

ROMAN EMPIRE UNITES EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST

City of Rome was founded -- 753 BCE

Roman Empire under various rulers expanded to surround the Mediterranean Sea

it extended across all of continental Europe and much of England, parts of the Middle East and North Africa north of the (Sahara Desert)

(BCE: Before the Common Era -- that is before the year 1 CE [Common Era])

because time is sometimes depicted as a line, BCE years become larger as you go back in time that is, [500 BCE] is 400 years *before* [100 BCE])

EARLY VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY TO THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Afro-Phoenicians sailings from Egypt as early as 750 BCE may have reached (today's Mexico)¹

colossal heads of basalt stone that represented realistic portraits of West Africans

dating far back in time stand along the eastern coast of (Mexico)

an enormous effort was necessary to quarry the basalt blocks weighing ten to forty tons

and move them seventy-five miles to sculpt them into heads six to ten feet tall

at about the same time, Native Americans created small ceramic and stone sculptures

of Caucasoid and Negroid faces

other evidence exists to suggest transatlantic communication

including weaving looms and strains of American cotton identical to north African cotton

Mediterranean powers Egypt and Phoenicia sailed as far as Ireland and England -- 600 BCE

they may have reached the Atlantic Ocean island of Madeira (one of the Canary Islands)

and the islands of the Azores off the coast of West Africa

EARLY EUROPEAN AND AFRICAN VOYAGES TO THE NEW WORLD

There are a great number of historic resources that indicated early cultural exchanges

between the "old world" and the "new":

oral histories, written records, cultural similarities, linguistic changes, pottery,

human blood types, archaeological dating and plant migrations

ancient Roman coins have turned up all over the Americas

leading some archaeologists to conclude that Roman seafarers visited the "New World"

Ancient Arab historical sources provide information regarding extensive Atlantic Ocean navigation

(thousands of years before Christopher Columbus "discovered" the New World [1492])

TRADE EXPANDS WITHIN CHINA

Merchants, shippers, camel drivers and sea captains extended and strengthened trade routes

across Eurasia along "silk roads," reaching to the Mediterranean and Black seas

¹ Locations in parenthesis (Mexico) were not known by that name at the time.

and the Indian Ocean between 300 BCE and 300 BCE
Trade within the Chinese empire grew under the Han Dynasty -- 222 BCE-202 BCE
caravans from the interior of China carried commodities to its western boundaries
Central Asian tribes attacked caravans hoping to capture valuable commodities
as a result, the Chinese Han Dynasty extended its military defenses further into Central Asia
to protect the trade caravans
Prosperous as it was, the "Silk Road" was influenced by local political developments
a stable government assured smooth trade on the road

RISE OF CITIES IN EUROPE AND ASIA

Cities grew size and multiplied in number partly because they developed
increasingly strong commercial ties with one another -- sometimes across long distances
Two of the biggest cities almost certainly were Rome and Luoyang, China about 100 BCE
most cities were multifunctional, serving as centers of government, religion, trade,
manufacturing, education or artistic centers
cities, such as Rome and Alexandria (Egypt) accomplished all of these functions
other cities had more specialized purposes
towns of the Mediterranean coast and Eurasia
chiefly transshipped goods along routes of trade

CHINESE TRADE EXPANDS INTO EUROPE

Route of the Silk Road grew with the rise of the Roman Empire
Roman leaders linked with the imperial court of China -- 200 CE (Common Era)
trade was conducted by middlemen who belonged to neither of the two empires
only the extreme ends of the trade route were managed by Roman and Chinese merchants
Chinese inventions such as gunpowder and paper first travelled to Europe along the Silk Road
as did a growing assortment of other products
Europeans shipped cosmetics, silver, gold, amber, ivory, carpets, perfume and ceramics
gathered in Europe, Central Asia, Arabia and Africa to the Chinese

EAST-WEST TRADE COMES TO AN END

Fall of the Han dynasty caused Chinese trade and the Silk Road to decline -- 220 CE-280 CE
China was thrown into chaos -- reunifying the nation seemed impossible
warring clans, political murders, foreign invaders all kept China in turmoil (for the next 400 years)

ROMAN EMPIRE IS DIVIDED INTO HALVES

Roman Emperor Diocletian realized the empire was too large of a single ruler
he divided the empire into two parts -- 285 CE (Common Era -- after the year 1 CE)

he kept the wealthier eastern portion for himself
Eastern Roman Empire encompassed extremely wealthy provinces including
most of the Aegean Sea, Asia Minor (Anatolia), Egypt and parts of North Africa
western portion of the Roman Empire (Europe) was placed under military rule
Civil war broke out in both portions of the Roman Empire -- 306 CE
Eastern Roman Emperor Constantine reunited the old Roman Empire under his control
and became the first Christian Emperor of the empire -- 313 CE
he founded a new capital city, Constantinople (Byzantium) -- 324 CE
and moved from Rome to the eastern city
Constantine planned to give a portion of the Roman Empire to each of his three sons
however the great Roman emperor died -- 337 CE
Conflict again broke out in the Roman Empire and it was once again divided in two
Western Roman Empire and Eastern Roman Empire

ANCIENT CHINESE TEXTS DESCRIBE A VOYAGE TO THE EAST

Hwui Shan, a Buddhist missionary from Afghanistan, came to China as a young man about 450 CE
this was a period of great expansion for Buddhism as zealous monks journeyed to far off regions
to share their evangelical fervor
Hwui Shan and four fellow priests chose a much different route than other missionaries
they set sail to the *east* of China and crossed the Yellow Sea
to an island he called “Jesso” (Japan) -- 499 CE
Hwui Shan traveled along the Kurlie islands (between Japan and the Kamchatka Peninsula)
until he reached Kamchatka then cross the North Pacific Ocean to the Aleutian Islands
which he identified as the **“land of the marked bodies”**²
he commented on the three lines painted on men’s faces to designate rank
(this was later confirmed by Alexander Mackenzie [1789])
he was pleased by the friendliness of these people
in the **“Great Han Country”**³ (Alaska) Hwui Shan stopped to observe the customs of the natives
he went southward past the “Middle Kingdom” (British Columbia, Washington and Oregon)
to **“Fu-Sang”**⁴ (Baja California) which he described: **“[Fu-Sang] was situated twice ten
thousand li [Chinese distance] or more to the east of the Great Han Country. That land is also
situated at the east of the Middle Kingdom. That region has many Fu-Sang trees [mythical mulberry
tree of life], and it is from these trees that the country derives its name... Their first sprouts are like**

² Edward Paysan Vining, *An Inglorious Columbia*, P. 300.

