

Expansion, Exploration, and Encounters**Lesson 2**

Europeans Explore the East

Key Terms and People

Prince Henry Portuguese supporter of exploration

Bartolomeu Dias Portuguese explorer who rounded the tip of Africa

Vasco da Gama explorer who gave Portugal a direct sea route to India

Treaty of Tordesillas treaty between Spain and Portugal dividing newly discovered lands between them

Dutch East India Company Dutch company that established and directed trade throughout Asia

Before You Read

In the last lesson, you read about the Mughal Empire in India.

In this lesson, you will read about why and how Europeans began an age of exploration.

As You Read

Use a timeline to take notes on important events in the European exploration of the East.

FOR “GOD, GLORY, AND GOLD”**Why did Europeans begin to explore new lands?**

For many centuries, Europeans did not have much contact with people from other lands. That changed in the 1400s. Europeans hoped to gain new sources of wealth. By exploring the seas, traders hoped to find new, faster routes to Asia—the source of spices and luxury goods. Another reason for exploration was spreading Christianity to new lands.

Bernal Diaz del Castillo, an early Spanish explorer, explained his motives: “to serve God and His Majesty, to give light to those who were in darkness and to grow rich as all men desire to do.”

Advances in technology made these voyages possible. A new kind of ship, the caravel, was stronger than earlier ships. It had triangle-shaped sails that allowed it to sail against the wind. Ships could now travel far out into the ocean. The magnetic compass allowed sea captains to stay on course better.

1. What were the two main reasons for European exploration?

Lesson 2, *continued*

**PORTUGAL LEADS THE WAY;
SPAIN ALSO MAKES CLAIMS**

How did Portugal lead the way in exploration?

The son of Portugal’s king, **Prince Henry**, was committed to the idea of exploring. In 1419, he started a school of navigation. Sea captains, mapmakers, and navigators met and exchanged ideas there. Portugal made the best use of the new sailing technology, and the Portuguese monarchy also invested in overseas exploration.

Over the next few decades, Portuguese captains sailed farther and farther down the west coast of Africa. In 1488, **Bartolomeu Dias** reached the southern tip of Africa. Ten years later, **Vasco da Gama** led a ship around Africa, to India and back. The Portuguese had found a sea route to Asia.

The Spanish, meanwhile, had plans of their own. Christopher Columbus convinced the king and queen that he could reach Asia by sailing west. In 1492, instead of landing in Asia, Columbus touched land in the islands of the Americas. Spain and Portugal argued over which nation had the rights to the land that Columbus had claimed. In 1494, they signed the **Treaty of Tordesillas**. It divided the world into two areas. Portugal won the right to control the eastern parts—including Africa, India, and other parts of Asia. Spain got the western parts—including most of the Americas.

2. How did Spain and Portugal solve their differences over claims to new lands?

TRADING EMPIRES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

Who established trading empires in the Indian Ocean?

Portugal moved quickly to make the new Indian Ocean route pay off. Through military might, Portugal gained power over islands that were rich in desirable spices. They were called the **Spice Islands**. Spices now cost Europeans one-fifth of what they had cost before, while still making Portugal very wealthy.

Other European nations joined in this trade. In the 1600s, the English and Dutch entered the East Indies. They quickly broke Portuguese power in the area. Then both nations set up an East India Company to control Asian trade. These companies were more than businesses. They were like governments. They had the power to make money, sign treaties, and raise their own armies. The **Dutch East India Company** was richer and more powerful than England’s company.

By 1700, the Dutch ruled much of Indonesia. They had trading posts in many other Asian countries and commanded the southern tip of Africa. At the same time, both England and France finally gained footholds in India.

Nevertheless, even though Europeans controlled the trade between Asia and Europe, they had little impact on most people living in these areas.

3. How did the Dutch and English become Indian Ocean trading powers?

Lesson 2, *continued*

As you read about the age of exploration, take notes to answer questions about events listed in the timeline.

1400	Prince Henry starts a navigation school.	↗	1. What technological advances made possible the age of exploration?
1419			
1487	Bartolomeu Dias rounds the southern tip of Africa.	→	2. What were some immediate and some long-term outcomes of Columbus's voyage?
1492	Columbus reaches the Caribbean.		
1494	Spain and Portugal sign the Treaty of Tordesillas.	→	3. What was the most important result of this agreement?
1498	Vasco da Gama reaches the port of Calicut on the Indian Ocean.	↘	4. How did Portugal benefit from his voyage?
1500			
1521	Ferdinand Magellan leads a Spanish expedition to the Philippines.	↗	5. Why did Spain set up trading posts in Asia?
1565	Spain begins settlements in the Philippines.		
1600	The Dutch establish a trading center on Java.	↗	6. How did the Dutch gain control of much of the Indian Ocean trade?
1619			
1664	France sets up its own East India Company.	↗	7. How did the European battles for Indian Ocean trade affect the peoples of Asia before the 19th century?