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CHAPTER 1

The Beginnings of Civilizations, 10,000 - 2000 B.C.E.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

* explain the link between the Neolithic food-producing revolution and the emergence of civilizations.
* identify the causes that transformed early communities in Southwest Asia into the first cities, kingdoms, and empires.
* describe how civilization took shape along the Nile River in Egypt.
* discuss the impact of food production and the use of metals on the first human populations of Europe.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

*The development of food production through agriculture and the domestication of animals led to the development of large settlements and the emergence of powerful elites.
*In Southwest Asia and Egypt, civilizations arose that were based on cities and devoted their resources to irrigation, warfare, and worship.
*Long-distance trade was an important feature of these early civilizations, as was the development of writing.
*As the case of Europe in this era illustrates, the development of civilization did not happen everywhere at the same time.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Culture, Agriculture, and Civilization

“Culture” is used by anthropologists to refer to all the different ways in which humans collectively adjust to their environment, and transmit experiences and knowledge to their descendants. Culture is best understood as a web of interconnected meanings that allows a particular group of people to understand themselves and their place in the world, and each culture is distinctive. Culture, then, is distinct from civilization, which is defined as a city-based society in which there are differing occupations and levels of wealth wherein elites exercise economic, political, and religious power.

A. The Food-Producing Revolution

The first modern humans supported themselves by gathering wild foods. After the Ice Age ended, humans slowly discovered how to increase their food supply by planting crops and domesticating animals. As a result, the human
population increased, food surpluses allowed for economic specialization and exchange, and fostered the growth of social, political, and religious hierarchies.

**B. The First Food-Producing Communities**

Archaeological excavations of Neolithic sites in three areas of Southwest Asia give evidence of the development of agriculture beginning around 8000 B.C.E. As a result, there developed in these areas increasingly complex forms of political organization and religious observance, as well as long-distance trade.

### II. The Birth of Civilization in Southwest Asia

By 6000 B.C.E., settled and expanding communities that relied on farming and herding were widespread in Southwest Asia. Commerce stimulated interaction between these communities and out of that interaction they developed a more uniform culture that set the stage for the emergence of civilization in Southwest Asia.

**A. Sumer: A Constellation of Cities in Southern Mesopotamia**

About 5300 B.C.E., a dynamic civilization that would last for 3,000 years began to emerge from the villages, and later cities, of Sumer (or southern Mesopotamia). In learning to control the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers to irrigate crops, the Sumerians developed the foundation of civilization: the city. By 2500 B.C.E., twelve cities dominated Sumer. Providing markets and encouraging craft specialists, Sumerian cities were important economic centers, in which centralized authorities directed labor and economic activity. Ultimate power in a Sumerian city lay in the hands of a king, who frequently expended his city’s resources in war against other kings. Long-distance trade, however, fostered diplomacy and increased Sumerians’ knowledge of foreign peoples. Sumerians envisioned the natural forces of Mesopotamia’s volatile climate as gods who must be appeased, and each city was dominated by temples, especially temples to that city’s patron god or goddess. The Sumerians contributed many cultural innovations but none was as important as their development (around 3200 B.C.E.) of cuneiform, a wedge-shaped system of writing.

**B. From Akkad to the Amorite Invasions**

With their conquest by the Akkadian king Sargon, the Sumerian cities found themselves part of a new kind of political entity: the empire. Controlling a large empire presented new challenges. Akkadian kings tried to ensure loyalty by portraying themselves as semi-divine figures, and met the problem of financing an empire through various means, one of the most important of which was taxing trade. Thus long-distance trade held great importance for these kings, and the cities of Mesopotamia prospered. Nonetheless, Akkadian rule collapsed around 2100 B.C.E., and was replaced by a powerful dynasty centered in the city of Ur. Ur’s kings centralized both government and economic production, but their most important innovation came in the area of law, by establishing the custom of collecting and writing down laws. Ur, however, collapsed about 2000 B.C.E., because of the invasion of the Amorites.

**C. New Mesopotamian Kingdoms: Assyria and Babylonia**

The Amorites absorbed the culture of those they had conquered and there
emerged two new kingdoms: Assyria and Babylonia. The discovery of bronze making helped to expand the power of Assyria, as it controlled much of the metals trade. But by 1762 B.C.E., Assyria had fallen to Babylonia. King Hammurabi brought all of Mesopotamia under Babylonia’s control and gave his name to the oldest surviving Mesopotamian law code, which introduced such fundamental legal principles as suiting the punishment to the crime. The heavy taxes imposed by the Babylonian kings led to revolts, and by 1500 B.C.E., Babylonian rule had ended in Mesopotamia.

III. The Emergence of Egyptian Civilization

Along the Nile River, ancient Egyptians created and maintained a remarkably stable civilization throughout millennia.

A. The Old Kingdom, ca. 3500-2200 B.C.E

Having mastered agriculture and herding by 3500 B.C.E., Egyptians in the Predynastic period (3500 - 3000 B.C.E.) saw the development of trade result in a shared common culture along the Nile River, while towns grew into small kingdoms that warred with each other. By 3000 B.C.E., however, Egypt was united politically, forming what historians call the Old Kingdom. Egyptian kings established themselves as religious, social, and political focal points. Considered human incarnations of divinity, Egyptian kings exercised a highly centralized authority through a complex bureaucracy made possible by the development of a writing system called hieroglyphs.

1. Religious Beliefs in the Old Kingdom

Egyptians were polytheistic like the Mesopotamians, but placed more emphasis on the afterlife, symbolized by the mummification of the dead and the worship of Osiris.

2. The Pyramids

Symbolic entryways to the next life, Egyptian tombs were designed to provide for the deceased materially, as well as spiritually, and royal burial customs grew ever more elaborate especially in the Old Kingdom, culminating in the construction of the pyramids.

B. The Middle Kingdom, ca. 2040-1785 B.C.E.

The Old Kingdom collapsed around 2200 B.C.E., due to economic decline, the erosion of royal authority, and droughts. Following 200 years of anarchy, Egyptian kings restored their authority but were less despotic and directed many of their efforts to improving their subjects’ lives, a concern that extended to religious life, as well.

C. Egyptian Encounters with Other Civilizations

Egypt was concerned to protect its international trade and was willing to use force if necessary, but preferred diplomacy and friendship when possible. Two of Egypt's most important economic ties were with Byblos and Nubia. Egypt also welcomed non-Egyptian immigrants.
IV. The Transformation of Europe

A cold climate and heavy forestation made food production more difficult in Europe than in Mesopotamia or Egypt. Farming did not dominate there until about 2500 B.C.E., having been spread slowly but steadily by the migration of food-producing peoples into Europe. As a result, a variety of cultures arose but without cities or systems of writing.

A. The Linear Pottery Culture
   This culture extended from Holland to Russia, developed rudimentary political authority, and built communal stone tombs called *megaliths*, of which the best known is Stonehenge.

B. The Battle Axe Cultures
   Between 3500 B.C.E. and 2000 B.C.E., these cultures gradually supplanted the Linear Pottery cultures and one of them, that of the Kurgan peoples, probably introduced the ancestor of most modern European languages.

C. Technology and Social Change
   Becoming widespread by 2600 B.C.E., the plow caused a dramatic expansion of European agriculture and, as a result, an increase in wealth, trade, and social stratification, laying the foundation of Europe’s aristocracy.

V. Conclusion: Civilization and the West

By 3000 B.C.E., “civilization” had not yet developed in Europe, but had developed in Mesopotamia and Egypt. Europe – the “West” – would eventually claim these Near Eastern civilizations as remote ancestors, from whom the West inherited such crucial components as systems of writing and the idea of law codes based on abstract principles.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Have students compare maps of ancient Mesopotamia or European cultures with modern maps. Challenge them to determine what modern states are now there, and what ecological changes have occurred.

2. Using the Internet, have students find information on cuneiform and hieroglyphics and see if they can discover how to write their names using either or both of these systems.

3. Use examples of art from ancient Egypt or Mesopotamia to illustrate how social, religious, and political ideas were conveyed pictorially.

4. Recently, archaeologists reported they believe they found the tomb of Gilgamesh (BBC News 4/29/03). Ask students to research Gilgamesh. What evidence is there to suggest he might have been a real person? Can mythic and historical elements be separated in dealing with such a figure? If so, how?
5. Ask the student to imagine himself or herself as an ancient Egyptian and to write an essay describing both his or her life and what he or she needed to be entombed with to continue in the afterlife.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Why did ancient societies have such a close association between religious and political power?

