

Before 1500, there was considerable cross-cultural interaction between Europe and Asia and, to a lesser extent, with sub-Saharan Africa. With the voyages of discovery of the 15th century, these contacts accelerated and became global in reach. The impact of European contact on the previously isolated societies of the Americas and the Pacific Islands was profound and devastating and will be discussed in detail in chapter 25. This chapter considers the motives and methods of European trade and exploration between the 15th and the 18th centuries. Some common themes of this era include:

- Mixed motives. European explorers acted from a complex mix of greed, daring, and missionary zeal. Christian princes, such as Prince Henry of Portugal and Ferdinand and Isabel of Spain, underwrote voyages to expand Christianity. Equally compelling were the profits to be made in the spice trade, especially if Arab intermediaries could be eliminated.
- Adventure. Curiosity & a sense of adventure also drew Europeans out into the world. Between 1500-1800, European mariners charted the oceans, seas, and coasts of the entire globe. Important geographic questions were resolved: the circumference of the earth, the quest for a northwest passage across North America, and the patterns of winds and currents.
- New technologies used in navigation. From Arab traders, the Portuguese borrowed the astrolabe and the cross staff and used these tools to determine their north/south position. Other new technologies included the magnetic compass, more flexible combinations of sails, improved shipbuilding, cannons, and more accurate navigational charts.
- The Columbian Exchange. Contact with European diseases was a demographic catastrophe for the populations of the Americas and the Pacific Islands, who usually suffered 80-90% mortality within the 1st generation. The cross-cultural exchange was more beneficial for Europeans, who gained significant new food crops.

1. The European Reconnaissance of the World's Oceans

A. Motives for Exploration

- 1) Resource-poor Portugal searched for fresh resources
 - a. From the 13th to the 15th century they ventured out onto Atlantic
 - b. Established sugar plantations in the Atlantic islands
- 2) The lure of direct trade without Muslim intermediaries
 - a. Asian spice trade
 - b. African gold, ivory, and slaves
- 3) Missionary efforts of European Christians
 - a. New Testament urged to spread the faith throughout the world
 - b. Crusades and holy wars against Muslims
 - c. *Reconquista* of Spain inspired Iberian crusaders
- 4) Various motives combined and reinforced each other

How did trade networks in the post-Classical Era compare to the Classical Era?

B. The Technology of Exploration Enabled European Mariners to Travel Offshore

- 1) Sternpost rudder, square & lateen of sails enabled ships to advance against wind
- 2) Navigational instruments
 - a. Magnetic compass
 - b. Astrolabe (and cross and back staffs)
- 3) Knowledge of winds and currents enabled Europeans to travel reliably
 - a. Trade winds north and south of the equator
 - b. Regular monsoons in Indian Ocean basin
 - c. The volta do mar

What new technologies accompanied the development of new trade routes?

How did trade affect the diffusion of scientific & technological traditions?

C. Voyages of Exploration: From the Mediterranean to the Atlantic

- 1) Dom Henrique, (Prince Henry) encouraged exploration of W Africa
 - a. Portuguese conquered Ceuta in N Africa in 1415
 - b. Established trading posts at Sao Jorge da Mina, W Africa
 - c. Bartolomeo Dias rounded the Cape of Good Hope and entered the Indian Ocean, 1488
- 2) Vasco da Game crossed Indian Ocean; reached India, 1497; brought back *huge* profit
 - a. Portuguese merchants built a trading post at Calicut, 1500
- 3) Christopher Columbus, Genoese mariner
 - a. Proposed sailing to Asian markets by a western route
 - b. Sponsored by Catholic kings of Spain; sailed to Bahamas, 1492
- 4) Columbus enabled other mariners to link E & W hemispheres.

What Classical era trade networks *continued*, & which *new* cities were *added* during this era?

D. Voyages of Exploration: From the Atlantic to the Pacific

- 1) Ferdinand Magellan, Portuguese navigator, in service of Spain
 - a. Crossed both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans 1519-1522
 - b. Only 1 of 5 ships completed the circumnavigation of the world
 - c. Magellan died in conflict in a Philippine island on the way home
- 2) Exploration of the Pacific took 300 years to complete
 - a. Trade route btwn Philippines-Mexico, by Spanish merchants
 - b. English mariners searched for a NW passage from Europe to Asia
- 3) Captain James Cook (1728-1779), British explorer
 - a. Led 3 expeditions to the Pacific, Arctic, Australia; died in Hawaii
 - b. By late 18th century, Europeans had reasonably accurate geographical knowledge of the world

What basic understandings of environment & technology did post-classical traders need to conduct their business?

