

age of contact texas history

Age of Contact Texas History: A Deep Dive into Cultural Collision and its Enduring Legacy

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Introduction: Understanding the Age of Contact in Texas

The "age of contact Texas history" refers to the period beginning in the late 16th century and extending into the 18th century, marking the initial sustained contact between European colonizers, primarily Spanish, and the diverse Indigenous populations inhabiting the region now known as Texas. This period is not simply a story of European arrival; it is a complex tapestry woven from encounters, conflicts, collaborations, and transformations experienced by all involved. Understanding this era is crucial to comprehending the state's present-day social, political, and cultural landscape. The age of contact Texas history shaped the demographic makeup, land ownership patterns, and even the very language of the region. This article explores the key aspects of this transformative period, examining the historical context, its lasting impact, and its continued relevance in contemporary Texas.

The Pre-Contact Landscape: A Diverse Indigenous Texas

Before the arrival of Europeans, Texas was home to a rich tapestry of Indigenous cultures. The Caddo Confederacy, with their sophisticated agricultural practices and complex social structures, inhabited East Texas. In the west, nomadic groups like the Apache and Comanche roamed the plains, their lives deeply intertwined with the buffalo herds. Along the coast, the Karankawa and other coastal tribes thrived on maritime resources. Each group possessed its own unique language, customs, and spiritual beliefs, reflecting the diverse environments they inhabited. Understanding this pre-contact world is essential to grasping the profound changes brought about by the age of contact Texas history. The

arrival of Europeans irrevocably altered this pre-existing balance.

The Spanish Arrival and its Impact: The Age of Contact Begins

The Spanish exploration and colonization of Texas, starting with Cabeza de Vaca's epic journey in the 16th century, initiated the age of contact. Unlike the rapid and often violent conquests in Mexico and Central America, the Spanish colonization of Texas was a slower, more complex process. Early Spanish efforts focused on establishing missions, aimed at converting Indigenous populations to Christianity and incorporating them into the colonial system. However, the Spanish presence was often met with resistance, shaped by varying degrees of cooperation and conflict with different indigenous groups. The missions, while sometimes offering protection and resources, also imposed a new social order that often disrupted traditional ways of life. The age of contact Texas history saw many indigenous communities adapt, resist, or negotiate with the newcomers, leading to a complex interplay of power dynamics and cultural exchange.

Disease, Displacement, and Demographic Shifts

The age of contact Texas history was tragically marked by the devastating impact of Old World diseases on Indigenous populations. Lacking immunity to illnesses such as smallpox, measles, and influenza, Indigenous communities experienced catastrophic population declines. This decimation profoundly altered the social and political landscape of Texas, weakening many tribes and making them more vulnerable to Spanish influence. The loss of life was not merely a biological event; it was a cultural catastrophe, disrupting social structures, traditions, and knowledge systems. The age of contact's demographic impact remains a critical aspect of understanding Texas today.

Resistance and Resilience: Indigenous Responses to Colonization

Despite the overwhelming challenges posed by disease and colonial expansion, Indigenous groups in Texas demonstrated remarkable resilience. Resistance to Spanish rule took various forms, ranging from armed conflict and strategic alliances to cultural adaptation and negotiation. Some groups actively fought against Spanish encroachment, while others selectively collaborated to protect their interests. The Comanche, for instance, fiercely defended their territories and even raided Spanish settlements, becoming formidable opponents. The age of contact Texas history is also a story of strategic adaptation, where indigenous groups navigated complex relationships with colonists to preserve their cultures and autonomy.

The Enduring Legacy: The Age of Contact's

Continued Relevance

The age of contact Texas history is not a closed chapter. Its reverberations continue to shape the state's social, political, and cultural landscape. Land ownership patterns, demographic distributions, and cultural practices all bear the marks of this era. The ongoing debates concerning land rights, historical memory, and the recognition of Indigenous contributions are all directly linked to the legacy of the age of contact. Understanding this history is crucial for fostering a more accurate and inclusive understanding of Texas today. The legacy of the age of contact necessitates a continuous reevaluation of historical narratives and a commitment to acknowledging the complexities and injustices that unfolded.

Conclusion

The age of contact Texas history represents a pivotal period in the state's development, marked by profound transformations in demographics, culture, and power dynamics. It's a narrative of both conflict and collaboration, resistance and adaptation, demonstrating the resilience of Indigenous populations and the lasting impact of European colonization. A comprehensive understanding of this period necessitates a nuanced approach, moving beyond simplistic narratives of conquest and acknowledging the complex interactions between different cultures. Only through such an approach can we fully appreciate the rich and multifaceted history of Texas and its enduring legacy.

