

The Age of Exploration

What motivated exploration?

- A. God. Many explorers sought a means of spreading their faith and finding allies against the Muslims.
- B. Glory. Nations, and people, desired to expand their control and seek adventure.
- C. Gold. The Ottoman Turks tightened control over the land routes through the Middle East; Europeans sought a water route to Asia. The expansion of trade and the discovery of precious metals became the chief reasons for exploration.



What explorers made significant discoveries?

- A. Portugal and Spain, with their location on the Iberian Peninsula, led in early exploration; however, other nations in Europe soon followed.
- B. Complete this chart of major explorers. Use the world map (on the next page) to chart the routes of their travels on the world by coloring their home country and tracing their route with the same color. Be sure to add a key to the map.

Explorer	Country	Lands Explored and/or Accomplishments and/or Interesting Facts
Vasco de Balboa	Spain	“Discovered” Pacific Ocean from the eastern shore (1510)
William Barents	The Netherlands	Attempted, unsuccessfully, to find the Northwest Passage by sailing north around Russia (1596)
Henry Cabot	England	Explored the coastline of Canada in search of the Northwest Passage (1497-8)
Jacques Cartier	France	Canada and the St. Lawrence River (1534-5)
Christopher Columbus	Spain	“Discovered” the New World (1492)
Hernando Cortes	Spain	Central America and Mexico; conquered Aztecs (1519)
Bartholomew Dias	Portugal	Rounded the Cape of Good Hope, South Africa (1487-8)
Francis Drake	England	First to survive circumnavigation of the globe (1577-1580)
Vasco da Gama	Portugal	Discovered the ocean route from Portugal to the East – India (1497-8)
Henry Hudson	The Netherlands	Mid-atlantic coastline of North America; “discovered” the Hudson River (1609)
Ferdinand Magellan	Spain	“First” to circumnavigate the globe (1519-1521)
<i>Marco Polo</i>	Italy	Forerunner of the Age of Exploration; explorer and traveller to China



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How did the exploration impact the “new” lands?

- A. Heightened rivalry between the European nations, both at home (in Europe) and abroad (throughout the world), as they competed for empires. England commissioned private ships to harass competitors (privateers). Monarchs granted land to explorers in exchange for claims in the new world. Trading companies rivaled states in acquisition of properties and accumulations of military.
- B. Colonization and conquest of the “new” worlds in the Americas and the “coastal fringe” lands in Africa and Asia. The Europeans interacted in three primary ways with the native populations: blended as equals; engaged as trade partners; or subjugated as inferiors.
 - 1. Encomienda system. Colonists were granted land and the labor of a certain number of American Indians who had to farm the land or work as servants; led to slavery.
 - 2. Conquistador. Spanish conquerors whose interest lay in taking, not trading; led to the defeat of the Aztecs in Mexico (by Cortes) and the Incas in Peru (by Pizarro)
 - 3. Captaincies. Portuguese method of granting tracts of land to donataires who financed colonization in exchange for political and economic control of their new territory.
 - 4. Indentured servitude. English companies offered free passage to the colony in exchange for a set number of years of work.
 - 5. Slavery.
 - 6. Mercantilism. Dominant economic policy of Europe rooted in the belief that a country’s power depended on its wealth in gold and silver. Countries used tariffs to discourage imports. Colonies became a source of raw materials and as well as a market for finished goods.
- C. Development of new demographic patterns.
 - 1. The Columbian Exchange. The exchange of plants and animals between Europe and the Americas laid the foundation for a global trade network. New food crops from the Americas (potato, corn, tomato, tobacco) supported population growth, changed tastes, and created new markets. Similarly, new animals (horse, pig, cattle) changed livestock populations in the Americas.

2. The Great Dying. As part of the Columbian Exchange, Europeans introduced pathogens to which the native populations had no natural immunity. Infectious disease devastated the populations across the entirety of the continent. The population loss created a shortage in manpower, decreased tax revenues, and weakened the natives' ability to resist the European conquests.
3. The Atlantic Slave Trade. Europeans valued Africa as a source of manpower to work plantations in the New World. The desire for physical goods (gold, silver, spice) became secondary to people goods.