

# Economic Transformation: Commerce and Consequence

## 1450–1750

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### CHAPTER LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To explore the creation of the first true global economy in the period 1450–1750
- To examine Western European commercial expansion in a context that gives due weight to the contributions of other societies
- To encourage appreciation of China as the world’s largest economy in the early modern period
- To increase student awareness of the high costs of the commercial boom of the early modern period in ecological and human terms
- To investigate the various models of trading post empires that were created in this period

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

#### I. Opening Vignette

- A. The Atlantic slave trade was and is enormously significant.
- B. The slave trade was only one part of the international trading networks that shaped the world between 1450 and 1750.
  1. Europeans broke into the Indian Ocean spice trade

2. American silver allowed greater European participation in the commerce of East Asia
3. fur trapping and trading changed commerce and the natural environment
- C. Europeans were increasingly prominent in long-distance trade, but other peoples were also important.
- D. Commerce and empire were the two forces that drove globalization between 1450 and 1750.

#### II. Europeans and Asian Commerce

- A. Europeans wanted commercial connections with Asia.
  1. Columbus and Vasco da Gama both sought a route to Asia
  2. motivation above all was the desire for spices (though other Eastern products were also sought)
  3. European civilization had recovered from the Black Death
  4. national monarchies were learning to govern more effectively
  5. some cities were becoming international trade centers
  6. the problems of old trade systems from the Indian Ocean network
    - a. Muslims controlled supply

- b. Venice was chief intermediary for trade with Alexandria; other states resented it
  - c. desire to find Prester John and enlist his support in the Crusades
  - d. constant trade deficit with Asia
- B. A Portuguese Empire of Commerce
1. Indian Ocean commerce was highly rich and diverse
  2. Portuguese did not have goods of a quality for effective competition
  3. Portuguese took to piracy on the sea lanes
    - a. Portuguese ships were more maneuverable, carried cannons
    - b. established fortified bases at key locations (Mombasa, Hormuz, Goa, Malacca, Macao)
  4. Portuguese created a “trading post empire”
    - a. goal was to control commerce, not territories or populations
    - b. operated by force of arms, not economic competition
    - c. at height, controlled about half of the spice trade to Europe
  5. Portuguese gradually assimilated to Indian Ocean trade patterns
    - a. carried Asian goods to Asian ports
    - b. many Portuguese settled in Asian or African ports
    - c. their trading post empire was in steep decline by 1600
- C. Spain and the Philippines
1. Spain was the first to challenge Portugal’s control of Asian trade
  2. establishment of a Spanish base in the Philippines
    - a. first encountered when Ferdinand Magellan circumnavigated the globe (1519–1521)
    - b. Philippines were organized in small, competitive chiefdoms
    - c. Spaniards established full colonial rule there (takeover occurred 1565–1650)
  - d. the Philippines remained a Spanish colonial territory until 1898, when the United States assumed control
3. major missionary campaign made Filipino society the only major Christian outpost in Asia
4. Spaniards introduced forced relocation, tribute, taxes, unpaid labor
  - a. large estates for Spanish settlers, religious orders, and Filipino elite
  - b. women’s ritual and healing roles were attacked
5. Manila became a major center with a diverse population
6. periodic revolts by the Chinese population; Spaniards expelled or massacred them several times
- D. The East India Companies
1. Dutch and English both entered Indian Ocean commerce in the early seventeenth century
    - a. soon displaced the Portuguese
    - b. competed with each other
  2. ca. 1600: both the Dutch and the English organized private trading companies to handle Indian Ocean trade
    - a. merchants invested, shared the risks
    - b. Dutch and British East India companies were chartered by their respective governments
    - c. had power to make war and govern conquered peoples
  3. established their own trading post empires
    - a. Dutch empire was focused on Indonesia
    - b. English empire was focused on India
    - c. French company was also established
  4. Dutch East India Company
    - a. controlled both shipping and production of cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, and mace
    - b. seized small spice-producing islands and forced people to sell only to the Dutch

- c. destroyed the local economy of the Spice Islands; made the Dutch rich
- d. for a time sought to colonize Taiwan through large-scale Chinese immigration, but lost control to China
- 5. British East India Company
  - a. was not as well financed or as commercially sophisticated as the Dutch; couldn't break into the Spice Islands
  - b. established three major trade settlements in India (seventeenth century)
  - c. British navy gained control of Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf
  - d. could not compete with the Mughal Empire on land
  - e. negotiated with local rulers for peaceful establishment of trade bases
  - f. Britons traded pepper and other spices, but cotton textiles became more important
- 6. Dutch and English also became involved in "carrying trade" within Asia
- 7. both gradually evolved into typical colonial domination
- E. Asians and Asian Commerce
  - 1. European presence was much less significant in Asia than in Americas or Africa
  - 2. Europeans were no real military threat to Asia
  - 3. the case of Japan
    - a. Portuguese reached Japan in the mid-sixteenth century
    - b. Japan at the time was divided by constant conflict among feudal lords (daimyo) supported by samurai
    - c. at first, Europeans were welcome
    - d. but Japan unified politically under the Tokugawa shogun in the early seventeenth century
      - i. increasingly regarded Europeans as a threat to unity
      - ii. expulsion of missionaries, massive persecution of Christians
    - e. Japanese were barred from travel abroad
    - iv. Europeans were banned, except the Dutch at a single site
  - e. Japan was closed off from Europe from 1650 to 1850
- 4. Asian merchants continued to operate, despite European presence
  - a. overland trade within Asia remained in Asian hands
  - b. tens of thousands of Indian merchants lived throughout Central Asia, Persia, and Russia

### III. Silver and Global Commerce

- A. The silver trade was even more important than the spice trade in creating a global exchange network.
  - 1. enormous silver deposits were discovered in Bolivia and Japan in the mid-sixteenth century
  - 2. in the early modern period, Spanish America produced around 85 percent of the world's silver
- B. China's economy was huge and had a growing demand for silver.
  - 1. 1570s: the Chinese government consolidated taxes into a single tax to be paid in silver
    - a. value of silver skyrocketed
    - b. foreigners with silver could purchase more Chinese products than before
- C. Silver was central to world trade.
  - 1. "silver drain" to Asia: bulk of the world's silver supply ended up in China (most of the rest reached other parts of Asia)
  - 2. Spanish silver brought to Europe was used to buy Asian goods
  - 3. silver bought African slaves and Asian spices
  - 4. the Spanish "piece of eight" was widely used for international exchange
  - 5. Potosí, Bolivia, became the largest city in the Americas (population: 160,000) because it was at the world's largest silver mine

