

CONQUEST AND COLONIZATION

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Grade 6

Central Idea:

The conquest of Mexico and the colonization of the United States had ideological beginnings, totally different effects and consequences, but its impact completely changed the history of the American Continent.

Subjects: History, Geography, Literature.

Time: Six weeks.

Materials:

Notebooks, drawing materials, computers with access to Internet, books related to the subject, maps of Mexico and the United States, map of the world.

Objectives:

- Distinguish between the conquest of Mexico and that of the United States. Mexican conquest was, at first, carried out by soldiers who subdued the natives by means of a bloody and unequal war. The colonization of the United States occurred when people were forced to leave England to flee from religious persecution. They arrived on the eastern coast of the United States and started the process of colonization, which, although some violent confrontations with the natives that inhabited this territory occurred, was not a military aggression.
- Understand that in both American cases the possibility was envisioned of creating a paradise on Earth.
- Investigate how the intervention of the Catholic Church in the case of Mexico, and of the Protestant Church in the case of the United States, gave rise to completely different processes. Whereas in Mexico a blending of cultures occurred, in the United States, segregation forced the Native Americans to live in reservations created specially for them, preventing the mixture of both cultures.
- Study how the Spanish crown exerted an absolute control on New Spain, whereas England allowed its colonies much more independence.
- Become aware from the admiration, and the trance that exerted the pre-Hispanic culture on the conquerors.

Abilities:

- . Form good questions relevant to the subject.
- . Collect, organize and process data.
- . Write summaries.
- . Analyze differences and similarities in two processes.
- . Evaluate the two processes.
- . Know and respect different points of view.
- . Develop the four basic abilities of communication: read, write, listen and speak.
- . Use maps to locate specific places.

Support:

Europe at the end of the 15th century begins to expand from the necessity to find variety, silk and new places to plant sugar cane.

The Portuguese are first to begin the adventure by means of their sea expeditions, which lead them to establish commercial sites in Africa, India and Southeast Asia, as well as the occupation of Cape Verde, the Azores and other islands of the Atlantic.

Just a short time later the king and queen of Castilla and Aragón, Isabella and Ferdinand, decide to economically support the trip of Christopher Columbus, who, wanting to find a new route to the Indies, arrives to America.

The New World begins to be seen in Europe as a possibility of establishing an Earthly paradise .

Spain, fortified by the arrival to the throne of Carlos V, emperor of Germany, begins to later organize expeditions; first of exploring with clear intentions for conquest of the new continent.

The expedition that begins the conquest of Mexico comes from Cuba, where the Spaniards had been based more than 20 years, and is commanded by Hernan Cortez. Cortez would only obtain his objective by means of alliances with the different natives that, being enemy of the mexicas, decide to help the conquerors in the taking of Mexico-Tenochtitlán. The fight is cruel and unequal; in addition of the Spanish soldiers' firearms and horses, the disease of smallpox, brought to America by the conquerors, had decimated the indigenous population the year before.

August 13, 1521, with the capture of the last mexica king, Cuauhtémoc, finishes the site of Mexico-Tenochtitlán, although the war that continues until all the natives extended by the territory are controlled by the conquerors. Finally, the Spanish crown restores a central government.

Just a short time later, a great amount of civil Spaniards begin to arrive in New Spain. They are in charge, among other things, to found new places of population, to introduce agriculture and cattle ranching, and to establish new commercial relations inside and outside the new colony.

The influence of the Catholic Church is fundamental in the history of New Spain. The Spanish crown, having a Catholic project of conquest, commands some Franciscans, Dominican and Augustine friars to evangelize the natives. This was the ideological justification of the conquest: to convert the pagans and integrate them to the Catholic society. It is indeed this possibility of integration, which allows that of the mixing of races and cultures.

The colonization of the United States was a totally different process. The Spanish crown exerted an absolute control on its colonies in America. It already had great economic interests due to the mining of gold and silver in this territory. In the case of England, precious metals were not a reason for colonizing. Far from offering benefits to them, having colonies in America had a very high cost. Therefore, the English monarchs decide to donate great extensions of land to the people who wanted to settle down in the English colonies in the New World, which allowed them to have much more autonomy.

The first English colonies in America were founded by Sir Walter Raleigh in North Carolina in 1585 and 1587, nevertheless these first did not prosper. The

colonists did not manage to adapt to a life full of difficulties and deficiencies, for which reason they decided to return to England. In the second case, the colony seemed to have a good beginning, yet apparently disappeared without leaving a trace, possibly attacked by a tribe of Indians.

In 1620, a group of one hundred two people leave England looking for freedom of religion. They sail aboard the Mayflower, making a trip of sixty days and finally arriving at the bay of Plymouth, Massachusetts.

