be willing converts nor indulgent hosts. For one thing, Christianity actually clashed with their religious beliefs and spiritual traditions. For another, the Spaniards had disrupted their traditional way of life. When Domingo de Terán, who had been named governor of what became the province of Texas, visited the Caddos in 1691 intending to found additional missions, his livestock indiscriminately trampled and fed upon the Caddos' new farm harvests. This, along with the soldiers' degrading treatment of women and imprudent overtures by the missionaries who violated Caddo protocol, made the Caddos resentful, leading the tribes' members to retaliate by attacking the interlopers' domesticated stock. Finally sensing hostility, the Spaniards retreated to Coahuila, leaving behind only a few missionaries to continue the work of Christianizing. But those few persons—who obviously resisted the Caddo convention that outsiders' acceptance into their society entailed marriage—could not convince the Caddos of their good intentions, so by 1693 the Spanish had departed East Texas.

The departure proved temporary, for events from within and without New Spain forced a return to Caddo land. Father Francisco Hidalgo, who had worked with Massanet among the Tejas, desired to resume the work he had helped begin in East Texas. In addition, the French renewed their activity along the mouth of the Mississippi to thwart English plans to move westward from the Atlantic to the middle of the continent. When the French established themselves at Mobile Bay in 1702, then farther west at Natchitoches, in what is now western Louisiana, it gave the Spaniards cause for alarm.

While several motives had brought the French to the border of Texas, trade ranked high on the list. This became evident when in 1713 a French Canadian named Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, who had been trading successfully with Indians in Louisiana, appeared in Natchitoches with an array of merchandise and a determination to seek markets among the Spaniards.

Setting out across Texas, St. Denis and a small detachment of French and Hasinai headed for New Spain proper. They arrived at San Juan Bautista on the Rio Grande (some thirty miles downriver from today's Eagle Pass on the Mexican side) on July 19, 1714, where Captain Diego Ramón quickly arrested them, detaining the encroachers until word arrived from the viceroy early the next year that the Frenchmen should be taken to Mexico City for official interrogation. Once in New Spain's capital, St. Denis gave a revealing account of his purpose: the French had received a letter from Father Francisco Hidalgo the previous year describing the Tejas and asking if the French would support a mission for the Indians. St. Denis disclosed that the Tejas yearned for a continuation of Christian missionary work, especially that of Father Hidalgo. As for trade, St. Denis declared that he saw no legal bans against commercial intercourse between French and Spanish territorial possessions.

Whatever the pretext, the viceroy saw no real justification for the French intrusion, so he immediately ordered Captain Domingo Ramón (the son of Diego Ramón) to make preparations to convert East Texas into a buffer zone by rebuilding the Spanish missions there. Assigned as second-in-command of this expedition was none other than St. Denis, who had adroitly persuaded the Spaniards that he now planned to set up stead on the Texas frontier and assist the Spanish in the work of Christianizing the Tejas. While room for distrust existed between the Spanish viceroy and the Frenchman, both found mutual benefit in their alliance. The Spaniards hoped to take advantage of St. Denis's knowledge of the Texas terrain, his command of Indian languages, and his knack for befriending certain Indians nations so as to repair fractured terms with the Caddos and establish a prosperous trade in East Texas. According to some historians, however, St. Denis's subsequent marriage to Captain Diego Ramón's step-granddaughter at San Juan Bautista lay at the heart of his defection from the service of France.

### Settlements

Such was the course of events in the early eighteenth century that placed the Spaniards permanently in Texas. In February 1716, Captain Domingo Ramón and St. Denis crossed the Rio Grande headed for East Texas at the head of about seventy-five people, among them twenty-six soldiers and several Franciscan priests (including Father Hidalgo). Upon the Europeans' arrival, the Tejas and other Caddos greeted them warmly, for they regarded St. Denis as their friend, and consequently believed the Spaniards would, as did the French among them, abide by Caddo custom of entering their kinship system by marriage (with Caddo people) and establishing family residence within the village proper. In late June, therefore, the explorers set up base at a site close to the Neches River. They immediately constructed a temporary presidio, then four missions close by it, among them Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Nacogdoches, situated near present-day Nacogdoches. With the erection of the missions and presidio by the summer of 1716, the Spaniards had succeeded in accomplishing two objectives: revitalizing missionary work among the East Texas Indians, which Father Hidalgo had sought; and laying claim to the region, the objective pursued by the Spanish government in order to ward off French encroachment.

