

EUROPE IN ASIA

In Asia, interaction was prompted primarily through trade and the beginnings of global European colonization and expansion. As a region, Asia was distinctly different than the Americas and Africa in that it possessed highly advanced, prosperous, relatively modern, and militarily strong civilizations. Because of these characteristics, European dealings with Asia were based on an association of "equals". This equality prompted Europe and Asia to largely engage in mutually beneficial trade relationships. To facilitate this relationship, European nations were allowed to establish a trade "presence" in Asia which was largely based on building trading posts in port cities and along the coastal regions. This trade led to a change in Asian economies which became more dependent on European trade and markets. Among other things this trade created a more prosperous merchant class in Asian societies that was closely aligned with Europeans.

During most of the 1600s and 1700s there was no significant European colonization in Asia comparable to that which existed in the Americas. While Europe did not initially engage in the colonization methods utilized in the Americas, it still had a major impact on the society and culture of Asia. For centuries Asian civilizations had largely developed in isolation from one another and from the European world. With the opening and eventual expansion of trade relationships this tradition of isolation began to break down and the introduction of European ideas spread, especially the introduction of Christianity as missionaries began travelling with the European merchants. Because of this influence of Christianity, many Asian governments limited or closed off trade with the Europeans in a return to isolationism in order to protect their cultures.

Name: _____

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1. Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, how was Asia different from the Americas and Africa?

2. Describe the relationship that developed between Europe and Asia.

3. Describe Europe's trade presence in Asia.

4. Explain the effect of European colonial power on the society and culture of Asia.

5. How did some Asian governments respond to European influence?
