SPANISH invasion of Yucatan
Quick OVERVIEW: **Spanish Empire**

in the 1460s Kingdom of Spain rose as a foreign power in Europe - focusing on **SEA TRADE**

1492 - Colombus (Genoa-Italy) navigated west and eventually met the island of **Hispanola** (present day Haiti and Dominican Republic) (HAT)

- The aim of Colombus under the Spanish empire was to: establish **colonies (stay)** and also to convert non-believers/ to Christianize/civilize.

- **The encomienda system:** A Spanish man (encomendero) would be given land and an amount of natives. His responsibility was to Christianize, protect, and “civilize” them in exchange for their free labor and tribute

- Avenues to colonization: Introduction of Diseases; Aldea system: church at the center---Catholicism; Introduction of Metals; Introduction of Alcohol-----Brought in Aguardiente-
The MAYA of the YUCATAN
(950 AD- 1525AD society)

Climate issues (drought), Deforestation, Civil wars, Diseases, War fare

Post classic: Dramatic changes in the Maya lowlands; Large constructions stopped; The Maya abandoned their big cities. Migration occurred to the north in the Yucatan area!

Society: The Maya reorganized themselves into smaller bands; Extended families, Agriculture was at the center of life, Hereditary elite monopolized power

United community: Joint stock company (everyone helped each other), Combined forces to promote common good, and spread the burden of risk to all members, Collective works and assignment of public works projects to residents

Trade: Elite controlled trade with other communities, Trading routes: stretched along the entire coast of southern Yucatan, Central America, central Mexico, the Guatemalan Highlands, Pacific coast and the Caribbean islands. Salt, honey, beans, corn

What made them survive? Community unity, Land and property, Strong belief system
“they were the ones who first brought disease here to our land”

Book of Chilam Balam, 1513

SPANISH + MAYA CLASH 1500s

A Late Postclassic Maya chronicle, known as the “Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel”, notes that “11 Ahau was when the mighty men arrived from the east. They were the ones who first brought disease here to our land, the land of us who are Maya, in the year 1513”.

FIRST CONTACT

1502 when during his final voyage to the New World Columbus came across a trading canoe near the Bay Islands in the Gulf of Honduras. Columbus recorded that the canoe was very long, about 8 feet wide and that it had a crew of 24 men plus a number of women and children. The cargo in the canoe included cotton clothing, cacao, copper bells and axes, pottery and macanas (wooden clubs inlaid with obsidian chips).

NACHAN CAN + GONZALO GUERRERO 1511

Beached along the east coast of Yucatan the exhausted survivors were captured and Valdivia and four of his men were sacrificed. Eventually only two Spaniards, Geronimo de Aguilar and Gonzalo Guerrero, remained alive. When Cortes reached the Yucatan in 1519, Aguilar was still serving a Maya lord while Guerrero had married the daughter of Nachan Can, ruler of Chetumal (Santa Rita, Corozal).
Nachán Can, or Nachán Ka’an, was the chief of the Chactemal Maya. He received the shipwrecked Spanish sailor/soldier Gonzalo Guerrero as a slave, in about 1511. Guerrero impressed Nachán Can with his warrior knowledge and capabilities, and Guerrero quickly became assimilated into the Maya culture, with tattoos and ear piercings. Nachán Can learned European style war strategies from Guerrero, who probably learned techniques from the Maya as well. Guerrero began to prove himself leading war parties, and Nachán Can eventually rewarded him with the hand of his daughter Zazil Há in marriage. Their children were the first Mestizos, and in fact the first known European/Native American children on the mainland of the Americas.
Chactermal: 1508: an exploratory ship was along the coast spreading diseases, A Ship travelling to Jamaica Shipwrecked and some of the Spanish men reached to the northern region; Gonzalo Guerrero and Geronimo de Aguilar, Fransisco de Montejo: 1527-29: attacked the region but under estimated the Maya

-Alonso Davila: went into Chactumal and found it empty; he created a town named Villa real: he defeated a small Maya band, “Nachancan answered “I do not desire peace, the tribute you desire will be paid in turkeys in the shape of spears and maize in the shape of arrows”, The maya used guerrilla tactics, 1532: the Spanish were defeated.

- 1544: THE PACHECOS: GASPAR, MELCHOR (son) AND ALONSO (nephew), Launched a campaign against the Maya: They conquered a lot of settlements, Men and women were garotted and thrown into lakes with weights tied to them, hands, ears, noses were chopped off, others were thorn to pieces. Others died in hunger, The Pachecos established Bacalar, Chetumal was never taken over.
The Spanish could not control Tipu. Another contact was when the governor of Bacalar visited Tipu. The Spanish had control over the Maya in the area now known as Guatemala.

-Friars Fuensalida and Orbita visited Tipu in canoes. The Maya welcomed them and the Friars taught the Maya were converted to Christianity. Discovered that the Maya were still practicing their religion. After the Friars left the Maya burnt down the churches.
The excavated church at Tipu, facing west, reveals the remains of the altar (foreground) and cobblestone paving marking the entrances on the north and south sides. Only the base of the masonry portion of the wall still stands. A reconstruction drawing of the church (above) shows the sanctuary with the altar at the far end.
(Above) One of the more puzzling features associated with the church was this circle of large stones just west of the main structure. At one time a sizable wood post, perhaps a large Christian cross, stood in the center of the circle. (Below) This complete skeleton was the first of the Christian burials excavated at Tipu, and is typical of those found under the church floor.
In the 1600’s the Spanish had converted many Manche Chol and shipped the other to the Guatemalan highlands; the others that stayed were wiped out by diseases. Dominicans tried to convert them; Joseph Delgado; the British were already here.

**Maya forms of resistance:** warfare, run away, hide religious beliefs, did not perform duties.