

APUSH TERMS 1-35

1. Great Ice Age

A drop in global temperatures that lasted from circa 100,000 BC to circa 12,000 BC; the northern half of North America, Asia and Europe was covered in year round snow resulting in a lowering of the seas level creating a land bridge between Asia and North America and creation of ice bridges between Europe and North America.

2. Little Ice Ages

After a warming of temperatures circa 12,000 BC until the Middle Ages (1300 AD) there were three drops and increases (1650s, 1770s, 1880s) in temperatures until circa 1880s AD (during the Industrial Revolution). This can be seen in the famous painting George Washington crossing the Delaware in 1775, which shows soldiers pushing huge ice flows out of the way and in the bitter cold winter of 1888 when cattle were frozen to the ground. Next predicted Little Ice age is 2030.

3. Bering Strait Land Bridge Theory

The Great Ice Age gathered enough water into huge glaciers that the water levels lowered so much that a land bridge was exposed between Asia and North America across the Bering Strait. Nomads from Asia crossed the Bering Land Bridge chasing herds of animals.

4. North Atlantic Ice Bridge Theory

The Great Ice Age gathered enough water into huge glaciers that the water levels lowered so much that a land bridge was exposed between Europe, England, and Ireland while connecting Iceland, Greenland and North America by ice sheets. Nomads from Europe crossed the land and ice sheets chasing herds of seals.

5. Cahokia

A pre-historic Native American city that housed as many as 20,000 people located in Illinois along the Mississippi River. It was part of the Mound-Builder society that lived throughout the Mississippi River Valley.

6. Anasazi

A pre-historic Native American pueblo culture that lived circa 100 AD to 1600 AD; a great drought (circa 1276-1299) with intermittent rainfall for nearly fifty years may have caused poetical instability and ultimately the demise of the culture. The modern day Hopi, Zuni and the Acoma are all descendants of the Anasazi.

7. Chaco Canyon

The administrative, cultural, economic and ceremonial center of the Anasazi; the canyon was nine miles long and constructed roads connected towns along a 400 mile stretch. Their jewelry, money and craft work has been found as far west as Oregon, California and Mexico.

8. Mesa Verde

Descendants of the Anasazi moved to the Mesa Verde after several invasions from a cannibal tribe from the south. Circa 1200 the Pueblo Indians transitioned from living on top of the mesas (7,000 ft) to the side and using the tops for farming.

9. Vinland; Vikings settle in Newfoundland

The Vikings settled in Newfoundland (far northeast coast of Canada) circa 1000 AD. In 1960 archeologists determined definitively that Vikings were the first to settle in North America, through discovering the first settlement. In 2016 archeologists used satellite imaging and have discovered a second settlement approximately 300 miles south of the first settlement.

10. Crusades

A series of military campaigns in the late 11th century to take back the Holy Land after the Seljuk Turks had closed it off from pilgrimages, which had been made peacefully for over 800 hundred years by both Muslims and Christians alike. The result of these military campaigns were an exchange of knowledge that ignited a spark of curiosity by Europe that would start the Renaissance, the Age of Exploration, the Scientific Revolution, the Reformation establishing Western dominance in politics, economics, religion, science and government for the 800 years.

11. West African Empires: Ghana, Mali, Songhai

Several African kingdoms of West Africa flourished from the 4th to 13th centuries, often trading goods and African slaves with Europeans during the early years of the Age of Exploration. The **Ghana Empire** maintained the trans-Saharan trade routes often bringing slaves and other goods (gold, salt) that was needed to trade with the Arab states. The **Mali** overthrew the Ghana Empire and ruled for nearly 250 years until they too fell. The **Songhai** were Muslims that (circa 15th-16th Centuries) ruled a vast trading empire and traded across the trans-Sahara routes for goods the Europeans desired in West Africa.

12. Trans-Saharan trade routes

Arabs and West African tribes kept a vibrant trade of slaves*, gold, salt, diamonds and other goods flowing both east and west from the end of the Roman Empire to the Age of Exploration (16th century). *Note: the slave trade at this time was not racial based; that would emerge starting in the 13th/14th centuries.

13. Silk Road

Arabs and Far Eastern people groups would cross the continent of Asia and then travel across the Pacific and Indian Oceans back to trade spices, coffee, silk, etc. The Silk Road has been used for over 3,000 years.

14. Marco Polo

Marco Polo was inspired to write a book of his journeys in 1295. It became a best seller and increased the curiosity of Europeans to explore the world while the Muslim Caliphate and China choose to close their doors to outside ideas, thus leading to the dominance of the West for over 500 years.

15. New Inventions: caravel, compass, astrolabe

Through the interactions of the Crusades and the travels of Marco Polo Europeans adopted advanced technologies. The **caravel** was a ship with triangle sails that allowed the ship to sail against the wind. It was used extensively to explore the west coast of Africa by Europeans. The **compass** was invented in China (circa 200 AD), was used in the Chinese explorations of the Indian and Pacific Ocean explorations (1200 AD) before they turned inward; it was widely used by Europeans by the 1300s in their explorations. The **astrolabe** was used to figure out latitude and longitude on dry land. Europeans invented the mariner astrolabe which could be used on the floating deck of a ship (circa 1295).