2. Although they both produced civilizations, what were the differences between Mesopotamian and Egyptian cultures?

3. Discuss the changes in culture related to the development of agriculture.

4. Why do you suppose the invaders of Sumeria ended up adopting the culture of those they conquered?

5. What sort of religious ideas does the megalith Stonehenge suggest? Would these seem to be similar to or different from those of Egypt or Mesopotamia?

CASE STUDIES

1. The textbook discusses the procedures used in Babylonian courts, as well as the principles underlying the Law Code of Hammurabi. From the full text of the Code (see below) students, either as individuals or in groups, can construct hypothetical “cases.” Use these cases, perhaps even staging mock “trials,” to explore other principles embodied in the Code.

2. Ancient Egyptians believed that, after death, an individual’s life-spirit, or ka, was judged by the god Osiris. What sort of a “case” might an Egyptian make for himself or herself before Osiris? Use this “trial” to explore ancient Egyptian values and beliefs.

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. “Quest for Fire” (1981) is one of the more serious attempts by a movie to dramatize the experiences of early humans.

2. The full text of the Law Code of Hammurabi can be found at www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/medieval/hammenu.

3. http://oi.uchicago.edu/OI/ has pictures of ancient Mesopotamian art, as well as a Teacher Resource Center. It is also an excellent source for maps.

4. Maps can also be found at www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/atlas.
These can be modified to outline form for student exercises.


6. Episodes 1 and 2 of the Time-Life series *Lost Civilizations* (1995) deal with, respectively, ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt, using digital technology and dramatizations to recreate the architecture and events of these times and places.

7. Andre Leroi-Gourhan’s *Treasures of Prehistoric Art* is still the best collection of reproductions of prehistoric art available.

8. *Stonehenge* and *Pyramid* are two relevant episodes of the Nova series *Secrets of Lost Empires* (WGBH 1997).


10. Investigations into Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife can begin with modern translations of *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*, such as the one by Raymond O. Faulkner (1990).

11. In the summer of 2003, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City presented a special exhibition, *Art of the First Cities: The Third Millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus*. See the exhibition catalog or visit the past exhibitions on Met’s Web site http://www.metmuseum.org for color photos of the art and artifacts displayed.
CHAPTER 2

The International Bronze Age and Its Aftermath: Trade, Empire, and Diplomacy, 1600 - 550 B.C.E.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

* explain how Egypt used warfare and diplomacy to develop an empire during the New Kingdom.
* describe the political, religious, and cultural traditions of the Hittite, Assyrian, and Babylonian Empires.
* identify the characteristics of the Mediterranean civilizations and relate those characteristics to the civilizations’ international trade and politics.
* discuss the forces that brought the International Bronze Age to an end and describe the new kingdoms and empires that developed in its wake.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* The development and growing use of bronze ushered in a new era, stimulating international trade that linked together five separate regions in the Middle East, Africa, and Europe.
* Linked together by trade and diplomacy, the peoples of these areas engaged in commercial, technological, and cultural exchanges that formed the basis of the West.
* Bronze made possible new military technology, like horse-drawn chariots, but the expense of this new technology led rulers to seek to expand their wealth.
* A desire for increased wealth led to the growth of empire – the expansion of territories under the control of one kingdom.
* Rulers came to realize that warfare could interrupt trade and interfere with the successful management of territories, leading to the development of a system of diplomacy that could produce long periods of peace.
* The economic, diplomatic, and cultural networks of the International Bronze Age broke down around 1100 B.C.E., as these areas faced both internal and external difficulties.
* After a period of slow recovery, new empires and new trading networks arose.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Civilization of the Nile: The Egyptian Empire

Over a period of 500 years after the end of the Middle Kingdom, Egyptians, under the direction of talented and aggressive rulers, created a vast multiethnic empire.
A. From the Hyksos Era to the New Kingdom

Invading Egypt at the end of the Middle Kingdom, the Hyksos introduced a new, advanced military technology: horse-drawn chariots with archers firing composite bows. The expulsion of the Hyksos around 1550 B.C.E. marked the beginning of the New Kingdom, a period in which Egypt extended its territories. Taking the title of “pharaoh” for the first time, Egypt’s rulers were now the supreme commanders of a permanent army. The powers of the pharaohs, which Egyptians believed came from the gods, were wide-ranging, absolute, and exercised through a highly organized bureaucratic administrative system. Temples also played an essential part in the government of Egypt. Women in Egypt, who enjoyed many rights, played an important role in religious worship.

B. Military Expansion: Building an Empire in Canaan and Nubia

Chariot warfare and Egypt’s great wealth allowed the pharaohs to conquer Canaan and Nubia. Egyptians supported the extension of the pharaohs’ power throughout the world, believing it was their responsibility to establish order in the world. Egypt gained enormous wealth from its empire, in particular from Nubia, which Egypt controlled by gaining the cooperation of Nubian princes and by settling Egyptians in Nubia. Increasingly, however, the pharaohs came to prefer diplomacy over war. The Egyptian empire fostered economic and cultural exchange. By the end of the New Kingdom, Egyptians had borrowed much from those they had conquered.

C. Pharaohs: Egypt’s Dynamic Leaders

Egypt’s success depended above all on its pharaohs.

1. Hatshepsut the Female Pharaoh and Thutmose III the Conqueror

Hatshepsut carefully adapted to the male images of kingship and pursued policies that brought Egypt peace, while the reign of her successor Thutmose III brought military glory.

2. The Amarna Period: The Beginnings of Diplomacy

Pharaoh Akhenaten’s attempts to impose the worship of the sun god as a sole, universal god were resented and did not outlast him.

3. The Battle of Kadesh and the Age of Ramesses

Egypt's clash with the Hittite kingdom, culminating in the Battle of Kadesh, gave way to a treaty and almost a century of peace and flourishing commerce.

II. The Civilizations of Anatolia and Mesopotamia: The Hittite, Assyrian, and Babylonian Empires

Other large, highly centralized empires developed during the International Bronze Age.

A. The Growth of Hittite Power: Conquest and Diversity

The Hittites extended their power through military conquest, and the Hittite Empire played an important role in the network of trade and communication in the International Bronze Age. Ruling in the name of the supreme God of Storms, the Hittite Great King fostered unity and worked hard to provide uniform justice, as well. The Hittites deliberately incorporated the gods of those they had conquered into their own religious system. The Hittites believed
that properly worshipped gods protected them and they believed in an afterlife.

B. The Mesopotamian Empires

Two empires emerged in Mesopotamia: Babylonia in the south and Assyria in the north. Both played an important role in the networks of the Bronze Age.

1. The Kingdom of Babylonia

Under Kassite rule, Babylonia enjoyed a golden age as a center of trade, culture, and learning. Ruling fairly and generously gained Babylonia’s kings loyalty and popularity, and the kingdom became especially renowned for its science, medicine, and literature.

2. The Kingdom of Assyria

Although the Assyrian kings understood the value of diplomacy, they also knew that Assyria’s power depended on control of natural resources and trade routes, and the kings were willing to use war to safeguard their economic interests.

III. The Civilizations of the Mediterranean: The Minoans and the Mycenaecans

The Minoan civilization on the island of Crete and the Mycenaean civilization on mainland Greece were the first civilizations in Europe. Mediating between these first European civilizations and the Egyptian and Hittite empires were small coastal states, the most prosperous of which were Ugarit and Troy.

A. Minoan Crete

Becoming highly skilled navigators, the Minoans made Crete a thriving center of long-distance trade. Minoan religion is not well understood, although there seems to have been at least two major female divinities. Four major urban administrative centers, called palaces, controlled the Minoan economy, suggesting a highly centralized political authority. These palaces gathered agricultural produce and housed craftsmen and artists, provided the goods that fueled the Minoan merchants’ extensive trade, and produced the wealth that allowed the elites to live in great luxury. The sudden collapse of Minoan power and prosperity around 1450 B.C.E. is also not fully understood, nor the possible role of the Mycenaean Greeks in that collapse.

B. Mycenaean Greece

Mycenaean civilization is the term applied to the culture of perhaps six kingdoms on the Greek mainland that existed from around 1600 to 1100 B.C.E., reaching its peak around 1400 B.C.E. As on Crete, fortified palaces served as administrative and economic centers. Excavations at the most influential kingdom, located in southern Greece at Mycenae, suggest a highly warlike people, dominated by a wealthy and well-fed elite of kings and aristocratic warriors who greatly valued military prowess. After the fall of Minoan Crete, the Mycenaecans took over and extended the Minoans’ trade routes. To foster this commerce, Mycenaean rulers forged diplomatic ties with Egyptian and Hittite monarchs, but undermined the latter with settlements in Hittite territory.