³ Edward Paysan Vining, *An Inglorious Columbia*, P. 359.

⁴ Edward Paysan Vining, *An Inglorious Columbia*, P. 265.

those of the bamboo. The people of the country eat them and the fruit, which is [formed] like a pear but of a reddish colour. They spin thread from their bark, from which they make cloth....”⁵

eventually Hwui Shan landed in (today’s Mexico) where he stayed to learn the culture of its people
Hwui Shan had a habit of describing in minute detail things peculiar to a country or people
when Hui Shen returned to China he reported his findings to the Emperor
and official historians who included Hwui Shan’s report in their state records
he described finding tool manufacturing people living collectively in tribes and villages
(these are characteristics of what is now known as the “Bronze Age” for their use of metal)
Hwui Shan’s story abounds with proofs of accuracy as he faithfully cites many American customs

WAS THE DISCOVERY OF HWUI SHAN POSSIBLE?

From China to Mexico it is never more than 200 miles from land point to land point
this distance was easily covered by the most primitive craft of the time
Strong warm Japan Current follows the exact route from China to North America
that was described by Hwui Shan
Japanese Current is so strong that a disabled boat could not avoid arriving off North America
(modern *Ryo Yei Maru* -- eighty-five-foot, 100-ton fishing schooner from Miaski, Japan
left her home port a on fishing cruise [December 5, 1926]
almost a year later with only two bodies remaining of the crew of twelve
she was sighted off Cape Flattery by freighter *Margaret Dollar*
Ryo Yei Maru was towed to Port Townsend, Washington
ship’s log revealed engine trouble developed a few days after sailing
she was caught in a typhoon and her long drift began)
(Japan suffered a devastating earthquake and tsunami [large ocean wave]
that claimed nearly 16,000 lives, injured about 6,000 people and destroyed or damaged
countless buildings and property [March 11, 2011]
this tsunami also swept about five million tons of debris into the Pacific Ocean
while an estimated seventy percent of the debris sank near Japan’s shore,
the remainder was dispersed throughout the northern Pacific Ocean
some of it made its way to Canadian and U.S. shores -- including Washington State
mainly in the form of Styrofoam, plastic, treated wood and light bulbs
all carried across the Pacific Ocean by the Japanese Current)
Generally scholars accept Hwui Shan’s visit as historic fact
primary debate is now focused on the significance of his visit
in fact, Asians did not arrive regularly and this voyage had little impact on China
while his visit seems of little importance

⁵ Edward Paysan Vining, *An Inglorious Columbia*, P. 265-269.

Hwui Shan may have greatly influenced the natives of the Pacific Coast
changing their lives in innumerable ways

ASIAN INFLUENCES REACH NORTH AMERICAN AND CENTRAL AMERICA

Many travelers and students have noted the similarity of ancient Asians and early Americans regarding social customs, religious rites, arts and languages -- examples of these include:

- almost identical zodiac signs used by Chinese and Native Mexicans;
- buildings in both China and Central American that used roofing materials of concave (bowl-shaped) and convex (curved outward) tiles;
- preservation of human ashes in burial urns;
- some early American inscriptions have many features of a written language which may have been read in columns from top to bottom -- Asian fashion;
- coins, utensils and objects of adornment were found that clearly were Asiatic in origin

IRISH CATHOLIC MONKS WERE RENOWN TRAVELERS

Saint Brendan (Brendan the Voyager, Brendan the Navigator) was part of Ireland's glorious history when the island was first converted to Christianity

like others of his time he set out to convert non-believers to his Roman Catholic faith

he sailed from Ireland in a boat of stitched leather

For seven years he journeyed to find the Promised Land of the saints sometime between 512-530 CE fabulous stories of his voyages over perilous waters were popular in the Middle Ages over the years many interpretations of where he visited surfaced

various pre-Columbian (before Christopher Columbus [1492]) sea-charts

indicated Saint Brendan sailed everywhere from the southern part of Ireland

to the Faroes Island (off Denmark), the Portuguese islands of the Azores and Madeira

and to the Canary Islands (off West Africa)

(another theory of St. Brendan's travels arose that were supported by Viking discoveries [1000 CE]

who found a region south of the Chesapeake Bay called "Ireland mikla" (Greater Ireland)

and stone carvings discovered in West Virginia dated between 500 and [1000] CE

exhibit the grammar and vocabulary written in Old Irish using the Ogham alphabet

(Today Saint Brendan is the Patron Saint of sailors and travelers)

CHINA IS REUNITED UNDER THE TANG DYNASTY

Tang Dynasty of China, 618-[907] CE once again revived commerce along the Silk Road

dynasty records indicated the population of the empire to be about fifty million people

its capital city (today's Xi'an) was the time the most populous city in the world

With such a large population base, the dynasty was able to raise professional and conscripted armies

numbering in the hundreds of thousands

nomadic powers dominating Inner Asia were dealt overthrown

various kingdoms and states paid tribute to the Tang court

lucrative trade routes along the ancient Silk Road could be protected

Tang dynasty established internal stability and initiated economic development in China

favorable policies were carried out to stimulate and encourage trade between the east and west

leading to expanding markets and rapid development along the Silk Road

thousands of foreigners came and lived in numerous Chinese cities for trade and commerce

Canton (today's Guangzhou) was described as a bustling mercantile center

many large and impressive foreign ships from Borneo, Indonesia, Java and Persia visited

it was reported to deal in spices, pearls and jade piled as high as mountains

Chinese porcelain from the city was treasured along with ceramics, rice-wine and tea

China's Silk Road covered 7,000 miles and spanned China, Central Asia, Northern India,

the Arabian Peninsula and the Roman Empire

it connected the valley of the Yellow River with the Mediterranean Sea

passing through (the present-day countries of Iran, Iraq and Syria)