FAQs

1. What were the primary motivations behind Spanish colonization of Texas? Spanish motives were multifaceted, encompassing the search for gold and other resources, the desire to spread Christianity, and the establishment of a buffer zone against other European powers.
1. How did the Spanish attempt to control and govern the Indigenous populations of Texas? The Spanish employed a range of methods, including the establishment of missions, presidios (military forts), and alliances with certain tribes, while simultaneously engaging in military campaigns against those who resisted.
1. What were the major consequences of the introduction of Old World diseases? The introduction of Old World diseases resulted in devastating population declines among Indigenous communities, profoundly altering the demographic and social fabric of Texas.

1. How did Indigenous populations resist Spanish colonization? Indigenous resistance manifested in various ways, from armed conflict and raiding to strategic alliances, cultural adaptation, and diplomatic negotiations.
1. What role did the missions play in the age of contact Texas history? Missions served as centers of religious conversion, agricultural production, and sometimes, forced labor, shaping the cultural landscape of Texas and initiating a process of acculturation.
1. How did the age of contact influence the development of Texas's ranching industry? The introduction of livestock by the Spanish laid the foundation for Texas's vast ranching industry, significantly impacting the landscape and economy.
1. What were the long-term effects of Spanish colonization on the environment of Texas? Spanish colonization resulted in significant environmental changes, including deforestation, soil erosion, and the introduction of non-native species.
1. How has the age of contact shaped contemporary land ownership patterns in Texas? Land ownership patterns in Texas remain significantly influenced by the historical processes of colonization and dispossession that occurred during the age of contact.
1. What are some of the ongoing debates surrounding the interpretation of the age of contact Texas history? Ongoing debates focus on issues of historical memory, the accuracy of traditional narratives, the recognition of Indigenous perspectives, and the acknowledgment of historical injustices.

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age of contact texas history: The Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca Álvár Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, 2020-06-18 This edition of Álvár Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's *Relación* offers readers Rolena Adorno and Patrick Charles Pautz's celebrated translation of Cabeza de Vaca's account of the 1527 Pánfilo de Narváez expedition to North America. The dramatic narrative tells the story of some of the first Europeans and the first-known African to encounter the North American wilderness and its Native inhabitants. It is a fascinating tale of survival against the highest odds, and it highlights Native Americans and their interactions with the newcomers in a manner seldom seen in writings of the period. In this English-language edition, reproduced from their award-winning three-volume set, Adorno and Pautz supplement the engrossing account with a general introduction that orients the reader to Cabeza de Vaca's world. They also provide explanatory notes, which resolve many of the narrative's most perplexing questions. This highly readable translation fires the imagination and illuminates the enduring appeal of Cabeza de Vaca's experience for a modern audience.

age of contact texas history: The Handbook of Texas Walter Prescott Webb, Eldon Stephen Branda, 1952 Vol. 3: A supplement, edited by Eldon Stephen Branda. Includes bibliographical references.

age of contact texas history: We Came Naked and Barefoot Alex D. Krieger, 2010-01-01 Second place, Presidio La Bahia Award, Sons of the Republic of Texas, 2003 Perhaps no one has ever been such a survivor as álvár Núñez Cabeza de Vaca. Member of a 600-man expedition sent out from Spain to colonize La Florida in 1527, he survived a failed exploration of the west coast of Florida, an open-boat crossing of the Gulf of Mexico, shipwreck on the Texas coast, six years of captivity among native peoples, and an arduous, overland journey in which he and the three other remaining survivors of the original expedition walked some 1,500 miles from the central Texas coast to the Gulf of California, then another 1,300 miles to Mexico City. The story of Cabeza de Vaca has been told many times, beginning with his own account, *Relación de los naufragios*, which was included and amplified in Gonzalo Fernando de Oviedo y Valdez's *Historia general de las Indias*. Yet the route taken by Cabeza de Vaca and his companions remains the subject of enduring controversy. In this book, Alex D. Krieger correlates the accounts in these two primary sources with his own extensive knowledge of the geography, archaeology, and anthropology of southern Texas and northern Mexico to plot out stage by stage the most probable route of the 2,800-mile journey of Cabeza de Vaca. This book consists of several parts, foremost of which is the original English version of Alex Krieger's dissertation (edited by Margery Krieger), in which he traces the route of Cabeza de Vaca and his companions from the coast of Texas to Spanish settlements in western Mexico. This document is rich in information about the native groups, vegetation, geography, and material culture that the companions encountered. Thomas R. Hester's foreword and afterword set the 1955 dissertation in the context of more recent scholarship and archaeological discoveries, some of which have supported Krieger's plot of the journey. Margery Krieger's preface explains how she prepared her late husband's work for publication. Alex Krieger's original translations of the Cabeza de Vaca and Oviedo accounts round out the volume.