- a. the city's wealthy European elite lived in luxury
  - b. Native American miners lived in horrid conditions
  - c. women found some new economic opportunities
- D. Silver vastly enriched the Spanish monarchy.
- 1. caused inflation, not real economic growth in Spain
    - a. Spanish economy was too rigid
    - b. Spanish aristocrats were against economic enterprise
  - 2. Spain lost its dominance when the value of silver fell ca. 1600
- E. Japanese government profited more from silver production than did Spain.
- 1. Tokugawa shoguns used silver revenues to defeat rivals and unify the country
  - 2. worked with the merchant class to develop a market-based economy
  - 3. heavy investment in agriculture and industry
  - 4. averted ecological crisis, limited population growth
- F. In China, silver further commercialized the country's economy.
- 1. people needed to sell something to obtain silver to pay their taxes
  - 2. economy became more regionally specialized
  - 3. deforestation was a growing problem; wasn't addressed as it was in Japan
- G. Europeans were essentially middlemen in world trade.
- 1. funneled American silver to Asia
  - 2. Asian commodities took market share from European products
- IV. The "World Hunt": Fur in Global Commerce**
- A. Europe's supply of fur-bearing animals was sharply diminished by 1500.
- B. There was intense competition for the furs of North America.
- 1. French were prominent in St. Lawrence valley, Great Lakes, and along the Mississippi
  - 2. British traders moved into Hudson Bay region
  - 3. Dutch moved into what is now New York
- C. North American fur trade.
- 1. Europeans usually traded with Indians for furs or skins, rather than hunting or trapping animals themselves
  - 2. beaver and other furry animals were driven to near extinction
  - 3. by the 1760s, hunters in the southeastern British colonies took around 500,000 deer every year
  - 4. trade was profitable for the Indians
    - a. received many goods of real value
    - b. Huron chiefs enhanced their authority with control of European goods
    - c. but Indians fell prey to European diseases
    - d. fur trade generated much higher levels of inter-Indian warfare
  - 5. Native Americans became dependent on European trade goods.
    - a. iron tools and cooking pots
    - b. gunpowder weapons
    - c. European textiles
    - d. as a result, many traditional crafts were lost
    - e. many animal species were depleted through overhunting
    - f. deeply destructive power of alcohol on Indian societies
  - 6. Implications of fur trade for Native American women
    - a. many native women married European traders facilitating cross-cultural exchange
    - b. in native societies the status of men was enhanced by the focus on hunting.
    - c. some new opportunities arose for women in the production of wild rice and maple syrup
- D. Russian fur trade.
- 1. profits of fur trade were the chief incentive for Russian expansion
  - 2. had a similar toll on native Siberians as it had on Indians

- a. dependence on Russian goods
- b. depletion of fur-bearing animal populations
- 3. Russians didn't have competition, so they forced Siberians to provide furs instead of negotiating commercial agreements
- 4. private Russian hunters and trappers competed directly with Siberians

## V. Commerce in People: The Atlantic Slave Trade

- A. Between the mid-fifteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries, the Atlantic slave trade took an estimated 10.7 million people from Africa to the Americas.
  - 1. millions more died in the process
  - 2. vast human tragedy
  - 3. African slave trade transformed the societies of all participants
    - a. the African diaspora created racially mixed societies in the Americas
    - b. slave trade and slavery enriched many
    - c. slavery became a metaphor for many types of social oppression
- B. The Slave Trade in Context
  - 1. most human societies have had slaves
  - 2. Africans had practiced slavery and sold slaves for centuries
    - a. trans-Saharan trade took slaves to the Mediterranean world
    - b. East African slave trade
  - 3. slavery took many forms, depending on the region and time period
    - a. slaves were often assimilated into their owners' households
    - b. children of slaves were sometimes free, sometimes slaves
    - c. Islamic world preferred female slaves; Atlantic slave trade favored males
    - d. not all slaves had lowly positions (in Islamic world, many slaves had military or political status)
    - e. most premodern slaves worked in households, farms, or shops
  - 4. distinctiveness of slavery in the Americas
    - a. the scale and importance of the slave trade in the Americas was enormous

- b. largely based on plantation agriculture, with slaves denied any rights at all
- c. slave status was inherited
- d. little hope of manumission
- e. widespread slavery in society that valued human freedom and equality—unlike anywhere else except maybe ancient Greece
- f. slavery was wholly identified with Africa and with “blackness”
- 5. origins of Atlantic slavery lay in the Mediterranean and with sugar production
  - a. sugar production was the first “modern” industry (major capital investment, technology, disciplined workers, mass market)
  - b. the work was very difficult and dangerous—slaves were ideal
  - c. at first, Slavs from the Black Sea region provided most slaves for Mediterranean sugar plantations
  - d. Portuguese found an alternative slave source in West Africa
- 6. Africans became the primary source of slave labor for the Americas
  - a. Slavs weren't available
  - b. Indians died of European diseases
  - c. Europeans were a bad alternative: Christians from marginal lands couldn't be enslaved; indentured servants were expensive
  - d. Africans were farmers, had some immunity to diseases, were not Christian, and were readily available
  - e. long debate on how much racism was involved
- C. The Slave Trade in Practice
  - 1. slave trade was driven by European demand
  - 2. but Europeans didn't raid Africa for slaves; they traded freely with African merchants and elites
    - a. from capture to sale on the coast, trade was in African hands

- b. Africans received trade goods in return, often bought with American silver
- c. harrowing journey for the slave
- 3. increasing pace of Atlantic slave trade
  - a. between 1450 and 1600, fewer than 4,000 slaves were shipped annually
  - b. in the seventeenth century, average of 10,000 slaves per year taken to the Americas
- 4. who was enslaved
  - a. people from West Africa (present-day Mauritania to Angola)
  - b. mostly people from marginal groups (prisoners of war, debtors, criminals)
  - c. Africans generally did not sell their own peoples
- 5. vast majority of slaves ended up in Brazil and the Caribbean
  - a. smaller numbers North America, mainland Spanish America or in Europe
  - b. about 15 percent of those enslaved died during the Middle Passage
- D. Consequences: The Impact of the Slave Trade in Africa
  - 1. created new transregional linkages
  - 2. slowed Africa's growth, while Europe and China expanded in population
    - a. sub-Saharan Africa had about 18 percent of the world's population in 1600 but only 6 percent in 1900
    - b. slave trade generated economic stagnation and political disruption in Africa
      - i. those who profited in the trade did not invest in production
      - ii. did not generate breakthroughs in agriculture or industry—since Europeans didn't increase demand for Africa's products, just for its people
  - 3. social effects
    - a. fostered moral corruption
    - b. unbalanced sex ratios in Africa
      - i. increased substantially labor demands on women
      - ii. led to more polygamous households
      - iii. led to the increased use of female slaves in West Africa
      - iv. a few women benefited by marrying European merchants, with some operating their own trading empires
  - 4. women participated in several state-building enterprises
    - a. Kingdom of Dahomey was ruled over by a Queen Mother
    - b. in the kingdom of Kongo, women held lower administrative positions and served on the monarch's council of advisers
    - c. Matamba also had female rulers
  - 5. effect of slave trade differed from place to place
    - a. many small-scale kinship-based societies were thoroughly disrupted
    - b. some larger kingdoms such as Kongo and Oyo slowly disintegrated
    - c. Benin in the forest area of present day Nigeria succeeded in limiting the effects of the slave trade until the 1700s
      - i. diversified its exports and bought firearms and other goods
      - ii. banned export of male slaves
      - iii. only with decline in 1700s did Benin reengage in the slave trade
    - c. Dahomey actively participated in slave trade during the early 1700s, but under royal control
      - i. annual slave raids by the army
      - ii. government depended on slave trade for revenue

## VI. Reflections: Economic Globalization—Then and Now

- A. A study of global commerce in the early modern period shows both how different from and how similar we are to people of the past.

- B. Globalization isn't just a twentieth-century phenomenon.
1. but early modern globalization was much slower and on a smaller scale
  2. early modern globalization was not yet centered on Western civilizations
  3. early modern economic life was mostly preindustrial
  4. early modern globalization was tied to empire building and slavery

## CHAPTER QUESTIONS

Following are answer guidelines for the Big Picture Questions, Seeking the Main Point Question, Margin Review Questions, Portrait Question, and Documents and Visual Sources Feature Questions that appear in the textbook chapter. For your convenience, the questions and answer guidelines are also available in the Computerized Test Bank.

