The Age of Exploration - DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Explanation

As we begin our study of how to write the Document-Based Essay for the AP World History exam, it is important to realize that the documents you will be asked to analyze will not be limited to written works. This first DBQ activity will ask you a series of questions based on different types of "documents". The goal of this activity is to help you become familiar with the variety of "documents" you may face related to the prompt you are responding to. As we move further in to the process you will learn how to group and categorize your documents, cite your documents accurately in your writing, and develop an effective thesis and organization to earn the maximum number of points possible on the test.

Be sure to read all of the content of this packet rather than just going directly to the questions. One of the biggest mistakes students make on the DBQ is not reading the background information about the prompt or the individual documents. You should get in the habit NOW to read all relevant material because it could be the key to a successful essay. ALSO, THERE ARE SEVERAL QUESTIONS ON TOMORROW'S FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT BASED ON THIS ASSIGNMENT.

Your answers to the questions do NOT need to be in complete sentences but they do need to effectively explain your response to each question.

This assignment is due at the start of class on Friday 3/1.

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Some BASIC history review...

It's hard to provide exact dates for the Age of Exploration, but this period is generally considered to have begun at the end of the Middle Ages, when Europeans were becoming increasingly interested in expanding their trade capabilities and pursuing scientific investigations. Countries began to see the value of exploration outside of Europe and the Mediterranean, and governments became more and more willing to finance expeditions to unknown or little-known parts of the world.

Throughout the Age of Exploration, European navigators relied on increasingly sophisticated technology to help them explore the seas and land. Developments in shipbuilding and navigational equipment enabled voyages of exploration to reach places they would not previously have been able to go. Developments in mapmaking also helped Europeans explore and record their voyages. The translation of an ancient mapmaking guide (Ptolemy’s Geography) into Latin helped spark interest in cartography and exploration, and the invention of the printing press made it easier to publish and distribute maps.

Vasco da Gama (c. 1469-1524) was the first European to travel via the sea route to India. Europeans had been trading with India for centuries, but da Gama’s voyage began the era of overseas trade between Europe and Asia. His first voyage to India left Portugal in July of 1497. He stopped over in Africa before heading to India, then landed in Calicut in May of 1498. It was important for da Gama to offer gifts to the king there, but the same gifts that had been welcomed in Africa were rejected in India because the king thought them inferior and of little value. Da Gama was forced out of Calicut by local Moors (Muslims) who saw his attempts to trade as a threat to their own business, and he returned to Portugal with only a few samples of foreign goods. He went back to India in 1502, however, and established a powerful trade route, killing many Indians and Muslims in the effort.

Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) believed that the world was round when he set off on his first voyage. He was trying to figure out how to reach Asia by sailing westward from Europe. When he landed in the West Indies (in the Caribbean Sea), he initially thought he was on islands off the coast of Asia. Columbus made four voyages to the “New World” and learned that the islands had gold. He pressed for Spain to colonize the islands and take advantage of their gold, ignoring the wishes of the people who already lived there.

Ferdinand Magellan (c.1480-1521) was the first person to lead a voyage that circumnavigated the globe. Although educated Europeans already believed the earth was round. Magellan's 1519-1522 voyage provided definite proof. It also proved that the Americas were completely separate from Asia, divided by the Pacific Ocean. Upon reaching the Philippines, Magellan converted a king and his subjects to Christianity, but was unable to convert the king's rivals and their subjects, who rose up against him and killed him. Magellan's party continued on the circumnavigation voyage and returned to Europe in 1522.
Ships and Navigation

Throughout the Age of Exploration, European navigators relied on the technology of their time to help them explore the seas. Developments in shipbuilding and navigational equipment enabled voyages of exploration to reach places they would not previously have been able to go. The Portuguese caravel, for example, had features that made it particularly well suited for exploration. Caravels enabled Portuguese fleets to explore the African coast and made Portugal a leader among European nations in world exploration. They did not, however, allow for extremely long voyages such as Magellan’s circumnavigation of the world.