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age of contact texas history: *U.S. History* P. Scott Corbett, Volker Janssen, John M. Lund, Todd Pfannestiel, Sylvie Waskiewicz, Paul Vickery, 2024-09-10 U.S. History is designed to meet the scope and sequence requirements of most introductory courses. The text provides a balanced approach to U.S. history, considering the people, events, and ideas that have shaped the United States from both the top down (politics, economics, diplomacy) and bottom up (eyewitness accounts, lived experience). U.S. History covers key forces that form the American experience, with particular attention to issues of race, class, and gender.

age of contact texas history: *Civil Rights in Black and Brown* Max Krochmal, Todd Moya, 2021-11-09 Not one but two civil rights movements flourished in mid-twentieth century Texas, and they did so in intimate conversation with one another. Far from the gaze of the national media, African American and Mexican American activists combated the twin caste systems of Jim Crow and Juan Crow. These insurgents worked chiefly within their own racial groups, yet they also looked to each other for guidance and, at times, came together in solidarity. The movements sought more than integration and access: they demanded power and justice. Civil Rights in Black and Brown draws on more than 500 oral history interviews newly collected across Texas, from the Panhandle to the Piney Woods and everywhere in between. The testimonies speak in detail to the structure of racism in small towns and huge metropolises—both the everyday grind of segregation and the haunting acts of racial violence that upheld Texas's state-sanctioned systems of white supremacy. Through their memories of resistance and revolution, the activists reveal previously undocumented struggles for equity, as well as the links Black and Chicana organizers forged in their efforts to achieve self-determination.

age of contact texas history: *Chronicle of the Narvaez Expedition* Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, 2002-06-25 The New World story of the Spanish explorer Cabeza de Vaca in his own words This riveting true story is the first major narrative detailing the exploration of North America by Spanish conquistadors (1528-1536). The author, Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, was a fortune-seeking Spanish nobleman and the treasurer of an expedition sent to claim for Spain a vast area of today's southern United States. In simple, straightforward prose, Cabeza de Vaca chronicles the nine-year odyssey endured by the men after a shipwreck forced them to make a westward journey on foot from present-day Florida through Louisiana and Texas into California. In thirty-eight brief chapters,

Cabeza de Vaca describes the scores of natural and human obstacles they encountered as they made their way across an unknown land. Cabeza de Vaca's gripping account offers a trove of ethnographic information, including descriptions and interpretations of native cultures, making it a powerful precursor to modern anthropology. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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age of contact texas history: Stephen F. Austin Gregg Cantrell, 2016-02-09 The Texas State Historical Association is pleased to offer a reprint edition of Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas, Gregg Cantrell's path-breaking biography of the founder of Anglo Texas. Cantrell's portrait goes beyond the traditional interpretation of Austin as the man who spearheaded American Manifest Destiny. Cantrell portrays Austin as a borderlands figure who could navigate the complex cultural landscape of 1820s Texas, then a portion of Mexico. His command of the Spanish language, respect

for the Mexican people, and ability to navigate the shoals of Mexican politics made him the perfect advocate for his colonists and often for all of Texas. Yet when conflicts between Anglo colonists and Mexican authorities turned violent, Austin's accommodationist stance became outdated.

Overshadowed by the military hero Sam Houston, he died at the age of forty-three, just six months after Texas independence. Decades after his death, Austin's reputation was resurrected and he became known as the "Father of Texas." More than just an icon, Stephen F. Austin emerges from these pages as a shrewd, complicated, and sometimes conflicted figure.