### Big Picture Questions

1. To what extent did Europeans transform earlier patterns of commerce, and in what ways did they assimilate into those older patterns?
  - Europeans for the first time operated on a global scale, forging new trade networks across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.
  - They also facilitated the full integration of fur-supplying regions into wider trade networks.
  - But in other ways, the Europeans assimilated older patterns, as in the Indian Ocean, where they sought to dominate previously established trade routes, and they continued to trade many of the same products.
2. How should we distribute the moral responsibility for the Atlantic slave trade? Is this a task appropriate for historians?
  - This is obviously a question intended to encourage student thought, without a simple or clear-cut answer.
  - It is evident that Europeans played an important role both in stimulating the slave trade and in developing a slave system that was unusually dehumanizing, degrading, and dangerous for those forced to participate as slaves.

- It is also clear that some Africans willingly participated in the trade, capturing and selling slaves to the Europeans.
- Whether assessing moral responsibility or blame is a task appropriate for historians is debatable. One could reasonably make a case for or against this idea.
- Students should be encouraged to think about historical context, rather than judging by the standards of our own era.
- Students should be encouraged not to think in all-or-nothing terms, such as assertions that all Europeans were (and are) morally guilty for the slave trade, when the vast majority of Europeans had nothing to do with it.
- Similarly, students should be encouraged to recognize that the fact that some African rulers and individuals participated in the slave trade does not imply moral guilt for all.

3. What lasting legacies of early modern globalization are evident in the early twenty-first century? Pay particular attention to the legacies of the slave trade.

- The Atlantic trading network
- The Pacific trading network between the Americas and East Asia
- The influence of European civilizations, especially in the Americas and the Philippines
- The engagement of even remote peoples, such as those of Siberia, in world trade networks
- The large populations in the Americas of peoples of African and European origins
- African cultural influences in the Americas
- Ideas of race, particularly of “blackness”
- The demographic and economic legacy of the slave trade in West Africa

4. **Looking Back:** Asians, Africans, and Native Americans experienced early modern European expansion in quite different ways. Based on Chapters 13 and 14, how might you describe and explain those differences? In what respects were they active agents in the historical process rather than simply victims of European actions?

- In the Americas, Europeans conquered the region politically and dominated it economically. The primary reasons for this were the devastation caused to Native American populations by European diseases and the technological advantages that Europeans possessed when they arrived.

- In Africa, Europeans established much stronger trade relationships and set up several trading posts on the east coast of Africa. However, they made no effort to conquer large territories, in large part because the most attractive regions for European conquest, such as West Africa, possessed too many deadly tropical diseases against which Europeans had little immunity.

- In Asia, Europeans (aside from the Spanish, who succeeded in establishing a colonial state in the Philippines) sought to found trading post empires, with mixed success. The Dutch were able to dominate several Spice Islands, and both the British and the Portuguese were able to set up fortified trading posts along the Indian Ocean coast. But none of these powers ever tried to conquer large territories, and in some cases, such as in Japan, the Europeans were only able to trade under conditions set by the local authorities. These developments show that, while the Spanish and Dutch were able to dominate relatively small regions, the larger established civilizations of Asia were too powerful for the Europeans to hope to rule, and in any case the great distances between Asia and Europe made such a colonial empire impractical.

- Both Africans and Asians were very much active agents in the historical process. Europeans in large part relied on the willing participation of local groups to trade in the Indian Ocean and along the Atlantic coast of Africa. Moreover, in most cases they had to deal with local political authorities who were sovereign in these regions.

- In the Americas, the huge disruption caused by epidemic disease made the Europeans far more influential especially in those regions that they brought under their effective political control. Nonetheless, Native Americans in some circumstances were active agents. A good example of this would be those that participated in the fur trade in North America where they were able to negotiate on an equal footing with their European counterparts.

## Seeking the Main Point Question

Q. In what different ways did global commerce transform human societies and the lives of individuals during the early modern era?

- It created completely new trade networks across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

- The slave trade brought large numbers of Africans to the Americas.

- It drew the remote peoples of Siberia and North America into global trade networks through the fur trade.

- It slowed population growth, disrupted the economy, and sometimes shaped the political system in West Africa.

- It was the driving force behind the large-scale slave economy that emerged in the Americas.

- It further commercialized the economies of the world, especially that of China, through inflows of silver from South America and Japan.

- In terms of its effect on individuals, many were enslaved.

- Some prospered from the trade, others were hurt by it.

- Many gained access to new products and technologies.

## Margin Review Questions

Q. What drove European involvement in the world of Asian commerce?

- European involvement in Asian commerce was motivated by a number of factors, including the desire for tropical spices, Chinese silk, Indian cottons, rhubarb, emeralds, rubies, and sapphires.

- The general recovery of European civilization following the disaster of the Black Death was a factor.

- Europeans were also driven by a resentment of the Muslim monopoly on the flow of Indian Ocean products to Europe, and the dislike that many European powers had for Venice's role as intermediary in the trade.

- They hoped to discover and ally with the mythical Christian kingdom of Prester John to continue the Crusades and combat a common Islamic enemy.

- The need to secure gold and silver to pay for Asian spices and textiles also played a role.

Q. To what extent did the Portuguese realize their own goals in the Indian Ocean?

- Their original goal of creating a trading post empire that controlled the commerce of the Indian Ocean was at best only partially realized. They never succeeded in controlling much more than half the spice trade to Europe, and by 1600, their trading post empire was in steep decline.



Q. How did the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, and British initiatives in Asia differ from one another?

- The Portuguese sought to set up a trading post empire that controlled the trade routes of the Indian Ocean.

- The Spanish established colonial rule over the Philippine Islands. In doing so, they drew on their experience in the Americas, converting most of the population to Christianity, ruling over the islands directly, and setting up large, landed estates owned by Spanish settlers.

- The Dutch and British organized their Indian Ocean ventures through private trading companies, which were able to raise money and share risks among a substantial number of merchant investors. These trading companies obtained government charters granting them trading monopolies, the power to make war, and the right to govern conquered peoples. They established their own parallel and competing trading post empires; the Dutch seized control of some of the Spice Islands, while the British set up trading centers in India by securing the support of the Mughal Empire or of local authorities.

Q. To what extent did the British and Dutch trading companies change the societies they encountered in Asia?

- The Dutch acted to control not only the shipping but also the production of cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, and mace. With much bloodshed, the Dutch seized control of a number of small spice-producing islands, forcing their people to sell only to the Dutch.

- On the Banda Islands, the Dutch killed, enslaved, or left to starve virtually the entire population and then replaced them with Dutch planters, using a slave labor force to produce the nutmeg crop.

- Ultimately, the local economy of the Spice Islands was shattered by Dutch policies, and the people there were impoverished.

- The British established three major trading settlements in India during the seventeenth century: Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras. They secured their trading bases with the permission of Mughal authorities or local rulers.

- British traders came to specialize in Indian cotton textiles, and hundreds of villages in the interior of southern India became specialized producers for the British market.

Q. What was the world historical importance of the silver trade?

- The silver trade was the first direct and sustained link between the Americas and Asia, and it initiated a web of Pacific commerce that grew steadily over the centuries.

- It transformed Spain and Japan, the two states that controlled the principal new sources of silver.

- It deepened the already substantial commercialization of China's economy, which fueled global commerce.

- It became a key commodity driving long-distance trade and offered the Europeans a product that they could produce that was also in demand elsewhere in the world.

Q. Describe the impact of the fur trade on North American native societies.

- The fur trade did bring some benefits, including the trade of pelts for goods of real value.

- It enhanced influence and authority for some Native American leaders.

