

American literature

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



American Literature Importance of the press in developing interest in the New World Christopher Columbus turned to sea as a young man to find a commercially viable Atlantic route to Asia (Burrell 34 - 38). He is said to have discovered the West Indies which were dominated by Taino Indians on the Island of Hispaniola. He is noted to have developed friendly relations with them in as early as 1492. Soon after this discovery, the West Indies were dominated by Spain among other countries in a bid to control their land and natural resources. Columbus sent a letter to royal officials within the government that provided a description of America. These descriptions of his voyages, the land and the people he had seen in these places are what drove Spain to Hispaniola. Here, they set up colonies that led to problems for the local inhabitants of those lands who had previously lived in peace.

Impact of European Man on existing Social structures

Bartolome de las Casas (Burrell 38 - 39) fought against the ill treatment that the Indians from Hispaniola faced at the time. The Spanish had taken over the islands belonging to the Indians and taken the inhabitants as slaves. They had taken their land and drove them to less habitable areas while taking all the food they produced. The Spanish broke the existing family structures that were in place in the island. Families were separated through death when some of their members were killed. Others were taken away to Spain as slaves to work in plantations, in the mines to harvest gold and in the sea harvesting pearls. The Indians who had been peacefully living in their islands as families faced life threatening difficulties with the arrival of the European man.

Similarities between the indigenous culture and European culture at the time

In Bernal Diaz del Castillo's text commonly referred to as "The True History of the Conquest of New Spain", it is evident that there were various similarities between the indigenous culture and the European culture at the time. Both cultures had well established cosmologies, high nobles, a priestly class and elected officials. Montezuma was the elected Emperor of Mexico at the time. These civilizations also both had warriors and a sophisticated division of labor that allowed them to conduct their daily affairs in an organized manner. Both cultures engaged in pottery and ceramics, metallurgy, weaving for basketry and clothing. These two cultures were both very advanced with well-developed social structures that enabled them to acquire beauty and wealth that allowed them to survive during their time period.

Works Cited

Burrell, Sidney Alexander. *Beginnings to 1700*. Wiley & Sons, 1972. Print.