Towns and cities sprung up along the Silk Road

these became centers for national crafts, art schools, palaces and mausoleums

traders, missionaries and refugees traveled together bringing new religions, customs,

products like glass, porcelain, soap and gunpowder -- and most important, a different culture

these were the people who gather collections of dried plants, studied the stars

and recorded methods of curing diseases

Great Silk Road linked many countries and people by means of peaceful activities

such as trade, culture and spiritual exchanges

THREE EUROPEAN CITIES DEVELOP TRADE WITH THE EAST

Silk Road was a famous trade route that linked China with the early Greeks [400 BCE]

followed by the Roman Empire [100 BCE]

trade along the Silk Road was periodically stopped for varying lengths of time

by political turmoil along the route

Merchants from Pisa and Genoa on the Mediterranean Sea and Venice on the Adriatic Sea

re-opened trade with the East and prospered by selling eastern commodities carried along the route

goods traveled from the ancient city of Xi'an, China along the Silk Road across northern China

then along several possible routes to Kashgar, China

then along several routes to Mashhad (Iran) to Bagdad (Iraq) and on to Istanbul (Turkey)

Muslims gladly traded with them at Alexandria, Egypt or even in Aleppo and Damascus, Syria

however, consolidation of the Ottoman Empire [1299] blocked all east-west trade to Europe

there was no direct contact between Europe and Asia for the next century

ISLAMIC INFLUENCE ON EAST-WEST TRADE

Europe's Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) was conquered by Islamic leaders -- 711
(Muslim forces, known as the Moors, maintained control for more than 700 years
during that time, Muslims diligently preserved the wisdom of the Greeks
and enhanced learning with ideas from China, India and Africa
this information was passed on to Europe through Spain and Portugal)

WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE BECOMES THE "HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE"

Imperial control of the Western Roman Empire became weaker and weaker
at the same time the Catholic Pope at Rome became increasingly powerful
an ongoing struggle between the rising papacy and the retreating empire led the pope
to unilaterally declare Charlemagne the successor of the Western Emperors -- 800 CE
this gave rise to the "Holy Roman Empire" in Europe
Imperial control of the Eastern Roman Empire, now the Byzantine Empire,
remained independent from the Western Roman Empire for more than 1100 years

ONCE AGAIN THE SILK ROAD DECLINES

Trade along the Silk Road declined with the fall of the Chinese Tang Dynasty -- 907 CE
Chinese did maintain a silk-fur trade with the Russians north of the original Silk Route
overland trade became increasingly dangerous and trade within Europe became more popular

NORTH AMERICA IS DISCOVERED BY EUROPEANS

Leif Erickson (with various spellings) was the son of Norwegians Thjodhild and Erik the Red
who founded the first Norse colonies in Greenland where Leif was raised
Leif Erickson sailed to Norway where King Olaf converted him to Christianity around 1000 CE
there are at least two versions of events leading up to Erickson's great discovery:

- on his way back to Greenland, Erickson was blown off course
he landed on the North American continent which he named "Vinland;"
- he may have sought out Vinland based on stories of an earlier voyage by an Icelandic trader

Leif Erickson and his crew of thirty-five men spent the winter in Vinland
they built a small settlement (later called Leifsbudir [Leif's Booths] by visitors from Greenland)
Leif returned to Greenland in the spring with a cargo of grapes and timber
(Norwegian research done in the [early 1960s] identified a Norse settlement
located at the northern tip (of today's Newfoundland)
later archaeological evidence suggests that Vinland may have been the area

around (today's Gulf of St. Lawrence) while Leifsbudir was a boat repair center
this indicates the settlement of Vinland may have occupied more than one location
two other sites in Vinland are also mentioned in sagas written in the [1500s and 1600s]
Straumfjord in the north and Hop in the south)

THE CRUSADES WERE A SERIES OF BATTLES TO DRIVE MOSLEMS FROM THE HOLY LAND

The Holy Land referred to part of the Middle East that is sacred to three major religions:

- for Jews it is the ancient Land of Israel (today's Palestine)
holy because it is where Moses led the Israelites to the promised land;
- this region between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea is holy for Christians
because it is the place where Jesus Christ lived and taught;
- for Muslims (the followers of Muhammad) it is holy because it was conquered by the Arabs
and became the center of an empire that expanded across the Middle East from India on the east
across North Africa to the south and to Spain and Portugal on the west and north
many sites in the Holy Land have long been pilgrimage destinations for all three religions
Jerusalem is the holiest of cities for all three religions

Western Europe was dominated by the Roman Catholic Church

Catholic religion was transportable and proselytizing (converting others)

spreading Christianity became a reason for military conquests

because of the power and influence maintained by the Roman Catholic pope

criticism of the church was impossible (before the time of Christopher Columbus)

The Crusades were led by the Roman Catholic Church to remove Muslims from the Holy Land

military units of Roman Catholics from all over western Europe marched to the Holy Land

roads, unused since the days of Rome, were need to raise, transport and supply large armies

significant increases in traffic took place as local merchants increased their areas of operation

nine Crusades were led by the church between 1096 CE and [1272 CE]

(In a series of battles the Portuguese drove the Moors (Muslims) out of the country [1250]

Portugal became an independent nation)

FUEDALISM OF THE MIDDLE AGES RESTRICTS THE LIVES OF EUROPEANS

There were many motivations for people to remain exactly where they were located

family and friends, security and protection, knowledge of surroundings and fear of the unknown

dominated the instinct of curiosity and the spirit of adventure

Yet a few adventurers in opposition to common practice did set out to see the world

an individual, perhaps joined by a companion, might strike out along a main road or path

it was possible to live off the land if the traveler was cautious and adaptable

it was important for a stranger to appear nonthreatening and to show a friendly face

merchants or missionaries could practice their trade along the way to generate an income
but to be accepted by the locals they must be willing to learn and accept new ideas
and be tolerant of new ways of doing things
if necessary, the journey could be extended as long as necessary -- even for a decade or more
perils of travel overland varied by landscape, weather conditions and encounters with strangers
these made the journey challenging and suspenseful but rewarding

MAPS ADD TO THE FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN

Rather than providing a depiction of the shape of the land in a specific location or area
early European maps were the depictions of the unknown by an artist
tiny known areas were approximately portrayed
these were surrounded by vast areas of terra incognita (land unknown)
immense unknown areas were fancifully filled in by Christian artists to locate Biblical places
Jerusalem, the center of the earth, was placed in the center of the map
heaven, an ocean that surrounded the earth (much like air), was located at the top of the map
terrifying demons, blood-thirsty animals, voracious plants and frightful people
denominated the unknown regions -- instilling terror and stifling wanderlust
Garden of Eden moved from location to location as maps were progressively expanded