- It ensured the protection of Native Americans involved in the fur trade, at least for a time, from the kind of extermination, enslavement, or displacement that was the fate of some native peoples elsewhere in the Americas.

- But the fur trade also had a negative impact, such as in exposing Native Americans to European diseases and generating warfare beyond anything previously known.

- It left Native Americans dependent on European goods without a corresponding ability to manufacture the goods themselves.

- It brought alcohol into Indian societies, often with deeply destructive effects.

Q. How did the North American and Siberian fur trades differ from each other? What did they have in common?

- Both trades were driven by the demands of the world market.

- Both had similar consequences for the native populations that participated in them, as both native Siberians and Native Americans suffered from new diseases and became dependent on the goods for which they traded furs.

- However, the trades also differed in that Native Americans dealt with several competing European nations who generally obtained their furs through commercial negotiations. No such competition existed in Siberia, where Russian

authorities imposed a tax or tribute, payable in furs, on every able-bodied Siberian male between eighteen and fifty years of age.

- A further difference lay in the large-scale presence of private Russian hunters and trappers, who competed directly with their Siberian counterparts.

**Q. Summing Up So Far:** What differences in the operation and impact of the spice, silver, and fur trades can you identify?

- The fur trade had a widespread ecological impact that was greater than the extraction of the other two commodities.
- The silver trade drove the commercialization of China to a greater extent than the other two.
- The fur trade in North America was driven by the willing participation of Native Americans rather than coercion or forced labor.
- All except the Siberian fur trade relied on new European sea trade routes.

**Q.** What was distinctive about the Atlantic slave trade? What did it share with other patterns of slave owning and slave trading?

- The Atlantic slave trade had many distinctive features, including the immense size of the traffic in slaves; the centrality of slavery to the economies of colonial America; and the prominence of slave labor in plantation agriculture.
- There was a distinctive racial dimension, as Atlantic slavery came to be identified wholly with Africa and with “blackness.”
- Also distinctive was the treatment of slaves as a form of dehumanized property, lacking any rights in the society of their owners; and the practice of slave status being inherited across the generations, with little hope of eventual freedom for the vast majority.
- Particularly ironic is the fact that American slaveholding took place in the only society, with the possible exception of ancient Greece, that affirmed values of human freedom and equality while permitting widespread slavery.
- But the Atlantic slave trade did possess some similarities with other patterns of slave owning, including the acquisition of slaves from Africa; the enslavement of outsiders and other vulnerable people; and the fact that slavery was a common practice since the earliest civilizations.

**Q.** What explains the rise of the Atlantic slave trade?

- The immense difficulty and danger of the work, the limitations attached to serf labor, and the general absence of wage workers all pointed to slavery as the only source of labor for sugar-producing plantations.
- The cutting off of the supply of Slavic slaves, the demographic collapse of Native American populations, and the Christian faith of marginal Europeans left Africans as the only viable source of slaves for the plantation economies of the Americas.

**Q.** What roles did Europeans and Africans play in the unfolding of the Atlantic slave trade?

- European demand for slaves was clearly the chief cause of the trade.
- From the point of sale on the African coast to the massive use of slave labor on American plantations, the entire enterprise was in European hands.
- Europeans tried to exploit African rivalries to obtain slaves at the lowest possible cost, and the firearms that they funneled into West Africa may well have increased the warfare from which so many slaves were derived.
- From the point of initial capture to sale on the coast, the slave trade was normally in African hands. African elites and merchants secured slaves and brought them to the coast for sale to Europeans waiting on ships or in fortified settlements.
- Africans who were transported as slaves also played a critical, if unwilling and tragic, role in the trade.

**Q.** In what different ways did the Atlantic slave trade transform African societies?

- Africa became a permanent part of an interacting Atlantic world, both commercially and demographically.
- The Atlantic slave trade slowed Africa’s population growth at a time when the populations of Europe, China, and other regions were expanding.
- The slave trade in general stimulated little positive economic change in Africa and led to economic stagnation.
- It also led to considerable political disruption, particularly for small-scale societies with little central authority that were frequently subject to slave raids.

- Some larger kingdoms, such as Kongo and Oyo, also slowly disintegrated because of the slave trade.
- But in other regions, like Benin and Dahomey, African authorities sought to take advantage of the new commercial opportunities to manage the slave trade in their own interests.

## Portrait Questions

Q. What might you infer about Ayuba's own view of slavery and the slave trade?

- His view of slavery was complex.
- On the one hand, he willingly participated in the trade, selling his father's slaves in 1730 and buying slaves upon his return to West Africa.
- However, his angry reaction upon his return to West Africa when he encountered the men who had captured him and sold him into slavery indicates that he felt his enslavement was unjust.
- Moreover, his decision to run away from his owner in Maryland indicates rejection of his status as a slave.

Q. What insights or questions about the slave trade does his remarkable story suggest?

- His story casts light on the slave trade in Africa and its relationship with the Atlantic slave trade.
- It shows how the slave trade could destabilize family life in West Africa.
- It provides some insight into how slaves captured in West Africa were employed in the Americas.
- It raises questions about how a former slave could willingly purchase slaves after securing his own freedom.
- That he attracted such great interest raises questions about how common slaves with Ayuba's background were in the British North American colonies.

## Using the Documents and Visual Sources Features

Following are answer guidelines for the headnote questions and Using the Evidence questions that appear in the documents and visual sources essays located at the end of the textbook chapter.

## Headnote Questions

### *Document 14.1: The Journey to Slavery*

Q. How does Equiano describe the kind of slavery he knew in Africa? How does it compare with the plantation slavery of the Americas?

- Equiano notes that slaves were sometimes bought and sold in his region of Africa and they were typically prisoners of war or those convicted of kidnapping, adultery, or other crimes.
- He notes that his father had slaves.
- He offers an account of his own abduction by other Africans and how at several points he was brought into the households of his masters and treated well.
- It is a very different form of slavery compared to the plantation system in the Americas. Slaves became part of the household to which they were bound, and as Equiano's account notes, could be treated well within this context. In the Americas, slaves were kept separate from the master's household and treated much more as an economic commodity.

Q. What part did Africans play in the slave trade, according to this account?

- African traders actively traded for slaves in Equiano's home region.
- He himself was abducted by other Africans into slavery.
- He notes that he was frequently traded by Africans to other Africans along well-established trade routes until he reached the coast, where he was sold to Europeans.

Q. What aspects of the shipboard experience contributed to the slaves' despair?

- The terrible conditions below deck
- The brutality of the ship's crew
- The overcrowding and heat
- The loathsome smells and filth
- The sickness among slaves
- Being bound in chains
- The sounds of the dying and of shrieking women

### *Document 14.2: The Business of the Slave Trade*

Q. How would you describe the economic transactions described in the document? To what extent were they conducted between equal parties? Who, if anyone, held the upper hand in these dealings?

- These transactions were in part market-driven exchanges, although the African king negotiated exchange rates and also claimed special prerogatives for himself.

- The two parties involved were relatively equal in that both voluntarily consented to the trade; however, it is clear that the African king was able to maintain his sovereign prerogatives when the trade took place within his territory.

- While the English trader shows acumen and to the best of his abilities seeks to trade for his own benefit, it is clear that the African king was able to sanction or forbid trading and was able to secure favorable trades for himself. It might be argued that these advantages left him with something of an upper hand.

Q. What obstacles did European merchants confront in negotiating with African authorities?

- European merchants had to convince the king to sanction their trading.

- They had to negotiate “with much trouble” prices with the king and pay taxes to the king and his officials for leave to trade, for protection, and for justice.

