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# Catalysts of the New World

In this source analysis, I will be analyzing information on various European nations and their relationships amongst each other and other nations of the world. I will describe how those relationships may or may not have changed over time through several documents on early European trade, exploration, and diplomatic relations between nations.

After reading the first source, *License to Venice to Trade With The Saracens*, I realize it is a trade document from the Pope outlawing commerce with the Saracens. I can infer that the people of Rome and the Saracens do not agree or get along by any means with each other. I pulled a quote from this document which goes as follows, “for there is no doubt that whosoever violates his conscience in evading this order will incur the anger of god.” To me, this really shows the religiosity of Rome during the time. This quote implies that the Pope’s word goes above and beyond the law and everyone who is a practicing Catholic shall abide by it. Aside from the legal court system, which Ancient Greece and many other European nations had, this source suggested to me that the people of Rome let God do the punishing and he was the worst punishment imaginable. This document shed some light on and allowed me to understand how different trading with other nations is today. In the reading, trade blocks were put in place due to the major differences and conflicts between Rome and the Saracens. But today, I do not hear about the United States place trading blocks on any other nations due to the economic driven society we live in today. I am not saying Rome wasn’t economically driven, but they did have other factors influencing their diplomatic relations such as religion that here in the United States isn’t so evident. The next source documents an Ottoman caravan being captured by King Richard during the Crusades. This document was proof to me that the world will always have differences and conflicts among different nations and we will never truly live all together in peace. It has an

interest in material gain and wealth and proves that economic gain drives humans against each other. Even if it is not physical harm, competition and stigma between businesses today are evidence for that.

The following source titled, *The Barcelona Navigation Act of 1227*, I believe is very similar to the last in the sense that they both have an interest in business, economic gain and wealth. This document implies that Barcelona is a very wealthy and economically driven city. If a nation or group of people do not comply with the Act that Barcelonian ships must be used to carry goods and merchandise, they must pay “a penalty of a thousand gold pieces”. I believe this source is describing an early form of business competition among different nations and their “shipping companies” if you will. This is evident to me in the following quote, “let him send them [merchandise] in a ship or vessel of Barcelona and let him not dare to send them on a foreign ship”. This quote made me come to the conclusion that business competition has always been around and nations have always competed for wealth and the domination of commerce and I think this quote is evidence that it will continue. My reading of this shows that Barcelona had economic relationships and competition among many other wealthy cities but despite all of that, remained a top mercantile city throughout history.

This next source is Marco Polo’s description of the great city of Kinsay. This document has an interest in portraying the city of Kinsay as truly being “great”. My reading of this source shows that this city had and potentially founded many modern traditions that are still in place today. One of these customs is “mourning over the dead” or today what is known as a funeral. I think the following quote accurately describes the way we today conduct funerals, “when any one dies the friends and relations make a great mourning for the deceased, and clothe themselves

in hempen garments”. (2). This reading is evidence that we live in a society very similar to the one in the city of Kinsay. The final source is a letter from Christopher Columbus after he had discovered the New World. I believe this source is evidence that Christopher Columbus is responsible for the Europeans to believe the Native Americans were savages and uncivilized. Columbus uses phrases such as “I had taken some Indians by force” (2) and “they [the Indians] continue to entertain the idea that I have descended from heaven” (2) to assert his dominance over the indigenous people. I believe this is why Europeans viewed the American Indians the way they did and why European artists depicted them as being very backwards and even why still today we view them as being uncivilized. Columbus goes on to say that he “never saw any people clothed, nor any ships like ours”. My reading of perhaps shows that the relationship the Europeans had with the Indians was for economic and territorial gain, rather than for diplomatic or commercial reasons.

The relationships amongst European nations and the New World were driven by many factors. Whether it be for religion, wealth, or simply for dominance, some of these driving factors still remain in some nations today which influence diplomatic associations. Overall, these documents have given me the acumen to effectively argue how relationships between Europeans and the New World have changed over time.