Learning Targets
• To introduce students to the variety of empires of the early modern period
• To emphasize that empire building was not just a Western European phenomenon
• To explore the range of colonial societies that evolved and the reasons for differences between them
• To emphasize the massive social reordering that attended European colonization in the Western Hemisphere

Big Picture Questions
1. The experience of empire for conquered peoples was broadly similar whoever their rulers were. Does the material of this chapter support or challenge this idea?
2. In thinking about the similarities and differences among the empires of the early modern era, what categories of comparison might be most useful to consider?
3. Have a look at the maps in this chapter with an eye to areas of the world that were not incorporated in a major empire. Pick one or more of them and do a little research as to what was happening there in the early modern era.
4. Compared to the world of the fifteenth century, what new patterns of development are visible in the empire-building projects of the centuries that followed?
5. In what ways did European empires in the Americas resemble their Russian, Chinese, Mughal, and Ottoman counterparts, and in what respects were they different? Do you find the similarities or the differences most striking?

Margin Review Questions
1. What enabled Europeans to carve out huge empires an ocean away from their homelands?
2. What large-scale transformations did European empires generate?
3. What was the economic foundation of colonial rule in Mexico and Peru? How did it shape the kinds of societies that arose there?
4. How did the plantation societies of Brazil and the Caribbean differ from those of southern colonies in British North America?
5. What distinguished the British settler colonies of North America from their counterparts in Latin America?
6. What motivated Russian empire building?
7. What differences can you identify among the four major empires in the Islamic world of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries?
8. How did the Russian Empire transform the life of its conquered people and of the Russian homeland itself?
9. What were the major features of Chinese empire building in the early modern era?
10. How did Mughal attitudes and policies toward Hindus change from the time of Akbar to that of Aurangzeb?
11. In what ways was the Ottoman Empire important for Europe in the early modern era?

Key Terms
Akbar: The most famous emperor of India’s Mughal Empire (r. 1556–1605); his policies are noted for their efforts at religious tolerance and inclusion. (pron. AHK-bar)
Aurangzeb: Mughal emperor (r. 1658–1707) who reversed his predecessors’ policies of religious tolerance and attempted to impose Islamic supremacy. (pron. ow-rang-ZEB)
Columbian exchange: The massive transatlantic interaction and exchange between the Americas and Afro-Eurasia that began in the period of European exploration and colonization.
Constantinople, 1453: Constantinople, the capital and almost the only outpost left of the Byzantine Empire, fell to the army of the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II “the Conqueror” in 1453, an event that marked the end of Christian Byzantium.
Cortés, Hernán: Spanish conquistador (1485–1547) who led the expedition that conquered the Aztec Empire in modern Mexico.
devshirme: The tribute of boy children that the Ottoman Turks levied from their Christian subjects in the Balkans; the Ottomans raised the boys for service in the civil administration or in the elite Janissary infantry corps. (pron. devsheer-MEH)
Dona Marina: Native American slave from an elite background who in 1519 became Cortés indispensable interpreter and strategist. She accompanied him during his conquest of the Aztec Empire and bore him a son. After the conquest she was married off to another conquistador, dying around 1530 C.E.
the great dying: Term used to describe the devastating demographic impact of European-borne epidemic diseases on the Americas. (pron. mess-TEE-zoh)

Mestizo: Literally, "mixed"; a term used to describe the mixed-race population of Spanish colonial societies in the Americas. (pron. MOO-guhl)

Mughal Empire: One of the most successful empires of India, a state founded by Muslim Turks who invaded India in 1526; their rule was noted for efforts to create partnerships between Hindus and Muslims. (pron. MOO-guhl)

Mulattoes: Term commonly used for people of mixed African and European blood.

Ottoman Empire: Major Islamic state centered on Anatolia that came to include the Balkans, the Near East, and much of North Africa. (pron. penin-soo-LAHR-es)

Peninsulares: In the Spanish colonies of Latin America, the term used to refer to people who had been born in Spain; they claimed superiority over Spaniards born in the Americas. (pron. penin-soo-LAHR-es)

Plantation complex: Agricultural system based on African slavery that was used in Brazil, the Caribbean, and the southern colonies of North America.

Qing dynasty: Ruling dynasty of China from 1644 to 1912; the Qing rulers were originally from Manchuria, which had conquered China. (pron. ching)

Settler colonies: Colonies in which the colonizing people settled in large numbers, rather than simply sending relatively small numbers to exploit the region; particularly noteworthy in the case of the British colonies in North America.

Siberia: Russia’s great frontier region, a vast territory of what is now central and eastern Russia, most of it unsuited to agriculture but rich in mineral resources and fur-bearing animals.

Yasak: Tribute that Russian rulers demanded from the native peoples of Siberia, most often in the form of furs. (pron. YAH-sahk)