Navigational instruments such as the cross-staff and the mariner’s astrolabe were used to figure out latitude, but they had limitations. For example, they could only be used when the navigator could see the sun or the stars and were therefore useless on a cloudy day.

In this analysis, you will see pictures of several technologies that Europeans used to explore the world.

**PORTUGUESE SHIPS**

Compare and contrast these two depictions of Portuguese ships. The *barca* (left) was commonly used in the early days of the Age of Exploration. The caravel (right) was a Portuguese ship developed in the 15th century (although it was based on Arab and European ship designs that had existed for centuries).

1. Describe the general appearance of each of the ships. How many masts does each have? What share are their sails? Which appears larger? Which appears wider?

2. Which ship do you think could sail faster? Why?

3. Exploration often involved careful navigation around coastlines and even sailing up rivers. Which ship do you think would be the easiest to maneuver in such situations? Why?
NAVIGATION METHODS

In this illustration you see a man using a cross-staff. This instrument was used to measure latitude. The navigator would hold one end of the cross-staff up to his eye and move the cross piece back and forth until its upper edge aligned with the sun or the North Star and its lower edge was aligned with the horizon. He then noted where the cross piece lined up with the longer piece and looked at a table to convert this number into the latitude of the location where he was standing.

The world "ORIZONTE" at the bottom of the image means "horizon."

4. In addition to the cross-staff, what is helping this man measure his latitude?

5. Why was it important to be able to locate the Big Dipper?

MARINER'S ASTROLABE

The astrolabe was another instrument used to measure latitude. The navigator hung it by the ring at the top and adjusted the alidade (the "hand") to line up with the sun or a star. It was not particular accurate but was commonly used.

6. Why do you think this astrolabe was used so frequently if it was not that accurate?

7. What might have been the consequences of measuring latitude incorrectly? What if Columbus and his crew hadn't measured latitude accurately on their second, third, or fourth voyages to the "New World"?
EXPANDING HORIZONS
This globe was used to teach people of the 16th century how the world and celestial bodies looked and related to each other. It shows the earth at the center of the solar system, with the planets, sun, moon, and several stars revolving around it. The criss strips around the globe represent the planets’ and the sun’s movements around the earth. It was created in 1543, the same year that Copernicus published his theory saying that the sun was actually the center of the solar system and that the earth and other planets revolved around the sun.

8. Why do you think something like this globe would have been valuable to the people in the 16th century? If you were a student during the 16th century, what might you have been able to learn from this globe?

Vasco da Gama

For this section you will need to access excerpts from da Gama’s account of his experience in Calicut, his first landing point in India. The link is located on my website.

Scroll down until you see the paragraph that begins "1498, Calicut. [Arrival]," about a quarter of the way down the page.

Read this paragraph and the next one.

HELP: The "captain-major" is da Gama. "Moors" refers to Arab merchants. Tunis was a trading city in North Africa and is now the capital of Tunisia.

9. What was da Gama looking for, according to what the convict told the Moors in Calicut?

10. What did the Moor tell the people upon boarding one of da Gama’s ships? How do you think da Gama received this news?
Read the next paragraph.

HELP: "tawny" = yellowish-brown; "covetous" = greedy, selfish

11. Describe da Gama's first impressions of the personalities of the people of Calicut. Do you think he portrayed them favorably or unfavorably? Give evidence that supports your answer.

Scroll down to the paragraph that begins "And the captain-major told him he was the ambassador of a King of Portugal," a little more than halfway down the page. This paragraph describes da Gama's first meeting with the king in Calicut.

HELP: "induced" = convinced; "intrusted" = entrusted (left in the care of); "ensuing" = following

12. How did da Gama (the captain-major) portray the king of Portugal?

13. What did da Gama Claim the purpose of his expedition was?

Scroll down to the paragraph that begins "On Tuesday, May 29, the captain-major got ready the following things." Read this paragraph.