- Merchants had to avoid competing against each other for slaves.

- The king required them to buy his slaves first and for higher prices than for other slaves.

- African traders often sought to hide the age and health of slaves, so merchants needed to successfully evaluate each slave.

- Merchants had to negotiate carefully with African traders by concealing the amount of brass and cowrie shells that they had aboard until they had successfully traded their other goods.

Q. How might an African merchant have described the same transaction? How might Equiano describe it?

- An African merchant would likely emphasize the importance of making one’s slaves appear to be of the ideal age and in good health in order to obtain the highest price for them, and the need to negotiate carefully to extract sought-after cowries and brass from the European traders.

- An African merchant might highlight efforts to create competition between European traders to drive up prices, and efforts to influence the king who negotiates the price of slaves.

- Equiano might have emphasized the experience of being prepared for sale by his African owner; the careful examination by the European

doctor and buyer; the painful branding; his arrival on the slave ship; and the horrendous suffering experienced during the Middle Passage.

Q. Notice the outcomes of Phillips’s voyage to Barbados in the last two paragraphs. What does this tell you about European preferences for slaves, about the Middle Passage, and about the profitability of the enterprise?

- The cargo of 480 men and 220 women indicates that male slaves were more valued by Europeans than female slaves.

- The fact that he left the West African coast with 700 slaves and arrived in Barbados with only 372 living slaves speaks to the hardships and high mortality rate suffered by slaves forced to take the Middle Passage.

- The European’s purchased slaves for cowrie shells or pieces of brass, which to them are probably nothing more than bits of junk or scrap. However, when arriving in Barbados, each slave fetches a price of 19 pounds, earning over 7,000 pounds from the trip and suggesting that the slave trade is a very profitable enterprise.

### ***Document 14.3: The Slave Trade and the Kingdom of Kongo***

Q. According to King Affonso, how had the Portuguese connection in general and the slave trade in particular transformed his state?

- It made his people desirous of goods that they new nothing of before.

- It led to certain subjects having more European goods than the king and using the power and status of the goods to disregard royal authority.

- The slave trade depopulated his country, draining it of needed labor.

Q. How did the operation of the slave trade in Kongo differ from that of Whydah as described in Document 14.2? How did the rulers of these two states differ in their relationship to Europeans?

- The slave trade in the Kongo differed in that it was conducted without royal support or direction, and was viewed by the king as detrimental to his kingdom.

- The king of Whydah sought primarily a trade relationship with Europe, where African slaves could be exchanged for a variety of goods but especially brass and cowries.

- Affonso sought a relationship based less on trade than on his desire for European priests,

teachers, drugs, and medical practitioners for his kingdom.

Q. To what extent did Affonso seek the end of the slave trade? What was the basis for his opposition to it? Do you think he was opposed to slavery itself?

- Affonso did not desire the end of the slave trade, but rather its close regulation by his officials.
- He wished to end the practice of kidnapping freemen to sell into slavery.
- There is no indication that Affonso opposed slavery entirely, just certain abuses and problems caused by the trade.

Q. What did Affonso seek from Portugal? What kind of relationship did he envisage with the Portuguese?

- Affonso sought help in reigning in Portuguese traders and in curtailing the importation of Portuguese goods. He also sought Portuguese priests, school teachers, drugs, and practitioners of medicine. He envisioned a protective relationship with the Portuguese; instead, the Portuguese exploited the country and undermined his rule.

***Document 14.4: The Slave Trade and the Kingdom of Asante***

Q. How did Osei Bonsu understand the slave trade and its significance for his kingdom?

- Osei Bonsu believed the slave trade was a result of his kingdom's successful conquests that the great God sanctioned so that proper sacrifice could be paid to him.
- Slaves were the rightful plunder of war. They were good people who did not need to be put to death, but who must be sold as slaves because they could not be fed within Asante.

Q. Some scholars have argued that the slave trade increased the incidence of warfare in West Africa as various states deliberately sought captives whom they could exchange for desired goods from Europe. How might Osei Bonsu respond to that idea? What was his understanding of the relationship between war and the slave trade?

- Osei Bonsu argued that warfare was natural between powerful states and sanctioned by the great God, thus it would occur regardless.
- Slaves were the legitimate plunder of war and the slave trade was necessary because the number of

slaves taken in war is often too great to support or sustain within his kingdom.

Q. In what ways did Osei Bonsu compare Muslim traders from the north with European merchants from the sea?

- Bonsu saw Muslim traders and European merchants as worshipers of the same god with different fashions and customs.
- He argued that Muslims believed that God sanctioned slavery, and that Islam had spread in West Africa through conversion of their slaves.
- He saw Europeans as trade partners who suddenly and inexplicably quit the slave trade.

***Visual Source 14.1: Tea and Porcelain in Europe***

Q. What foreign trade items can you identify in this image?

- Tea
- Porcelain cups, saucers, teapot, and bowl
- A silk tablecloth
- Perhaps silk clothing on the figures in the painting

Q. Note the European houses on the tea cup at the bottom left. What does this indicate about Chinese willingness to cater to the tastes of their European customers?

- This indicates that Chinese manufacturers were willing to produce patterns specifically for the European market.

Q. From what social class do you think the woman in the image comes?

- Her dress and surroundings indicate that she most likely comes from the upper class.
- However, it is possible that she came from a prosperous family engaged in trade or one of the professions.

Q. How might you explain the great European interest in Chinese products and styles during the eighteenth century? Why might their possession have suggested status?

- No European products could rival the high quality of Chinese porcelain and silk. In addition, Chinese products were more accessible than ever before. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Chinese products conveyed status because of their expense and relative rarity.

- Chinese products conveyed status because they were expensive and relatively difficult to purchase, were recognizable as coming from China, and had long possessed a reputation for quality.

**Visual Source 14.2: A Chocolate Party in Spain**

Q. What marks this event as an upper-class occasion?

- The presence of chocolate, the dress of the participants, and the saucers and teacups identify this as an upper-class occasion.

Q. What steps in the preparation of the chocolate drink can you observe in the image?

- The processed chocolate beans seem to be represented on the plate in the foreground.
- The figure to the left is engaged in heating and stirring the chocolate in a pot over a fire.
- The figure to the right is pouring the chocolate into a cup on a saucer.
- The figure in the background holds a filled cup on a saucer, perhaps allowing it to cool before drinking.

Q. Why do you think Europeans embraced a practice of people they regarded as uncivilized, bloodthirsty, and savage? What does this suggest about the process of cultural borrowing?

- Chocolate lost its Aztec ritual and religious associations in Europe. Instead, it gained a reputation as a medicine, an aphrodisiac, and an energy drink, and the church allowed its consumption during fasts.
- In terms of cultural borrowing, it suggests that products were sometimes adopted without their original cultural contexts; instead, the adopting culture invested the product with different meanings.

**Visual Source 14.3: An Ottoman Coffeehouse**

Q. What activities can you identify in the image?

- People are drinking coffee, playing board games, playing music, and conversing.

Q. Would you read this image as critical of the coffeehouse, as celebrating it, or as a neutral description? Notice that the musicians and those playing board games at the bottom were engaged in activities considered rather disreputable. How would you describe the general demeanor of the men in the coffeehouse?

- Students could argue that the image is critical of the coffeehouse by pointing to the presence of musicians and those playing board games, and the debate surrounding the status of coffee as an intoxicant in the Islamic world.

- Students might argue that the image is neutral by pointing to the negative features, including presence of musicians, board games, and coffee, but also to the generally positive features, such as the high status and the good demeanor of the patrons.

