

Period 4: Global Interactions, c. 1450 to c. 1750

Key Concept 4.1 Globalizing Networks of Communication and Exchange

The interconnection of the Eastern and Western Hemispheres made possible by transoceanic voyaging marked a key transformation of this period. Technological innovations helped to make transoceanic connections possible. Changing patterns of long-distance trade included the global circulation of some commodities and the formation of new regional markets and financial centers. Increased transregional and global trade networks facilitated the spread of religion and other elements of culture as well as the migration of large numbers of people. Germs carried to the Americas ravaged the indigenous peoples, while the global exchange of crops and animals altered agriculture, diets and populations around the planet.

I. In the context of the new global circulation of goods, there was an intensification of all existing regional trade networks that brought prosperity and economic disruption to the merchants and governments in the trading regions of the Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, Sahara, and overland Eurasia.

II. European technological developments in cartography and navigation built on previous knowledge developed in the classical, Islamic and Asian worlds, and included the production of new tools, (such as astrolabe or revised maps) innovations in ship designs (such as caravels) and an improved understanding of global wind and currents patterns, all of which made transoceanic travel and trade possible.

III. Remarkable new transoceanic maritime reconnaissance occurred in this period.

- A. Official Chinese maritime activity expanded into the Indian Ocean region with the naval voyages led by Ming Admiral Zheng He which enhanced Chinese prestige.
- B. Portuguese development of a school for navigation led to increased travel to and trade with West Africa and resulted in the construction of a global trading-post empire.
- C. Spanish sponsorship of the first Columbian and subsequent voyages across the Atlantic and Pacific dramatically increased European interest in transoceanic travel and trade.
- D. Northern Atlantic crossings for fishing and settlements continued and spurred European searches for multiple routes to Asia.

Describe the degree of global 'interconnection' after 1500 CE compared to before 1500.

What were the overall effects of this change in global interconnectedness?

How did the global trade network after 1500 CE affect the pre-existing regional trade networks? (Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, trans-Saharan, Silk Routes)

What technical developments made transoceanic European travel & trade possible?

Where did those developments originate?

What were the major notable transoceanic voyages between 1450-1750 CE?

Where did Zheng He and the Chinese Treasure Fleets travel?

Why did Portugal begin longer maritime voyages ca. 1430 CE?

What effect did Columbus' travels have on Europeans?

What originally motivated Europeans to travel across the northern Atlantic?

IV. The new global circulation of goods was facilitated by royal chartered European monopoly companies who took silver from Spanish colonies in the Americas to purchase Asian goods for the Atlantic markets, but regional markets continued to flourish in Afro-Eurasia using established commercial practices and new transoceanic shipping services developed by European merchants.

- A. European merchants' role in Asian trade was characterized mostly by transporting goods from one Asian country to another market in Asia or the Indian Ocean region.
- B. Commercialization and the creation of a global economy were intimately connected to new global circulation of silver from the Americas.
- C. Influenced by mercantilism, joint-stock companies were new methods used by European rulers to control their domestic and colonial economies and by European merchants to compete against each other in global trade.
- D. The Atlantic system involved the movement of goods, wealth, and free and unfree laborers, and the mixing of African, American and European cultures and peoples.

V. The new connections between the Eastern and Western hemispheres resulted in the Columbian Exchange.

- A. European colonization of the Americas led to the spread of diseases including smallpox, measles and influenza that were endemic in the Eastern Hemisphere among Amerindian populations and the unintentional transfer of vermin, including mosquitoes or rats.
- B. American foods (such as potatoes, maize or manioc) became staple crops in various parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa. Cash crops (such as sugar or tobacco) were grown primarily on plantations with coerced labor and were exported mostly to Europe and the Middle East in this period.
- C. Afro-Eurasian fruit trees, grains, sugar, and domesticated animals (such as horses, pigs or cattle) were brought by Europeans to the Americas while other foods (such as okra or rice) were brought by African slaves.
- D. Populations in Afro-Eurasia benefitted nutritionally from the increased diversity of American food crops.
- E. European colonization and introduction of European agriculture and settlements practices in the Americas often affected the physical environment through deforestation and soil depletion.

What new financial and monetary means made new scale(s) of trade possible?

