

Consequences of exploration for europeans and the indigenous peoples

[History](#)



In 1492, Christopher Columbus landed in the Caribbean bearing the name of the Spanish Crown in hopes that he had landed in the Indies of Asia using a direct sea route. Though that is not where he landed, his "New World" was a place of great wealth, new materials and crops, new source of labor, and new land for the European nations. The consequences for the native people of the Americas were much worse with devastating death tolls, enslavement, new diseases and racist attitudes towards them. Though it would not be fair to say that the Europeans did not share in negative consequences or that the indigenous people did not gain any advantages.

The greatest negative consequences for the Europeans due to the European expansion are a devastating economic revolution, and the introduction of the venereal disease Syphilis. Once the Spanish began to mine the precious ores of America the wealth of Spain underwent a major transformation.

Demanding one-fifth of all profit, the Crown became immensely rich and this showed in their influence on the rest of Europe, seeing that other countries now lacked the material wealth of Spain. Throughout this time of great wealth the population rose steadily in Spain. With population increase, came an increased demand for food and merchandise.

Spain had expelled a large amount of their skilled farmers, workers, merchants and businessmen during the Inquisition when they cleansed their country of the Jewish and Muslim people. Along with the demand in Spain, the demand for Spanish and European products in the Americas also became hard to keep up with. With the ever-increasing influx of silver bullion the prices in Spain began to rise and the inflation quadrupled the prices of everything within thirty years. In 1556, Martin de Azpilcueta Navarro, a <https://assignbuster.com/consequences-of-exploration-for-europeans-and-the-indigenous-peoples/>

Spanish canon lawyer, writes about the influx of American silver as the cause of the inflation.

We see by experience that in France, where money is scarcer than in Spain, bread, wine, cloth, and labour are worth much less. And even in Spain, in times when money was scarcer, saleable goods and labour were given for very much less than after the discovery of the Indies, which flooded the country with gold and silver. The reason for this is that money is worth more where and when it is scarce than where and when it is abundant. Along with this, the Spanish king Philip II spent more money on outside enterprises to worsen his countries debt.

When needing to pay his debt to other countries, he also paid in silver bullion spreading the inflation to the rest of Europe. The discovery of the Americas led Europe to inflation and increased prices and Spain to almost complete debt by the seventeenth century. Besides silver and gold, the native people of the Americas passed Syphilis on to the Spanish who came to settle there. In five year time, Syphilis had spread to Russia from the European Atlantic coast. Though it could not be proven, Syphilis is thought to have originated in Epiola because no evidence of Syphilis exists in Europe before 1493.

These open sores, boils, and aches in the joints caused excruciating pains to many Europeans due to this quickly widespread venereal disease. The only proven effective way to treat Syphilis was from drinking the boiled bark of the guaiacum tree which only grew in Epiola. Though no exact numbers were calculated for Syphilis it could not be compared to the death tolls that the European diseases left on the Indian populations. " In a period of 130 years,

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something like 95 percent of all Native Americans died of disease. That number is far greater than experts (until recently) had ever suspected.

The Native Americans who survived the plagues were, of course, completely demoralized and depressed by this tremendous loss of their loved ones, of their lifestyle, and of their ancient culture. "(Bib 2.) The 95 percent population loss of the Natives was staggering compared to probably one percent death caused by Syphilis. Thus though Syphilis was a negative consequence of European expansion it proved minor compare to the Indigenous peoples loss due to European disease. Besides new crops and animals the indigenous people were introduced to new religions, medicines and ways of life that helped better themselves.

Christianity was introduced to the indigenous people thanks to very ardent Catholicism from the Spanish and Portuguese. These Christians taught of love, equality and a heaven after death for those who acted well on earth. For many indigenous people this religion called to them and they were converted. Those who did not convert voluntarily were either forced to convert or killed. The native people actually became very passionate about this religion and even followed religious doctrines more closely than the Spanish conquistadors.

The natives began to spread peace and love as a bigger doctrine than territory fighting which shows how religion was a positive outcome from European expansion. New technology and medicine helped more effectively cure the local people and brought new light to the topic. In Pre-Colombian times the Indian populations would come to the ailing and stay by their side

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through illness thus probably catching the illness themselves, the Europeans taught to isolate the sick and better medicines to treat them.

The lives that new medicines saved in the Americas is immeasurable but probably still do not compare to the lives lost from European diseases. New technologies such as guns, steel and sailing equipment helped build stronger weapons than the ones previously possessed by Indians, and a new material from which objects could be made. Very strong steel could be used to make protection from swords and swords themselves thus fortifying indigenous peoples' ability to make weapons, protect themselves, and hunt.

Many thousands of things brought from Europe helped make indigenous life better such as candles to light the night and paper so writing and language could be better developed. Though much understated there were many positive outcomes from European expansion to the indigenous people of the Americas and even a few negative outcomes for the Europeans themselves. More often than not, when talking about the European expansion into America, the Europeans seem to get much better rewards from their expansion. And they actually did.

They reaped much higher rewards from their conquest of the Americas than the indigenous people, yet it cannot be forgotten that both peoples' had multiple sides to their gains and losses due to European expansion.

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