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American History

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Christopher Columbus: Italian explorer

My explorer is Christopher Columbus, an Italian, who is known for finding the Americas, the Caribbean, and subsequently South America, under the flag of Spain. He also created the columbian exchange which led to increased trade and food production across the globe. Christopher Columbus was an essential part of American History.

Christopher Columus was a navigator, colonizer, and explorer from Genoa, Italy. His voyages across the Atlantic Ocean lead to general European awareness of the American continents in the Western hemisphere. Columbus completed four voyages of exploration and several attempts at establishing a settlement on the island of Hispaniola, all funded by Isabella I of Castile. Columbus wanted to find a new route to India, China, Japan and the spice islands. If he could reach these lands, he would be able to bring back rich cargoes of silk and spices.

His landing place was the Bahamas, then he visited the islands now known as Cuba and Hispanolia, establishing a colony. Columbus returned to the Castile in 1493, with captured natives. Word of his voyage soon spread throughout Europe. It wasn’t until his 3rd voyage in 1498 that Columbus realized that the lands he had discovered were not part of Asia, but a new continent. Columbus believed he had found India until the day he died.

After Columbus landed for nearly 5 months, he explored the Caribbean, particularly the islands of Juana and Hispaniola, before returning to Spain. Columbus opened the way for European countries to colonize and exploit those lands and their people. He also forced the indigenous people to look for gold in mines and to rebuild his fort. Warfare, Enslavement and forced relocations disrupted and altered the lives of Indigenous peoples in the Americas.

These voyages could not have been made without his ships the Santa María, Nína, and Pínta. If Columbus never found America, it would have never been colonized. Columbus’s arrival affected the native populations by forcing them to slave labor, leading to depopulation due to diseases, and seizure of their land and wealth. Christopher Columbus was not only an important part of American history, but also a part of world history. Had it not been for the Columbus voyages, the colonization of America would have most likely happened years later.