What previously established scale(s) of trade continued?

Describe European merchants overall trade role c. 1450-1750.

What role did silver play in facilitating a truly global scale of trade?

What new mercantilist financial means developed to facilitate global trade?

What were the economic and social effects of the Atlantic trading system?

What were the unintentional biological effects of the Columbian Exchange?

What foods were transferred to new geographic regions as part of the Columbian Exchange, and what labor systems made this transfer possible?

What plants/animals were transferred across the Atlantic as part of the Columbian Exchange?

What effects did American food crops have on the diet of Afro-Eurasians?

How did settlers' action affect the Americas environmentally?

VI. The increase in interactions between newly connected hemispheres and intensification of connections within hemispheres expanded the spread and reform of existing religions and created syncretic belief systems and practices.

- A. Muslims developed Sunni, Shi'a, and Sufi traditions. As Islam spread to new settings in Asia and Africa, believers adapted it to local cultural practices.
- B. The practice of Christianity continued to spread throughout the world and was increasingly diversified by the process of diffusion and the Reformation.
- C. Buddhism spread within Asia.
- D. Syncretic forms of religion (such as vodun in the Caribbean, the cults of saints in Latin America, or Sikhism in South Asia) developed.

VII. As merchants' profits increased and governments collected more taxes, funding for the visual and performing arts, even for popular audiences, increased.

- A. Innovations in visual and performing arts were seen all over the world. (such as Renaissance art in Europe, miniature paintings in the Middle East and South Asia, woodblock prints in Japan or post-Conquest codices in Mesoamerica)
- B. Literacy expanded accompanied by the proliferation of popular authors, literary forms and works of literature in Afro-Eurasia. (such as Shakespeare, Cervantes, *Sundiata*, *Journey to the West* or kabuki)

How did the Columbian Exchange affect the spread of religions?

Where did the "universal" religions of Buddhism, Christianity & Islam spread?

How did the practice of religions develop in this era?

How did the arts fare during this period?

How did public literacy as well as literary and artistic forms of expression develop during this period?

Key Concept 4.2 New Forms of Social Organization and Modes of Production

While the world's productive systems continued to be heavily centered on agricultural production throughout this period, major changes occurred in agricultural labor, the systems and location of manufacturing, gender and social structures, and environmental processes. A surge in agricultural productivity resulted from new methods in crop and field rotation and the introduction of new crops. Economic growth also depended on new forms of manufacturing and new commercial patterns, especially in long-distance trade. Political and economic centers within regions shifted, and merchants' social status tended to rise in various states. Demographic growth—even in areas such as the Americas, where disease had ravaged the population—was restored by the eighteenth century and surged in many regions, especially with the introduction of American food crops throughout the Eastern Hemisphere. The Columbian Exchange led to new ways of humans interacting with their environments. New forms of coerced and semi-coerced labor emerged in Europe, Africa and the Americas and affected ethnic and racial classifications and gender roles.

How did agriculture's role change between 1450-1750?

What pre-requisite conditions made these changes possible?

I. Traditional peasant agriculture increased and changed, plantations expanded, and demand for labor increased. These changes both fed and responded to growing global demand for raw materials and finished products.

- A. Peasant labor intensified in many regions. (such as the development of frontier settlements in Russian Siberia, cotton textile production in India or silk textile production in China)
- B. Slavery in Africa continued both the traditional incorporation of slaves into households and the export of slaves to the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean.
- C. The growth of the plantation economy increased the demand for slaves in the Americas.
- D. Colonial economies in the Americas depended on a range of coerced labor (such as chattel slavery, indentured servitude, *encomienda* and *hacienda* systems, or the Spanish adaptation of the Inca *mit'a*).

II. As new social and political elites changed, they also restructured new ethnic, racial and gender hierarchies.

- A. Both imperial conquests and widening global economic opportunities contributed to the formation of new political and economic elites. (such as the Manchus in China, Creole elites in Spanish America, European gentry or urban commercial entrepreneurs in all major port cities in the world)
- B. The power of existing political and economic elites (such as the zamindars in the Mughal Empire, nobility in Europe or daimyo in Japan) fluctuated as they confronted new challenges to their ability to affect the policies of the increasingly powerful monarchs and leaders.
- C. Some notable gender and family restructuring occurred including the demographic changes in Africa that resulted from the slave trades. (as well as dependence of European men on Southeast Asian women for conducting trade in that region or the smaller size of European families)
- D. The massive demographic changes in the Americas resulted in new ethnic and racial classifications. (such as mestizo, mulatto or creole)

How did labor systems develop between 1450-1750?