C. Two Coastal Kingdoms: Ugarit and Troy

In the border regions between empires were independent cities; the most
notable of these were Ugarit and Troy.

1. **Ugarit: A Mercantile Kingdom**
   Ugarit possessed rich natural resources and a fine natural harbor that made the city a hub of international trade, reflected in the Ugarit elite’s literacy in their own and other languages. The city’s independence was maintained by the clever diplomacy of Ugarit’s kings.

2. **Troy: A City of Legend**
   Famous from Homer’s epic poems, Troy prospered from trade, but its greatest days had already been ended by an earthquake at the time that Homer’s Trojan War would have taken place.

**IV. The End of the International Bronze Age and Its Aftermath**

Between 1200 and 1100 B.C.E., the era of prosperity and international interconnection ended as the civilizations of the Bronze Age plunged into a period marked by invasions, migrations, and the collapse of stable governments.

**A. The Raiders of the Land and Sea**
Mycenaean civilization collapsed from warfare that caused the kingdoms and the economic system to collapse, but the Greek language and some religious beliefs survived. Invasion and economic decline triggered the collapse of the Hittite empire’s government. This economic and political decline, combined with earthquakes, plague, and climate change, spurred migrations of peoples the Egyptians called “Raiders,” who destroyed Ugarit and other coastal cities. The Raiders failed to destroy Egypt, but that kingdom slipped into a long economic and military decline. Invasions also severely weakened Assyria and Babylonia.

**B. The Phoenicians: Merchants of the Mediterranean**
Two hundred years after the International Bronze Age ended, the independent cities of the Phoenicians along the eastern Mediterranean emerged with a vibrant mercantile and seafaring culture. Motivated by the search for metal ores, the Phoenicians crisscrossed the Mediterranean and even ventured into the Atlantic in search of trade. They thus became important cultural mediators between the Middle East and the western Mediterranean, symbolized in their chief city in the west, Carthage, which controlled trade between the eastern and western Mediterranean. Showing remarkable continuity through time and across the Mediterranean, Phoenician religion emphasized rebirth and fertility, but sometimes involved child sacrifice. The most lasting cultural contribution of the Phoenicians was the phonetic alphabet.

**C. Mesopotamian Kingdoms: Assyria and Babylon, 1050 - 550 B.C.E.**
Although they declined, Assyria and Babylonia survived and began to reassert themselves around 1050 B.C.E.

1. **Neo-Assyrian Imperialism**
The Neo-Assyrians developed a highly militarized empire, using cruelty and deportation to subdue and keep subdued the peoples they conquered. They did not interfere in those peoples’ traditions or religious practices, although the ruler Ashurbanipal did attempt to create a uniform culture throughout his realm by organizing and disseminating the diverse
heritages of his subject peoples. However, Neo-Assyrian brutality eventually backfired, leading to the revolts that caused the empire to collapse by 603 B.C.E.

2. The Neo-Babylonian Empire

Seizing and supplanting the Neo-Assyrian Empire, the Neo-Babylonian Empire consisted of wealthy cities bound together by the worship of the all-powerful god, Marduk. Believing that earth and sky were interrelated, Babylonian religion fostered astronomy and mathematics.

V. Conclusion: The International Bronze Age and the Emergence of the West

During the International Bronze Age, a crucial phase in the formation of Western civilization, an intricate network of political, commercial, and cultural ties among cities and kingdoms created a complex pattern of cultural diffusion over a vast geographic area.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Minoan Crete was famous for its labyrinth, which became an important religious motif in the ancient world and today. Have students research ancient labyrinths and map out one of their own.

2. Using the Internet, have students gather information on the Phoenician alphabet and trace other alphabet systems that descended from it.

3. The earliest evidence of written music comes from the Bronze Age around 1400 B.C.E. Some of this early music has been performed on recreations of period instruments and recorded, which can add a valuable dimension to consideration of this creative period. For information on what is available on CDs, see http://www.bellaromamusic.com.

4. This chapter indicates that women in New Kingdom Egypt were respected and treated well. What about other Bronze Age women? Have students research the status of women in the other empires, kingdoms, and cities of the Bronze Age.

5. A figure from New Kingdom Egypt who has fascinated people for years is Nefertiti, wife of Akhenaten, whose bust is one of the most famous pieces of art in the world. Have students research this figure, exploring many different approaches: art history, Egyptian religion, recent archaeological discoveries, the place of women in the New Kingdom, and so forth. Can anything of the queen herself be discerned in all of this?

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. How does the “Hymn to Aten” compare with the psalms of the Bible?

2. What does the archaeological evidence suggest about Minoan religion? What
problems are encountered trying to interpret religious beliefs from such evidence?

3. The end of the Millawanda letter suggests the origin of the phrase “Don’t shoot the messenger.” What other difficulties might be encountered by early government bureaucrats and officials?

4. Discuss the two most pronounced trends in religion in this period: the tendency to adopt and assimilate others’ gods and the tendency to focus on a single, all-powerful god.

5. A problem the ancient multiethnic empires faced was ruling over diverse and distinct peoples. What are the ways in which this problem could be addressed?

CASE STUDIES

1. Expansion of territory and control of its trade brings wealth to an empire but warfare itself is expensive and disrupts trade. Stage a debate between those who would argue for and against war before a ruler.

2. Some Bronze Age empires sought to create internal unity by promoting one religious culture or trying to incorporate many gods into one over-arching religious system; others endeavored to promote loyalty by allowing subject peoples to adhere to their own religious traditions unmolested. Have your students present the “case” for each approach: What are the advantages and risks? What factors might favor one approach over another?

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. Egypt’s Golden Empire (2003), part of the PBS series Empires, examines the imperialism of the New Kingdom, and is supported by an interactive Web site: www.pbs.org/empires/egypt.

2. The religious developments of New Kingdom Egypt are the focus of a major museum tour organized by the National Gallery of Art: “The Quest for Immortality: Treasures of Ancient Egypt.” The tour continues through 2007, and the catalog for this exhibit contains numerous high-quality photographs of religious artifacts, as well as extensive scholarly texts. Information on the tour and the catalog can be found at www.nga.gov/exhibitions, where there is also an interactive page, including a virtual tour of a tomb.

3. A Web site operated by the British Museum contains reference material on Assyria and Babylonia: www.mesopotamia.co.uk.

4. A Web site hosted by Dartmouth University provides extra information on the ancient Aegean, including Minoan Crete, the Mycenaeans, and Troy: http://projectsx.dartmouth.edu/classics/history/bronze_age.
5. Bronze Age art work from the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art can be viewed by clicking on “Ancient Near Eastern Art” at www.metmuseum.org/collections.

6. Primary sources, maps, artwork, and much more for everything discussed in this chapter can be found at the Internet Ancient Sourcebook for Mesopotamia at http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook03.html.
CHAPTER 3

*Persians, Hebrews, and Greeks: The Foundations of Western Culture, 1100 - 336 B.C.E.*

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- identify the political and religious beliefs and institutions that gave Hebrew civilization its unique character.
- discuss the results of the Hebrews’ interactions with other peoples.
- explain how the Persian Empire brought diverse peoples together in a stable realm.
- identify the elements of Persian religion and government that have influenced the West.
- explain the development of the Greek city-states.
- describe the intellectual, social, and political innovations of Classical Age Greece.

**SIGNIFICANT THEMES**

*After 1100 B.C.E., Persian encounters with other peoples, particularly the Hebrews and Greeks, produced the distinctive religious, political, and cultural innovations and transformations that historians call the Classical Age.*

*The Persians strengthened their own highly organized and justly administered empire by borrowing and adapting from other cultures.*

*One of the most influential ideas in the Western tradition, monotheism, originated with the Hebrews about 1100 B.C.E., and was transformed in the Classical Age into the religion of Judaism.*

*Classical Age Greece originated democracy, as well as philosophical schools and artistic principles and models that have had an enduring influence in the West.*

**CHAPTER OUTLINE**

I. Persia: An Empire on Three Continents

Around 1400 B.C.E., groups of people began to migrate into what is now western Iran. Five hundred years later, these people had consolidated into two groups: Medes and Persians. Although initially the Medes dominated, in the sixth century Persia broke away from, and then conquered, the Medes.

A. Cyrus the Great and Persian Expansion

Ascending the throne in 550 B.C.E., Cyrus the Great transformed Persia into a giant, multiethnic empire. His son Cambyses continued the expansion and made Persia the mightiest empire in the world.
1. A Government of Tolerance
   The highly centralized Persian government, although absolute in power, allowed subject peoples to continue their own religions as long as they recognized Persian political supremacy.

