

A TIME LINE FROM 1491

1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus by Charles C. Mann

Europe and Asia	Dates	The Americas
	25000-35000 B.C.	Time of paleo-Indian migration to Americas from Siberia, according to genetic evidence. Groups likely traveled across the Pacific in boats.
Wheat and barley grown from wild ancestors in Sumer.	6000	
	5000	In what many scientists regard as humankind's first and greatest feat of genetic engineering, Indians in southern Mexico systematically breed maize (corn) from dissimilar ancestor species.
First cities established in Sumer.	4000	
	3000	The Americas' first urban complex, in coastal Peru, of at least 30 closely packed cities, each centered around large pyramid-like structures
Great Pyramid at Giza	2650	
	32	First clear evidence of Olmec use of zero--an invention, widely described as the most important mathematical discovery ever made, which did not occur in Eurasia until about 600 A.D., in India (zero was not introduced to Europe until the 1200s and not widely used until the 1700s)
	800-840 A.D.	Sudden collapse of most central Maya cities in the face of severe drought and lengthy war

Vikings briefly establish first European settlements in North America.

1000



Reconstruction of Cahokia, c. 1250 A.D.*

Abrupt rise of Cahokia, near modern St. Louis, the largest city north of the Rio Grande. Population estimates vary from at least 15,000 to 100,000.

Black Death devastates Europe.

1347-1351

1398

Birth of Tlacaélel, the brilliant Mexican strategist behind the Triple Alliance (also known as the Aztec empire), which within decades controls central Mexico, then the most densely settled place on Earth.

The Encounter: Columbus sails from Europe to the Caribbean.

1492

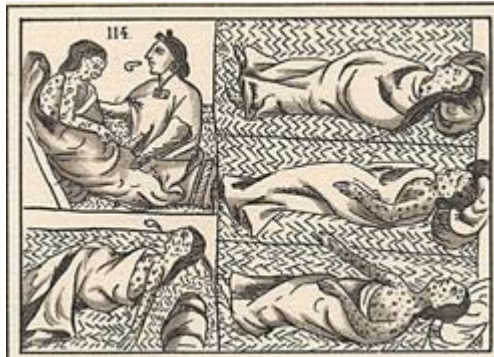
The Encounter: Columbus sails from Europe to the Caribbean.

Syphilis apparently brought to Europe by Columbus's returning crew.

1493

Ferdinand Magellan departs from Spain on around-the-world voyage.

1519



Sixteenth-century Mexico drawing of the effects of smallpox**

Cortes driven from Tenochtitlán, capital of the Triple Alliance, and then gains victory as smallpox, a European disease never before seen in the Americas, kills at least one of three in the empire.

1525-1533 The smallpox epidemic sweeps into Peru, killing as much as half the population of the Inka empire and opening the door to conquest by Spanish forces led by Pizarro.

1617 Huge areas of New England nearly depopulated by epidemic brought by shipwrecked French sailors.

English Pilgrims arrive at Patuxet, an Indian village emptied by disease, and survive on stored Indian food, renaming the village Plymouth.

1620