



World History

Early Expeditions of the Southern Hemisphere

Name: _____

Section: _____

Score: ____/5

Directions: Use the following readings to answer the associated thought questions, and then map out the major voyages of the designated explorers.

Map of Early Explorations



Key

----- Magellan

+++ Da Gama

--- Henry the Navigator

*** Zheng He

Directions:

Map out the major voyages of all three explorers. In the case of Prince Henry the Navigator map out the major voyages he dispatched. Use the key above to distinguish between the three different explorers. Write the years of the expeditions over the lines.

Prince Henry the Navigator

Portugal is a country that has no coast along the Mediterranean Sea so the country's advances in worldwide exploration centuries ago comes at no surprise. However, it was the passion and goals of one man who truly moved Portuguese exploration forward.

Prince Henry was born in 1394 as the third son of King John I (King Joao I) of Portugal. At the age of 21, in 1415, Prince Henry commanded a military force that captured the Muslim outpost of Ceuta, located on the south side of the Strait of Gibraltar.

Three years later, Prince Henry founded his Institute at Sagres on the southwestern-most point of Portugal, Cape Saint Vincent - a place ancient geographers referred to as the western edge of the earth. The institute, best described as a fifteenth century research and development facility, included libraries, an astronomical observatory, ship-building facilities, a chapel, and housing for staff.

The institute was designed to teach navigational techniques to Portuguese sailors, to collect and disseminate geographical information about the world, to invent and improve navigational and seafaring equipment, to sponsor expeditions, and to spread Christianity around the world - and perhaps even to find Prester John. Prince Henry brought together some of the leading geographers, cartographers, astronomers, and mathematicians from throughout Europe to work at the institute.

Although Prince Henry never sailed on any of his expeditions and rarely left Portugal, he became known as Prince Henry the Navigator.

The institute's primary exploration goal was to explore the western coast of Africa to locate a route to Asia. A new type of ship, called a caravel was developed at Sagres. It was fast and was much more maneuverable than prior types of boats and though they were small, they were quite functional. Two of Christopher Columbus' ships, the Nina and the Pinta were caravels (the Santa Maria was a carrack.)

Caravels were dispatched south along the western coast of Africa. Unfortunately, a major obstacle along the African route was Cape Bojador, southeast of the Canary Islands (located in Western Sahara). European sailors were afraid of the cape, for supposedly to its south lay monsters and insurmountable evils.

Prince Henry sent fifteen expeditions to navigate south of the cape from 1424 to 1434 but each returned with it's captain giving excuses and apologies for not having passed the dreaded Cape Bojador. Finally, in 1434 Prince Henry sent Captain Gil Eannes (who had previously attempted the Cape Bojador voyage) south; this time, Captain Eannes sailed to the west prior to reaching the cape and then headed eastward once passing the cape. Thus, none of his crew saw the dreadful cape and it had been successfully passed, without catastrophe befalling the ship.

Following the successful navigation south of Cape Bojador, exploration of the African coast continued.

In 1441, Prince Henry's caravels reached Cape Blanc (the cape where Mauritania and Western Sahara meet). In 1444 a dark period of history began when Captain Eannes brought the first boatload of 200 slaves to Portugal. In 1446, Portuguese ships reached the mouth of the Gambia River.

In 1460 Prince Henry the Navigator died but work continued at Sagres under the direction of Henry's nephew, King John II of Portugal. The institute's expeditions continued to venture south and then rounded the Cape of Good Hope and sailed to the east and throughout Asia over the next few decades.



Zheng He (Ma He)

Zheng He was the son of a hājjī, a Muslim who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca. His family claimed descent from an early Mongol governor of Yunnan province in southwestern China as well as from King Muḥammad of Bukhara. The family name Ma was derived from the Chinese rendition of Muḥammad. In 1381, when he was about 10 years old, Yunnan, the last Mongol hold in China, was reconquered by Chinese forces led by generals of the newly established Ming dynasty. The young Ma Sanbao (later Ma He), as he was then known, was among the boys who were captured, castrated, and sent into the army as orderlies. By 1390, when these troops were placed under the command of the prince of Yan, Ma He had distinguished himself as a junior officer, skilled in war and diplomacy; he also made influential friends at court.



In 1400 the prince of Yan revolted against his nephew, the Jianwen emperor, taking the throne in 1402 as the Yongle emperor. Under the Yongle administration (1402–24), the war-devastated economy of China was soon restored. The Ming court then sought to display its naval power to bring the maritime states of South and Southeast Asia in line.

For 300 years the Chinese had been extending their power out to sea. An extensive seaborne commerce had developed to meet the taste of the Chinese for spices and aromatics and the need for raw industrial materials. Chinese travelers abroad, as well as Indian and Muslim visitors, widened the geographic horizon of the Chinese. Technological developments in shipbuilding and in the arts of seafaring reached new heights by the beginning of the Ming.

The emperor having conferred on Ma He, who had become a court eunuch of great influence, the surname Zheng, he was henceforth known as Zheng He. Selected by the emperor to be commander in chief of the missions to the “Western Oceans,” he first set sail in 1405, commanding 62 ships and 27,800 men. The fleet visited Champa (now in southern Vietnam), Siam (Thailand), Malacca (Melaka), and Java; then through the Indian Ocean to Calicut (Kozhikode) and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Zheng He returned to China in 1407.

On his second voyage, in 1408–09, Zheng He again visited Calicut—stopping as well in Chochin (Kochi) to the south—but encountered treachery from King Alagonakkara of Ceylon. Zheng defeated his forces and took the king back to Nanjing as a captive. In October 1409 Zheng He set out on his third voyage. This time, going beyond the seaports of India, he sailed to Hormuz on the Persian Gulf. On his return in 1411 he touched at Samudra, on the northern tip of Sumatra.

