



# 1450

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A critical moment in an era of global change that ushered in the Modern Age.



# About



- Constantinople falls to the Ottoman Turks forcing Europeans to seek trade routes to the West.
  - Native American tribal empires begin a long period of decline and a mini-Ice Age changes tribal relationships.
  - In Africa, the slave trade has started in its infancy as the Portuguese begin using islands off of the coast of West Africa to grow cash crops.
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# Setting

## Where did it happen?

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Tribal warfare and the trade with Europeans allowed the powerful and wealthy Islamic kingdoms of West Africa to begin capturing prisoners of war for the developing slave trade.

Portuguese ships allowed for trade to be more expansive with the kingdoms of West Africa, but it also influenced them to sail along the coast of Africa to try to reach India.

## How did it happen?

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Europeans acquired and improved upon a new technology, invented by the Chinese—the gun, which allowed them to slowly repel the Muslim invaders and to become more powerful militarily.

In the Holy Roman Empire (modern Germany) Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press—ushering in a new era in the history of mankind, as information and knowledge can now be rapidly shared.

# Setting the Stage

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In 1451, Christopher Columbus was born in the port city of Genoa (in modern Italy).

By 1453, the Hundred Years' War has come to an end and both England and France started their development as modern nation-states.

By 1492, Spain has finally pushed the Muslims out of Granada— and now is ready to challenge Portugal for its position as a hub of commercial activity.

By the 1450s, Europe has recovered from the Black Death, but the cultural implications of the pandemic led to a splintering across Europe between the Church as an institution and the growing nation-states in the North and the West.

By 1491, the Portuguese have started making the journey along the west coast Africa to try to find a route to the East. It is Columbus that first sets the stage for a journey into the West and a New World.