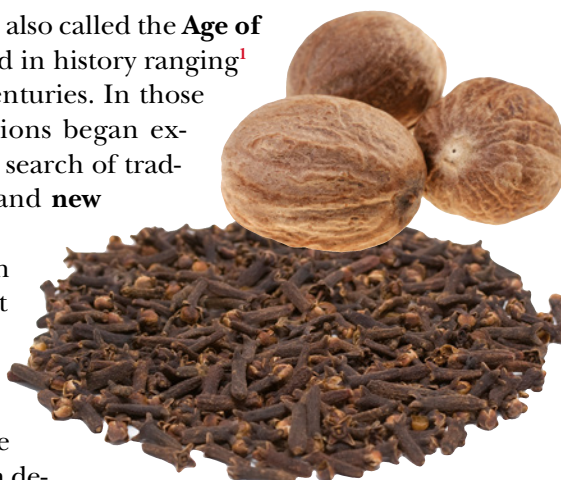


THE AGE OF EXPLORATION

The **Age of Exploration**, also called the **Age of Discovery**, was a period in history ranging¹ from the 15th to the 17th centuries. In those times some European nations began exploring the world by sea in search of trading partners, **new goods**² and **new trade routes**.

At the beginning of the 15th century there were great changes in Europe. Population began to grow creating an increased demand for food. During the Renaissance there was also a demand for unusual trade goods, including **spices** like pepper, nutmeg³ and cloves⁴. These spices, which were only found in **India** and certain areas of the East, were precious at the time, since they were used for preserving and flavouring⁵ meats. There were also political and religious reasons which led to the Age of Discovery. Some **European nations** were unhappy with the Muslim dominance of trade from the East and looked for new trade routes. Many European nations built and sailed ships during the Age of Discovery, including England, Spain, Portugal, Italy, France and many Scandinavian countries. In addition to discovering the American continent,



GLOSSARY

- 1 going
- 2 products
- 3 the hard, aromatic, almost spherical seed of a tropical tree
- 4 the dried flower blossom of a tropical tree
- 5 adding a substance to a food to give a specific taste
- 6 advancement

these European powers also formed **colonies** all over the globe. By forming a colony, a nation could monopolize a particular product, and expand its political and social power. Some of these colonies did not return to native authority until the 20th century.

By travelling to different regions around the globe, explorers were able to learn more about areas like **Africa** and **the Americas**. Thus, the Age of Exploration served as a stepping stone⁶ for geographic knowledge. It allowed more people to see and study various areas around the world, giving us the basis for much of the knowledge we have today.

READING COMPREHENSION

● Answer the following questions.

- 1 What do we mean by Age of Exploration?
- 2 Why did the Europeans begin to explore new areas?

- 3 What were the main changes in Europe at the beginning of the 15th century?
- 4 What were the main European sea powers?
- 5 Why were colonies established?

ACTIVITIES



VOCABULARY

● In the text above, find the English equivalents of the following Italian words.

- | | | | |
|----------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| 1 Commercio | ..... | 7 Insaporire | ..... |
| 2 Spezie | ..... | 8 Dominazione | ..... |
| 3 Noce moscata | ..... | 9 Esploratori | ..... |
| 4 Monopolizzare | ..... | 10 Carni | ..... |
| 5 Chiodi di garofano | ..... | 11 Rotte commerciali | ..... |
| 6 Colonia | ..... | 12 Conservare | ..... |

WRITING

● Write a short paragraph about the positive and negative consequences of the Age of Exploration.