GENGHIS KHAN (RULER) UNITES THE MONGOL EMPIRE

Mongol Empire emerged from the unification of Mongol and Turkic tribes of Mongolia
under the leadership of Genghis Khan who united many of the nomadic tribes of northeast Asia
by the use of wholesale slaughter of the local inhabitants -- 1206
(Genghis Khan and his empire have a fearsome reputation in local histories to this day)
significant among these people were the Tatars -- native people of Volga River region of Russia
fierce horse riders, skilled archers and well schooled in the art of war
they were a fearsome enemy
Genghis Khan's leadership, charisma, innovations in law and organization
gave him the tools necessary to expand his empire exponentially
Under Genghis Khan the Mongol Empire grew to encompass Central Asia and Cathay (China)
east to the borders of the Korean Peninsula and west to parts of the Middle East
to the south the heartlands of India were drawn into the empire by the time of his death --1227
Death of Genghis Khan left his empire divided into four "khanates"
his descendants went on to capture the largest contiguous land empire in human history
stretching from Eastern Europe to the Sea of Japan, covering large parts of Siberia in the north
south into Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the Iranian plateau and the Middle East
Genghis Khan and his descendents Batu Khan, Mangu Khan, Kublai Khan and Hulagu

showed a combination of military genius, personal courage administrative versatility
and cultural tolerance unequalled in Europe

they conquered or created vassal states out of (modern-day China, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Syria,
Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Palestine, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan,
Belarus, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Belarus, Armenia, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary,
Bulgaria, Thailand, Myanmar, Japan, Java, Austria, Croatia, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon,
Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Kuwait, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Greece
and Macedonia)

swarms of Tatar horsemen ravaged Poland and Hungary --1241

spreading fear throughout the Christian Europe as Mongol warriors

were poised to swarm across Europe the great Khan Okkodai died forcing their return home

EMPIRE OF KUBLAI KHAN, THE GRANDSON OF GENGHIS KHAN RULES BY LAW

Mongol Empire was separated into four Khanates, each ruled by a separate Khan

Kublai Khan came to power through strength of arms

but his reign also featured advancements in political organization as well as the arts and sciences
he organized his bureaucracy based on the traditional Mongol system,

but also adopted many aspects of Chinese administrative practices

Kublai Khan employed large numbers of Chinese officials and advisors after all he had
only tens of thousands of Mongols with him and they had to rule millions of Chinese

Kublai continued to expand the Mongol Empire but in contrast to Genghis Khan and others

he stressed to his generals the importance and effectiveness of clemency toward the conquered

Kublai Khan was elected Khan of Mongolia and Cathay (China) at age forty-five --1260

when the Great Khan came to the Mongol throne his empire reached

from the Yellow River in China to the shores of the Danube in eastern Europe

and from Siberia to the Persian Gulf

eleven years later he created the Yuan Dynasty of Cathay uniting the four empires

his reign was one of solid expansion and lasting achievements

his people enjoyed economic prosperity and advanced the fields of science and literature
astronomy, mathematics and medicine reached a very high level

Chinese economy was mainly based on agriculture which developed superior techniques

paper currency backed by gold that was good throughout China

stimulated the development of commerce

trade with foreign countries was greatly encouraged

New artistic styles flourished as Kublai Khan sponsored a melding of Chinese and Tibetan Buddhism

he patronized astronomers and clock-makers

he hired a monk to create a written language for some of Western China's non-literate languages

DESPITE THE FEARS OF CHRISTIAN RULES THE MONGOLS BECAME POWERFUL ALLIES

Muslims Turks had blocked all trade along the ancient Silk Road

Mongol warriors successfully invaded and occupied the shores of the Caspian Sea
and overcame the Ottoman Caliph of Baghdad and Syria

Mongol empires extended twice the size of the Roman Empire

the route to East-West trade was suddenly re-opened to European travelers

Tartars, Mongol people from Central Asia were much maligned by European historians
as reckless destroyers and barbarians

these historians never saw a Tartar and knew nothing of their culture and progress⁶

Mongol leaders believed in free trade among nations

they provided the usual Mongol policy of low customs charges, lower tolls and taxes,
well-policed roads to protect against bandits and free passage for everyone

great Silk Road that had been heavily traveled for centuries was open to Europeans

Tatar conquest of Russia opened a northern road to Cathay

MARCO POLO TRAVELS TO THE INDIES

Marco Polo's father Noicolo and uncle Maffeo were Venice (Italy) merchants

who were involved in the Asian trade and had visited the court of Kublai Khan

Marco Polo was seventeen years old when he left Venice with his father and uncle

bypassing Constantinople on an overland trading trip to Cathay (China)

reaching the Silk Road they crossed high mountains and deserts

they fought fierce nomads who plundered caravans of trade goods

Marco Polo and his relatives reached the Court of Kublai Khan in Cathay (China) -- 1271

While in court Marco saw that the Great Khan's ambassadors were unable to provide information
regarding anything beyond the specific business they had been sent to conduct

Marco was sent on a mission of his own to represent the Great Khan

Marco took great pains to learn about all kinds of different matters in the countries he visited

to report back the details lacking in other reports but important to Kublai Khan

he was awed by the ruthlessness and hardiness of the Mongol soldiers

Kublai Khan was quite impressed by young Marco Polo

every year he became more reluctant to lose Marco's services

Marco remained in the employ of Khan for seventeen years traveling on missions to far off places

Marco Polo had knowledge of or had actually visited a greater number of different countries
than any other man in the world

(After an absence of twenty-four years all three Polos returned to Venice [winter 1295])

⁶ Daniel Boorstin, *The Discoverers*, P. 126

they brought with them hidden in their clothes a shower of rubies, diamonds and emeralds)

DEATH OF KUBLAI KHAN LEADS TO AN END TO EAST-WEST TRADE

During the glorious period of trade, diplomatic activities with foreign countries were quite frequent many foreign envoys, merchants and travelers such as Italian merchant Marco Polo traveled to Cathay

However, following the death of Kublai Khan --1294

East-West trade stopped -- all roads to the East were closed [1350]

MEDITERRANEAN SEA WAS THE CENTER OF EUROPEAN TRADE

Trade within Europe was conducted by Venice, Naples, Genoa and Pisa ships which sailed north to bring products from Northern Europe back to the Mediterranean trade centers

Venice early became important in the Mediterranean trade

aided by the stability of her government the city became the most prosperous

Florence became outstanding in banking and woolen manufacture

Naples, Milan and Venice ranked among the five most populous cities in Western Europe

