

Each of these reasons merits a particular consideration. That the Americans are a new people seems indisputable, when we reflect on the smallness of their number, their ignorance, and the little progress the most civilized among them had made in the arts. In the first accounts of the discovery and conquest of America, it is true, Mexico, Peru, St. Domingo, &c. are mentioned as very populous countries; and we are told that the Spaniards had every where to engage with vast armies; yet it is evident these facts are greatly exaggerated; first, from the paucity of monuments left of the pretended grandeur of these nations: secondly, from the nature of the country itself, which, though peopled with Europeans, more industrious, doubtless, than its natives, is still wild, uncultivated, covered with wood, and little more than a group of inaccessible and uninhabitable mountains; thirdly, from their own traditions, with respect to the time they united into society, the Peruvians reckoning no more than 12 kings, from the first of whom, about 300 years before, they had imbibed the first principles of civilization, and ceased to be entirely savage; fourthly, from the small number of men employed to conquer them,