

How columbus exploration and discovery changed europe essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Though Christopher Columbus was not the first man to discover the new world and was not even the first European to make contact with the Western world, he is still celebrated as the father of exploration and has even been given his own day of remembrance in many nations.

Many other men, including Vikings and other sailors, traversed the Atlantic Ocean in search of a nation world, but Christopher Columbus was the one who had the greatest impact on European society. Because of that, the reaction from European society to his exploration was substantially greater than how they reacted to any of the other exploration attempts. Though his actual exploration may have been similar to those who came before him, Columbus' trip the Americas occurred under entirely different pretenses, which is why his voyage was so much more important to European leaders. Early world history shows that there may have been exploration attempts to the Americas as early as 1100. Then, Vikings and other sea-faring groups of people sailed all throughout the Atlantic Ocean and found all sorts of things. European nations, as a whole, did not respond to those voyages, though.

Even though Viking Leif Eriksson may have been the first man to ever discover America, he is not given nearly the amount of praise that Christopher Columbus gets. The reasons for this difference can be traced back to intent. This is because in the case of the Vikings, they were not making trips for the good of any of the European nations. They were simply doing what Vikings do and to be frank, nobody cared what was going on across the ocean. This is the primary reason why there was no huge outcry of support for the Vikings who probably discovered the new world before anyone else. Another thing that must be considered in this debate is the <https://assignbuster.com/how-columbus-exploration-and-discovery-changed-europe-essay/>

state of affairs in Europe during the time that the Vikings made their many voyages to America.

In the 1100s and really any time leading up until about 1400, Europe was very introverted. It was mired in what would later become known as the Middle Ages, or the Medieval period. During this time, disease was rampant, the economy was not very organized, and simply put, life was extremely primitive. Nations themselves were not as organized as they would become in later years. This meant that large, cooperative, nation efforts could not be undertaken by nations. During this time, nations were split into smaller divisions.

Though there were Kings at the time in Europe, most of the territories were governed by different lords, who had their system of protection in place with knights and other warriors. Though they were all apart of a nation, no one seemed to have any sort of national pride for that nation. Instead, they were loyal to their own nobles, because that was who gave them protection. When Christopher Columbus sailed to the new world in 1492, things were quite different in Europe.

Though some argue that Europe was still in the later part of the Middle Ages during 1492, most feel like things had come out of it by that time. Now, nations began to have organization. In a way, they almost had too much organization. Kings of these European nations were busy trying to organize themselves into powerful countries and they were trying to jockey for position among a bunch of other countries that also wanted the power. In a way, it was an arms race to see who could collect the most power and who

could gain the most wealth. These nations were tired of fighting, for the most part, though.

The Middle Ages cost most of the European countries a lot of lives and more importantly, almost all of their money. Now, instead of trying to kill each other, countries wanted to make more money than the other countries around them. The chief players in this game were Spain, England, France, and Portugal, though there were other nations who tried their very best to get involved, as well. In this race, the country that collected the most money would have the positioning to be the most powerful country. With that money, countries would be able to build infrastructure and put together large, powerful armies. One of the primary ways that countries tried to out-do each other during this time was through exploration.

According to Samuel Eliot Morrison's book, *Admiral of the Ocean Sea: A Life of Christopher Columbus*, nations would do almost anything within reason to keep up with the countries around them (Morrison). Columbus pitted European powers against each other by pitching his idea to many different leaders. He went many times to the high court of Portugal to try to gain their support. He also went to England to pitch his idea to the monarchs there. In the end, it was Spain that came up with the funding and because of that, they were able to gain power over the rest of Europe. That brings the discussion back to the question of intent, once again.

As mentioned before, the Vikings of the 1100s were sailing for their own money and their own survival. Columbus was sailing for Spain and in effect, he was sailing for European power. That is the primary reason why the

reaction to his voyage is so much different than it was for the voyages of the Vikings. Another thing to consider is the domino effect that is caused by the voyage of Christopher Columbus. Not only did he sail once, but he went to the Americas three more times after his first famous visit. Once it was discovered that Columbus had found land on the other side of the world, a whole new way of thinking came about.

No longer did people consider the world flat. Now, they saw opportunity to colonize the nations of the new world and gain power over their adversaries. Christopher Columbus' journey to America is a much different situation than any of the other people who may have sailed to the Americas before. Though the trip may have been the same, the impact of the trip was certainly not.

Columbus set of a chain of events that would change the world. Through innovative thinking, he changed the way the game was played in Europe. He opened up the door to new possibilities that most leaders had only dreamed about and because of that, he set himself apart from all of the other sailors of his time. Christopher Columbus ushered in change during that time and he helped push Europe out of the Middle Ages.

By bringing Europe into the new world, he became one of the greatest men to ever walk the earth. Works Cited Morison, Samuel Eliot, Admiral of the Ocean Sea: A Life of Christopher Columbus, Boston, Little, Brown and C