This is the moment which initiates the colonization of all the East Coast of the United States. The English colonies begin to prosper. Although, throughout the process, there are violent encounters between colonists and some native tribes who saw their life and culture threatened, there is neither a war nor a military submission, as in the case of the conquest of Mexico.

The religious ideas of the protestant colonists, prevent a blending of cultures in the United States, since for them the Indians are condemned souls, to exterminate or to shut in reservations specially created for them.

Presentation of the subject:

Beginning:

The teacher will ask the students to locate on a map of the world the following points: Spain, England, Mexico and the United States. The students will answer the following questions:

- 1.- Of the four countries that you located, which of the two is the oldest?
- 2.- In what continent are each of them located?
- 3.- Find some similar relation in the pairs Spain-Mexico, England-United States?

In groups the students will write in a large poster what they think were the causes that led to the conquest of Mexico and to the colonization of the United States.

Development:

The group will divide itself in two sub-groups. The first group will study the expedition of Hernan Cortez to Mexico-Tenochtitlán, the historical antecedents of the conquest, the determining paper of the Catholic Church within the process, and the dependency between the new colony and Spain. The second group will investigate the trip of the pilgrims on the Mayflower, the historical antecedents of this trip, the special characteristics of the colonization of the United States considering that they were made by protestant puritans and the relations that were established between the English crown and the new colony.

Closing:

When finalizing the unit, both groups will present/display the results of their investigation. Using this information, a large poster will be created on which similarities and differences between both processes will be written.

Activities:

The students of group A:

- They will locate individually on maps that the teacher will have provided to them previously: Spain, the island of Cuba and the city of Mexico-Tenochtitlán. They will color the maps and they will add them to their notebooks.

- They will read a fragment of *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain* by Bernal Diaz del Castillo, in which the author describes his impressions when arriving at Tenochtitlán. The students will choose the main ideas of the text and will write a summary.
- Using the previous information, they will create a mural in which they will represent the images described by Bernal Diaz del Castillo.
- They will choose important characters of that time and write their biographies.
- They will write an imaginary dialogue between Malinche and Hernan Cortez.
- In pairs they will create a comic strip which illustrates the encounter between natives and conquerors.

The students of group B:

- Locate individually in maps, in which the teacher has provided for them previously: England and Plymouth, Massachusetts. They will color the maps and add them to their folders.
- They will read a fragment about the trip of the pilgrims on the Mayflower. The students will abstract the main ideas of the text and will write a summary.
- Using the previous information, they will create a mural in which they will represent the voyage of the Mayflower.
- They will choose important figures of that time and will write their biographies.
- They will write an imaginary dialogue between a pilgrim and a native.
- In pairs they will create a comic strip, which illustrates the encounter between the pilgrims and the natives.

Both groups:

- Look at the 1795 Papal proclamation addressed to the citizens of New Spain. Discuss the importance of the Pope, as the head of the Catholic Church, as an influence in the colonization of New Spain.
http://tides.sfasu.edu/SP17/SHHVII_2.php?culture=5&chrono=4&index=0
- Discuss how Texas missions were established by the Spanish. Father Margil and the Tejas Indians is found in Espinosa's 1737 book *El Peregrino Septentrional Atlante: Delineado en la Exemparissima Vida del Venerable Padre F. Antonio Margil de Jesús*.
<http://tides.sfasu.edu/SP17/BX4705.php?culture=5&chrono=4&index=0>

Evaluation:

The teacher and the student will select will the activities they consider to be most relevant for evaluating the theme.

For final evaluation, the students will answer the following questions:

- 1.- How does the expansion process of Europe in the 15th century begin to unravel?

- 2.- Who commands the expedition in order to conquer Mexico and where does it originate from?
- 3.- In what form and which elements favor the Spanish in obtaining the victory?
- 4.- What date and which event mark the victory of the Spanish conquistadores?
- 5.- Why was the action of the Catholic Church so important in the process?
- 6.- Why did the Spanish Colony exhibit so much strictness over its colonies in America?
- 7.- How and why was the United States colonized?
- 8.- In which way does the protestant ideology change the process of civilization in the United States?
- 9.- What are the principal differences in each process?
- 10.- If you could travel back in time in a time machine what would you be, a Spanish conquistador or an English colonist?

Bibliography:

Escalante Gonzalbo, Pablo, Nueva Historia Mínima de México, El Colegio de México, 2005,2004.

Bethell, Leslie, Historia de América Latina, Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Díaz Del Castillo, Bernal, Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva España Pearson Learning Core Knowledge, History and Geography, E.D. Hirsch, Jr.

In relation with Texas Tides:

The group will be divided into 5 subgroups in which each one will investigate a Spanish mission.