The Age of Exploration

A Widening World
The Silk Road: Precursor to Age of Exploration

- The **Silk Road** is a historically important international trade route between **China** and the **Mediterranean**.
- Europeans had a great desire for the **treasures** of the Far East.
- Large trade networks were established to help **import** goods from China into European markets.
The Silk Road
Silk Road: Culture

• The road is not only an ancient international trade route, but also a splendid cultural bridge liking the cultures of China, India, Persia, Arabia, Greek and Rome.

• The Four Great Inventions of China and religions of the West were introduced into their counterparts.
Historical Significance of Silk Road

- **Goods, people and ideas** all travelled along these long-distance routes spanning or circumventing the vast landmass of **Eurasia**.
- From earliest times, there have been three main routes, which connected China with the outside world.
These were the overland routes that stretched across Eurasia from China to the Mediterranean, known collectively as the "Silk Road".

Eventually these land routes proved to be very challenging due to rough terrain, robbery, and the fragile nature of the goods being exported out of the region.
Toward the end of the European Middle Ages, the Catholic Church launched a series of Holy Wars against the Muslims in the Middle East.

These wars were known as the Crusades, and while their original goals were not achieved, they nevertheless, had long reaching effects.
• As a result of the Crusades, **trade increased**, which also increased **cultural diffusion** between the Islamic world and Europe.

• As this trade flourished and grew, new practices in business were developed, and a fundamental change in European society took place.

• This time period is know as the **Commercial Revolution**.
Resurgence of Trade

- In the late 1300s, **Italian City States** became the center of the resurgence of trade.
- **Venice** was the richest and most powerful of these states.
- From Italy, goods were shipped to large **trade fairs**, which were located on major trade route crossroads.
- The larger of these trade fairs evolved into towns, with a change in the way of life for their inhabitants.
The Black Death

- A result of the increased interaction between Europe and the Middle East was the spread of the **Bubonic Plague**, also known as, the Black Death.
- Starting in the 1100s, the plague was spread along trade routes and had an enormous impact on Europe, including the loss of **1/3 of the population**, a decline in their economy, and a weakening of feudalism.
- In **China**, **35 million** people died as a result of the plague, and in Cairo, Egypt, 7,000 people a day died at the disease's height.
Commercial Revolution

- Despite some setbacks due to the plague, the resurgence of trade continued across Europe, with many new innovations in business.
• **Guilds**: were trade associations of craft workers and merchants. All of one craft would form together to set standards on prices and quality. Guilds dominated economic life during this period and were the main mode of production.
Capitalism

- **Capitalism** emerged with the decline of feudalism. Capitalism is based on trade and capital, which is money for investment. Higher demand for a product means higher prices and higher profits. Capitalism becomes the new economic system and resulted in the development of new business practices to handle the increase in trade.
• The Commercial Revolution and the resurgence of trade across Europe completely reshaped society. These changes resulted in the decline of feudalism, and a revival of arts, literature, and science known as the Renaissance.
Middle Ages Ignite Trade

- The resurgence of trade following the Middle Ages in Europe during the Renaissance resulted in a demand for goods from Asia.
- Trade routes were established across the Mediterranean and through the Middle East to handle this need.
• But, when the expansion of the **Ottoman Empire** caused disruption along these routes, Europeans were forced to seek alternative ways of **importing** these goods.

• This led to the exploration of **water routes** to Asia, and eventually the discovery of the **Americas** by the Europeans.

• Europeans were motivated by:
  1. **God**
  2. **Glory**
  3. **Gold**
  4. **Goods**
Motivations: God

- The **Protestant Reformation** devastated the **Roman Catholic Church** in two ways:
  1. The **population** of devout followers decreased dramatically.
  2. The **power** of the Catholic Church greatly diminished.

As a result, many Catholic monarchs took action to preserve their faith and increase their power.
Reconquista

- In 1469, **Ferdinand of Aragon** and **Isabella of Castile** married and joined two of the most powerful kingdoms in **Spain**.
- In **1492**, they conquered **Grenada**, the last **Muslim** stronghold and united Spain under their rule.
- This is known as the **Reconquista**.
After achieving this victory, Isabella launched a religious crusade to rid Spain of Jewish and Islamic influence.

In all, over 150,000 people were forced out of Spain, while many others were killed.

This had a negative effect on Spain, as many of the people forced out were Spain's cultural and intellectual elite.
Reconquista Spreads

• To further the scope of the Church, monarchs like Ferdinand & Isabella funded voyages to discover new sea routes to Asia for goods and to spread Christianity along the way using missionaries.
Motivations: Glory

- Many monarchs hoped that in addition to gaining *salvation* by reconquering land for the Church, that they could also *expand* their kingdoms and develop *overseas empires*.
- Ambition to form global empires and the power that comes with a large domain motivated a colonial race among the great European nations of the 15th century.
Nations such as Spain, Portugal, England, France and the Netherlands competed with one another for the glory and power of overseas empires in Asia.