2. Zoroastrianism: An Imperial Religion
   The official religion of Persia was Zoroastrianism, which teaches that the universe is dominated by a struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. Human beings, by choosing right or wrong, engage in this struggle, giving human existence meaning and laying the foundation for profound human ethics. Zoroastrianism thus provided an ideological support and guide for the great Persian kings, and also played an important role in shaping Western religious thought, especially the ideas of a final judgment and a combat between good (God) and evil (the Devil).

B. The Achaemenid Dynasty
   This dynasty was founded when Darius seized the throne in 522 B.C.E. Darius built a new capital, Persepolis, and further expanded the Persian Empire, bringing it into direct contact with the Greeks.

II. Hebrew Civilization and Religion

   The Jews, whose civilization has been one of the most influential in the West, originated at the end of the end of the International Bronze Age, when their semi-nomadic, pastoral ancestors began to migrate into Canaan.

A. The Settlement in Canaan
   Distinguished by their belief in only one god, the Hebrew tribes believed they had been led out of slavery in Egypt by Moses, who had also given them God’s law. The Hebrew tribes gained control over most of Canaan during the eleventh century B.C.E., and came to believe that they, including those Canaanites who had joined them, were all descended from a common ancestor, Abraham. The Hebrews built shires to their one God throughout Canaan, of which the most important was the shrine at Shiloh, where their most sacred object, the Ark of the Covenant, was kept. Conflict with other groups in Canaan, especially the Philistines, resulted in the Hebrew tribes organizing themselves under a king.

B. The Israelite Kingdoms
   Under the kings David and Solomon, Hebrew life was transformed, as these monarchs created governmental, military, and commercial structures such as those found in the empires of Mesopotamia and Egypt. After Solomon’s death in 922 B.C.E., tribal animosities caused the kingdom to split into two separate kingdoms: Israel and Judah, both of which struggled to survive in the shadow of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires.

1. The Hebrew Prophets
   As the gap between rich and poor grew, and the poor became more
oppressed, social critics known as prophets arose, speaking with what they claimed was the authority of God to denounce religious decay, urge moral reform, and promote justice. After Israel fell to the Assyrians in 733 B.C.E., religion in Judah became more centralized in Jerusalem. This led to greater uniformity and a more powerful priesthood.

2. The Babylonian Exile

After Judah fell to the Babylonians, thousands of Jews found themselves deported to Babylon, where they struggled to maintain their cultural and religious identity, and further developed their idea of one god as a universal god. When the Babylonians in turn fell to the Persians, the Jews returned to Jerusalem.

3. The Second Temple and Jewish Religious Practice

A second temple was built in Jerusalem and religious leaders such as Ezra began to standardize Jewish religious practice. In the process, women's religious roles became quite restricted.

4. The Hebrew Bible

It was in the period following the building of the Second Temple in 515 B.C.E. that the Hebrews began slowly to shape their Bible, in which they recounted their relationship with their one god as it developed through historical events. Nonetheless, the significance of the Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament, lies less in its narration of history than in its religious ideas: its insistence on the presence of God in human lives, its moral vision of human existence, and its understanding of history as the unfolding of a divine plan.

III. Greece Rebuilds: 1100–479 B.C.E.

Emerging from the Dark Age, a period of poverty and political instability, Greece’s economic growth and encounters with the Phoenicians and Persians in the Archaic Age set the stage for the period of great cultural achievement known as the Classical Age.

A. The Dark Age, ca. 1100-750 B.C.E.

Urban life, literacy, and maritime trade disappeared as both food production and population declined, causing many Greeks to migrate to Ionia.

B. The Archaic Age, ca. 750-479 B.C.E.

Between 750 and 650 B.C.E., many economic and cultural innovations were introduced to the Greeks from their contacts with Middle Eastern peoples, the most valuable of which was the Greek adoption of the Phoenician alphabet.

1. Homer’s Epic Poems

Newly literate, the Greeks quickly recorded two of the greatest literary works ever composed, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, both attributed to a poet named Homer but actually drawing on a large and already old oral tradition.

2. The Polis

A new form of social and political life, the *polis* was a self-
governing city-state, which varied in size but contained the same institutions: an assembly, a council of elders, temples, and a marketplace. The polis fostered a strong bond between the citizens and their community.

3. Colonization and the Settlement of New Lands
Because of a population boom, the Greeks turned to colonization throughout the Mediterranean, stimulating commerce and spreading a vibrant Greek culture.

4. Elite Athletic Competition in Greek Poleis
To express a common Greek identity and honor the gods, aristocratic men from as many as 150 city-states competed for glory in athletic games, including the first Olympics.

5. The Hoplite Revolution
With increased wealth, nonaristocratic men could afford war weapons, which led to the development of the hoplite phalanx, infantry fighting in a close-knit manner. Conscious of their military contributions, the hoplites, usually led by a populist tyrant, began to challenge the political dominance of the aristocracy. Although tyrants enabled the political participation of ordinary citizens, their rule often became oppressive and usually did not last more than two generations.

6. Sparta: A Militarized Society
The hoplites of Sparta achieved political power without the help of a tyrant, but rapid expansion, especially the Spartan conquest of Messenia, caused Sparta to become a highly militarized polis.

7. Athens: Toward Democracy
In 594 B.C.E., to avoid war between the peasantry and the aristocrats, Solon enacted reforms that limited aristocratic authority and increased all citizens’ political participation. From these reforms emerged democracy. Following the rule of the tyrant Peisistratus, Cleisthenes built on Solon’s work, establishing new institutions and ensuring every male citizen had a permanent voice in government.

C. The Persian Wars (490-479 B.C.E.)
Athens’ support of the Ionian Greeks’ rebellion against the Persian Empire set the stage for a conflict between Persia and the Greek poleis.

1. The Marathon Campaign
Thanks to well-trained hoplites, the Athenians were able to defeat the Persians when they landed at Marathon.

2. Athenian Naval Power and the Salamis Campaign
In preparation for Persian revenge, Athens developed a large navy consisting of battleships called triremes, manned by the poorest citizens, who now in addition to hoplites and aristocrats, took an active role in the military defense of Athens. The sacrifices of their ally Sparta at Thermopylae enabled the Athenians to position their fleet for a stunning victory over the Persian navy at Salamis.
IV. The Classical Age of Greece (479-336 B.C.E.)

Following the defeat of a great empire by a handful of city-states, Greek confidence soared and creativity flourished, nowhere more so than in Athens.

A. The Rise and Fall of the Athenian Empire

After Persia’s defeat, Athens adopted an aggressive foreign policy that rapidly expanded an Athenian Empire but sowed the seeds of the discord that would cause that empire’s collapse.

1. From Defensive Alliance to Athenian Empire

To continue to drive the Persians out of the Aegean area, Athens created the Delian League, but after the Persians were gone by 469 B.C.E., the League became a means for Athens to imperialize other Greek poleis.

2. Democracy in the Age of Pericles

Democracy at home and empire abroad reached their peak under Pericles, who dominated the Athenian political arena from 461 B.C.E. until his death in 429 B.C.E. Both empire and increased public business led to an increase in public officials, while reforms gave Athenian women a more important role in society, but no public rights.

3. Conflict with Sparta: The Peloponnesian War

Feeling threatened by Athenian power, Sparta and a few allies began a long conflict until a disastrous Athenian expedition in 415 B.C.E. set the stage for the defeat of Athens.

4. The Collapse of Athenian Power

Athens surrendered in 404 B.C.E., but within a year had overthrown the tyrants imposed by Sparta and restored democracy.

B. The Social and Religious Foundations of Classical Greece

The prosperity and vibrant civic life of Greek citizen men sprang from a society that strictly subordinated women and relied on slave labor.

1. Gender Roles

Greek women were married young, consigned to a life of domestic labor, and kept strictly controlled and secluded by their husbands. Lower-class women were sometimes forced by economic necessity to sell produce or cloth in the marketplace, a few women gained prestige as priestesses, and others were prostitutes, including an elite group of courtesans. In general, Greek men considered women to be intellectually and emotionally inferior to men, and preferred male relationships, including homosexual ones.

2. Slavery: The Source of Greek Prosperity

Greek prosperity depended on the labor of slaves, who made up about one third of the population. Slaves had no legal or political rights and performed a wide variety of tasks, but slavery was not necessarily lifelong.

3. Religion and the Gods

Greek life was permeated with religion, which provided a structured way for the Greeks to interact with their gods. Shared religious ideas on the gods, like the Greek language, gave the Greeks a common
identity. A chief religious concern in Greece were winning the gods' favor through building them great "homes," or temples, and pleasing them through sacrifices. Greeks were also anxious to discern the future.