GENOA AND VENICE BATTLE FOR CONTROL OF THE MEDITERRANEAN TRADE

Bitter rivalry between the two centers of trade erupted in fighting

a climatic sea battle off the Dalmatian coast left Genoa the victor -- September 6, 1298

one of the seven thousand Venetian prisoners was ship commander Marco Polo

who was brought back in chains to Genoa

MERCHANTS IN EUROPE CONDUCT TRADE WITH CHINA

City merchants of Genoa and Pisa on the Mediterranean Sea and Venice on the Adriatic Sea prospered by selling exotic Eastern commodities

goods traveled over the Silk Road from eastern China through central Asia

passed through Baghdad (Iraq) on the way to Istanbul (Turkey)

Muslims in Alexandria (Egypt), Aleppo and Damascus (Syria)

gladly traded with the merchants of Genoa, Pisa and Venice

but the Muslim Turks would not allow European goods to pass through Istanbul to the East

However, Egyptian routes in the hands of Turkish Muslims were very difficult for Europeans to use

goods passing by that route were so heavily taxed by the local sultans that Indian merchandise tripled in cost by the time it reached a merchant in Pisa, Genoa and Venice⁷

Turkish tribes conquered Constantinople (Istanbul), Turkey -- 1299

this was the beginning the Ottoman Empire -- one of the most powerful empires in the world

⁷ Daniel Boorstin, *The Discoverers*, P. 128

Ottoman Turks established a multinational, multilingual empire
controlling much of southeast Europe, Western Asia and North Africa
all trade between Europe and Asia was ended

MARCO POLO DICTATES THE STORY OF HIS VAST TRAVELS

Marco Polo became friendly with another prisoner, Rustichello, who authored tales of romance
such as his retelling of the tales of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table

Marco dictated his reminiscences of his travels throughout Cathay (China) to another prisoner -- 1300

Rustichello knew the makings of a good story and could not restrain himself from occasionally
embellishing Marco's exploits with colorful episodes of his own creation

Rustichello published the *Travels of Marco Polo* not in Latin -- the language of the clergy
but rather in French -- the language of literate

before long Marco Polo's was translated into most European languages

"never before or since has a single book brought so much authentic new information, or so
widened the vista for a continent."⁸

Marco Polo was nicknamed "Marco Millions" because of his supposed exaggerations

Polo reported "Ania" was an Asiatic province located somewhere in the interior of Cathay
he noted a water link connected Europe with Ania -- the "Strait of Anian"

SPAIN BECOMES INTERESTED IN TRADE WITH THE EAST

Marco Polo had stirred the imagination of adventures in Europe

he began a search for a water passage to the East which lasted for 500 years

(until Roald Amundsen sailed the *Gjoa* from the Atlantic to the Pacific [1907])

Islamic rulers of Spain were interested in recording and expanding knowledge of the world

Spanish geographers worked out new maps which confirmed details in Marco Polo's book -- 1375

these writing stirred the imagination of adventurers and sparked the search for great wealth

FUNDIMENTAL CHANGES TAKE PLACE IN EUROPE

People in Europe did not consider themselves part of a nation

they rarely left their village and knew little of the larger world

most were responsible to the local feudal nobles who provided only limited protection

A few monarchs began to consolidate their power

by allying themselves with the emerging commercial classes

they weaken the control local feudal nobles exerted over their subjects

Consolidation of wealth and power into the hands of a few led to the rise of city-states

whose increasing prosperity and power from international trade and commerce

⁸ Daniel Boorstin, *The Discoverers*, P. 138.

led to an increase in the size of territory to be conquered
new forms of social technology developed that provided for successful administration
bureaucracy grew in size and authority, double-entry bookkeeping, mechanical printing
all allowed merchants and rulers to manage far-flung empires
since the invention of gunpowder by the Chinese [1232] military technology advanced
as European rulers began to commission improved guns and larger cannons
an ability to mount cannons on ships developed
arms races also extended to refinements in archery and siege tactics
amassing wealth and dominating other people became positively valued attributes
they provided the key means of winning esteem on earth -- and salvation in heaven
Europe had enjoyed recent success in exploiting various newly-discovered islands and societies
gradually spreading more deadly forms of smallpox and bubonic plague across Europe
and devastatingly carrying diseases to places where immunity did not exist

EUROPEAN TRADE MERCHANTS HAVE FIRM CONTROL OF EAST-WEST TRADE

City-states of the Italian Peninsula were the beginning and end of the trade routes to the East
trade goods were very expensive to purchase and to transport

Italian and Constantinople trade merchants justified their high prices

by pointing out the dangers involved in conducting trade:

- traders had to carry goods half way around the world;
- caravans had to crawl through high mountain passes infested with bandits;
- local lords taxed the travelers and their cargo;
- bridges and ferries charged tolls;
- goods passed through the hands of many middlemen -- each earned a profit

Clearly, a new preferably all water route, was needed to transport increased amounts of trade goods

PORTUGUESE LEADERS BEGIN TO SEEK A NEW TRADE ROUTE TO THE EAST

Prince Henry (The Navigator) was the third son of Portuguese King John

like his brothers Henry desired fame and glory

to fulfill that end he oversaw construction of a fleet of ships to be used in a crusade
against the infidels (non-Christians) then occupying Gibraltar, Portugal

while his fleet was en route to establish a glorious reputation for Henry

his father, King John, rejected his plan

Prince Henry returned home to sulk -- but rather return and brood in the court in Lisbon

he went to the very tip of southern Portugal

there he created a new path to fame and glory

twenty-six-year-old Prince Henry established his headquarters at Sagres, Portugal

and remained for forty years until his death [1460]
Portugal's location faced away from the centers of European civilization
rather it looked westward toward the vast unknown ocean
and southward toward the African continent of which Europeans were equally ignorant
Prince Henry sought to explore into the unknown around Africa
hopefully, as rumors persisted, India could be reached by this route
however, the idea was pure speculation based on rumors, vague ideas and suggestions
unknown lands would have to be skirted and used to supply food and water along the route
Christian geographers depicted scenes of mortal danger in *terra incognita* (land unknown)
what would be required was an original, progressive, systematic national program

