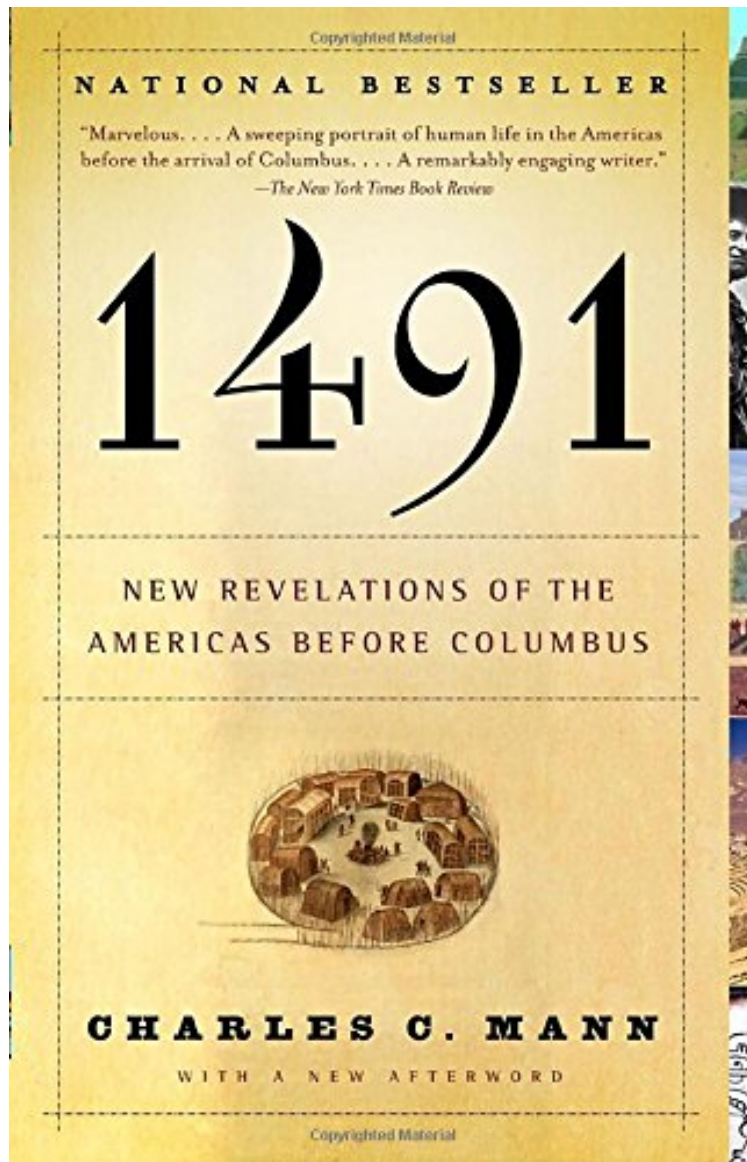


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Charles C. Mann

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#2569 in Books Charles C Mann 2006-10-10 2006-10-10Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.00 x 1.06 x 5.20l, 1.25 #File Name: 1400032059541 pages1491 New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus | File size: 76.Mb

Charles C. Mann : 1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Another Shift in HistoryBy Frank AugustineFor me, "1491" is the second of two significant shifts in history not presented in my generation of schooling experience (New York), or available to those of us with a passion for "what really happened?" My first revelation came with: "Guns, Germs, and

Steel," by Jared Diamond. If keeping a library, they should be placed next to each other. As far as rating the book, I thought it could have been edited a bit tighter in some of the extended narrative examples. Having said that, readers should be prepared, it is lengthy, but worth it. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good history - even if a little biased. By Craig Alger Very insightful and interesting read! I suspect there is a bit of subjectivity due to a biased author, but the historical references and research was very enlightening and even surprising. Definitely worth a read for anyone interested in paleo- and/or pre-Columbian American history! 10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Well written account of the latest theories on pre-Columbian history. By Customer I mistakenly put off reading this book because I was unsure whether it was properly researched and supported, or more of a speculative work like the Menzies book about the Chinese 'discovering' America. In fact, Mann is a respected writer for Science, National Geographic and other journals of record, and the book contains lengthy bibliographical notes. Mann does occasionally argue for a particular, controversial interpretation, but he balances each discussion with other views. The other reviews here do a good job of summarizing, so I'll be more subjective. I think this is an important book. Over time it seems bound to cause people to reassess a range of issues around aboriginal rights and the environment. At least one reviewer has already decried this book as propaganda for the anti-environmental right. I think this is a shallow interpretation. Mann's point is that the pre-Columbian people were more populous and had greater impact (much greater) on the landscape than previously recognized. However, that this would justify modern environmental atrocities is as absurd as saying Aztec practices justify modern human sacrifice, or 16th century Spanish colonial policy justifies slavery and religious crusade. Instead "1491" could provide context for modern debate as well as some possibly very interesting opportunities to apply pre-Columbian agricultural techniques (heterogeneous Maize cultivation and charcoal enrichment of soil for example) to current environment policy. But the book was not written as a policy guide, and is easy to read as just a rich historical tapestry. The story contains triumphs such as the rise of mesoamerican and peruvian cultures, and a wide range of horrible tragedies...primarily the recurrent plagues that swept the continent after the Europeans arrived. I have lived in the western US my entire life, and reading this book has changed my perception of the land around me. It is easy to think all the history is back in the eastern part of the country, or Europe or Asia. After reading this book and "One Vast Winter Count" (a history of the American West before Lewis and Clark, recommended by Mann as a supplement to his book), the history of my part of the world is suddenly alive and the landscape itself feels richer. Highly recommended.

