

Mr. Hartong
World History
Exploration Unit

Effects of Exploration Interactive Notes

Objective: 1. Describe how European economic and cultural influence dramatically increased through explorations, conquests and colonization.

[These slides correspond to these notes.](#)

Effects of The Age of Exploration: European Economic and Cultural Influence

Part I: Economic Influences:

- Mercantilism was the economic theory that led Western Europe to explore and establish new trade routes to Asia and the Americas. (Remember the fixed amount of wealth on Earth?)
- This shifted power away from the Italians and Muslims to these Western European nations like Portugal, Spain, England, and France.
- Mercantilism led Western Europe to colonize the Americas, Eastern Asia, and eventually Africa creating new global empires.
- Colonies brought materials back to the home countries as they exploited the natural resources in the New World and made the home country rich.
- The African slave trade was essential in this colonization as much of this work was labor intensive. 20 million slaves were forced to leave their homeland and families to work in the New World.
- Typically conquest of the natives was also necessary in order to acquire this fixed amount of wealth. Within the first 100 years 90-95% of the natives will be dead!
- Spain conquered the natives to acquire gold.
- England killed natives for the farmland.
- While the French attempted a more friendly approach for the fur, but still killed through disease/war.
- Mercantilism led Western Europe to adopt trade practices that were in their favor such as triangular trade.
- The commercial revolution will lead to the birth of capitalism as well.
- Unlike mercantilism where the government makes all the economic decisions, capitalism allows individuals to create companies and control economic decisions. Instead of the government getting rich (mercantilism), the citizens can get rich (capitalism) running their own businesses.
- Capitalism works in a “market economy” where citizens decide what goods are bought and sold through a balance of supply and demand.
- This will be a fundamental cause of the American Revolution as citizens will try to run their own businesses free from government control and interference.

Part II: The Cultural Influences:

- The transAtlantic slave trade brought the African culture and traditions to the Americas.
- It also created the racism that has been evident in our country ever since.
- The languages spoken in the New World reflect the countries that colonized those areas.
- Brazil – Portuguese
- Mexico – Spanish
- Argentina – Spanish
- USA and Canada - English
- The Columbian Exchange

- The exchange of plants and animals across the Atlantic changes cultures forever.
- List some animals from Europe: (taken from [this spreadsheet](#))

cow, pigs, goats, horses, sheep, chicken, etc.

- List some animals from America:

turkey, llama, alpaca

- List some plants from Europe:

wheat, oats, lemons, coffee, tea, bananas, etc.

- List some plants from America:

corn, potato, tomato, beans, pumpkin, squash, tobacco, etc.

- Religion:
 - Europeans took to the new areas of the world their Christian faith.
 - Some came for religious freedom.
 - Some came as missionaries to convert the natives.
- Entire cultures were also destroyed during this time of exploration and colonization.
- 90-95% of the Native Americans died within the first 100 years of European arrival.
- The Aztec and Inca empires were destroyed for their gold.
- The African continent will be forever changed due to the enslavement of their people.

In Conclusion

- Exploration, colonization and conquest resulted in cultural diffusion.
- European, African, and native cultures all combined to create the “melting pot” in America we know as diversity.