HELP: "lambel" = probably something put on a coat of arms; "bale" = a nobleman, a duke; "depreciated" = lowered the value of

14. How did the Moor, his factor, and the bale react when they saw the items da Gama was planning to give to the king? Why did they react this way?

15. How did da Gama react to the news about his intended gifts?

16. What examples of cultural misunderstanding or misjudgment are evidence in the passages you've read? Cite at least two, and explain how they show cultural misunderstanding/misjudgment.
Maps

People have created maps since ancient times. Some ancient maps and mapmaking guides have lasting influence up into the Age of Exploration - particularly Ptolemy's Geography, an eight-volume mapmaking guide. This work was translated into Latin in the 15th century, allowing scholars and scientists across Europe to interpret it. Once Ptolemy's work was exposed to a wider audience, more people became interested in learning about mapmaking techniques.

The invention of the printing press and the further exploration of the world outside Europe during the 15th century also led to an increased interest in mapmaking. Educated Europeans of the late 15th century accepted that the world was round, and the first globe was produced to serve as a model of the earth.

As exploration continued, maps and globes were continually fine-tuned and filled in. For example, the Americas were first placed on maps in the early 16th century. As Europeans explored the coasts of continents such as North and South America and Africa, their maps began to look more like the maps we know today.

**MAP OF THE WORLD, 1482**

This German map was created ten years before Columbus set sail on his first voyage. **Claudius Ptolemy** originally drew the map in the second century CE, and it remained popular until the Age of Exploration, when explorers began to redraw Europe's view of the world.

Look carefully at the map. It does not include the "New World", since this area was unknown to Europeans when the map was created. Europe is in the northwest, Africa is in the west and southwest, Southeast Asia is in the southeast, and Siberia and China are in the northeast.

Compare this map to a modern world map that shows the actual layout of the earth's continents and bodies of water. Answer the following questions:

17. What do you notice that's different about the Indian Ocean on the 1482 map? What does this difference suggest about European geographical knowledge in 1482?

18. Which parts of the world seem to be the most accurately represented on the 1482 map? Why do you think this is the case?
19. It's not easy to tell on this map, but the Eastern Hemisphere is dedicated to being much wider from east to west than it really is (180 degrees longitude rather than 105). Columbus would have been familiar with this map and would have assumed it to be realistic. He would also have known that the earth was a total of 360 degrees all the way around (contrary to popular myth, he did not believe the earth was flat)

You know that Columbus was trying to find a passage to Asia across the Atlantic and that when he arrived in the West Indies, he first thought he was in Asia. How might this map have helped lead him to the false conclusion that he was in Asia rather than in a "New World"?

20. What major part of the world is on this map that wasn't on the first map you looked at? Why do you think this is?

21. How does the Indian Ocean differ in appearance from the way it looked in the previous map you saw?

MARTIN WALDSEEMÜLLER’S WORLD MAP, 1507

North Section: North America ("terra incognita") to Japan ("zipangri")
Decorations include the portrait of Ptolemy on the left and Vespucci on the right.
22. What do you notice about the shape of Africa on this map, as compared to the previous map you looked at? Why do you think this is?

23. Does Antarctica appear on this map? Why or why not?

CORNELIUS WYTFLIET’S WORLD MAP, 1597

Compare this map to a modern world map that shows the actual layout of the earth’s continents and bodies of water. Answer the following questions:

24. How long after the Waldseemüller map was this one created?

25. What major differences do you notice between this map and the Waldseemüller map? List at least five.

26. Antarctica was referred to in those days as "Terra Australis," which means "southern land." Was this continent drawn accurately, compared to what you’ve seen on modern maps? Why or why not? Do you think people have explored Antarctica’s shoreline by this time? What evidence do you have to support your answer?

27. What evidence do you see on this map to document the European exploration of Mexico and the modern-day American southwest?