Note, that although many of the explorers hired by the monarchs to capture new lands were Italian, Italy itself was not a united country and therefore did not join the race for colonies.
Motives: Gold

• Initially, European nations were seeking a sea route to Asia to improve trade.
• In addition to finding such routes, explorers stumbled upon unchartered lands, the New World.
• Later, explorers venturing to the New World (Americas) found outrageous amounts of gold and silver.
Monarchs as well as pirates were very interested in the new wealth to be had in the overseas colonies.

During the course of this phases of Old Imperialism, there was so much gold and silver flooding the European markets that it sparked inflation in Europe.
Motives: Goods

- European nations competed for colonies across the globe.
- These colonies were exploited for their **raw materials**, and used as **new markets** for European goods.
- Europeans had little regard for most of the **indigenous** peoples of these areas, and as a result, there was great loss of life and culture.
A New Frontier: Old Imperialism

A Global Impact of a European Phenomenon
Old Imperialism

Time period during the 15th and 16th centuries when Europeans searched for new sources of wealth and for easier trade routes to China and India. Resulted in the discovery of North and South America by the Europeans.
Types of Colonies

Depending upon your nation’s resources, there were two types of colonies that could be established:

1. **Colony** - a permanent settlement where the parent country takes over the government, forces natives to assimilate, and imposes their culture upon them.

2. **Trading posts** - a temporary settlement where only a trading relationship is established, this method is much cheaper and used by less wealthy/powerful nations.
In the early 1400s, Europeans began exploring the west coast of Africa in search of an all-water route to Asia. These early explorations were led by the Portuguese.
Conquering Colonies: Portugal

• In 1488, **Bartholomeu Dias** rounded the **Cape of Good Hope** at the southern tip of Africa.
• In 1498, **Vasco Da Gama** established an all water route to **India**.
• Portugal typically created **trading posts** in the areas claimed by their explorers.
• The success of these explorations led Spain to begin its own voyages.
Conquering Colonies: Spain

• In 1492, Christopher Columbus crossed the Atlantic Ocean and discovered the Americas for Spain.

• The Spanish tended to set up large colonies in the areas claimed by their explorers.

• These discoveries had a lasting impact on Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas.
Impact of Imperialism: Africa

• In the **1400s**, the **Portuguese** setup numerous **forts** and **port cities** along the **east coast** of Africa in hopes of establishing trade with the interior.

• They were unable to establish contact and ultimately failed.
• By the mid **1600s**, the **Dutch** had established a settlement at **Cape Town** on the tip of **Africa**.

• This acted as a midway point for their trade with India.

• The Dutch that settled Cape Town were known as **Boers**.

• They either **forced out**, or **enslaved** most of the native **Africans** in this region.
Impact of Imperialism: Asia

- In the **1500s**, Portugal took control of the Indian trade network from the Muslims.
- They also captured and controlled important **trade ports** along the **Indian coast**.
- This resulted in Portugal controlling the **spice trade** for most of the 16th century.
- Portuguese power in this region declined due in part to their **mistreatment of native people** in India, and the **disrespect** shown to **Indian religion** and **culture**.
• The **Dutch** took control from the Portuguese in the late **1500s**.
• A group of wealthy merchants setup the **Dutch East India Company** in the early 1600s and became the dominant force in the Asian spice trade.
• Their power did not begin to decline until the **1700s**.
• The **British** and **French** formed their own **East India Companies** and competed for the lucrative spice trade during the **1700s**.

• Britain and France both formed alliances with local princes and employed **Sepoys**, or Indian troops.

• In the end, the **British East India Company** forced France out and remained in control of the trade networks.

• Soon after, they became the **real power** in **India**.
- **Spain** attempted to gain part of the Asian **spice trade** through its claim on the island chain known as the **Philippines**.

- The Spanish claimed the Philippines due to their discovery by **Ferdinand Magellan** in **1521**.

- Spanish merchants and **missionaries** used these islands as a staging ground into Asia.
Impact of Imperialism: The Americas

- After **Christopher Columbus** discovered the **West Indies**, **Spain** began a program of imperialism and colonialism in the Americas.
- Spain sent over **Conquistadors**, or conquerors who secured the region for exploitation.
- Some Conquistadors were motivated by the search for **gold** and **glory**, while others wanted to convert the natives to **Christianity**.
• Hernan Cortez arrived in Mexico in 1519.
• Within two years he had conquered and destroyed the Aztec Empire.
• Francisco Pizarro arrived in South America in 1532, and accomplished the same feat against the Incas.
**Treaty of Tordesillas**

- **Spain** and **Portugal** led the ocean-going European explorers of the 15th and 16th centuries.