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age of contact texas history: *The Indigenous Paleolithic of the Western Hemisphere* Paulette F. C. Steeves, 2021-07 2022 Choice Outstanding Academic Title *The Indigenous Paleolithic of the Western Hemisphere* is a reclaimed history of the deep past of Indigenous people in North and South America during the Paleolithic. Paulette F. C. Steeves mines evidence from archaeology sites and Paleolithic environments, landscapes, and mammalian and human migrations to make the case that people have been in the Western Hemisphere not only just prior to Clovis sites (10,200 years ago) but for more than 60,000 years, and likely more than 100,000 years. Steeves discusses the political history of American anthropology to focus on why pre-Clovis sites have been dismissed by the field for nearly a century. She explores supporting evidence from genetics and linguistic anthropology regarding First Peoples and time frames of early migrations. Additionally, she highlights the work and struggles faced by a small yet vibrant group of American and European archaeologists who have excavated and reported on numerous pre-Clovis archaeology sites. In this first book on Paleolithic archaeology of the Americas written from an Indigenous perspective, *The Indigenous Paleolithic of the Western Hemisphere* includes Indigenous oral traditions, archaeological evidence, and a critical and decolonizing discussion of the development of archaeology in the Americas.

age of contact texas history: Last Chance in Texas John Hubner, 2008-04-29 A powerful, bracing and deeply spiritual look at intensely, troubled youth, *Last Chance in Texas* gives a stirring account of the way one remarkable prison rehabilitates its inmates. While reporting on the juvenile court system, journalist John Hubner kept hearing about a facility in Texas that ran the most aggressive—and one of the most successful—treatment programs for violent young offenders in America. How was it possible, he wondered, that a state like Texas, famed for its hardcore attitude toward crime and punishment, could be leading the way in the rehabilitation of violent and troubled youth? Now Hubner shares the surprising answers he found over months of unprecedented access to the Giddings State School, home to "the worst of the worst": four hundred teenage lawbreakers convicted of crimes ranging from aggravated assault to murder. Hubner follows two of these youths—a boy and a girl—through harrowing group therapy sessions in which they, along with their fellow inmates, recount their crimes and the abuse they suffered as children. The key moment comes when the young offenders reenact these soul-shattering moments with other group members in cathartic outpourings of suffering and anger that lead, incredibly, to genuine remorse and the beginnings of true empathy . . . the first steps on the long road to redemption. Cutting through the political platitudes surrounding the controversial issue of juvenile justice, Hubner lays bare the complex ties between abuse and violence. By turns wrenching and uplifting, *Last Chance in Texas*

tells a profoundly moving story about the children who grow up to inflict on others the violence that they themselves have suffered. It is a story of horror and heartbreak, yet ultimately full of hope.

age of contact texas history: *Empire of the Summer Moon* S. C. Gwynne, 2010-05-25 *Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award* *A New York Times Notable Book* *Winner of the Texas Book Award and the Oklahoma Book Award* This New York Times bestseller and stunning historical account of the forty-year battle between Comanche Indians and white settlers for control of the American West “is nothing short of a revelation...will leave dust and blood on your jeans” (The New York Times Book Review). *Empire of the Summer Moon* spans two astonishing stories. The first traces the rise and fall of the Comanches, the most powerful Indian tribe in American history. The second entails one of the most remarkable narratives ever to come out of the Old West: the epic saga of the pioneer woman Cynthia Ann Parker and her mixed-blood son Quanah, who became the last and greatest chief of the Comanches. Although readers may be more familiar with the tribal names Apache and Sioux, it was in fact the legendary fighting ability of the Comanches that determined when the American West opened up. Comanche boys became adept bareback riders by age six; full Comanche braves were considered the best horsemen who ever rode. They were so masterful at war and so skillful with their arrows and lances that they stopped the northern drive of colonial Spain from Mexico and halted the French expansion westward from Louisiana. White settlers arriving in Texas from the eastern United States were surprised to find the frontier being rolled backward by Comanches incensed by the invasion of their tribal lands. The war with the Comanches lasted four decades, in effect holding up the development of the new American nation. Gwynne’s exhilarating account delivers a sweeping narrative that encompasses Spanish colonialism, the Civil War, the destruction of the buffalo herds, and the arrival of the railroads, and the amazing story of Cynthia Ann Parker and her son Quanah—a historical feast for anyone interested in how the United States came into being. Hailed by critics, S. C. Gwynne’s account of these events is meticulously researched, intellectually provocative, and, above all, thrillingly told. *Empire of the Summer Moon* announces him as a major new writer of American history.