PRINCE HENRY OF PORTUGAL BECOMES HENRY THE NAVIGATOR

Henry knew the only way to explore the unknown was to clearly mark its receding boundaries
he made Sagres a center for cartography, navigation and shipbuilding
he initiated and organized expeditions on the edge of the unknown world
although he never ventured out himself
Henry organized something like a school for mariners at Sagres, Portugal
sea captains, pilots, mariners and travelers from all over Europe arrived
bringing new information, observations and facts
scholars and geographers, aware of ancient discoveries, arrived to record old and new information
Henry gathered together old and new books, charts and maps
map-makers, compass-makers and other instrument-makers arrived to advance navigation
mariners' compasses were well known at this time
skilled craftsmen developed a simpler cross-staff to measure latitude,
to measure the angle of the stars for the same purpose the quadrant was invented,
mathematical tables were developed to accurately determine latitude anywhere on earth
shipbuilders, carpenters and other craftsmen improved ship construction
that resulted in an advanced sailing ship
sail-makers revived old concepts and developed new skills and techniques
that revolutionized the skill of sailing
tradesmen arrived to plan and prepare expeditions searching ever farther into the unknown
Henry the Navigator at first encouraged, and then required, the leaders of his expeditions
to keep accurate logbooks and charts to be brought back to Sagres
so cartographers could accurately record the information that had been generated
Portugal's standard ship, the familiar square-rigged *BarcaI*, was suited to sailing with the wind
these large ships worked well in the confines of the Mediterranean Sea
where larger cargoes assured greater profit -- maneuverability was not important

however, ships designed for discovery did not need to be large
its important cargo was information
which could be carried on a map or in a logbook or journal or even in a man's mind
discovery ships had to be maneuverable and they had to be able to sail back home
Henry's craftsmen developed the Portuguese "caravel" -- small highly maneuverable sailing ships
they were agile and easy to navigate with a shallow keel (bottom)
caravels could sail upriver and in shallow coastal waters
caravels displaced about fifty tons and were seventy feet long with a twenty-five-foot beam
they were large enough to hold supplies for a small crew of about twenty
who usually slept on the deck but in bad weather went below
mariners who sailed out with the wind had to return against the wind
square-rigged sails were pushed by the wind
and pulled into the vacuum generated as the wind blew across the curved sails
ancient Roman ships had used lateen-rigged sails
rather than running across the ship like square-rigged sails
lateen-rigged sails ran the length of the ship and were triangular shaped
lateen-rigged sails could be turned into the wind
caravels carried two or three lateen sails and were ideal for exploration
limited capacity for cargo and crew were their main drawbacks
Caravels became the explorers' standard ship
Port of Lagos, Portugal near Sagres became a shipbuilding center
Year after year Prince Henry sent out expeditions to explore
using its newly-developed caravels, Portugal discovered the Madeira Islands and the Azores
located west and south of Portugal -- these were claimed by Portugal by "right of discovery"
leap-frogging exploration of the West coast of Africa was begun using caravels
African pilots helped Prince Henry's captains explore their way down the coast
African slave trade was first begun when Portuguese explorers
sold two hundred captives in Lagos (Nigeria) -- 1444
profits from the slave trade changed the public's attitude toward Prince Henry the Navigator
up until then he had cost the kingdom a considerable amount of money
with very little return on the investment
however, profits from the slave trade turned public criticism into praise
Portuguese sailors heard that African traders were sailing far across the Atlantic Ocean -- 1450
but the primary goal for Prince Henry the Navigator's explorers was India

CONSTANTINOPLE FALLS TO THE TURKS

Constantine was the capital city of the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire

that had been founded by the Roman Empire Constantine the Great [330 CE]
this was the home of the Eastern Orthodox Catholic Church
as opposed to the Roman Catholic Church founded in Rome (Italy)
Constantinople fell to European soldiers during the Fourth Crusade [1204]
and was captured by Muslims led by Sultan Mehmen II's Ottoman Turks -- 1453
Byzantine Empire was replaced by the Ottoman Empire
(Ottoman Empire reached its peak covering parts of Asia, Europe and Africa [1590]
and reigned until the end of World War I [1917] when the empire was broken up)

SPAIN OVERTHROWS THE ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT

Muslims had ruled large parts of the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) for more than 700 years
Seventeen-year-old King Ferdinand II of Aragon married eighteen-year-old Isabella of Castile
they began their cooperative reign uniting two important regions of Spain --1469
They were propelled by their Roman Catholic faith to pursue an expensive, bloody, ten-year war
to drive out the Moors (Muslims) and unite their land under Christian leadership
Ferdinand and Isabella incorporated a number of independent Spanish realms into their kingdom

JOHN II BECOMES KING OF PORTUGAL

Portuguese expeditions organized by Prince Henry the Navigator, the younger brother of John II,
had crawled down the West African coast in search of riches -- notably gold
while this had greatly extended Portuguese maritime knowledge,
there was little profit to show for the effort
Upon becoming king of Portugal, John II needed to build up the royal treasury -- 1481
he saw expanding commerce as the key
he was eager to break into the highly profitable Italian spice trade between Europe and Asia
King John II wanted to find a new all-water trade route to Asia
by sailing around the African continent

PORTUGAL LAUNCHES THE "AGE OF DISCOVERY"

Portuguese King John II sent Captain Bartholomew Dias to explore the coast of West Africa
in search of a way to reach the Indian Ocean -- previously only possible by traveling overland
Dias sailed from Lisbon, Portugal with three ships -- August 1487
leaving his supply ship behind, he sailed two ships off the coast of South Africa
Dias reached the southern tip of Africa which was named the "Cape of Hood Hope"
he continued east as far as the Eastern Cape province of South Africa before turning back
(After fifteen months at sea and a journey of nearly 16,000 miles the returning triumphant mariners
were met by welcoming crowds in Lisbon, Portugal [December 1488])

one was Christopher Columbus who had been trying to convince King John II of his idea to reach the East by sailing West -- Dias' good news was bad news for Columbus)

SPAIN BEGINS THE INQUISITION TO DRIVE OUT SPANISH JEWS

Catholic Pope Sixtus IV allowed Ferdinand and Isabella to introduce the Spanish Inquisition a powerful and brutal force to confront what was seen as a danger to the church from Jews masquerading as Christians

All Jews who refused to leave Spain or to convert to Christianity would be driven from Spain or would face torture and death by the Spanish Inquisition --1488

SPAIN EXPANDS ITS INQUISITION

Ferdinand and Isabella drove the last of the Moors (Muslims) from Granada, Spain -- 1492 Spanish Muslims were given a similar order as had been given the Spanish Jews leave Spain, convert to Christianity or face the Inquisition

Spain went from being one of the most tolerant countries in Europe to one of the most intolerant Catholic Inquisition tortured and killed Jew and Muslims alike in Spain, Portugal, (and expanded to the Spanish Netherlands and Latin America until it is suppressed in Portugal [1820] and [1834] in Spain)