- **Portuguese** ships travelled to the southern Atlantic and the **African coast** while **Columbus** headed **west** in Spanish ships in 1492 to find a path to the **trade centers** of Asia.
• The Spanish and Portuguese looked to the Pope, head of the Roman Catholic Church, to legitimate their claims as they expanded their reach.

• In 1481, a Papal Bull, a special charter, granted the Canary Islands to the Castilians of Spain and rights to Africa for the Portuguese.
• When it was revealed that lands lay across the Atlantic (Europeans would soon realize these were the expansive continents of North and South America), disputes arose as to who had rights to these territories.

• The **Treaty of Tordesillas** in **1494** split the “**New World**” between **Spain** and **Portugal**.

• Although very little of the new lands had been seen, lines were slashed across the globe, giving most of **North** and **South America** to **Spain** and the easternmost area of what is now **Brazil** to **Portugal**.
Sphere of Portuguese influence in colonisation according to the agreement of Tordesillas in 1494 between Portugal and Spain.
Impact of the Treaty of Tordesillas

- The impact of the **Treaty of Tordesillas** on the **Pacific Northwest** came centuries later.
- The **Spanish** had settlements in **Mexico** and **California**, but had not expanded north into the colder regions of the northern Pacific.
By the **18th century**, the **Portuguese** were no longer leaders in exploration, but the **Russians, British, and French** were sending expeditions that threatened what the Spanish still believed to be their rightful territory, granted by the **Pope**.

Spain finally sent vessels to the Pacific Northwest, to areas they had all but ignored for more than 275 years.
North America

- In **North America**, the **Dutch**, the **French**, and the **British** all competed for New World colonies.
- All three nations were searching for the mythical **Northwest Passage**, which would lead them to Asia.
- Unfortunately for them, it did not exist.
- But, they stayed and began establishing **colonies** for **trade** and **settlement**.
• In the **1600s**, the **French** settled **Canada**.
• They established a string of forts from the **St. Lawrence** river all the way to **Louisiana**.
• In **1607**, the **British** established its first permanent settlement at **Jamestown** in **Virginia**.
Over the next 100 years, large numbers of British would settle along the eastern coast of North America.

This resulted in the death and displacement of the native population.

The Dutch established a trading post called New Amsterdam, but were eventually forced out by the British, and New Amsterdam became New York.
Triangular Trade & Slavery

- As colonies in the Americas grew, so did the need for cheap, reliable labor.
- At first, European settlers attempted to **enslave Native Americans**.
- This was a **failure** because Native Americans were **unsuited** to **plantation** work.
- Also, it was easy for them to **escape** and return to their people.
- Europeans then turned to **Africa** for its **labor source**.
Starting in the 1500s, large numbers of Africans were bought and transported to the Americas for agricultural work.

This trade eventually became very large and profitable and was known as the Triangle Trade due to goods and people moving from Europe to Africa to the Americas.

The slave trade resulted in the African Diaspora, which is the large, forced migration of millions of people.
An estimated 17 million men, women, and children were enslaved and transported from Africa to the West Indies by Europeans between the 17th and 19th Centuries.

The Atlantic Slave Trade

Packed like sardines below deck, in filthy conditions, at least one million Africans lost their lives on the crossing.
The Columbian Exchange

- The **Age of Exploration** was a period of vast exchange of **people, plants, animals, ideas, and technology**.
- This is known as the **Columbian Exchange**, because it starts with Columbus.
- While many aspects of this exchange had **positive** effects, such as the **exchange of foods** between Europe and America, there were also **negative** effects, such as the **exchange of diseases** between Europe and America.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Columbian Exchange</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>From Old World to New World</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• bananas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• grapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• pigs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• cattle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• chickens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• smallpox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• measles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• typhus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Impact of Exploration

- The **Age of Exploration** changed the world.
- Access to **new** and **better foods** allowed the **European population** to **grow**, and access to the New World gave these people a place to go.
- New World civilizations such as the **Inca** and **Aztecs**, faced near **total destruction** of their cultures either through disease brought by the Europeans, or by **colonization**.
- **Africa** faced a **Diaspora**, or forced movement of its people, as **slavery** became the dominant labor force in the Americas. The Age of Exploration was both a positive and negative experience for many civilizations.
• New world powers emerged in **France** and **England**.

• A wide scale competition for Empire created new tensions in Europe.

• The stage was set for intense wars to brew amongst the world powers for global domination.