C. Intellectual Life
Exploring the natural world and the human condition, the Greeks in the Classical Age created an enduring legacy in drama, science, philosophy, and the arts.

1. Greek Drama
The Greeks examined their values and contemporary issues in public dramatic performances. The tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides explored conflicts between passion and reason, between divine and human law, while the irreverent and lewd comedies by Aristophanes made points about human and social failings with sarcasm and mockery.

2. Scientific Thought in Ionia
About 600 B.C.E., Greek thinkers in Ionia, inspired by their encounter with the Babylonian scientific and mathematical tradition, rejected supernatural explanations for natural events and tried to develop a rational understanding of nature based on careful inquiry and logical deduction.

3. The Origins of Writing History
The origin of the Western tradition of writing history began with Herodotus, who sought to explain the Persian War, and was further developed by Thucydides, who analyzed the causes of the Peloponnesian War.

4. Nature Versus Customs and the Origins of Philosophical Thought
Believing that communities could prosper only if governed by just institutions and fair laws, the Greeks questioned whether their moral and political standards were invented human customs or based in nature. In the fifth century B.C.E., teachers named sophists argued that all human institutions and standards were human inventions, leading to moral relativism. In response, Socrates and his pupil Plato argued for the validity of absolute standards; Plato, in particular, taught that not only were virtues real, they constituted a higher reality which careful, critical reasoning could perceive and understand. Plato elevated theory over scientific inquiry, but Plato’s student Aristotle believed that the scientific observation and classification of nature allowed us to acquire knowledge of absolute truths.

5. The Arts: Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture
The pursuit of the ideal preoccupied not only Greek philosophers and dramatists, but Greek artists as well, who sought to balance this idealism with realism, especially in the representation of the human body, which the Greeks believed was both beautiful and worthy of exaltation. Greek architects also sought to reflect the grace and balance they perceived in the natural world with symmetrical and proportional buildings.
V. Conclusion: The Cultural Foundations of the West

The Classical Age, an era dominated by Persia, produced what would be important, lasting legacies for the West. The Persians transmitted scientific traditions to the Greeks, and Zoroastrianism had an impact on Judaism. Most directly important to the cultural foundations of the West were the religious and ethical teachings of the Hebrews and the political, artistic, and philosophical innovations of the Greeks.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Have students research and then map out a typical polis. How does the geography of the polis both express and instill Greek values?

2. Compare Greek art with Persian art. In what ways were they similar? What differences in culture do they reflect?

3. Experimenting with different search engines, challenge students to find as many influences of the Greeks on modern life as possible. A similar challenge can be made regarding the Hebrews. See which of two teams can find the most influences.

4. As a writing exercise, have students select a character from the *Iliad* or the Hebrew Bible and recount an episode from that character’s point of view.

5. Compare Greek histories with Hebrew histories to illustrate the different ways in which these peoples viewed themselves and the meaning of human existence in the world.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. How did the religious ideas of the Hebrews compare with those of the Greeks and Persians?

2. What impact do you believe other peoples had on the Hebrews?

3. What factors shaped the development of the Greek city-states? Why do you think democracy developed in Athens in an age of kings?

4. What basic principles underlay Greek scientific thought?

5. Consider a part of that profound question at the center of the development of Greek philosophical thought: Do moral standards reflect absolute standards, or are they human inventions? What is the origin and basis of morality? How might these questions have been answered by the Hebrews and the Persians?
CASE STUDIES

1. At the end of Aeschylus’s trilogy of plays, *The Oresteia*, the central character, Orestes, goes on trial in front of Athena. Have your students either stage this trial, or analyze it in a debate. What is Aeschylus saying about violence, civilization, and human nature? How would events in Greece at that time have influenced his outlook?

2. *The Book of Job* in the Hebrew Bible is also a trial of sorts – God’s trial of Job and, in a way, Job’s trial of God. Have students form two, or even three, groups – representing the positions of God, Job, and perhaps Job’s friends. What, ultimately, is this story trying to say about morality, divinity, and justice?

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. *The Spartans* (2003) is a recent PBS series that approaches Greek history from the Spartan point of view.

2. *Testament*, by John Romer, is a lively account of the creation of the Bible, whose early chapters deal with the Hebrew Bible. There was also a companion TV series on PBS.


5. The Internet Ancient History Sourcebook – Greece at [http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook07.htm](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook07.htm) contains a great deal of material on ancient Israel, Persia, and Greece. (If you are directed to the Fordham University Web site, use their search to reach the Ancient History Sourcebook.)
CHAPTER 4

The Hellenistic World and the Roman Republic, 336 - 31 B.C.E.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

* explain how Alexander the Great created an empire in which Greek civilization flourished amid many different cultures.
* identify the distinguishing features of Hellenistic society and culture.
* describe the result of encounters between Greeks and non-Greeks.
* explain how the Roman Republic came to dominate the Mediterranean world in this period.
* discuss how Roman rule over the Hellenistic East affected Rome’s development.
* identify the political and social changes that brought the Roman Republic to an end.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* Alexander the Great’s conquests began the process of extending Greek culture into non-Greek parts of the world, and allowed the development of a complex, cosmopolitan civilization.
* This Hellenistic civilization was founded on the spread of the Greek language, which became the common tongue in trade, politics, and intellectual life.
* In addition to a shared language, diverse peoples across political borders developed a cultural unity as they absorbed elements of Greek culture, such as philosophy, religion, literature, and art.
* The spread of Hellenistic culture was a series of cultural exchanges, as non-Greeks engaged Greek culture in a process of adaptation and synthesis and contributed their own cultural elements to mainstream Hellenism.
* Roman expansion brought Rome into contact with Hellenism, and also undermined Rome’s republican form of government.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. The Warlike Kingdom of Macedon

Linguistically linked to Classical Age Greece, Macedon was a monarchy in which kings were obliged to wage war continuously to retain the support of the Macedonian army.

A. Unity and Expansion Under King Philip

King Philip, who had a gift for military organization and innovation, united the Macedonian nobility and conquered the Greek city-states in 338 B.C.E.
B. The Conquests of Alexander

King Philip shrewdly linked Greek civilization with Macedonian might when he announced that he intended to conquer the Persian Empire as “revenge” for the Persian War, but it was his son Alexander who actually conquered not only the Persian Empire but beyond – as far as India. As he conquered, Alexander established cities at key locations, which drew thousands of Greek migrants who became the cities’ elites. Although Alexander tried to adapt Persian political structures to consolidate and unite his empire, resistance from his army ensured that at his death, without an adult heir, Alexander’s empire would eventually disintegrate.

C. Successor Kingdoms: Distributing the Spoils

Fighting among themselves, Alexander’s generals eventually created a number of kingdoms, run by all-Greek administrations in which the kings were worshiped as gods but relied on military success, public projects, and patronage to ensure the support of their armies and subjects.

II. Hellenistic Society and Culture

Politically disunited, the Hellenistic kingdoms all had the same Greek social institutions and cultural orientation.

A. Cities: The Heart of Hellenistic Life

Hellenistic civilization was defined by its Greek-speaking cities. The people of the Hellenistic cities shared a common identity based on a common language, and the cities continued Greek traditions of learning, art, and architecture. They even continued the tradition of active public life in an age of absolute monarchical power, as Hellenistic kings tended to allow considerable freedom in local government. Those governments were dominated by the wealthy citizens, who spent lavishly to decorate and enhance their cities, which were becoming more diverse as the Greek concept of exclusive city-citizenship yielded to the reality of common "subjectship" to the king.

B. New Opportunities for Women

Women in the Hellenistic world had more opportunities than women in the Classical Age. Female infanticide was reduced, royal women often wielded considerable power, and overall female education improved, although women remained under the supervision of men with fewer rights and opportunities.

C. Hellenistic Literature, Philosophy, and Science

The Hellenistic era saw striking innovations in literature, philosophy, and science.

1. Literature: Poetry and History Writing

Faced with a repressive political climate, playwrights and poets produced frivolous but elegant works, while a few historians resisted the pressure to extol the deeds of the king to produce more thoughtful accounts.

2. Philosophy: The Quest for Peace of Mind

The schools of Plato and Aristotle continued in Athens, but new schools of philosophy arose, some of which shared a common goal of
acquiring inner tranquility. Epicureans sought peace by withdrawing from the world and fears, Stoics sought peace by acceptance of fate and devotion to duty, and Cynics sought peace by rejecting not only all needs and desires but all the customs and conventions of society.

3. Explaining the Natural World: Scientific Investigation

Hellenistic scientists rejected the more speculative approach of classical Greek science in favor of an emphasis on realism, leading to great advances in mathematics, astronomy, and medicine.