How was peasant labor affected between 1450-1750?

How did slavery within Africa compare to the pre-1450 era?

What caused the Atlantic slave trade to expand so dramatically?

How did labor systems develop in the colonial Americas?

How did the post-1450 economic order restructure the social, economic, and political elites?

How did pre-existing political and economic elites react to these changes?

How were gender and family structures affected to these changes?

How did societies in the Americas reflect the post-1450 economic order?

Key Concept 4.3 State Consolidation and Imperial Expansion

Empires expanded and conquered new peoples around the world, but they often had difficulties incorporating culturally, ethnically and religiously diverse subjects and administrating widely dispersed territories. Agents of European powers moved into existing trade networks around the world. In Africa and the greater Indian Ocean, nascent European empires consisted mainly of interconnected trading posts and enclaves. In the Americas, European empires moved more quickly to settlement and territorial control responding to local demographic and commercial conditions. Moreover, the creation of European empires in the Americas quickly fostered a new Atlantic trade system that included the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Around the world, empires and states of varying sizes pursued strategies of centralization, including more efficient taxation systems that placed strains on peasant producers, sometimes prompting local rebellions. Rulers used public displays of art and architecture to legitimize state power. African states shared certain characteristics with larger Eurasian empires. Changes in African and global trading patterns strengthened some West and Central African states—especially on the coast, led to the rise of new states and contributed to the decline of states on both the coast and in the interior.

I. Rulers used a variety of methods to legitimize and consolidate their power.

- A. Visual displays of political power (such as monumental architecture, urban plans, courtly literature or visual arts) helped legitimize and support rulers.
- B. Rulers continued to use religious ideas to legitimize their rule. (such as European notions of divine right, the Safavid use of Shiism, the Mexica or Aztec practice of human sacrifice, the Songhay promotion of Islam or the Chinese emperors' public performance of Confucian rituals)
- C. States treated different ethnic and religious groups in ways that both utilized their economic contributions while limiting their ability to challenge the authority of the state (such as the Ottoman treatment of non-Muslim subjects, Manchu policies toward Chinese or the Spanish creation of a separate "República de Indios")
- D. Recruitment and use of bureaucratic elites, as well as the development of military professionals (such as the Ottoman devshirme, Chinese examination system or salaried samurai), became more common among rulers who wanted to maintain centralized control over their populations and resources.
- E. Rulers used tribute collection and tax farming to generate revenue for territorial expansion.

How did empires attempt to administer the new wide-spread nature of their territories?

How did the role of Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe develop in this new world-wide political order?

How did the people of various empires react to their government's methods?

How did political rulers legitimize and consolidate their rule?

What role did religion play in legitimizing political rule?

How were ethnic and religious minorities treated in various empires?

How did rulers make sure that their governments were well run?

How did rulers finance their territorial expansion?

II. Imperial expansion relied on the increased use of gunpowder, cannons and armed trade to establish large empires in both hemispheres.

- A. Europeans established new trading post empires in Africa and Asia which proved profitable for the rulers and merchants involved in new global trade networks, but also affected the power of states in interior West and Central Africa.
- B. Land empires expanded dramatically in size, including the Manchus, Mughals, Ottomans and Russians.
- C. European states, including Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, France and Britain, established new maritime empires in the Americas.

III. Competition over trade routes (such as Omani-European rivalry in the Indian Ocean and piracy in the Caribbean), state rivalries (such as the Thirty Years War or the Ottoman-Safavid conflict), and local resistance (such as bread riots) all provided significant challenges to state consolidation and expansion.

What was the relationship between imperial expansion and military technology?

How did Europeans go about creating new global empires and trade networks?

How did pre-existing land-based empires and new empires during this era compare to previous era's empires?

What obstacles to empire-building did empires confront, and how did they respond to these challenges?