- Students could make the case that the image celebrates the coffeehouse by noting the relaxed social setting and the high status and upright demeanor of the patrons.

- The general demeanor of the men appears to be one of relaxation and enjoyment.

Q. Notice the cups which the patrons are using and those stacked in the upper right. Do they look similar to those used in Europe and shown in Visual Source 14.1? Certainly Ottoman elites by the sixteenth century preferred Chinese porcelain to that manufactured within their own empire.

- The cups do look similar and are likely to be Chinese porcelain.

**Visual Source 14.4: Clothing and Status in Colonial Mexico**

Q. What indications of status ambition or upward mobility can you identify in this image? Keep in mind that status here is associated with race and gender as well as the possession of foreign products.

- Indications of status ambition or upward mobility include the European dress of the man and daughter; the high-status native dress of the woman; and the display of porcelain in the foreground.

- The woman's Indian status may also speak to the ambitions of her husband who married outside his own *casta*.

Q. Why do you think the woman is shown in more traditional costume, while the man is portrayed in European dress?

- The mode of dress depicted may be meant to emphasize her status as a member of the Indian *casta*, for one purpose of these paintings was to represent different racial groups.

- It may also be that because she is not the public persona of the family, she need not dress with the same pretensions as her husband.

Q. Notice the porcelain items at the bottom right. Where might these have come from?

- These porcelain items most likely came from China.

Q. In what cultural tradition do you think this couple raised their daughter? What problems might they have experienced in this process?

- Because so many features of the painting point to ambitions for social mobility, it is likely that they raised the child in a manner above their castas.

- They may have experienced considerable problems because they sought to secure a status for their child that her racial background did not automatically confer.

### Using the Evidence Questions

#### *Documents: Voices from the Slave Trade*

1. **Highlighting differences:** What different experiences of the slave trade are reflected in these documents? How can you account for those differences?

- The different experiences recounted here include those of an enslaved person; a European slave trader; an African monarch whose kingdom and personal authority suffered from the slave trade; and an African monarch who opposed the ending of the slave trade. The Atlantic Slave trade was a very complex commercial system that linked the early modern world into a global network. It had profound, enduring economic and human consequences and it transformed all of its participants. These different documents show how people reacted differently to this system based on how they encountered it.

2. **Noticing what's missing:** What perspectives are missing that might add other dimensions to our understanding of this commerce in people?

- The perspectives of plantation owners in the Americas are largely absent from this collection, as are the experiences of female slaves. Also missing, except indirectly, is the perspective of African slave merchants.

3. **Integrating documents and the text narrative:** In what ways do these documents support, illustrate, or contradict this chapter's narrative discussion of the slave trade?

- In Document 14.1, Equiano's description of slavery in Africa correlates well with the chapter

narrative, which notes that in many places slaves could be assimilated into their owners' households.

- All four documents offer further evidence of how African-operated trading networks worked to supply the slave trade.

- Document 14.2 offers further insight into the discussion of trading culture along the West African coast that is recounted in the textbook (p. 691).

- Documents 14.1 and 14.3 add to our understanding of the Middle Passage.

- However, the documents do not address as fully some topics covered in the textbook, including the underdevelopment of African society because of the slave trade and the impact of slavery on culture in the Americas.

4. **Assessing historical responsibility:** What light do these documents shed on the much-debated question about who should be held responsible for the tragedy of the Atlantic slave trade?

- Document 14.1 sheds light on the human suffering of the slave trade and the role of both African and European merchants in the trafficking of slaves.

- Document 14.2 reveals the cooperation between local African rulers and African and European traders in the slave trade.

- Document 14.3 reveals how disruptive European traders could be to established African governments, even those that actively opposed the slave trade.

- Document 14.4 shows how some African leaders were attached to the slave trade and promoted it, even when Europeans were moving to end it.

#### *Visual Sources: Exchange and Status in the Early Modern World*

1. **Analyzing the display of status:** In what different ways did the possession of foreign objects convey status in the early modern world? Toward whom were these various claims of status directed? Notice the difference between the display of status in public and private settings.

- The possession of foreign objects conveyed status because of the wealth needed to acquire them, their rarity, and the perceptions of those who saw them.

- These claims of status were directed toward other members of the same society.

- Public displays served to directly assert status to outsiders, while more private displays reinforced a sense of status identity within the household.

2. **Noticing gender differences:** In what ways are men and women portrayed in these visual sources? Why might women be absent in Visual Sources 14.2 and 14.3?

- Both men and women are portrayed displaying and using luxury items; however, the depictions of women in Visual Sources 14.1 and 14.4. present them in domestic settings where their display is private.

- Visual Sources 14.2 and 14.3 depict men participating in social occasions where status items were consumed and in venues from which women were largely excluded.

3. **Exploring the functions of trade:** How might you use these visual sources to support the idea that “trade served more than economic needs”?

- The items on display in these visual sources are luxury items not needed for survival.
- The items are being used to assert the status of the user and so do not serve a directly economic purpose.

4. **Raising questions about cultural borrowing:** What issues about cross-cultural borrowing do these visual sources suggest?

- The visual sources suggest that commodities can be borrowed without borrowing their cultural or religious meanings, as is the case with chocolate in Visual Source 14.2.

- Some trade items were made specifically to appeal to another culture, as shown in the European house motifs on the Chinese porcelain in Visual Source 14.1.

- Sometimes the cultural meanings associated with an object were transferred with the item, as seen in the European clothing worn by the man in Visual Source 14.4.

- Sometimes religious beliefs could shape perceptions of products borrowed across cultures, as indicated in Visual Source 14.3.

5. **Evaluating images as evidence:** What are the strengths and limitations of visual sources as a means of understanding the relationship of trade and status in the early modern era? What other kinds of sources would be useful for pursuing this theme?

- The visual sources provide evidence of the presence of specific products, and evidence of how these products were used.

- However, they tell us little about how these items were acquired or how contemporaries understood these products.

- Written sources might provide the reactions of observers to the display of luxury items, as well as a clearer picture of how these items were acquired and understood.

## LECTURE STRATEGIES

### Lecture 1: Of ships and the sea: The mechanics of a new world order

We tend to ignore ships and shipping, at most mentioning in accounts of exploration and increasing globalization that the Europeans had good ships. This lecture strategy proposes to explore ships, shipping, winds, oceanic travel, and ports in the early modern period. Its objectives are:

- to examine European maritime technology comparatively with that of other parts of the world in an effort to understand how Europe could come to dominate the seas
- to examine the conditions on European ships—how they got from place to place, the amount of manpower required, etc.
- to explore in greater detail what conditions were like in the great international ports of the period 1450–1750.

Begin with a discussion of the *Mary Rose*, a warship constructed by order of Henry VIII of England that sank on its maiden voyage. The ship has now been raised from the sea and has been thoroughly studied, thus providing a readily available source of information about sixteenth-century ships. Some important points to note are:

- the problem of what to do with cannons on ships (open gunports caused the ship to sink)
- the ship’s ability to sail in different winds
- the ship’s capacity
- the ship’s construction (note especially the keel, which makes a strong contrast to Chinese vessels of the period).

From there, explore the development of naval seapower. Some important points to consider are:

- the contributions of Arabic and Chinese technology



- the development of the galleon
- progressive developments in rigging, which made it possible to tack against the wind
- how many tons of goods a ship could hold
- the European “arms race” in maritime technology, both because of encounters between Christian and Muslim fleets in the Mediterranean and because of England’s rivalry with the French, Spaniards, and Dutch
- the Spanish Armada
- the growing importance and usefulness of shipboard cannons over time
- the relatively static nature of Chinese, Arabic, and Indian shipping in the same period.