D. Encounters with Foreign Peoples

During the Hellenistic Age, Greeks encountered large numbers of foreign peoples with important results for the West.

1. Exploring the Hellenistic World

Convinced of their own superiority to non-Greek “barbarians,” educated Greeks enjoyed learning about foreign peoples, with whom they were coming into greater contact as trade and curiosity drove Hellenistic explorers to the fringes of their world.

2. Resistance to Hellenistic Culture

Although some of those foreigners conquered by the Greeks tried to learn Greek and assimilate to Hellenistic culture, most remained separated from, and resentful of, their Greek masters, whom they ignored whenever possible. Egyptian and Persian religions began to predict a future deliverance at the hands of a divinely sanctioned leader, while the Jews, lead by the Maccabees, rose up in a successful revolt.

3. Celts on the Fringes of the Hellenistic World

Tribal, warlike, and nonliterate, the Celts, ancestors of many modern Europeans, lived just beyond the Hellenistic World but exerted influence on that world through trade and, on occasion, invasion.

III. Rome’s Rise to Power

During the Hellenistic Age, Rome expanded from a city-state into a vast and powerful empire, attempting to incorporate those it conquered into its republican political structure. But trying to govern ever-growing territories with the institutions of a city-state undermined the Roman Republic.

A. Roman Origins and Etruscan Influences

For the first four centuries of its existence, Rome developed its prosperity through trade and its military skills by fighting hostile neighbors. Rome was heavily influenced by its neighbors the Etruscans, through whom Rome absorbed much of Greek culture, especially in religion.

B. The Beginnings of the Roman State

Around 500 B.C.E., the Romans overthrew kingship and established a republic, although real power lay in the hands of a relatively small number of influential families. For the next 200 years, Roman political life was a struggle between the wealthy aristocrats (patricians) and the poor commoners (plebeians). This was known as the Struggle of Orders, in which the plebeians slowly but steadily won political and legal rights until they became fully integrated into
Roman government. A major reason why the plebeians were able to succeed is that they were the backbone of the Roman army.

C. Roman Territorial Expansion
Conquests caused governmental change in Rome.

1. Winning Control of Italy
By 263 B.C.E., Rome had conquered all of Italy and learned both the value of political alliances and the wisdom of extending Roman citizenship to those they conquered.

2. The Struggle with Carthage
In a series of three Punic Wars fought with Carthage from 264 B.C.E. to 146 B.C.E., Rome gained the islands of Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia, survived a devastating invasion by the Carthaginian king Hannibal, and finally completely destroyed Carthage.

3. Conflict with the Celts
The Romans faced fierce resistance from the Celts in western Europe, although Julius Caesar succeeded in conquering the Celtic region of Gaul right before the end of the Roman Republic.

D. Rome and the Hellenistic World
Although at first reluctant to do so, Rome extended her control to the Hellenistic eastern Mediterranean.

1. The Macedonian Wars
In three wars fought between 215 and 168 B.C.E., Rome conquered Macedon and Greece.

2. The Encounter Between Greek and Roman Culture
The acquisition of the eastern Mediterranean intensified Hellenism’s influence on Rome. Romans had a love-hate affair with Greek culture, admiring its sophistication but at the same time desiring to preserve their own rugged Roman virtues, which they feared Hellenism threatened. Greek culture had a major impact on Roman literature and drama, and Stoicism held a tremendous appeal for the Roman philosophers. Art, architecture, and even religion also showed the pervasive influence of Hellenism.

E. Life in the Roman Republic
Territorial expansion brought prosperity, and although a small number of families dominated political life, they also created stability by ensuring that no one family was too powerful.

1. Patrons and Clients
The influence of the ruling families was extended through political networks built on the Roman custom of patrons and clients, in which a powerful man would exercise influence on behalf of a socially subordinate man in exchange for that man’s public support. Thanks to this system, complex webs of interdependency operated at every level of Roman society.

2. Pyramids of Wealth and Power
A well-defined hierarchy shaped Rome’s social organization, as well as its political organization. By the first century B.C.E., Rome was
dominated by a leadership elite comprised of old noble and former plebeian families, followed by a business class called the equestrians, and the often-impoverished citizen peasantry of plebeians. At the bottom were about two million slaves, one-third of the population, whose brutal treatment resulted in periodic slave revolts.

3. The Roman Family

This sense of hierarchy was reflected in the Roman family, whose male head, the *paterfamilias*, exercised full authority over not only his wife and unmarried children, but the family’s slaves and dependents, as well. Even though they were always legally dependent upon a male relative, Roman aristocratic women usually retained control over their own property and could act with a considerable degree of independence— even influencing political matters behind the scenes.

IV. Beginnings of the Roman Revolution

The wealth of empire exacerbated the existing inequalities of wealth and power in Rome and led to the disintegration of the Republic.

A. The Gracchi

The brothers Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus sought to alleviate some of the worse aspects of these inequalities, especially poorer Romans losing their lands, which threatened recruitment for the Roman army. Both brothers met violent ends in their attempts at reform and unwittingly opened the door for unscrupulous politicians to exploit the poor, especially impoverished soldiers, to gain personal power.

B. War in Italy and Abroad

In 90 B.C.E., Rome’s Italian allies revolted, demanding full citizenship. They lost their war against Rome, but gained all of their demands. Shortly thereafter, the Roman general Sulla used his army to overturn his political opponents and gain control of Rome. Sulla attempted to restore the power of the Senate, but the precedent of using military might in political contests had been set.

C. The First Triumvirate

To gain land for his soldiers, the Roman general Pompey formed an alliance with the wealthy Crassus and the ambitious Caesar, which became known as the First Triumvirate. In return for helping his partners, Caesar gained both wealth and the command of the Roman army in Gaul.

D. Julius Caesar and the End of the Republic

In conquering Gaul (modern France and Belgium), Caesar won glory and prestige. When he was politically opposed by Pompey and the Senate, Caesar used his loyal troops to instigate a civil war that he won by 45 B.C.E., when he returned to Rome. There, one year later, Caesar had himself declared dictator for life, but was assassinated by a group of idealistic senators who hoped to restore the Republic. Instead, Rome was plunged into another civil war, which was won in 31 B.C.E. by Caesar’s grandnephew and legal heir, Octavian.
V. Conclusion: Defining the West in the Hellenistic Age

The cultural and geographical boundaries of the West began to take shape during the Hellenistic Age, which saw Hellenistic culture spread and interact with local cultures across the Mediterranean, most significantly leaving a distinctive mark on Roman civilization.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Allow students to approach the history of the Roman Republic through its art with the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Timeline of Art History: www.metmuseum.org/toah. Students can compare Roman art from this period with later and earlier periods, as well as make comparisons with art in other parts of the world at this time.

2. Cleopatra has remained a compelling figure throughout the centuries, and how she has been portrayed has usually said more about the historical era creating the portrait than about the queen herself. Divide your students into groups. Have some groups examine well-known works centering on Cleopatra, such as William Shakespeare’s Antony and Cleopatra, George Bernard Shaw’s Caesar and Cleopatra, or the 1963 movie Cleopatra, while another group researches the actual historical figure. What does a comparison of the groups’ results say about historical, not to mention artistic, interpretation?

3. Have students compare maps of Alexander’s Empire with that of the Roman Empire, and mark off the geographic “areas of exchange” where Hellenism encountered other cultures. Where was there greater receptivity? Where greater resistance?

4. Rome’s first law code was the Twelve Tables. Have students examine these laws and legal procedures and write essays in which they compare one particular law or procedure with its modern equivalent.

5. One of the most engaging ways to encounter history is through “everyday life.” Ask each student to identify one ordinary activity – eating breakfast, going to class, washing dishes, reading a book – and then to research and report on what that activity, or its equivalent, would have been like in the Hellenistic world.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Why did Greek civilization flourish amid the many cultures of Alexander’s empire?

2. Why do you think the position of women improved in the Hellenistic world, compared with their position in the classical age?

3. Given the Greeks’ conviction that they were superior to non-Greeks, why were they so curious about “barbarians”?

4. What were the chief differences between Hellenism and the civilization of the classical era?
5. What – if anything – might the Romans have done to prevent the creation of an empire from undermining their republican government?

CASE STUDIES

1. The Hellenistic Age was one of both assimilation and resistance. Have students select one or more of the different peoples who came under the influence, then research and present in a debate the pros and cons of assimilation.

2. Instead of being assassinated, what if the Senate leaders had been able to arrest Julius Caesar? Have students imagine – or enact – what his trial might have been like. What case would the prosecution have made? How might Caesar have defended himself?