age of contact texas history: Los Adaes, the First Capital of Spanish Texas Francis Galan, 2020-06 In 1721, Spain established a fort and mission on the Texas-Louisiana border, or frontera, to stem the tide of people and goods flowing back and forth between northern New Spain and French Louisiana. Named in part after the indigenous Adai people, the complex of the presidio (Nuestra Señora del Pilar de los Adaes) and the mission (San Miguel de Cuellar de los Adaes) became collectively known as Los Adaes. It was the capital of Tejas for New Spain. In the first book devoted to Los Adaes, historian Francis X. Galan traces the roots of the current US-Mexico border to the colonial history of this all but forgotten Spanish fort and mission. He demonstrates that, despite efforts to the contrary, Spain could neither fully block the penetration of smuggled goods and settlers into Texas from Louisiana nor could it successfully convert the Native Americans to Christianity and the Spanish economic system. In the aftermath of the transfer of Louisiana from France to Spain in 1762, Spain chose to shutter the fort and mission. The settlers, or Adaeseños, were forced to march to San Antonio in 1773. Some returned to East Texas soon after to establish Nacogdoches. Others remained in San Antonio, the new capital of Spanish Texas, and settled on lands distributed from the secularized Mission San Antonio de Valero, a mission now widely known as the Alamo. Los Adaes, the First Capital of Spanish Texas makes a major contribution to Texas history by providing a richer perspective on the shifting borders of colonial powers.

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MCQ TO EXPAND YOUR TEXAS KNOWLEDGE AND EXCEL IN QUIZ COMPETITIONS, ACADEMIC STUDIES, OR PROFESSIONAL ENDEAVORS. THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS ARE PROVIDED AT THE END OF EACH PAGE, MAKING IT EASY FOR PARTICIPANTS TO VERIFY THEIR ANSWERS AND PREPARE EFFECTIVELY.

age of contact texas history: The La Salle Expedition on the Mississippi River Nicolas de La Salle, 2003 The La Salle Expedition on the Mississippi River presents the definitive English translation of Nicolas de La Salle's diary account of René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle's 1682 discovery expedition of the Mississippi River from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. This previously unknown manuscript copy was discovered recently in the collection of rare books in the Texas State Archives. It provides the most complete and authoritative account available of this historic North American adventure and territorial claim. By careful cross- document analysis, Foster projects an extended expedition chronology that adds about two weeks to the journey, corrects the date that La Salle's claim was announced, and revises erroneous interpretations made by most contemporary French and American scholars. The work includes maps prepared by the noted Southwest cartographer John V. Cotter

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age of contact texas history: The Prime of Life Steven Mintz, 2015-04-07 "By drawing on 400 years of social and economic history . . . [the book] presents a thoughtful and thorough guide through the life stages." (Library Journal) Adulthood today is undergoing profound transformations. Men and women wait until their thirties to marry, have children, and establish full-time careers, occupying a prolonged period in which they are no longer adolescents but still lack the traditional emblems of adult identity. People at midlife struggle to sustain relationships with friends and partners, to achieve fulfilling careers, to raise their children successfully, and to age gracefully. The Prime of Life puts today's challenges into new perspective by exploring how past generations navigated the passage to maturity. Whereas adulthood once meant culturally-prescribed roles and relationships, the social and economic convulsions of the last sixty years have transformed it fundamentally, tearing up these shared scripts and leaving adults to fashion meaning and coherence in an increasingly individualistic culture. Emphasizing adulthood's joys and fulfillments as well as its frustrations and regrets, Mintz shows how cultural and historical circumstances have consistently reshaped what it means to be a grown up in contemporary society. "A triumph of historical writing." —The Spectator "[Mintz's] message—that there are many ways to wear the mantle of responsible adulthood and that the 1950s model is a mere blip on history's radar—is deeply necessary and long overdue." —New York Times Book Review "Describing the cultural, economic, and social changes from the Colonial era to today's world . . . Mintz argues that neither religious nor secular middle-class values are adequate responses to the new generation's problems." —Choice "A

thoughtful and strangely encouraging tour of an often difficult life stage.” —Kirkus Reviews

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Written from detailed notes taken during this historic journey, Joutel's journal is the most comprehensive and authoritative account available of this dramatic story of adventure and misadventure in Texas. Joutel, who served as post commander for La Salle, describes in accurate and colorful detail the daily experiences and precise route La Salle's party followed in 1687 from the Texas coast to the Mississippi River. By carefully comparing Joutel's compass directions and detailed descriptions to maps and geographic locations, Foster has established where La Salle was murdered by his men, and has corrected many erroneous geographic interpretations made by French and American scholars during the past century. Joutel's account is a captivating narrative set in a Texas coastal wilderness. Foster follows Joutel, La Salle, and their fellow adventurers as they encounter Indians and their unique cultures; enormous drifting herds of bison; and unknown flora and fauna, including lethal flowering cactus fruit and rattlesnakes. The cast of characters includes priests and soldiers, deserters and murderers, Indian leaders, and a handful of French women who worked side-by-side with the men. It is a remarkable first hand tale of dramatic adventure as these diverse individuals meet and interact on the grand landscape of Texas. Joutel's journal, newly translated by Johanna S. Warren, is edited and annotated with an extensive introduction by William C. Foster. The account is accompanied by numerous detailed maps and the first published English translation of the testimony of Pierre Meunier, one of the most knowledgeable and creditable survivors of La Salle's expedition.

