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FRONTISPIECE: Frederick Catherwood, Study of a Mayan monument, ca. 1842 (see entry 521).
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FACING: Arnoldus Montanus, De nieuwe en onbekende wereld, 1671 (see entry 473).
OPUS SEPI

ristolii Petri Marty
tis Anglorum Mediolanensis Protonotarii
Aplicat et a Coelis refera Indica
rit; nunc sum et
nati us medio
ceri cura excen
sum; quod
adeque

eri sti venustate nostro quoq
repose historia loco esse poterit.
Columb Anno domini M.D.XXX

Eli privilegio Cesareo.
De Insulis nuper in mari Indico repertis

Epistola Christi nian Colom cui etiam noster mul-
tum debet de Insulis in mari Indico nuper inven-
tis: ad quam perquirendas osim fato antea mente: aus-
spiciis et greiaudissimis Fernandi Hispaniae Regis
suffusa horat: ad Magnificar dominar Rapheas-
lem Sandores dem fereulli Regis Theflauri um missis: quam nobilis ad litteras nunc Aliander
de Colonis Hispani domate: in Latinum con-
vertere: tereo calendis Maii Mcccxxvi. Pontifie
atus Alexandri Sexti Anno primo.

Quoniam suscepit principis rem perfecta
me conspecta fullo: gratum tibi fore fru-
has solitus exarare: quae te vivificant
ret in hoc nostris in teres frugis recidunt;
Tricennario die posti. Claudia discessit: in ma-
re Indici pereut: vii plurimus Insulas innumeris
habitat: hominibus reperti, quarum omnium pse-
hicissimi: Regn nostrum praecixo celebriato: et exli-
lis extensis: commodo: nemine posse fiunt acces-
ptis: principis carum, dii: Saltatoris: nonne imposu-
ris: eius foedus aut: tiam ad hanc: ad ceteras aliam
pueritias: Eum vero Indi Guanahany vocant.
Alique etiam mant na ono nomine numpere.
Quippe aliam Insulam Sancte Marie Conceptos-
nis: aliam Fernandinam, aliam Hypheliam, alia
The Kislak Collection includes resources that focus on one of the most dramatic events of the modern period: the encounter between Europe and the Americas, and the wide range of critical historical processes that ensued. This encounter is made particularly significant by virtue of the context of both regions at the end of the fifteenth century.

The artifacts, documents, maps, and other materials offer an opportunity to explore three major and connected processes at the time of encounter: the development of the pre-Columbian civilizations of the Americas, the conflict and accommodation that defines the generation of the encounter, and the establishment of a stable Spanish-American society constructed as a consequence of the encounter itself.

America included a rich and diverse collection of civilizations, with a deep and long historical development at the time of the encounter, which is reflected in the triumph of the Mexican-Aztec Empire and the Inca Empire. These two exceptional political, social, economic, and cultural enterprises achieved their success by virtue of large-scale, complex organizational structures of trade and government built up through intense and often violent competition among the many peoples in the Americas.

Europe experienced the encounter primarily through the initiative of the recently ascendant Spanish kingdoms. This Spanish moment at the end of the fifteenth century represented the culmination of a centuries-long campaign to re-conquer the Iberian Peninsula, construct a coherent and effective national presence, and create a sense of cultural identity based on religious and linguistic uniformity capable of sustaining an imperial presence.

Chronologically, the story begins with the early history of the Americas to 1500; it then captures the moment between 1500 and 1550 that defines the characteristics of the new Spanish order in the Americas with special emphasis on the conflict and accommodation of
culture, religion, language, economics, and politics that is central to this process, and it closes with the establishment of the Spanish imperial system in the Americas into the seventeenth century.

This focus creates a context for understanding some of the consequences of this dramatic encounter. We can see the intensity of engagement around the issues of religion and language, central concerns for both Native Americans and Spaniards. We can recognize the remarkable European Renaissance commitment to rational thought that motivates the intense pursuit of specific knowledge reflected in the Spanish effort to catalog, map, and understand all they found new in the Americas. We can appreciate the Atlantic-wide impact of this encounter by observing the reaction of other European nations as they challenged Spanish control over the opportunities offered by the Americas.

This story marks an extraordinary transition in world history that set the stage for the resulting rise of Western Europe and its extensive empires well into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It engages us in an effort to comprehend the trauma of the conflict and readjustment required by the encounter of the powerful but quite distinct civilizations and cultures of Spain and the Americas. It captures both the fragility of civilization and the enduring strength of culture and language in the face of conquest and colonization. This is a story for our time as well, because the experience of the Americas illustrates so many of the themes that occupy our attention today: conflict and accommodation among highly diverse cultures, the maintenance of diverse cultural identities within the context of the homogenizing influence of global trade, and the challenge of balancing rights and responsibilities among cultural and political groups with distinct, and often unequal, levels of technological sophistication and power.

The insights from our study of this critical period expand our comprehension of the large issues that have always defined the cultural, social, economic, and political conflicts of our past and our present, and that will most likely condition our future.
March.

27. Finished bringing in hay, and mowing. 21st, 22nd, 23rd.
28. Also, finished the grape and ladder. 20th, 21st.
29. Was on the meadow all day on the 23rd, 24th, 25th, and three weeks of July.

April.

3. Sowed my turnips in the orchard, by the hogs. 4th, 5th, 6th.
5. Also, on the 7th, 8th, 9th.
6. Also, on the 10th, 11th, 12th.
7. Also, on the 13th, 14th, 15th.
8. Also, on the 16th, 17th, 18th.
9. Also, on the 19th, 20th, 21st.
10. Also, on the 22nd, 23rd, 24th.
11. Also, on the 25th, 26th, 27th.
12. Also, on the 28th, 29th, 30th.
13. Also, on the 31st, 1st, 2nd.
The independence era from the late eighteenth through the first decades of the nineteenth centuries marked the close of the historical arc that began with the expansion of European settlement into the Americas. The separation of the North American colonies from Great Britain, the French and Haitian revolutions and their impact in Europe and the Americas, and the sequential series of independence movements in Latin America involved a realignment of power, authority, and governance that marked the end of an era. Newly emergent nations throughout the Americas struggled to resolve the challenges of independence. Their efforts to redefine the limits of sovereignty and to establish new economic and political relationships within the Americas and with the former colonial nations produced continuing conflict that lasted in North America and much of Spanish America through the mid-nineteenth century—and in Brazil, Cuba, and Puerto Rico until the end of the century.

For our purposes here, it is enough to recognize that the treasures of the Kislak Collection highlight the story that begins with the native American civilizations, captures the dramatic and complex encounter of Europeans with those civilizations, and closes with the reorganization of trade, commerce, and political institutions that marked the transitional era. The Kislak Collection enables us to study the languages and cultures of these widely diverse peoples in the face of the dramatic and often violent adjustments brought about by events from the first encounters through the later independence movements.

JOHN LOMBARDI
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