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. Material and information pertaining to the Hellenistic world, including primary sources and maps, can be found at the Internet Ancient History Sourcebook, www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook. (If directed to the Fordham University Web site, use their search to locate the Sourcebook.)

2. *In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great* (1998) is a four-part PBS series covering the life and career of the great conqueror.


5. *Rome: Power and Glory* (1999) is a six-part series covering the entire history of the Roman Empire; the first episodes are relevant to this chapter.
CHAPTER 5

Enclosing the West: The Early Roman Empire and Its Neighbors, 31 B.C.E. - 235 C.E.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to:
* explain how the Roman imperial system developed.
* identify the roles the emperor, senate, army, and Rome itself played in this process.
* describe how provincial peoples assimilated to or resisted Roman rule.
* discuss how Romans interacted with peoples living beyond the imperial borders.
* describe the social and cultural response to the emergence and consolidation of empire.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* A key element of the Romans’ success was a willingness to share their culture with their subjects and to assimilate them into the political and social life of the empire.
* Roman culture flourished primarily in cities, and Roman civilization was an urban one.
* The Roman Empire brought cultural unity and political stability to a very large and diverse area.
* Rome’s development, in turn, was shaped by its encounters with its subject populations.
* What it meant to be a Roman was affected by whether one was in the imperial center, the provinces, or the frontiers and beyond.
* The intellectual, religious, political, and geographic parameters of imperial Rome set the basic outlines of the modern West.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. The Imperial Center

From the ruins of the Roman Republic, a new political system emerged in which the emperor held absolute power for life. During this process, Rome itself, the imperial center, became a model for the whole empire.

A. Imperial Authority: Augustus and After

While ostensibly restoring Republican Rome, Octavian gained total political mastery of Rome and ruled it absolutely, although he only accepted from the Senate the title of “Augustus.” Augustus created an imperial system that long survived him, and his successors later openly took the title of emperor.

1. The Problem of Succession

After Augustus’s death, the succession of his stepson Tiberius established a hereditary monarchy for the empire, which included
emperors adopting able successors. The smooth transition of power that was supposed to be ensured by the hereditary principle, however, was occasionally interrupted by the intervention of the army or civil war.

2. The Emperor’s Role: The Nature of Imperial Power

Under the imperial system established by Augustus, the emperor had four main responsibilities: 1) protect and expand imperial territory; 2) administer justice and provide good government throughout the empire; 3) supervise the public worship of the gods; 4) be a symbol of unity in the empire by embodying it. The latter resulted in a cult of the emperor and emperor-worship.

B. The City of Rome

Emperors vied to lavish buildings and monuments on Rome, especially in the Forum, the political and public center of the city that was the hub of the Roman world. Among the gleaming homes and public buildings, however, the impoverished majority of Rome’s inhabitants lived in filthy and dangerous slums.

C. The Agents of Control

Although the emperor stood at the heart of the imperial system, there were two other agents of control.

1. The Roman Senate: From Autonomy to Administration

The Senate had a more restricted role in the new imperial system but still played a significant administrative role. It broadened to include nonaristocrats and elites from outside Rome itself and solidified new networks of power.

2. The Roman Army and the Power of the Emperor

The army not only allowed Rome to gain and hold territory, but also was the most important element in making – or breaking – an individual emperor. After completing their terms of service, legionaries received grants of land, and subject peoples recruited into the army gained Roman citizenship. The Roman army epitomized the Roman values of organization and discipline.

II. Life in the Roman Provinces: Assimilation, Resistance, and Romanization

Beyond the imperial center, Rome encouraged the adoption of Roman ways and extended Roman citizenship to the peoples of the Empire’s provinces. Many provincials readily assimilated to a Roman life and thought of themselves as Romans, but others resisted Romanization.

A. The Army: A Romanizing Force

Roman army bases and the settlement of Roman soldiers in the provinces made the Roman army a significant force of Romanization throughout the imperial era. The Roman army mirrored the transformation of the Roman Empire from a collection of conquests to a well-organized state with a common culture, as troops from outside Italy increased in numbers and made up a larger percentage of the army as a whole.

B. Administration and Commerce

The Roman Empire was held together by a well-run provincial system
whose structure gave rise to an administrative-military class. The many provinces of the Roman Empire were connected by extensive transport and commercial networks which also helped to spread Romanization.

C. The Cities
Cities were the key to maintaining Roman control, linking provinces to the imperial center through well-built roads and allowing the interaction of imperial administrators with local elites.

D. The Countryside
Land was the greatest source of wealth, and control of the countryside was the key to imperial prosperity. The economy of the Roman Empire was fundamentally agricultural, made possible by the toil of peasants in the countryside who were exploited to maintain the wealth of their landlords and feed the cities and the army.

E. Revolts Against Rome
After defeat, the adjustment to Roman rule was rarely smooth and resentment often turned into revolt.

1. Arminius and the Revolt in Germany
In 9 C.E., the too-rapid imposition of economic exploitation and taxation on the Germanic tribe the Cherusci led a Romanized member of that tribe, Arminius, to lead the only successful revolt against Rome. The revolt freed the tribes east of the Rhine River from Roman rule.

2. Boudica’s Revolt in Britain
Angered by Roman abuse of herself and her daughters, the British Queen Boudica led an open rebellion. Although the Romans put down the revolt, they learned from it that they must treat subject peoples fairly.

3. The Revolt of Julius Civilis in Gaul
Like Arminius, Julius Civilis was a Romanized German tribal, who tried to take advantage of civil war in Rome to lead several Germanic tribes in revolt. Unlike Arminius, though, Julius Civilis was not successful.

4. Jewish Revolts
Despite repeated defeats, the Jews of Judea continued to rebel against Rome because their strong sense of religious identity, rooted in a set of sacred texts, prevented their full assimilation into Roman society.

F. Law, Citizenship and Romanization
With the Antonine Decree of 212 C.E., Roman citizenship was granted to all free men and women in the Roman Empire. Since Roman citizens were entitled to the rights and benefits of Roman law, the expansion of citizenship led to the dominance of Roman law over other traditions, strengthening unity in the empire and Romanization. Roman law helped shape Western legal and cultural concepts by distinguishing between criminal and civil law, by establishing a tradition of codification and interpretation of the law, and by contributing the idea of universal legal principles. However, not everyone was equal in the eyes of Roman law.
III. The Frontier and Beyond

On the edges of the Roman Empire, boundaries and border areas allowed cultural distinctions to emerge between “civilized” Romans and “barbarian” foreigners. As Rome consolidated her conquests and fortified her borders, Romans came to view those boundaries as marking a cultural divide between civilization and barbarism, which justified Roman conquest.

A. Rome and the Parthian Empire

Highly structured and enormously powerful, the eastern Parthian Empire was Rome’s one formidable rival and Roman policy towards it shifted from attempted conquest to diplomacy, resulting in a mutually profitable exchange of ideas and technologies.

B. Roman Encounters with Germanic Peoples

Despite their lack of political unity, the tribal peoples living north of the Rhine and Danube rivers posed the greatest threat to Rome, and defense against them absorbed much of Rome’s military resources. The Germans interacted with the Romans peacefully through trade, and Germanic men were often recruited into the Roman army.

C. Economic Encounters Across Continents

Trade brought Rome into an almost-global network.

1. Encounters with China

Not diplomacy but trade, in particular the silk trade, connected Rome to China. Roman merchants did not acquire silk in China, but in India, where they also purchased spices and other luxury items.

2. Encounters with Africa

For Romans, “Africa” mostly meant only North Africa, and their contacts with sub-Saharan Africa were few.

IV. Society and Culture in the Imperial Age

Just as the illusion of continuity masked genuine political change, social change also occurred within what appeared to be enduring social norms, and the shift from republic to empire had a profound effect on culture and religious beliefs.

A. The Upper and Lower Classes

New aristocratic families emerged as old lines died out, but aristocrats continued to be only a tiny fraction of the population. Most citizens were the poor (but free) plebeians; the squalor and precariousness of their lives was only somewhat allayed by “bread and circuses.”

B. Slaves and Freedmen

A huge percentage of the Roman Empire’s populations consisted of slaves, who were subjected to appalling abuses yet nonetheless managed to forge emotional relationships with each other. Slavery was not necessarily permanent. A slave could hope for manumission, whereupon he could join the ranks of the freedmen and his children could become citizens.

C. Women in the Roman Empire

Aristocratic Roman women had more freedom than was usual for women
in the ancient world, and at the most elite levels they exercised real political power behind the scenes.

D. Literature and Empire

The development of imperial autocracy and the expansion of imperial power affected both the work and the lives of Roman writers.

