The discovery of America transformed the Old World by establishing new trade routes, introducing widespread slavery, and exchanging of new animals, plants, and diseases.

1. The Colombian Exchange is characterized by the exchange of new plants, animals, and diseases between the Old World and the New World.
   1. Old World crops included rice, wheat, barley, oats, rye, turnips, onions, cabbage, lettuce, peaches, pears, and sugar. New World crops maize (corn), white potatoes, sweet potatoes, manioc, peanuts, tomatoes, squash (incl. pumpkin), pineapples, papaya, and avocados (Crosby, n.d.).
   2. Old World animals included dogs, horses, donkeys, pigs, cattle, goats, sheep, barnyard fowl and New World dogs, llamas, guinea pigs, and fowl (a few species) (Crosby, n.d.).
   3. Smallpox came from Europe to America, Syphilis came from the Americas to Europe, Malaria and Yellow Fever came from Africa to the Americas, and plague came from Asia to Africa (Corbett et al., 2014, p. 62)
   4. During the Crusades the Europeans bought new and exotic goods from the East, such as silk, spices, and precious jewels. As the demand for these goods grew, trade routes to Asia opened up, Christopher Columbus, setting sail in search for a shorter route to Asia, discovered the Americas (Crosby, n.d.).
2. The Colombian Exchange had effects on the following groups in the following ways:
   1. Native Americans
      1. Diseases such as smallpox ravaged Native American populations in the Americas and the Caribbean.
      2. Colonization and the expansion of crops brought from Europe (wheat, barley, and rye, and later, tobacco) encroached on land the Native Americans were living on and using to hunt and farm. Natives didn’t understand the “claim” to land and felt it was there for all to use and benefit from (McNeill, n.d.).
      3. Native Americans traded domesticated llamas and alpacas for European goats, pigs, horses, and cattle (McNeill, n.d.).
   2. Africans
      1. The introduction of maize in southern Africa provided a main source of food for peasant Africans.
      2. Cash crops such as tobacco demanded major amounts of manual labor. In the North, peasant Europeans provided labor. In the south, where warm temperatures brought malaria carrying mosquitos, Africans faired the disease better and was the main source of labor. When crops took off, demand for labor increased dramatically, giving birth to chattel slavery (Grolle, 2013).
   3. Europeans
      1. Europeans suffered venereal disease in the form of syphilis from the Americas.
      2. They traded for guinea pigs and other domesticated animals from the natives.
      3. Colonization and the success of cash crops brought wealth and a source of income for those who could afford the slave labor associated with it.
      4. Colonizing the Americas also brought freedom to practice religion and freedom from religious persecution for some Europeans (McNeill, n.d.)
   4. Chinese
      1. Europeans brought silver to China, causing a silver rush and for a time, great wealth.
      2. With more and more European traffic came more and more silver, eventually causing inflation, tax deficits, bloody unrest and, ultimately, the collapse of the regime (Grolle, 2013).
   5. The Spanish (Spain)
      1. Spain explored in the search of mineral deposits such as gold. Italian explorer Christopher Columbus discovered America and brought with him crops with intentions of growing and building revenue. This allowed trade with natives.
      2. Spain became the route of dispersion for the new plants in Europe.
      3. Spain took control of much of the southern tip of the Eastern Americas (Florida), creating wealth for the nation (Grolle, 2013).
3. Five (5) ways that the creation of new global trade routes affected the occupations and lifestyles of the average working American in the colonies.
   1. Shift from mercantilism to capitalism (benefit of the country vs. benefit of self)
   2. Manufacturing and exporting their natural resources.
   3. Hard working small farmers, craftsmen, and merchants.
   4. Single crop economy - profitable, single crop farms growing tobacco, indigo, rice, hemp, and later on, cotton.
   5. Slave labor. The quest for huge profits, which depended upon a constant source of cheap labor, created an enormous slave populations.
   6. Export of agricultural goods (Olson-Raymer, n.d.)

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