

Page 105 → Effects of Spanish Exploration

Although the Spanish failed to find gold, their exploration of Texas was important. It gave Spain [the Spanish government] ownership of land in the Texas area. The Spanish also learned about the land and the people of Texas. Texas served as a border between Spanish and European settlements and native American settlements.



At the same time, Spanish exploration changed the lives of the native American Indians in Texas. During their travels, European explorers spread diseases. Measles and Smallpox were the commonly spread diseases. Most Europeans recovered from the illnesses. American Indians often died because they had never been exposed to the diseases. Epidemics (when a lot of people get sick) killed thousands of American Indians. In time, many Indians in Texas died from European diseases (sicknesses brought by people from Europe) and from conflicts or wars with Europeans.



The spread of diseases from Europe to the Americas was part of the Columbian Exchange. The Columbian Exchange is the name for the moving and trading of plants, animals, and diseases between the United States and other continents. The Columbian Exchange is named after Christopher Columbus. When the Spanish came to America with Columbus, they brought plants and animals, such as bananas, cattle, and horses. When they returned to Europe, explorers took back American plants and animals, such as corn, peanuts, and turkeys.

**Page 106 → The Rise of Plains Horse Culture**

The wild babies of the horses the Spanish brought to the Americas became known as mustangs. In the 1600s, American Indians in Texas began getting mustangs by trading with the Europeans and stealing from the Europeans. Horses changed the Indians' lives on the Texas Plains. Using horses, Indians could move their belongings more easily. Some Indians became more nomadic or were able to move around more easily. They used horses to follow the buffalo herds. On horseback, Indians became better hunters and fighters. They could ride into the Indians' land and then ride away into the Plains.



Spanish people in New Mexico first wrote about seeing the Apache Indians riding horses in 1659. When they saw the horses, the Spanish people were scared and upset. Now, the Indians were better fighters! The Europeans were no longer the best. Once the Indians started using horses, they had better chance of fighting off the Europeans.



Page 106 → The Apache Dominate the Plains

The Apache Indians in Texas and New Mexico had been friendly to the Spanish at first. Many explorers described them as being very kind. After the Spanish began to live among the Pueblo Indians, their relationship with the Apache Indians changed. The Apache, who had been stealing from the Pueblo for years, started to think the Spanish were their enemies. Groups or bands of Apache Indians raided or attacked settlements in New Mexico to take horses and supplies. The Spanish had better weapons, but the Apache Indians were unstoppable. The Apache ruled the Texas Plains. The Spanish started to call the Plains, Apacheria, or “Apache Land.”



The fighting between the Spanish and the Apache was very common. There were other Indian tribes that fought with Native Americans, too. The Spanish thought that America was open for them to take. The Indians lived there forever, so they thought America was their home. The Europeans and Native Americans fought for hundreds of years.

