Notes for Columbus Lecture:

1. Not the First
   1. Norse sailors reached Iceland in 874
      1. Greenland year later
      2. Vinland settled by Leif Erickson somewhere on Canadian coast
   2. Trade with the Orient beckoned more exploration 500 years later
      1. Marco Polo’s tales of traveling in the far east – European demand skyrockets!
         1. Returned with unusual spices, rugs and silk
         2. Difficult long journey over land to Asia – through Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and Northern India
            1. Geographic barriers – mountain ranges, deserts
            2. Bandits threatened transportation lines from Europe to Asia
            3. Political tribute demanded regularly
            4. Crossing the Ottoman Empire required heavy tax payments
   3. European demanded a new route to supply these goods more affordably:
      1. Three additional factors that created this age of exploration
         1. Advance of sailing and shipbuilding technologies
            1. Arab development of the astrolabe
            2. Design of the caravel
            3. Time-keeping with a clock
         2. Political changes
            1. European monarchs consolidate lands with increased tax base
            2. Increased funding of navies
            3. Europe gains control of Mediterranean Sea with defeat of Ottoman’s in 1571
            4. Could now focus on exploration to the west – monarchs after the three g’s
         3. Protestant Reformation
            1. 1517 – fierce and bloody competition between Catholicism and Protestantism
            2. Strong religious/ theological incentive for monarchs to open treasuries to exploration and settlement