In this groundbreaking work of science, history, and archaeology, Charles C. Mann radically alters our understanding of the Americas before the arrival of Columbus in 1492. Contrary to what so many Americans learn in school, the pre-Columbian Indians were not sparsely settled in a pristine wilderness; rather, there were huge numbers of Indians who actively molded and influenced the land around them. The astonishing Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan had running water and immaculately clean streets, and was larger than any contemporary European city. Mexican cultures created corn in a specialized breeding process that it has been called man's first feat of genetic engineering. Indeed, Indians were not living lightly on the land but were landscaping and manipulating their world in ways that we are only now beginning to understand. Challenging and surprising, this is a transformative new look at a rich and fascinating world we only thought we knew.

1491 is not so much the story of a year, as of what that year stands for: the long-debated (and often-dismissed) question of what human civilization in the Americas was like before the Europeans crashed the party. The history books most Americans were (and still are) raised on describe the continents before Columbus as a vast, underused territory, sparsely populated by primitives whose cultures would inevitably bow before the advanced technologies of the Europeans. For decades, though, among the archaeologists, anthropologists, paleolinguists, and others whose discoveries Charles C. Mann brings together in 1491, different stories have been emerging. Among the revelations: the first Americans may not have come over the Bering land bridge around 12,000 B.C. but by boat along the Pacific coast 10 or even 20 thousand years earlier; the Americas were a far more urban, more populated, and more technologically advanced region than generally assumed; and the Indians, rather than living in static harmony with nature, radically engineered the landscape across the continents, to the point that even "timeless" natural features like the rainforest can be seen as products of human intervention. Mann is well aware that much of the history he relates is necessarily speculative, the product of pot-shard interpretation and precise scientific measurements that often end up being radically revised in later decades. But the most compelling of his eye-opening revisionist stories are among the best-founded: the stories of early American-European contact. To many of those who were there, the earliest encounters felt more like a meeting of equals than one of natural domination. And those who came later and found an emptied landscape that seemed ripe for the taking, Mann argues convincingly, encountered not the natural and unchanging state of the native American, but the evidence of a sudden calamity: the ravages of what was likely the greatest epidemic in human history, the smallpox and other diseases introduced inadvertently by Europeans to a population without immunity, which swept through the Americas faster than the explorers who brought it, and left behind for their discovery a land that held only a shadow of the thriving cultures that it had sustained for centuries before. --Tom

Nissley A 1491 Timeline 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 Mexica drawing of the effects of smallpox** Cortes driven from Tenochtitlan, 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 *Courtesy Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, Collinsville, Ill., painting by Michael Hampshire. **Courtesy Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, Santa Fe, N.M. (Bernardino de Sahagn, *Historia General de las Cosas de Nueva España*, 1547-77). From Publishers Weekly This production is a most nonfiction audio that ought to be a "reading" as distinct from a "performance." Johnson renders this thoroughly researched, well-written history of early North and South American Indian populations in a strong, clear voice, with excellent intonation. His diction is almost too perfect one occasionally focuses on pronunciation rather than content. Most of the book is written in narrative form that sweeps listeners through an exciting rethinking of all we ever learned about when so-called Indians first inhabited the American continents and how they may have come here, about their numbers, religions, cultures, inventions, social structures and their relations to European invaders and settlers. When Mann relates the internecine battles among schools of anthropologists and archeologists, however, the listener might wish he had the book in hand for clarity. It might be wise from the start to make a list of the numerous Indian and European individuals and groupings. This audiobook is well worth the trouble. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Bookmarks Magazine Like all creation myths, the story of Americas discovery by Columbus endures no matter how improbable it now seems. Mann, a correspondent for *Science* and *The Atlantic Monthly* and coauthor of four previous books, dives right into this thorny topic one fraught with political tension and intertwined with a nation's identity with no agenda other than the journalists' desire to find the truth. Critics were riveted by his rich portrait of the pre-Columbian Americas and compared him favorably to Jared Diamond, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fate of Human Societies*. Like a good reporter, Mann seeks out sources that challenge his own views; nonetheless, critics found some of Mann's conclusions short on evidence. In some cases, they questioned whether his journalistic approach did justice to such a complex subject. Copyright 2004 Phillips Nelson Media, Inc.