

What were the effects of the transatlantic voyages on the Americas, Africa and Europe?

Use the timeline to create a graphic organizer that examines the impact of the period from 1491-1607 on both the Old World and the New World. Plus, you should list dates, events, and historical processes.

The New World

What was happening prior to 1491 that would influence the course of events once the European explorers made their way into the New World?

(Pre) 1491— While the two most powerful Native American empires— the Aztec and the Inca were in a state of decline, most of the Native American groups living in North America were settled in farming villages in the Southwest, the Mississippi River Valley, the Pacific Northwest and in the Eastern Woodlands. Very few Native American groups except for a handful of scattered hunter-gatherers lived on the Great Plains.

1500—

1520—

1540—

1560—

1580—

1600—

1607—

The Old World

What was happening prior to 1491 that would influence the European explorers to make their way into the New World?

(Pre) 1491— Prior to the voyages of Columbus, Europeans had fought against the Muslims of North Africa and the Middle East, who controlled most of the trade routes from India and China, during and after the Crusades. The Europeans had rebounded their population after the bubonic plague or Black Death of the mid-14th century, survived the conflicts such as The Hundred Years' War and new nations such as England had arisen during the period. The Renaissance begins and with the development of the printing press— a new and more educated population begins to emerge. The Portuguese have already started an early form of plantation-based slavery on islands off the coast of West Africa. Seeking new routes of trade and economic development, the nations of Europe— Spain and Portugal (both of whom have expelled the Muslims from their kingdoms) begin to search for new pathways for economic expansion.

1500— After the voyages of Columbus, Europeans begin to understand that they have in fact discovered two new continents, but not a route to the East. With the Portuguese having already discovered a route to India, the Spanish began to explore the New World.

1520— While the expedition of Hernando Cortes is conquering the Aztec Empire, Europe is undergoing the Protestant Reformation, as a German monk and theologian Martin Luther and his supporters breakaway from the teachings of the Catholic Church. It leads to continental warfare.

1540— With the wars of religion raging on the continent— new groups of Protestants, such as those under John Calvin also breakaway from the Catholic Church. England under Henry VIII also breaks away from the Catholic Church. Spain is at war constantly during this period to defend the Catholic faith. A great debate concerning the humanity of the Native Americans occurs as the religious wars fade.

1560— Spain discovers silver in Mexico, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador and begins to flood the global economy with their new currency. A global depression, perhaps the first of its kind occurs and the Spanish economy begins to crumble. The Dutch provinces breakaway from Spain and become The Netherlands. The Spanish do succeed in stopping an Ottoman (Muslim) invasion in 1571, but it is a costly victory.

1580— In an ill-fated attempt to invade England— to force it back into Catholicism and to punish it for its incursions into the New World, the Spanish fleet is defeated (largely by the weather) during the Battle of the Armada in 1588.

1600— With its economy in shambles, its territorial holdings too vast for it to continue to manage, Spain begins to fade as a global power. England becomes the new dominant force in the European world.

1607— After experiencing decades of peace and prosperity under the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the English began the process of establishing its first colonies in the new world as a new monarch James I took the throne. Jamestown became the first successful English settlement in the New World.

Other important connections include the 1680 Pueblo Revolt and its impact. Plus, the development of the mission system in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. The development of a hybrid culture which integrated people of European, African and Native American descent is also incredibly important to note.

What other historical processes occurred during this time period?

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