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS PREPARES AN EXPEDITION OF DISCOVERY FOR SPAIN

Italian navigator Christopher Columbus traveled extensively through Europe he may have learned of the Viking's discoveries in the "New World" he claimed to have visited Iceland [1477]

Having failed to gain support for his plan to reach China by sailing West across the Atlantic Ocean from either Italy (already conducting trade with Cathay [China])

or Portugal (which was then searching for a route to China of its own around Africa)

Italian navigator Christopher Columbus presented his plan to Spain's Queen Isabella she referred the idea to a committee for their consideration

Spanish advisors determined that Columbus grossly underestimated the distance to Asia they advised their Royal Highnesses to reject the impractical plan

however, to keep Columbus from taking his ideas elsewhere, the explorer was given an annual allowance and was provided a letter ordering all cities and towns under Ferdinand and Isabella to provide him food and lodging at no cost

After lobbying the Spanish Royal court for two years Queen Isabella remained opposed

Columbus left the court in despair -- however, King Ferdinand intervened

Columbus' voyage of discovery was saved

About half of the funding for the expedition came from private investors organized by Columbus

Spain was financially bankrupt after fighting the Moors (Muslims) for ten years
royal treasurer was forced to shift funds among royal accounts to pay for the expedition
Christopher Columbus was made “Admiral of the Ocean” and was to receive a part of all profits

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS EXPLORES FOR SPAIN

Forty-one-year-old Columbus departed on his first trip to the “New World” from Palos, Spain
in search of India (China, Cipangu [Japan] and the islands of the East Indies) -- August 3, 1492
he led three caravels, the flag ship *Santa Maria* accompanied by the *Nina* and the *Pinta*
As instructed by Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella,
this was no mere trade or even exploration trip, but was rather a conquest and exploitation effort
converting any newly discovered natives to Christianity was used as the rationale
Columbus stopped in the Canary Islands off the coast of West Africa for repairs
before continuing to sail West -- September 6
his journal noted they enjoyed lovely sailing
seas were so calm the sailors were able to converse from ship to ship
they experienced high seas only on the last day when they knew land was near
Columbus reached the New World when he discovered and named San Salvador
(a small island in today’s Bahamas) -- October 12, 1492
he was certain this was on an outlying island of Cipango (Japan)
Arawak natives of the island soon appeared and brought gifts for Columbus and his crew
some of the ornaments worn by the natives were made of gold
using sign language, these people told Columbus there were many more islands
to the north and south where they found gold -- Columbus explored five nearby islands
since Columbus thought he was in the East Indies, he misnamed the people “Indians”
Columbus sailed on to the island of Cuba where he arrived -- October 28
thinking he had found China, he sent two men to investigate but they failed to find the emperor
Leaving Cuba, Columbus made another landfall -- December 5
natives called the island Haiti, but Columbus renamed it La Espanola (today’s Hispaniola)
(today’s the island of Hispaniola contains the nations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic)
Santa Maria ran aground and had to be abandoned -- December 25, 1492
Columbus himself took over as captain of the *Nina*
Columbus arranged to leave thirty-nine of his men behind on La Espanola (Hispaniola)
in a small settlement he named La Navidad (in today’s Haiti) which means Christmas in Spanish
Christopher Columbus began his return voyage to Spain -- January 16, 1493
Columbus kidnapped between ten to twenty-five Indians to be taken to Spain
this is the first slave trading exploitation between the Old and New Worlds
Columbus reached Palos, Spain -- March 15, 1493

to prove his success he displayed the seven or eight natives who survived the trip
he revealed to his crew that he kept two ship's logs in an effort to keep secret
his route to the East Indies (which he never reached)
as his reward from Spanish King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella
Columbus was promoted to "Admiral of the Ocean Sea"
Columbus had launched the "Age of Discovery"

When Columbus reached the Western Hemisphere perhaps twenty million or more people lived there
nations such as the Arawaks of the newly discovered West Indies stunned Europeans
they had no monarchs or hierarchy

Fascination with America led to European self-consciousness and religious confusion
some Europeans glorified Indian nations as examples of simpler, better societies
from which European civilization had devolved
others maligned Indian societies as primitive and underdeveloped

CATHOLIC CHURCH WAS COFOUNDED BY THE INFORMATION BROUGHT BY COLUMBUS

Christopher Columbus had, in fact, discovered a whole New World

it was noted in the Bible that all animals lived in the Garden of Eden

later two of each species entered Noah's arc

where did all of these animals not mentioned in the Bible come from?

even more confusing, who were these new people not mentioned in the Bible?

unlike Muslims they had not rejected Christianity -- they had never encountered it

Also, there was the issue of two Catholic nations, Portugal and Spain, competing over the New World

Spanish rulers Ferdinand and Isabella feared claims and expansion by Portugal

would limit Spain's access to Columbus' discovery and strengthen Portugal's economy

they insisted the pope grant them exclusive claim to all lands South and West toward India

Pope Alexander VI issued the *Inter caetera* papal bull (charter) dividing the western hemisphere
into Portuguese and Spanish zones

"Line of Demarcation" was drawn 100 Leagues West of Portugal's Cape Verde islands
off the West coast of Africa -- May 4, 1493

this recognized previous Portuguese claims to all lands east of the line including Africa

Spain was entitled to all lands West of the Line of Demarcation

almost entirely all of the New World fell under Spanish influence

thus France, the Netherlands and England were left without a sea route to Asia

unless their ships defied the papal ban and explored anyway

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS' SECOND VOYAGE TO THE NEW WORLD

Spain immediately appreciated the value Columbus' discoveries

Ferdinand and Isabella outfitted him for a second expedition to explore and colonize
with seventeen caravels, 1,200-1,500 men, pigs, horses, cattle, attack dogs and their diseases
cannons, crossbows, guns and cavalry

Columbus' orders were to expand the Hispaniola settlement, convert the natives to Christianity,
establish a trading post and continue his explorations in search of China or Japan

Columbus sailed from the Canary Island -- October 13, 1493

his journey led to the discovery of the island of Dominica, the Leeward Islands,
Lesser Antilles chain and Puerto Rico south of Cuba
giving Spain the claim of discovery over each

islands discovered by Columbus became known as the West Indies

When Christopher Columbus returned to his colony of La Navidad on the island of Hispaniola
he discovered all of his men had been killed by angry natives