On his fourth voyage Zheng He left China in 1413. After stopping at the principal ports of Asia, he proceeded westward from India to Hormuz. A detachment of the fleet cruised southward down the Arabian coast, visiting Djofar and Aden. A Chinese mission visited Mecca and continued to Egypt. The fleet visited Brava and Malindi and almost reached the Mozambique Channel. On his return to China in 1415, Zheng He brought the envoys of more than 30 states of South and Southeast Asia to pay homage to the Chinese emperor.

During Zheng He’s fifth voyage (1417–19), the Ming fleet revisited the Persian Gulf and the east coast of Africa. A sixth voyage was launched in 1421 to take home the foreign emissaries from China. Again he visited Southeast Asia, India, Arabia, and Africa. In 1424 the Yongle emperor died. In the shift of policy his successor, the Hongxi emperor, suspended naval expeditions abroad. Zheng He was appointed garrison commander in Nanjing, with the task of disbanding his troops.

Zheng He’s seventh and final voyage left China in the winter of 1431, visiting the states of Southeast Asia, the coast of India, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and the east coast of Africa. He died in Calicut in the spring of 1433, and the fleet returned to China that summer.

Zheng He was the best known of the Yongle emperor’s diplomatic agents. Although some historians see no achievement in the naval expeditions other than flattering the emperor’s vanity, these missions did have the effect of extending China’s political sway over maritime Asia for half a century. Admittedly, they did not, like similar voyages of European merchant-adventurers, lead to the establishment of trading empires. Yet, in their wake, Chinese emigration increased, resulting in Chinese colonization in Southeast Asia and the accompanying tributary trade, which lasted to the 19th century.

Thought Questions:

1. Where was he from? What Government(s) did he work for?
2. What was the motivation(s) for his explorations?
3. What did Zheng He contribute to the general understanding of the world/What did he accomplish for the country(s) he was serving?

Ferdinand Magellan (1480 - 1521)

Ferdinand Magellan was born in 1480 into a noble Portuguese family. His parents died when he was still a boy and he became a court page in Lisbon. In 1505, he enlisted in the fleet of the Portuguese viceroy to the Indies, and spent the following years involved in a series of Portuguese expeditions in India and Africa. In 1511, he was with the fleet that conquered Malacca (on the Malay Peninsula), thus gaining control of the most important trade routes in the region. He also explored the islands of present-day Indonesia as far east as the Moluccas (also known as the Spice Islands).



In 1512, Magellan returned to Lisbon, and the following year, he was wounded during an expedition to Morocco, which left him with a permanent limp. After a disagreement with the Portuguese king, in 1517 Magellan went to Spain to try and enlist the Spanish king's support for an expedition to reach the Moluccas by sailing westwards. The Spanish wanted a share in the valuable spice trade from the Moluccas, but the Portuguese controlled the eastwards route round southern Africa. Magellan was successful and in September 1519 set out with a fleet of five vessels. In spite of a mutinous crew, rough weather, scurvy, a desperate lack of provisions and unknown waters, Magellan managed to cross the Atlantic and navigate through the straits at the southern point of South America which were later named after him.

Now with only three ships, Magellan sailed on into the Pacific with rapidly diminishing supplies, which led to many of the crew dying of starvation and scurvy. After around 14 weeks they reached an island, probably Guam, in the western Pacific. They then sailed on to the Philippines. On 27 April 1521, Magellan was killed there after becoming involved in a battle between two rival local chieftains.

One ship from the fleet eventually reached Spain in September 1522, having completed the first ever circumnavigation of the globe.

"Ferdinand Magellan (1480 - 1521)." BBC News. BBC, n.d. Web. 21 Jan. 2015.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/magellan_ferdinand.shtml>.

Thought Questions:

1. Where was he from? What Government(s) did he work for?
2. What was the motivation(s) for his explorations?
3. What did Magellan contribute to the general understanding of the world/What did he accomplish for the country(s) he was serving?

Vasco da Gama (c.1460 - 1524)

Vasco da Gama was born in about 1460 into a noble family. Little is known of his early life. In 1497, he was appointed to command an expedition equipped by the Portuguese government, whose intention was to find a maritime route to the East.

Setting off in July 1497, da Gama's expedition took advantage of the prevailing winds by sailing south down the coast of Africa, then veering far out into the Atlantic and swinging back in an arc to arrive off the southern African coast. This established a route still followed by sailing vessels. The expedition then rounded the Cape of Good and, after sailing up the coast of east Africa, took on an Arab navigator who helped them reach the Indian coast, at Calicut (now Kozhikode) in May 1498. This voyage launched the all-water route from Europe to Asia.

Da Gama returned to Portugal. The king immediately dispatched another expedition to secure a trading post at Calicut. After hearing of the massacre of all those at the trading post, da Gama sailed for India again in 1502 attacking Arab Muslim ships he met on the way. He forced the ruler of Calicut to make peace and, on his return voyage along the east African coast established Portuguese trading posts in what is now Mozambique.

Back in Portugal, da Gama was granted further privileges and revenues and continued to advise the king on Indian matters. After 20 years at home, in 1524, he was nominated as Portuguese viceroy in India and sent to deal with the mounting corruption among Portuguese authorities there. Arriving in Cochin, he fell ill and died on 24 December 1524. In 1539, his body was taken back to Portugal for burial.

"Vasco da Gama (1460 - 1524)." BBC News. BBC, n.d. Web. 21 Jan. 2015.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/magellan_ferdinand.shtml>.



Thought Questions:

4. Where was he from? What Government(s) did he work for?
5. What was the motivation(s) for his explorations?
6. What did Da Gama contribute to the general understanding of the world/What did he accomplish for the country(s) he was serving?