

# THE MAKING OF A GLOBAL WORLD

## The Pre-Modern World

Globalization is the free flow of goods, capital and services to people across national borders.

In economic terms, globalization is the interdependence of nations around the globe fostered through free trade.

Emerged since last 50 years or so.

It has a long history of trade, migration, people in search of work, movement of capital, etc.

From ancient times, travellers, priests and pilgrims travelled long distances for knowledge, opportunity, spiritual fulfilment, or to escape persecution.

They carried:  
goods, money, values, skills, ideas, inventions and even germs and diseases

3000 BCE - Active coastal trade linked Indus valley civilization with present-day West Asia.

For more than a millenia, cowries from the Maldives found their way to China and East Africa.

Cowries / Cowdi - Seashells used as a form of currency

## \* Silk Routes Link The World

The silk route was a historic trade route.

»» Stretched from Asia to the Mediterranean, traversing China, India, Persia, Greece, Italy

»» Silk Road - Earned its name from Chinese Silk, a highly valued commodity that merchants transported along these trade networks.

»» This road linked Asia with Europe and Africa (north) before the Christian era and thrived almost till the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

### • Movement of Goods Through trade routes,

Chinese Pottery, Indian textiles and spices were imported to Europe.



In return, Gold and Silver were brought from ~~India~~ Europe to India.

### • Culture Exchange

»» Goes hand in hand with trade

»» Earlier, Christian Missionaries and Muslims travelled through silk route to Asia.

»» Buddhism emerged from East India and spread in several directions through intersecting points on silk routes.

## \* Food Travels: Spaghetti and Potato

- »» Food offers many examples of long-distance cultural exchange.
- »» Traders and travellers introduced new crops to the lands they travelled.

- »» It is believed that
  - Chinese noodles travelled west → became Spaghetti
  - Arab traders Sicily, Italy → took Pasta

### Q Why people used to travel in ancient times?

- »» 1. Culture exchange (spread of religion)
- »» 2. Trade
- »» 3. Exchange of goods
- »» 4. To explore the world
- »» 5. Escape

»» Foods were known in India, Japan, but origins never known  
»» Guesswork suggest possibilities of long-distance cultural contact in even pre-modern world.

»» 5 centuries ago ~ ancestors did not know about common foods like potatoes, soya, groundnuts, maize, tomatoes, chillies, sweet potatoes, etc.

»» Introduced only in Europe and Asia  
»» ~~Americans came to know about them after Christopher Columbus discovered America.~~ (For Europeans America was a magical land)

»» Many common foods came from America's original inhabitants - the American Indians.

## Q Explain Irish Potato Famine.

- Europe's poor began to eat better and live longer with introduction of humble potatoes.
- Ireland's poorest peasants became very dependent on potatoes.
- Mid-1840s: A disease <sup>(potato blight)</sup> destroyed potato crop, many people died of starvation.

## \* Conquest, Disease and Trade

- 16<sup>th</sup> century - European sailors found sea route to Asia, successfully crossed western ocean to America.
- Indian Ocean had bustling trade: goods, people, knowledge, customs, etc. criss-crossed its waters.
- India was centre of these flows and entry of Europeans helped to expand or re-direct some flows to Europe.

### Impact upon America

1. Before 'discovery' America ~~cut off~~ from regular contact with rest of the world.

2. From 16<sup>th</sup> century America's vast land and abundant crops and minerals began to transform trade and lives everywhere.

→ **Silver** (and other precious metals) from mines in present-day Peru and Mexico:

- Enhanced Europe's wealth
- Financed trade with Asia

»» 17<sup>th</sup> century

- Legends spread about South America's fabled wealth
- ↓
- Many expeditions in search of El Dorado, the fabled city of gold.
- ↓

»» Mid-16<sup>th</sup> century  
Portuguese and Spanish conquest for colonization of America was underway.

1. The most powerful weapon of Spanish conquerors was 'germs'.
2. Ex - Smallpox (a deadly killer) that they carried on their person
3. Once introduced, it spread deep into America.

### Consequences

- »» Due to their long isolation, America's original inhabitants had no immunity against these diseases.
- »» It killed whole communities, paving way for conquest.
- »» Guns could be bought and turned against the invaders, but not diseases.

»» Europe's Condition (until 19<sup>th</sup> century)

1. Poverty and hunger were common
2. Cities were crowded and diseases widespread
3. ~~Rel~~ Religious conflict and dissenters common.

↓ Consequences

»» Thousands of people fled to America

By 18<sup>th</sup> century

»» Plantations worked by slaves captured in Africa were growing and sugar for European markets.

»»»

1. Until 18<sup>th</sup> century - India and China were among the world's richest countries.
2. They were prominent in Asian trade.
3. Later, China restricted overseas contracts and retreated into isolation.



China's reduced role → Importance of America gradually moved centre of world trade westwards.

Europe emerged as a centre of world trade.

