25-Crash Course World History Video Notes

The Spanish Empire, Silver, & Runaway Inflation

1. In the years before Columbus three impressive civilizations arose in Mesoamerica: the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the Mayans and the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
2. The Aztecs formed out of an alliance of three major cities in modern day \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in about 1430, just 89 years before Cortez and his conquistadors showed up.
3. The Aztec state was very hierarchical, with an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at the top and a group unruly noble beneath him. In addition, there was a class of powerful \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ whose job it was to keep order in the cosmos.
4. The Aztec religion held that history was cyclical and punctuated by terrible \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and then would ultimately end with a massive apocalypse. The job of the priests was to avoid these disasters, by appeasing the gods, generally through \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
5. The Aztecs extended their control over most of southern Mexico, parts of Guatemala and the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. They demanded \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from conquered people in the form of goods, precious metals, and people to sacrifice.
6. The Aztecs accomplished some amazing things. Especially the building of their capital city Tenochtitlan, on the site of modern day \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, which was like Venice in that it was divided and serviced by canals.
7. They also had \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, called chinampas, which provided food for the city.
8. Founded in the 13th century, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Empire ruled between 4 and 6 million people by the time the Spanish showed up in 1532. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and a very effective administrative structure held the empire together, which was even more impressive when you consider all the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and temples that were built atop mountains with nothing to haul things up those mountains, except for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and people.
9. The Inca had no \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ but they were able to keep records with knotted strings called quipus.
10. And vitally, they ordered every male peasant under the Inca control to do unpaid work for the Inca government for a specified period of time each year. This system, which the Inca called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ allowed them to build all those roads and temples.
11. So, the Spanish arrived in Mexico in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and in Peru in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, benefiting in both cases from total chaos due to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
12. After conquering the Incas and the Aztecs, they created an empire with two administrative divisions. The Viceroyalty of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, founded in 1521, and the Viceroyalty of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, founded in 1542.
13. While most of the Spanish aristocrats who came over ran large agricultural operations, the real glory for conquistadors was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
14. Initially they found some, both in the Caribbean and in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but never enough to get, super-rich. They did, however, find a mountain made of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
15. The Spanish adapted the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ system to mine and process that silver.
16. Now, you might wonder why the Spanish didn’t purchase African slaves to work in the mines. They did in Mexico, but in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ it was cheaper to use indigenous labor. Purchasing slaves was inefficient because 1. They didn’t have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ working at high altitudes, and 2. Mine work was super deadly.
17. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ poisoning among miners was so common that parents would often maim their children to keep them from having to work the mines.
18. Spanish mines in the Americas produced over 150,000 tons of silver between the 16th and the 18th centuries, over \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the world’s supply.
19. Spain became the richest nation in Europe and Spanish silver pesos became the de-facto \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
20. The huge influx of silver caused skyrocketing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and since they never set tax rates to account for it, they collected the same amount of money sixty years after the discovery of silver, but that money was worth a fraction of what it once had been. Spain also used silver to fund many 16th century \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
21. Charles V’s ambitions of a united Europe were shattered and he gave the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ half of his kingdom to his son Ferdinand and gave Spain with the American stuff to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in 1556.
22. Philip II also inherited a rebellion in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, because the Dutch were like, “We’re gonna be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, also you guys know nothing about economics.” And then the English sided with the Dutch and there was a war featuring a disastrous invasion of England, called the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, in 1588. England’s success against the Spanish, even though it can largely be chalked up to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, was credited to Queen Elizabeth I.
23. Most of the silver mined in the Americas went to Europe, but at least a third of it went to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_; either directly on Spanish galleons, or indirectly through the purchase of Chinese goods.
24. China began making their coins out of silver. Now, China didn’t have a lot of silver itself, but \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ did, so they traded manufactured goods for it, but soon even that wasn’t enough.
25. In the early part of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dynasty, Chinese farmers paid their taxes in goods, mainly grain, and labor. But as more silver entered the economy, the Ming government changed its policy and required \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to be paid in silver.
26. The Spanish empire’s silver trade was the first truly global market—even \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was involved.
27. Both Spain and China experienced inflation that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ their governments. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ suffered. The search for precious metals led the Spanish to find and eventually destroy two of the world’s great empires, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Many thousands were killed mining silver and the mercury used to refine it.