Other general issues to include are:

- the need for ships of advanced design in order to brave the inhospitable coast of West Africa
- what European ships could offer by way of maneuverability compared to their Asian competitors
- the horrid conditions usually encountered by ships sailing south of either South America or Africa.

### Lecture 2: The companies

One of the most fascinating stories of the age of commercial globalization is the role played by the Dutch and British East India companies. A lecture exploring and comparing these two great enterprises can provide a useful platform from which to examine two significant regions of Europe as well as the issue of trade with Asia. The objectives of this lecture strategy are:

- to develop an understanding of European mercantilism
- to investigate Dutch and British political and social development in the early modern period
- to consider European interactions with Asian societies in greater detail than the chapter allows
- to explore how trade companies functioned.

Begin with the foundation of the Honorable East India Company by Elizabeth I of England on December 31, 1600, and the establishment of the Dutch East India Company by the States-General of the Netherlands in 1602. Some points to include are:

- the dominance of merchant interests in both countries
- the practice of granting state monopolies

- the Dutch wars of independence from Spain and their implications for mercantile history
- the Dutch East India Company’s role as the first company ever to issue public stock
- how the two companies actually functioned in terms of investment and dividends.

From there, consider the work of the two companies, focusing on the early modern period (the Dutch East India Company dissolved in 1800; the British East India Company still exists). Some points to include are:

- the development of the story (already related in this chapter) of the Dutch takeover of the Spice Islands
- the exploration of how British traders established ascendancy in Indian trade
- the relationship between company shipping and the navies of their respective countries
- other ways in which the Netherlands and England (later Great Britain) supported their respective trade companies
- how many Dutch and English merchants actually went to Asia and what they did while there
- how much profit there was in the business
- the impressions that European traders brought home of the peoples they encountered
- the damage done to the peoples or states encountered by the Europeans.

### Lecture 3: The Tokugawa Shogunate

A thread of Japanese history runs through this chapter, and it is well worth exploring both as an example of early modern responses to globalization and as a foreshadowing of Japan’s massive world significance in later centuries. The objectives of this lecture strategy are:

- to explore the history of Japan in the early modern period
- to use Japan as a model that can help students understand the attractions and dangers of the European presence in Asia.

Begin this lecture from a long historical perspective, by examining feudal Japan during the Kamakura (1185–1333) and Muromachi (1336–1573) periods. Important points to include are:

- the figurehead status of Japanese emperors and the role of shoguns
- the fragmentation of Japanese political life

- the centrality of military rule, including the role of the samurai.

From there, examine the arrival of the Europeans, including such points as:

- the Battle of Nagashino (1575), at which European firearms massacred enemy samurai
- the evangelization of St. Francis Xavier and other missionaries
- the establishment of Christian communities in Japan.

Weave that narrative in with the parallel series of events that led to the creation of the Tokugawa shogunate in 1600, including such points as:

- Tokugawa Ieyasu's rise to power
- exploitation of Japanese silver deposits
- the nature of Japanese society in the period.

Conclude with the events that led the Tokugawa shogun to decide to close Japan to Western influence, how this decision was carried out, and the persecution of the Christian communities in Japan.

## THINGS TO DO IN THE CLASSROOM

### Discussion Topics

#### 1. Misconception/Difficult topic (large or small group). “Why Europeans wanted spices.”

Ask your students to list the reasons why they think Europeans craved Asian spices so badly. In an average class, reasons will include the strange myth that Europeans wanted spices to cover the taste of rotting meat. Students are far less likely to consider the role of spices as an important status symbol (rather like furs). After the initial student list is established, lead a discussion that works in such points as:

- the fact that microbes will make you just as sick, whether you mask the taste with spices or not
- medicinal use of spices
- the much wider range of foods to which spices were added, compared to typical American cuisine today
- the high price of spices
- how people in early modern Europe displayed their status more generally.

#### 2. Contextualization (large or small group). “In pursuit of ‘soft gold.’”

Ask students to discuss the human cost of the fur trade in both Siberia and North America compared to other forms of large-scale trade that developed in the early modern period.

#### 3. Comparison (large or small group). “The impact of silver.”

This discussion question requires students to consider the many varied implications of the rapid expansion of the world silver supply after 1500 because of increased production in Bolivia and Japan. First ask your students to trace the flow of silver from the Bolivian mine at Potosí. Where did it go and what was it used for? Make sure that students address how it helped to fund multiple trading networks from the Atlantic slave trade to the Indian Ocean spice trade. What impact did it have on Spain and the rest of Western Europe? Where did the silver end up? Why? What can these flows tell us about the world economy at the time? Conclude by asking students if they think that developments would have been different if new sources of silver had not been discovered.

### Classroom Activities

#### 1. Analysis exercise (large or small group). “Find the ports.”

Ask students to pick out the major ports mentioned in Chapter 14. Then, using a world map, ask students to find the major ports used by Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and British traders in the early modern period. Color-coding the ports of various countries will make it possible to see concentrations of mercantile interests.

#### 2. Role-playing exercise (small group). “Justifying slavery.”

Choose three groups to represent slaveholders (1) in West Africa, (2) in the Caribbean, and (3) in the British colonies of North America. Ask each group to do some research and then to present to the rest of the class a five-minute defense of slavery as they practice it. After all three groups have presented, the role of the rest of the class will be to debate against the presenters. The greatest challenge to all the students engaged will be to remain true to cultural

mores of the early modern period—make it clear in the assignment that you are the representative of the anachronism police and will not allow anachronism to drift in.

### 3. Clicker question.

Was the world better or worse off for the globalization of the early modern period?

## Class Discussion for the Documents and Visual Sources Features

### Comparison (large or small group): Slavery, Old and New.

This discussion question allows a review of material included in the chapter, as well as the possibility of drawing material from other chapters. Ask students to come up with at least five examples of slavery in various world societies before the beginning of the Columbian exchange. The students should rank their five examples by (1) the degree of impact slavery had on each society, and (2) the societies' relative harshness toward the slaves themselves, and they should be able to explain their ranking. Next, ask students to add two forms of African slavery in the Americas to their list, considering where they should be placed in relation to the premodern examples.

### Comparison (large or small group): Status and Long-Distance Trade, Then and Now.

The purpose of this activity is to encourage students to think about how status is defined in part through the possession of specific items. Ask students what items convey status in their social world. Compile a list on the board, then compare this list to the items that conveyed status in the early modern world. What about the items is the same and what has changed? Does the distance that the item had to travel still convey status? What about the rarity of the item? Finally, ask students why certain aspects of how products convey status have changed, while others have not.

## Classroom Activities for the Documents and Visual Sources Features

### Role-Playing (large or small group): Trading Slaves.

Using Document 14.2, set up a slave trading post along the West African coast in order to allow your students to explore how Africans and Europeans interacted in the slave trade. Assign each person a role, including an African king, his official, several African traders, European merchants, and a group of slaves. Charge each with seeking to get the best deal out of the transaction by first identifying what they are after and then negotiating with other participants. How are deals struck? Who seems to have the upper hand? What recourse do European merchants have to unacceptable demands by their hosts? What role do slaves play in these transactions? Finally, turn to Using the Evidence question 4 to draw some conclusions about responsibility for the trade.

