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Europeans in Asia:
The Early Years of Empire Building



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The Portuguese

1510: Portuguese seize Goa
1511: Portuguese conquer Malacca
1500s: Portuguese in control of the European-Asian spice trade from outposts and forts

Why? Control of the spice trade
How? Firepower
Where? Indian Ocean and around Africa

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The Dutch

1599: Dutch fleet returns with Asian spices
1602: Dutch East India Company forms
1641: Take Malacca from Portuguese and begin trading with China
1700s: Decline due to rising power of France and England

Why? Interest in spices and trading
How? Warships, trading vessels, and Dutch East India Company
Where? Cape Town (Africa) and Indian Ocean outposts (especially Spice Islands)

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The Spanish

1521:

Magellan claims Philippines from Spain

1520s-1570s:

Archipelago conquered

Why?

Spanish link to Asia

How?

Military and missionaries

Where?

Silver from Spanish America passed through on its way to buy goods in China

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India under the Mughals

1526:

Babur founds the Mughal dynasty

1700s:

European traders begin to enter mainland India along the coast

Why?

"Mughals do not initially see Europeans as a threat
"Europeans want Indian textiles

How?

"Warehouses and forts at coastal ports
"Europeans already on mainland as Mughal rule breaks down

Where?

European rule begins in Bengal

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European Ascendancy in India

•Religious toleration ends

•Hindu and Muslim princes begin fighting

•Europeans play princes against one another

Civil wars

Tax increases

Peasant unrest

•India's central government collapses

•British and French trading companies hire their own Indian troops (sepoys)

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Britain vs. France

- 1740-1748: War of the Austrian Succession (also known as *King George's War*)
- 1756-1763: Seven Years' War (known in the United States as the *French and Indian War*)
- Britain and France compete for world domination
- Britain and France both have trading operations in India

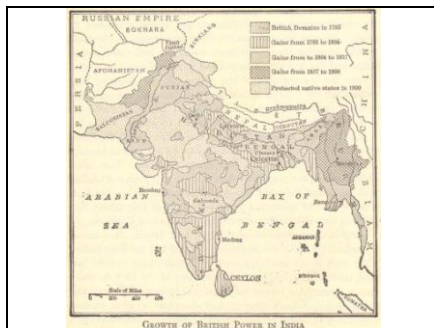
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Robert Clive (1725-1774)



- British East India Company agent
- Commands British and Indian troops (sepoys) to defeat French in India
- Gains control over Bengal and begins collecting taxes
- British East India Company uses Bengal as a launching pad for controlling India

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Questions

- What attracted Europeans to Asia?
- Which European nation was the first to acquire trading rights around the Indian Ocean?
- What role did the Philippines play in Spain's global trading empire?
- How did Great Britain come to dominate India?
