

Chapter-8

Confrontation of Cultures

Questions 1.

Compare the civilization of the Aztecs with that of the Mesopotamians.

Answer:

Aztecs	Mesopotamia's
(i) Aztecs society was hierarchical. It included nobles, priests, warriors and traders.	(i) Mesopotamian society was divided into three classes. It included higher, middle and lower classes.
(ii) The people of Aztecs civilization worshiped the gods of war and sun.	(ii) Mesopotamian people worshiped many gods and goddesses.
(iii) Aztecs civilization flourished in Central America between 1200 to 1400 AD.	(iii) Mesopotamian civilization flourished in Modern Iraq around 5000 BC.
(iv) The Aztecs knew the art of metal smelting. Ornaments were made of gold.	(iv) The Mesopotamia's were the first to use potters wheel, glassware, etc.
(v) Constant wars and climatic changes were responsible for the decline of the Aztec Civilisation.	(v) European invasion was the cause of the decline of the Mesopotamian Civilisation.

Questions 2.

What were the new developments helping European navigation in the 15th century?

Answer:

1. The invention of magnetic compass in 1380 CE helped in searching and identifying four cardinal directions. These directions were North, South, East and West.

2. Manufacturing of sailing sea helped the sailors to sail much safer and comfortable. Larger ships were built which could carry a large quantity of cargo.
3. The Travelogue of Marco Polo also helped a lot in European navigation and created wide interest among the people.
4. Travel literature and books on geography were also available.

Question 3.

Give reasons for Spain and Portugal being the first in the 15th century to venture across the Atlantic.

Answer:

1. The rulers of both Spain and Portugal had passion for acquiring wealth in the form of gold and treasure for glory and titles.
2. They also wanted to establish colonies in the regions.
3. The Christian Missionaries wanted to venture across the Atlantic.
4. Many Christians wanted to bring people of other lands into the fold of Christianity.

Question 4.

What new food items were transmitted from South America to the rest of the world?

Answer:

The food items which were transmitted from South America to the rest of the world were as follows:

1. Cacao
2. Potatoes
3. Tobacco
4. Cane sugar
5. Chillies
6. Rubber
7. Sugar

Question 5.

Write an account of the journey of an African boy of seventeen captured and taken to Brazil as a slave.

Answer:

Do it yourself. Guidelines in brief are given for the help of the students. They can elaborate it with the help of their teachers. The journey of the African boy was very hard. He was made a slave and journey started from Congo. Their ship sailed in the Atlantic ocean and reached Brazil in South America via Angola.

Question 6.

How did the discovery of South America lead to the development of European colonialism?

Answer:

European countries, especially Spain and Portugal were greedy for gold and silver. It was their expectation that a heavy quantity of gold was available in South America. So, they settled in different regions. International trade and industrialisation expanded in the region. They established their rule with the help of military strength. But local people resisted it. But the Spaniards suppressed their resistance. The merchants brought a variety of products to the Europeans such as tobacco, potatoes, sugarcane, cacao and rubber. Europe also became familiar with new crops from America, notably potatoes and chillies. The merchants formed joint stock companies and sent out trading expeditions. Profit was the main objective. The newly discovered land earned huge wealth. It also gave an impetus to the revolution. Thus it can be said that the discovery of South America led to the development to European colonialism.