Columbus attacked a local tribe and took many of the people as slaves

Columbus had been appointed governor and Viceroy of the new lands by the Spanish crown

his second voyage marked the start of the colonization of the New World

over the next year and a half did his best to establish a government but failed

he kept most of what little wealth was found for himself -- supplies began to run out

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS RETURNS TO SPAIN WITH LITTLE TO SHOW FOR HIS EFFORTS

Columbus returned to Spain to ask for more resources to keep his struggling colony alive

Columbus, who had promised gold and trade routes, did not want to return to Spain empty-handed
instead, on his second expedition he brought back many native slaves with him

Appalled, Queen Isabella decreed that New World natives were subjects of the Spanish crown

therefore they could not be enslaved -- most were freed and ordered returned to the New World

TREATY OF TORDESILLAS IS SIGNED BY SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

Pope Alexander VI's *Inter caetera* papal bull (Line of Demarcation)

had divided an unknown New World between two Catholic nations -- 1493

Portuguese King John II was not pleased with that arrangement

he felt his sailors were forced to sail too close to the coast of Western Africa

African traders visiting (today's Brazil) may have influenced King John II

to insist on moving pope's Line of Demarcation to the west

Spanish and Portuguese ambassadors met at Tordesillas in northwest Spain to resolve the dispute

they accepted the principle of dividing the New World as established by Pope Alexander VI

they agreed to move the old line 100 leagues west of the Cape Verde islands -- June 7, 1494

(this new line has a profound significance -- it sliced South America into two parts

the Eastern part came under Portuguese control and the Western portion fell to the Spanish)

Treaty of Tordesillas effectively countered Pope Alexander VI's *Inter caetera* papal bull even though the new treaty was negotiated without consulting the Pope, some sources called the resulting line the Papal Line of Demarcation

ENGLAND REACHES THE NEW WORLD

John Cabot, an Italian navigator and explorer, was financed by Italian merchants in London and commissioned by England's King Henry VII to sail on a voyage of discovery he believed that the route to Asia would be shorter from northern Europe than Columbus' route On Cabot's first effort he sailed the *Matthew*, a fast and able ship of fifty tons (tonnage was a measure of volume and not weight) with a crew of eighteen men from Bristol, England -- summer 1496 fifty days into the voyage, Cabot landed on the east coast of North America although the precise location of this landing is subject to controversy he is thought to be the person who gave *Newfoundland*, an island in Canada, its name wherever Cabot landed, his expedition became the first Europeans to set foot in North America since the Vikings 500 years earlier Cabot only reported landing once during his expedition and he did not advance inland any distance he made no contact with any native people but did find the remains of a fire, a human trail, nets and a wooden tool Cabot's crew appeared to have remained on land only long enough to take on fresh water and to raise the Venetian and Papal banners and claim the land for the King of England

PORTUGAL FINDS AN ALL-WATER TRADE ROUTE TO INDIA

Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama under a commission from King John II sailed a fleet of four ships with a crew of 170 men from Lisbon, Portugal -- July 8, 1497 da Gama commanded the *Sao Gabriel* accompanied by its sister ship the *Sao Rafael*, the slightly smaller caravel *Berrio* and an unnamed storage ship da Gama followed the route pioneered by earlier Portuguese explorers along the coast of Africa Rounding the Cape of Good Hope, he sailed up the east coast of Africa to Malindi (just north of Mombasa in today's Kenya, Africa) there he contracted the services of a pilot whose knowledge of the monsoon winds allowed him to bring the expedition east to Calicut located on the southwest coast of India Vasco da Gama's expedition was successful beyond all reasonable expectation he carried back two ship loads of spices to Lisbon, Portugal [August 1499] these were sold at an enormous profit to the crown for sixty times the cost of the expedition still, the expedition had exacted a large cost -- one ship and over half his men had been lost

JOHN CABOT'S SECOND ENGLISH EXPEDITION ENDS IN MYSTERY

John Cabot's second expedition to Newfoundland was far less successful than his first voyage. Cabot departed from Bristol, England with five ships and a crew of 300 men -- May 1498. His ships carried ample provisions and small samplings of cloth, lace and other "trifles" which suggested he was to begin trade with the native people. En route, one ship became disabled and sailed to Ireland as the other four ships continued on. From this point there is only speculation as to the fate of the voyage and John Cabot.

COLUMBUS' THIRD VOYAGE ENDS IN HIS ARREST

Christopher Columbus' third expedition to the New World sailed from Spain -- May 30, 1498. This was an expedition composed of six vessels to bring supplies to his colony of La Navidad on the island of Hispaniola and to further explore to the south. Columbus founded his second colony, Santo Domingo (in today's Haiti). This became the oldest European city in the Americas. Columbus left his brother Don Bartolome to act as governor of the New World. Governmental control eventually broke down and was replaced. Spanish soldiers were granted a tract of land or an entire village with its inhabitants. This system was not called slavery -- so there was no reaction to it in Europe. Failure of Christopher Columbus and his two brothers as political leaders of the New World colony along with the failure to produce gold and silver for Spain's Royal Majesties resulted in all three being clapped in irons and sent back to Spain as prisoners [October 1500].

AMERIGO VESPUCCI OBSERVES THE EAST COAST OF SOUTH AMERICA

Amerigo Vespucci was a merchant in Venice, Italy. At the invitation of King Manuel of Portugal, Vespucci participated as observer in several voyages that explored the east coast of South America between 1499 and [1502], striking the northeast coast at what is now (today's Guyana). Vespucci sailed southward, discovering the mouth of the (Amazon River). Portuguese sailors reached 6° South before returning north. Vespucci sighted (today's Trinidad) and the (Orinoco River). Vespucci stopped at the Spanish colony of Santo Domingo before returning to Portugal.

SPANISH COLONISTS DISCOVER GOLD ON THE ISLAND OF HISPANIOLA

Spanish governors of the colony of Santo Domingo made a major gold strike -- 1499. Hundreds of natives were forced to mine for gold -- punishment was used to make an example even for minor offenses. Spanish soldiers cut off the ears or noses of the natives.

All Indians were forced to promise to give a tribute to the Catholic Sovereigns in Spain every three months each person age fourteen and older paid a specified amount when the tribute was paid, the native received a brass or copper token to wear if no token could be displayed, hands were cut off -- Indians died of starvation Forcing Indians to work in mines caused disrupted the native culture and the ecosystem an enormous decrease in the native population took place malnutrition became widespread as gardens and fields were ignored rabbits and livestock brought in by the Spanish caused further devastation European diseases carried by the sailors and animals became wide-spread