### Critical Analysis (large or small group): What Is Status?

In one sense a Chinese teacup or some dried tea leaves are just objects without any great value; however, in the early modern world these objects conveyed considerable status on their owners. This classroom activity is designed to help students understand what status is and how it is conveyed. Ask students collectively or in small groups to consider why these items conveyed prestige and draw up a list of these reasons. Some questions that might help to guide their thoughts include: What about their acquisition might bring prestige? What about their display or use might bring prestige? Conclude by asking students to explain what it is that conveys status from an object to the person who possesses it.

## WHAT'S THE SIGNIFICANCE?

**African diaspora:** Name given to the spread of African peoples across the Atlantic via the slave trade.

**Benin:** West African kingdom (in what is now Nigeria) whose strong kings sharply limited engagement with the slave trade. (*pron.* be-NEEN)

**British/Dutch East India companies:** Private trading companies chartered by the governments of England and the Netherlands around 1600; they were given monopolies on Indian Ocean trade, including the right to make war and to rule conquered peoples.

**Dahomey:** West African kingdom that became strong through its rulers' exploitation of the slave trade. (*pron.* dah-HOH-mee)

**Ayuba Suleiman Diallo:** Sold into slavery in West Africa and transported to work on a plantation in Maryland in 1730, this well-educated Muslim (ca. 1700–1773) became a celebrity in England because of his life story. He returned to his home in West Africa in 1734 after philanthropists bought his freedom. (*pron.* ah-YOO-bah SOO-lay-mahn JAH-loh)

**Indian Ocean commercial network:** The massive, interconnected web of commerce in premodern times between the lands that bordered on the Indian Ocean (including East Africa, India, and Southeast Asia); the network was badly disrupted by Portuguese intrusion beginning around 1500.

**Potosí:** City that developed high in the Andes (in present-day Bolivia) at the site of the world's largest silver mine and that became the largest city in the Americas, with a population of some 160,000 in the 1570s. (*pron.* poh-toh-SEE)

**“silver drain”:** Term often used, along with “specie drain,” to describe the siphoning of money from Europe to pay for the luxury products of the East, a process exacerbated by the fact that Europe had few trade goods that were desirable in Eastern markets; eventually, the bulk of the world's silver supply made its way to China.

**“soft gold”:** Nickname used in the early modern period for animal furs, highly valued for their warmth and as symbols of elite status; in several regions, the fur trade generated massive wealth for those engaged in it.

**Philippines (Spanish):** An archipelago of Pacific islands colonized by Spain in a relatively bloodless process that extended for the century or so after 1565, a process accompanied by a major effort at evangelization; the Spanish named them the Philippine Islands in honor of King Philip II of Spain.

**Tokugawa shogunate:** Military rulers of Japan who successfully unified Japan politically by the early seventeenth century and established a “closed door” policy toward European encroachments. (*pron.* Toe-koo-GOW-ah SHOW-gun-at)

**trading post empire:** Form of imperial dominance based on control of trade rather than on control of subject peoples.

## FURTHER READING

- East & Southeast Asia: An Annotated Directory of Internet Resources: History of Japan, <http://newton.uor.edu/Departments&Programs/AsianStudiesDept/japan-history.html>. An excellent guide to works available online.
- Glete, Jan. *Warfare at Sea, 1500–1650: Maritime Conflicts and the Transformation of Europe*. London: Routledge, 2002. An interesting account that includes considerable information about ship design and capabilities.
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- Stein, Stanley J., and Barbara H. Stein. *Silver, Trade, and War: Spain and America in the Making of Early Modern Europe*. 2nd ed. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003. A thought-provoking account of the intersection of trade and war in the early modern era.

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East Asia as the Portuguese trading post empire was taking shape.

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- Equiano, Olaudah. *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*. Ed. Robert Allison. Boston: Bedford/ St. Martins, 1995. Account of the Atlantic slave trade through the eyes of an African slave.
- Halsall, Paul, ed. *Indian History Sourcebook: England, India, and the East Indies, 1617 C.E.* <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/india/1617englandindies.html>. A collection of short documents, including the Mughal emperor Jahangir's letter to James I of England.
- Halsall, Paul, ed. *Internet Modern History Sourcebook: The Early Modern World*. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook03.html>. An interesting collection of accounts by world travelers, including accounts of Francis Drake's and Ferdinand Magellan's circumnavigations, letters from St. Francis Xavier, and more.
- Pepys, Samuel. *A Pepys Anthology*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. A nice selection from Pepys's voluminous diaries. Pepys was an English official who worked for the navy in the late seventeenth century.
- Pinto, Fernão Mendes. *The Travels of Mendes Pinto*. Ed. and trans. Rebecca D. Catz. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989. Fascinating account of this merchant adventurer's travels along the sea routes of the Indian Ocean and

## FILM

- *Black Sugar*. Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 1989. 26 minutes. Presents the African slave trade from a West African perspective.
- *The Blue Highway: Trade Routes across the Sea*. Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 1990. 26 minutes. Traces the history of seaborne commerce in the Orient, including segments on the Portuguese and on the Dutch East India Company.
- *Exploration*. Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 1998. 53 minutes. Explores comparatively the motivations for exploration, conquest, and colonization, contrasting the Chinese experience with that of the European powers.
- *Gorée: Door of No Return*. Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 1992. 30 minutes. Documentary on the history of the slave trade, focusing on Gorée Island off the coast of West Africa, where slaves were held before making the dangerous Middle Passage.
- *The Great Age of Exploration*. Insight Media, 1998. 30 minutes. Recounts the first century and a half of European oceanic exploration and discovery.
- *History of Trade in China*. Insight Media, 2000. 26 minutes. Offers an overview of Chinese trade from antiquity to the twentieth century, with segments on the early modern period.
- *Slave Ship*. Discovery Channel, 1997. 52 minutes. Takes an in-depth look at the Atlantic slave trade, with segments on the preexisting trade in Africa before European demand transformed it.

## ADDITIONAL BEDFORD/ ST. MARTIN'S RESOURCES FOR CHAPTER 14

### PowerPoint Maps, Images, Lecture Outlines, and i>clicker Content

These presentation materials are downloadable from the Media and Supplements tab at [bedfordstmartins.com/strayer/catalog](http://bedfordstmartins.com/strayer/catalog), and they are available on an

Instructor's Resource CD-ROM. They include ready-made and fully customizable PowerPoint multimedia presentations built around lecture outlines that are embedded with maps, figures, and selected images from the textbook and are supplemented by more detailed instructor notes on key points. Also available are maps and selected images in JPEG and PowerPoint format; content for i>clicker, a classroom response system, in Microsoft Word and PowerPoint formats; the Instructor's Resource Manual in Microsoft Word format; and outline maps in PDF format for quizzing or handouts. All files are suitable for copying onto transparency acetates.

### **Documents and Essays from *Worlds of History: A Comparative Reader*, Fifth Edition**

The following documents, essays, and illustrations to accompany Chapter 14 are available in the following chapters of this reader by Kevin Reilly:

Chapter 16:

- Nzinga Mbemba, *Appeal to the King of Portugal*
- Captain Thomas Phillips, *Buying Slaves in 1693*
- J. B. Romaine, *Journal of a Slave Ship Voyage*
- *Images of African-American Slavery*
- Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself*

### **Online Study Guide at [bedfordstmartins.com/strayer](http://bedfordstmartins.com/strayer)**

The Online Study Guide helps students synthesize the material from the textbook as well as practice the skills historians use to make sense of the past. Each chapter contains specific testing exercises, including a multiple-choice self-test that focuses on important conceptual ideas; a flashcard activity that tests students on their knowledge of key terms; and two interactive map activities intended to strengthen students' geographic skills. Instructors can monitor students' progress through an online Quiz Gradebook or receive email updates.

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