But this was not the end of New Spain's Texas enterprise, for now New Spain's central government pushed ahead with plans to solidify the Spanish position on the northern periphery. At the beginning of 1717, Captain Ramón and Fray Antonio Margil de Jesús established two more missions farther east of the original foundations, inching the missionaries closer to the French post of Natchitoches. These settlements struggled. The

missionaries and soldiers faced stark conditions, receiving little help from the Crown in the way of supplies, food, clothing, and weapons, and then getting practically no assistance from the Caddos they had been dispatched to convert, for the Spaniards still were not inclined to establish residence among Caddo society as custom mandated. Another expedition, led by Martín de Alarcón, marched from Mexico City toward the Río San Antonio in 1718 to found a military post called San Antonio de Béxar and a mission they named San Antonio de Valero. The new presidio and mission would serve the purpose of Christianizing the Coahuiltecan Indians, who had long eked out a marginal existence in their ancestral territories and were presently under attack by marauding bands of Apaches coming down from the plains. Additionally, the presidio-mission complex midway between the Rio Grande and the East Texas frontier line would become a supply station. The result was the peopling of what became the original municipality of San Antonio. Around this site the Spaniards constructed the Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo in 1720 and three others in the 1730s. In 1721, the Spaniards secured control of the Bay of Espíritu Santo (or La Bahía) by building a fort that they hoped would serve as a Gulf Coast deterrent to Frenchmen desiring to initiate sea trade west from Louisiana. They also reasoned that the garrison would temporarily store provisions to be brought into Texas from Vera Cruz by ship. In 1749, however, the Crown moved the presidio and mission (built in 1722) of La Bahía inland toward the San Antonio River at the site of modern-day Goliad (the site kept the name of La Bahía) as part of a plan to found two civilian communities there. The towns did not thrive, but the presidio-mission-settlement complex of La Bahía remained.

Despite the entrenchment, the French chased the Spaniards out of East Texas in 1719, when war broke out in Europe between Spain and France. In a countermove, the Spanish Crown dispatched the governor of the province of Coahuila and Tejas, the Marqués de Aguayo, to regain the lost East Texas lands. The governor discharged his assignment by restoring the old missions among the Tejas and establishing a new presidio in July 1721 named Nuestra Señora del Pilar de los Adaes, just fifteen miles west of Natchitoches, near the present-day town of Robeline, Louisiana. Los Adaes, as the site came to be known, did well, as its friars, soldiers, and civilian residents of necessity adapted to Caddo patterns of village living and rules of comportment, and in the process became more accepting of the Caddos, upon whom they depended for survival. Returning to San Antonio in early 1722, Governor Aguayo issued directions for finishing the San Antonio de Béxar presidio started in 1718, then headed for La Bahía, where he established a mission to protect and Christianize the Karankawas and other coastal tribes. By the time Aguayo returned to his home in Coahuila in May 1722, he had increased the number of military posts and missions in Texas, repopulated the region with civilians, and established a much stronger Spanish hold on the entire province.

A new reconnoitering expedition in 1728 partly undermined Aguayo's work when it ascertained that the French were no longer the threat they once had been and concluded that a reduction in the number of Texas presidios, missions, and civilian settlements would make sense financially. But the friars remained committed to working among the Indians; hence some of the missions continued functioning as before. Moreover, the imperial government still desired to reinforce the halfway station at San Antonio. A *villa*, or civilian settlement, called San Fernando de Béxar, was built there in 1731, when sixteen families (somewhere between fifty-five and fifty-nine individuals) arrived from the Canary Islands. In that same year, the friars from East Texas relocated to San Antonio. Therefore, before the end of the 1730s, a presidio, a municipality, and five missions constituted the San

Antonio (or Béxar) complex. Additionally, small Indian communities sprang up in the vicinity of San Antonio as Indian families gathered there, relying on Béxar for protection and material help.

The Spaniards also pushed to settle the country along the Rio Grande. Don José de Escandón took charge of this expedition, and by the early 1750s he had colonized the south bank of the river and also planted the seeds of modern-day Laredo, Texas. The lands of the lower Rio Grande Valley proved conducive to farming and ranching, and the region up to the Nueces River became pastureland for feral cattle and horses. The settling of this territory on both sides of the Rio Grande proved to be one of Spain's most successful ventures in the Far North.

Church efforts to win converts also begot expansion, although attempts to broaden the mission system proved disappointing. In 1746, the Church established a mission (and the viceroy authorized the construction of a presidio in 1747) on the San Gabriel River (near present-day Rockdale, Texas) to assist the Tonkawas, who were then being victimized by the Apaches and Comanches, and it added two more missions in the vicinity in 1749. But the Crown never fully attended to these assignments. Demoralization among the presidial soldiers and even the missionaries set in, and the Indians became dissatisfied due to what they felt was a lack of proper attention. The project on the San Gabriel thus died in 1755.

An attempt to convert the dreaded Apaches also failed. Since the establishment of the San Antonio complex, these Indians had made periodic attacks on the settlements there, but by the 1740s their own hostilities with the Comanches had made the Apaches receptive to an alliance with the Spaniards. In turn, attacks by the Comanches and their allies upon Spanish settlements prompted the Spanish to make appeals to the Apaches for mutual-defense plans. Given this opportunity to Christianize the Apaches, the Spaniards in 1757 established a mission and fort along the San Sabá River (near modern-day Menard, Texas); prospects of finding silver deposits also encouraged the enterprise. It did not last long. In March of 1758, a broad group of tribes allied against the Apaches (led by the Comanches) attacked the new mission and destroyed it completely. In addition, the Apaches showed indifference to the Spaniards' proselytizing overtures. Following a series of futile attempts to carry out imperial and missionary objectives there, the viceroy abandoned the San Sabá enterprise in 1769.