2. Trade and Conflict in Early Modern Asia

A. Trading-Post Empires

- 1) Portuguese built >50 trading posts btwn W Africa & E Asia
- 2) Alfonso d'Albuquerque, 16th-century Indian Ocean commander
 - a. Seized Hormuz in 1508, Goa in 1510, and Melaka in 1511
 - b. Forced all merchant ships to purchase safe-conduct passes
 - c. Portuguese hegemony grew weak by the late 16th century
- 3) English and Dutch established parallel trading posts in Asian coasts
 - a. English in India, the Dutch at Cape Town and Indonesia
 - b. Sailed faster, cheaper, & more powerful ships than Portuguese
 - c. Created an efficient commercial organization—the joint-stock company
- 4) Formation of powerful, profitable joint-stock companies which were private enterprises that enjoyed gov't support & little oversight
 - a. The English East India Company (EIC), founded in 1600
 - b. United East India Company (VOC), Dutch founded 1602

How did the physical size of post-Classical trade networks compare to the previous era?

What Classical era trade networks *continued*, & which *new* cities were *added* during this era?

What factors encouraged commercial growth in this era?

B. European Conquests in SE Asia

- 1) Spanish conquest of the Philippines led by Legazpi, 1565
- 2) Manila, the bustling port city, became the Spanish capital
 - a. Spanish & Filipinos massacred Chinese merchants by 1,000s
 - b. Spread Christianity throughout the archipelago
 - c. Muslim resistance on southern island of Mindanao
- 3) Conquest of Java by the Dutch
 - a. Began w/ VOC trading city of Batavia in 1619
 - b. Policy: secure VOC monopoly over spice production & trade
 - c. Enormous monopoly led to prosperity of Dutch in 17th century

C. Commercial Rivalries and the Seven Years' War

- 1) Global competition and conflict
 - a. Dutch forces expelled most Portuguese merchants from SE Asia
 - b. Conflict between English and French merchants over control of Indian cotton and tea from Ceylon, early 18th century
 - c. Competition in the Americas among English, French, and Spanish forces
- 2) The Seven Years' War (1756-1763) aka "French & Indian War"
 - a. **Europe:** British & Prussia vs. France, Austria, & Russia
 - b. **India:** British vs. French forces (each w/ Indian allies)
 - c. **Caribbean:** Spanish & French vs. British expansion
 - d. **N America:** British vs. French forces

What factors encouraged commercial growth in this era?

- 3) Outcome: British hegemony
 - a. British gained control of India, French Canada, North America (east of the Mississippi River) and Spanish Florida
 - b. In Europe, Prussian armies held off massive enemy armies
 - c. War paved the way for the British empire in the 19th century

3. Global Exchanges

A. The Columbian Exchange

- 1) Biological exchanges btwn Old and New Worlds
 - a. **Columbian Exchange**—global diffusion of plants, food crops, animals, human populations, & disease pathogens
 - b. Permanently altered the Earth's environment
- 2) Epidemic diseases—smallpox, measles, diphtheria, whooping cough, and influenza—led to staggering population losses
 - a. Smallpox reduced Aztec population by 95% w/in 100 years
 - b. Contagious diseases had same horrifying effects in Pacific islands
 - c. Btwn 1500-1800, 100 million people died of imported diseases
- 3) New foods and domestic animals
 - a. Wheat, horses, cattle, sheep, goats, & chickens → Americas
 - b. American crops included maize, potatoes, beans, tomatoes, peppers, peanuts → Eurasia
 - c. World population: 1500 = 425 million; 1800 = 900 million
- 4) Migration of human populations
 - a. Enslaved Africans were largest group of migrants, 1500-1800
 - b. Sizable voluntary migration from Europe to the Americas
 - c. 19th century, European migration to South Africa, Australia, and Pacific Islands

How & why did crops migrate?

What were the effects of migration?

B. The Origins of Global Trade

- 1) Transoceanic trade: European merchants created a genuinely global trading system of supply and demand, linking the ports of the world
- 2) The Manila galleons
 - a. Sleek, fast, heavily armed ships that sailed btwn Manila and Mexico, beginning 1571
 - b. Asian luxury goods to Mexico, silver from Mexico to China

What factors encouraged commercial growth in this era?

What technological & cultural exchanges did states encourage in this era?