16. Incan Empire

An ancient indigenous civilization in southeastern Peru that emerged in the 12th century (circa) and lasted until the 16th century. European explorers unwittingly brought disease that severely weakened their empire through mass death, before Francisco Pizarro kidnapped and executed their emperor Atahualpa in 1532.

17. Aztec Empire

An ancient indigenous civilization in southern Mexico that emerged in the 13th century (circa) and lasted until the 16th century. European explorers unwittingly brought disease that severely weakened their empire through mass death as Hernan Cortez conquered the Aztecs in 1521.

18. Mayan Empire

An ancient indigenous civilization in Guatemala that emerged in the 6th century and had inexplicably begin to decline in the 9th century AD. By the time of the Columbian Exchange the Mayans had abandoned their cities and had been conquered by the Aztecs and treated as a vassal state, until the Mayans sided with Cortez in an attempt to overthrow the Aztecs.

19. Renaissance

Means “rebirth” in Latin. Between the 14th and 17th centuries the nations of Europe experienced an intellectual and cultural awakening that caused Europeans to question and explore the world around themselves through science, art, civics and economics.

20. Prince Henry the Navigator

Prince of Portugal that started a navigation school made up of the best cartographers, sailors, most experienced captains, etc. Began exploring the west coast of Africa to set up trade posts and find a route to the Far East to bypass the Italian, Arab and Asian middle men of the Silk Road.

21. Sao Tome

An island off the coast of Central West Africa that was Portugal’s first attempt at colonization. It went poorly until Portugal realized that the soil was suited for growing sugar. Since sugar was labor intensive the Portuguese began partaking in the already established trans-Saharan slave trade for their sugar plantations.

22. Elmina Castle

Elmina Castle started out as a fort to protect Portuguese trading their rapidly expanding empire along the coast of West Africa and at the southern edge of Moorish (North African Muslims) power in 1482. By the 17th century the Dutch had taken it over and used it for harboring slaves until the next slave ship arrived, often as long as 6-9 months. It became an infamous, secret slave center.

23. Bartholomew Diaz

Explorer for the nation of Portugal. He discovered the southern tip of Africa, calling it the Cape of Good Hope in 1488.

24. Ferdinand and Isabella

The King from the house of Aragon and the Queen from the House of Castile united most of Spain through their marriage. They sponsored Christopher Columbus to sail “west” in search of a new route to the Far East, to circumvent the Italian, Arab and Asian middle men of the Silk Road and the Portuguese going south.

25. Reconquista

The Moors (North African Muslims) conquered the Iberian Peninsula in 700 AD. The Portuguese and Spaniards had been under Moorish rule for 700 years. The different houses of Spain could not put aside their differences to kick out the Moors, until the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella united the House of Aragon and Castile, which then conquered the House of Granada. After 700 years the Spaniards were finally united enough to resist and reconquer Spain from the Moors.

26. Christopher Columbus; 1492

Explorer for Spain. He sailed “west” to find an alternative route to the Far East. He believed that the world was round when most Europeans believed that the world was flat however he underestimated the circumference of the world by 10,000 miles. In his first voyage (1492) he revolutionized the West by being the first European to discover two new continents, although it is debated if he ever realized this.

27. Taino

The first people group that Columbus met were the Taino on the island of Hispaniola (present day Haiti/Dominican Republic). They initially traded as equals, but in time the Spaniards enslaved the Taino to work in their gold mines.

28. Bartholomew de Las Casas

A Catholic priest that fought for the rights of the Taino people. He spent his entire life protecting them from the Conquistadors that tried to enslave them to work in the mines.

29. Conquistadores

Soldiers from the Reconquista that had become explorers in the New World. They searched for God, Glory and Gold and were granted haciendas or plantations (incredibly large farms)

throughout New Spain as payment from the crown. They enslaved first the indigenous people and later imported African slaves to work their haciendas or sugar plantations.

30. Encomienda System

Conquistadors were granted the towns of the indigenous people they conquered. The conquistadors, known as *encomenderos*, were able to tax these people and summon them for labor. In return the *encomenderos* were expected to provide safety for the people through an established military and teachings in Christianity.

31. Columbian Exchange

An exchange of both seen and unseen items between Europe, Africa and the Americas. Contact between the three areas exchanged a wide variety of new crops and livestock, which supported increases in population in both hemispheres. Initially diseases caused precipitous declines in the population of indigenous peoples in the Americas.

32. Treaty of Tordesillas

In an attempt to avoid an all-out war for land in the New World and not knowing how much or where the land was, Spain and Portugal turned to the Pope to decide how to divide up the land. The Pope declared all land west of the 47 degree latitude belonged to Spain and all land east of 47 degree latitude belonged to Portugal. In the end, Portugal received only Brazil and Spain received the rest of South America, Central America and the western portion of North America.

33. Ponce de Leon

Explorer or Conquistador that searched the American southeast for gold and unwittingly brought disease killing tens of thousands of Native Americans who did not have any immunities to fight the new diseases.

34. Ferdinand Magellan

Explorer that sailed for Spain and was the first person to circumnavigate the globe proving that the world was round. Magellan did not complete the voyage as he was killed in the South Pacific by some indigenous people groups.

35. Vasco Nuñez de Gama

Spanish explorer and conquistador that was the first person to round the Cape of Good Hope (southern tip of Africa) and reach India.