## Incorporation

What Spain sought by its efforts at settlement and missionization in Texas was the annexation of its far northern territory into the national core. Incorporation would involve transplanting the attributes of Spanish civilization to the frontier and ensuring the defense of the region from foreign threats by linking it to social and political systems in the interior of New Spain. Ideally, such a move would establish ties to the center of Spain's New World empire, which would be maintained through the presidio, the mission, the rancho, and the villa, institutions that had been successful in the process of incorporating former frontier regions throughout New Spain. But, as in all such efforts, settling the periphery of the empire entailed dealing with the indigenous peoples, who by their numbers, military prowess, and economic and political support systems controlled all of Texas except for the San Antonio to La Bahía wedge.



## Readings

### Books

- Anderson, Gary Clayton, *The Indian Southwest, 1580–1830: Ethnogenesis and Reinvention* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999).
- Bannon, John Francis, *The Spanish Borderlands Frontier, 1513–1821* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1970).
- Barr, Juliana, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).
- Carlson, Paul, *The Plains Indians* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998).
- Chipman, Donald E. and Harriett Denise Joseph, *Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999).
- and ———, *Spanish Texas, 1519–1821*, Revised edition (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010).
- Cruz, Gilbert R., *Let There Be Towns: Spanish Municipal Origins in the American Southwest, 1610–1810* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1988).
- Driver, Harold E., *Indians of North America*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973).
- Hickerson, Nancy Parrott, *The Jumanos: Hunters and Traders of the South Plains* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994).
- Jennings, Jesse, *Prehistory of North America*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974).
- John, Elizabeth, *Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds: The Confrontation of Indians, Spanish, and French in the Southwest, 1540–1795* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1975).
- La Vere, David, *The Caddo Chiefdoms: Caddo Economics and Politics, 700–1835* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).
- , *The Texas Indians* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004).
- Moorhead, Max L., *The Presidio: Bastion of the Spanish Borderlands* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1975).
- Newcomb, William W., Jr., *The Indians of Texas: From Prehistoric to Modern Times* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961).
- O'Callaghan, Joseph F., *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975).
- Ricklis, Robert A., *The Karankawa Indians of Texas: An Ecological Study of Cultural Tradition and Change* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996).
- Smith, F. Todd, *The Caddo Indians: Tribes at the Convergence of Empires, 1542–1854* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995).
- Spencer, Robert E., et al., *The Native Americans: Ethnology and Background of the North American Indians*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).
- Wade, Maria F., *The Native Americans of the Texas Edwards Plateau, 1582–1799* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003).
- Weber, David J., *The Mexican Frontier, 1821–1846: The American Southwest under Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982).
- Weddle, Robert S., *The Wreck of the Belle, the Ruin of La Salle* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001).

### Article

- Perttula, Timothy K., "How Texas Historians Write About the Pre-AD 1685 Peoples of Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* CXV (April, 2012).

## Bibliographies

- Cruz, Gilberto Rafael and James Arthur Irby, *Texas Bibliography: A Manual on History Research Material* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1982).
- Cummins, Light Townsend and Alvin R. Bailey, Jr., *A Guide to the History of Texas* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988).
- Jenkins, John H., *Basic Texas Books: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Works for a Research Library* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1988).

## General reference books

- Branda, Eldon S., *Handbook of Texas*, Vol. III (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1977).
- The Texas Almanac and State Industrial Guide (Dallas: The Dallas Morning News, published annually).
- Tyler, Ron, ed., *The New Handbook of Texas*, in 6 vols. (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996).
- Webb, Walter Prescott and H. Bailey Carroll (eds.), *Handbook of Texas*, in 2 vols. (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1952).

## Surveys

- Campbell, Randolph B., *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).
- Connor, Seymour V., *Texas: A History* (Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1971).
- de la Teja, Jesús F., Paula Marks, and Ron Tyler, *Texas: Crossroads of North America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004).
- Howell, Kenneth Wayne, Keith Joseph Volanto, James Smallwood, Charles D. Grear, and Jennifer S. Lawrence, *Beyond Myths and Legends: A Narrative History of Texas* (Wheaton, IL: Abigail Press, 2008).
- Richardson, Rupert N., Adrian Anderson, Cary D. Wintz, and Ernest Wallace, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, 10th ed. (New York: Prentice Hall, 2010).

## Geographies

- Jordan, Terry G., et al., *Texas: A Geography* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984).
- Stephens, A. Ray, cartography by Carol Zuber-Mallison, *Texas: A Historical Atlas* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010).