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age of contact texas history: The Age of Reconnaissance J H Parry, 2010-12-30 The Age of Reconnaissance, as J. H. Parry so aptly named it, was the period in which Europe discovered the rest of the world. It began with Henry the Navigator and the Portuguese voyages in the mid-fifteenth century and ended 250 years later when the 'reconnaissance' was all but complete. This book is less concerned with the voyages of discovery themselves than with an analysis of the factors that made the voyages possible in the first place. Dr Parry examines the inducements - political, economic, religious - to overseas enterprises at the time, and analyses the nature and problems of the various European settlements in the new lands. At the beginning of the period central to this book, the middle of the fifteenth century, the normal educated man believed that the Ancients were more civilized, more elegant, wiser and, except in religious matters, better informed than his contemporaries. But gradually as the reconnaissance proceeded, the European picture became fuller

and more detailed and with it the idea of continually expanding knowledge became more familiar and the links between science and practical life became closer. The unprecedented power which it produced would eventually lead Europe from reconnaissance to worldwide conquest.

age of contact texas history: The Big Resource Guide to Teaching and Learning Texas History Tracey Williams, 2016-10-29 Offering a one-of-a kind teaching resource for Texas history teachers, The Big Resource Guide to Teaching and Learning Texas History, by author and teacher Tracey Williams, includes everything to make Texas history come alive in the classroom. The teaching units are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and contain activities, assignments, and assessments to help instructors teach the state curriculum. The Big Resource Guide to Teaching and Learning Texas History covers all major topics in Texas history and offers a graphic organizer to help students record the important details of the topics. This resource includes essential Texas history vocabulary, cross-curricular vocabulary, and end-of-chapter assessments. This guide helps prepare students for assessments, and it also aligns with English language arts, offering reading and writing activities. An engaging resource, it allows students to collaborate with their peers, be creative, investigate subject matter, solve problems, and have fun while learning.

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age of contact texas history: Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca Donald E. Chipman, 2012 Cabeza de Vaca's mode of transportation, afoot on portions of two continents in the early decades of the sixteenth century, fits one dictionary definition of the word pedestrian. By no means, however, should the ancillary meanings of commonplace or prosaic be applied to the man, or his remarkable adventures. Between 1528 and 1536, he trekked an estimated 2,480 to 2,640 miles of North American terrain from the Texas coast near Galveston Island to San Miguel de Culiacán near the Pacific Coast of Mexico. He then traveled under better circumstances, although still on foot, to Mexico City. About a year later, Cabeza de Vaca returned to Spain. In 1540, the king granted Cabeza de Vaca civil and military authority in modern-day Paraguay. After arriving on the coast of Brazil in 1541, he was unable to find transportation by ship to the seat of his governorship. He then led a group of more 250 settlers through 1,200 miles of unchartered back country, during which he lost only two men. Cabeza de Vaca's travels are amazing in themselves, but during them he transformed from a proud Spanish don to lay advocate of Indian rights on both American continents. That journey is as remarkable as his travels. It was this great awakening that landed him in more trouble with Spaniards than Indians. Settlers at Asunción rebelled against the reformist governor, incarcerated him, tried to poison his food on two occasions, and finally sent him to Spain in irons. There he was tried and convicted on trumped-up charges of carrying out policies that were the exact opposite of what he had promoted--the humane protection of Indians. This book examines the two great journeys of Cabeza de Vaca--his extraordinary adventures on two continents and his remarkable growth as a humanitarian.

age of contact texas history: History of Texas, 1673-1779 Juan Agustín Morfi, 1967 First part in a two volume work about the history of Texas.

Additional Resources

Texas History Era of Contact Content Module

This guide is designed to walk you through the Age of Contact unit in Texas History. As you read the content contained in this document you will be answering questions and completing activities.

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(1)(A) identify the major eras in Texas history, describe their defining characteristics, and explain the purpose of dividing the past into eras, including Natural Texas and its People; Age of Contact; ...

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