

Overseas Expansion
Microscopic Pioneers and the Demographic Numbers Game

I. A Better Route to the East: Importance of Indian Ocean and Silk Route Trade

A. Venetian and Genoese Control of Eastern Mediterranean Trade

1. Portuguese Plan

- a. Prince Henry the Navigator (1394–1460)
- b. Gomes Eanes de Zurara (1404?–1474), *Crónica da Guiné*
- c. Paolo Toscanelli (1397–1482)
- d. Vasco de Gama (1469?–1524)
- e. Pedro Álvares Cabral (1460?–1526?)

2. Spanish Plan

- a. Unification of Aragon (Ferdinand) and Castille (Isabella)
- b. Expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Spain (1492)
- c. Christopher Columbus (1451–1521)

3. Pope Alexander VI: Papal Bull (1493) and Treaty of Tordesillas (1494)

B. Economics of the Expansion

1. The Spice Trade

- a. Typical 15th-cent. European diet: bread, cabbage, turnips, peas, lentils, onions, and an occasional rabbit
- b. Pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, mace, ginger; rhubarb, silk, etc.

2. “God, Gold, and Glory”

3. Impact of Europe on the Americas

- a. Aztecs: Moctezuma, Hernan Cortés, and Doña Marina
- b. Incas: Atahualpa and Francisco Pizarro
- c. Population loss (smallpox, slave labor in silver mines, etc.)

4. Impact of the Americas on Europe

- a. gold and silver bullion
- b. corn, potatoes, tobacco, etc.
- c. syphilis?

C. Ideological Positions of the Spanish Conquest

1. Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (1490–1573) — lower is subject to higher
2. Bartolomé de las Casas (1473–1566) — one world community
3. Gerónimo de Mendieta (1525–1604) — Indians will inherit the earth

Columbian Exchange

From Western Hemisphere to Eastern



From Eastern Hemisphere to Western



Foods

maize
potatoes
sweet potatoes
cassava (manioc)
tomatoes
pumpkins
squash
peanuts
lima beans
kidney beans
navy beans
string beans
cacao
chili peppers
papaya
avocado
pineapple
strawberry
raspberry
cashew
brazil nut
peanut

wheat
sugar cane
carrot
onions
melons
radishes
lettuce
cabbage
cauliflower
okra
rice
yams
bananas
coffee
olives
coconut
breadfruit
peas
spinach
cucumber
chickpeas (garbonzos)
grapes (for wine)
asparagus
garlic
apple
cherry
fig
pear
plum
lemon
artichoke
beet
parsnip

Animals

turkeys
guinea pigs
Muscovy ducks

horses
cattle
sheep
goats
pigs
donkeys
chickens
guinea hens

Recommended Reading:

- Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Inventing the Flat Earth: Columbus and Modern Historians* (New York, Praeger, 1991).
- A. H. Lybyer, “The Ottoman Turks and the Routes of Oriental Trade,” *English Historical Review*, 30 (1915): 577–588.
- Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1972)