E. Religious Life

The Roman Empire made no effort to impose uniform religious beliefs, permitting subject peoples to continue their religious traditions. As a result, this era saw important religious changes.

1. Polytheism in the Empire

Syncretism, the equating of two gods and the fusing of their cults, was common throughout the empire. Among anonymous urban dwellers, religions that promised a form of salvation were popular.

2. The Origins of Rabbinic Judaism

The loss of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 C.E. shifted the focus of Judaism to a community-based religious life in which rabbis replaced the former priests as religious leaders, thus laying the foundation for modern Judaism.

3. The Emergence of Christianity

Christians formed a new community within the Roman Empire, with a new sense of shared identity, a new sense of history, and a new perception of the Roman system. Originating in the Jewish community and drawing much from Jewish tradition, Christianity differed from Judaism, especially in its regard for the person and work of Jesus.

4. The Spread of Christianity

At first gaining converts primarily from marginalized groups, in the second century C.E., Christianity began to attract adherents educated in Greek philosophy, which they used to elucidate and explain their new faith – laying the foundations of Christian theology. Truly revolutionary in its vision of all humanity united under a single God, and in its hostility to other forms of religious expression, Christianity survived sporadic persecution by the Romans to eventually displace all polytheistic religions in the West.

V. Conclusion: Rome Shapes the West

The Roman Empire’s boundaries outlined what would become the West. While permitting no dissent, the Romans did extend Roman citizenship, Roman law, and the Roman way of life throughout its realm, uniting diverse peoples as “civilized” and influencing even those “barbarians” beyond its borders.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Working from an outline map of Rome, have students construct a “tourist guide” map for an ancient visitor to the city.
2. Romans have often been portrayed in motion pictures, from the epics of Cecil
B. DeMille to the more recent *Gladiator*. Ask students to view one of these films and to write an evaluation of the film’s historical accuracy.

3. Have students compare Greek statues with Roman ones, noting how the Greeks sought to portray an idealized form, while the Roman ones are more “realistic.” What images and messages might the Romans have been seeking to project with their statuary?

4. Using the Internet and other resources, have students research China, India, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Parthian Empire during this period. What were their states of development? If a stray Roman were to encounter one of these, would there be elements he might recognize as “civilized”?

5. Have each student imagine himself or herself as a Roman soldier and write a “diary” of his or her experiences in the provinces. How would the process of “Romanization” have looked from that point of view?

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

1. What factors helped assimilation and Romanization? What factors hindered it?

2. What principles of Roman law and legal thought have proven most important to the development of Western legal and political thought?

3. Why was Augustus successful in making himself the sole ruler of Rome, when Julius Caesar had failed?

4. To what degree was the Roman distinction between “civilized” and “barbarian” based on cultural conditions, and to what degree was it simply “us” and “them”?

5. Compare the situation of elite Roman women during the empire with that of elite women in the Hellenistic kingdoms and women in Republican Rome. Did the shift to a Hellenistic-style rule benefit elite Roman women? If so, how and why?

**CASE STUDIES**

1. Suppose that the leader of a group that rebelled against Rome – such as Boudica or Arminius – was put on trial by the Romans. Have students research and present that person’s “defense,” as well as the case that would have been made against the rebel leader by the Romans.

2. Have students research Roman law and stage “trials,” perhaps using well-known recent cases in the United States, to explore both Roman legal concepts and procedures.

**FURTHER RESOURCES**

1. The works of many Roman writers mentioned in this chapter, such as Livy, Ovid, Horace, Virgil and Seneca, are widely and easily available and provide a valuable insight into the Roman mind.
2. The works of the Apologists and other early Christian theologians can be found gathered together in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. While the four Gospels record the life and work of Jesus, the best look at the emergence of Christianity within the Roman Empire is in the *Acts of the Apostles* in the New Testament. An on-line collection can be found at [www.earlychristianwritings.com](http://www.earlychristianwritings.com).

3. The Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Texas provides directories and links to Jewish history at [http://inic.utexas.edu/menic](http://inic.utexas.edu/menic). Click on “Society and Culture: Religion and Spirituality,” then “Judaism.”

4. A recent program on the early Roman Empire from PBS is *The Roman Empire in the First Century* (2001), which is accompanied by a Web site with additional information on many of the writers mentioned in this chapter, as well as information on the empire itself, the social order, and life in Roman times at [www.pbs.org/empires/romans](http://www.pbs.org/empires/romans). In this same Empire series is *Peter and Paul and the Christian Revolution* (2003), also with a supporting Web site: [www.pbs.org/peterandpaul](http://www.pbs.org/peterandpaul).


6. *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism: A Parallel History of Their Origins and Early Development* (1992), edited by Hershel Shanks, offers insight into the development of these two faiths in this period.

7. For a more in-depth examination of the origins and early development of Christianity, see L. Michael White’s *From Jesus to Christianity* (2004). The recent, very popular, but somewhat controversial, movie by Mel Gibson, *The Passion of the Christ* (2004), is useful for provoking discussion.
CHAPTER 6

Late Antiquity: The Age of New Boundaries, 250 - 600

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to:
* describe how the Roman Empire successfully reorganized after the instability of the third century.
* explain how Christianity became the dominant religion in the Roman Empire.
* discuss the impact Christianity exerted on Roman society.
* identify the ways in which Christianity enabled the transformation of communities, religious experience, and intellectual traditions inside and outside the empire.
* explain how and why the Roman Empire disintegrated in the West.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* After a devastating half-century of crisis, the Roman Empire managed to recover and endure another one hundred years because of political and administrative reforms.
* By the middle of the fifth century, the Western Roman Empire had collapsed and was being replaced by new Germanic kingdoms, while the eastern Roman Empire managed to endure.
* In both the eastern Roman Empire and the new western kingdoms, Rome’s cultural legacy continued, but in very different ways.
* The era of late antiquity saw the emergence of Christianity as the dominant religion throughout the empire, drawing new cultural boundaries between Christians and Jews.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Crisis and Recovery in the Third Century

Between 235 and 284, civil war and invasion caused economic collapse and the breakdown of imperial administration before a new emperor halted the decline and shored up the empire.

A. The Breakdown of the Imperial Government

Following the assassination of Emperor Severus Alexander in 235, military coup followed military coup and emperors and would-be emperors neglected the empire’s borders, allowing invaders to break through. Power fragmented and inflation spun out of control.

B. The Restoration of Imperial Government

Diocletian rescued the empire through military, administrative, and economic reforms that fundamentally transformed the empire.

1. Diocletian’s Reforms

Diocletian divided the Roman Empire into two parts -- East and
West -- each with its own emperor, and set up a system to regularize the succession. He enhanced the authority of the emperor and restored Roman military power by reorganizing the army and limiting its role in political affairs. He also reorganized the empire’s administrative system, which was now supported by a new tax system that placed the greatest burden on the peasants and resulted in widening social and economic divisions. Diocletian sought to strengthen the empire through the religious persecution of Christians.

2. Foundations of Late Antique Government and Society

Although Diocletian’s reforms stabilized and preserved the Roman Empire, they also altered the character of the empire. Power shifted away from the traditional urban aristocracy, and civic life itself decayed. In the countryside of the western provinces, peasants turned to landowners for protection, and as a result became dependent on them. The center of gravity within the empire shifted decisively to the east, where the empire’s wealth and political might were increasingly concentrated.

II. Christianizing the Empire

Although Diocletian succeeded in strengthening the Roman Empire militarily, administratively, and economically, he failed to stem the growth of Christianity.

A. Constantine: The First Christian Emperor

Constantine, an ambitious young general, overthrew Diocletian’s succession system and reunited the empire under the rule of one man -- himself -- and founded a new capital city, Constantinople, to glorify his rule. Constantine kept the empire divided administratively and in other ways, continuing Diocletian’s reforms, but unlike Diocletian, Constantine, convinced that his military success was due to the Christian God, became a Christian, paving the way for the eventual Christianization of the empire and transforming Christianity from a persecuted religion to a favored religion, which was now yoked to the imperial office.

B. The Spread of Christianity

With imperial support, Christianity spread rapidly throughout the empire in the fourth century.

1. The Rise of the Bishops

The spread of Christianity led to the development of a hierarchical administrative structure in that religion that paralleled Roman imperial administration. This structure linked Christian communities into the Christian Church, and within this structure, bishops emerged as important figures, who became supervisors of religious life, teaching the faith and overseeing the care of the less fortunate. With Constantine’s conversion, bishops became incorporated into imperial affairs, as well. By 400, the bishop of Rome was claiming primacy over the other western bishops.

2. Christianity and the City of Rome

As Christianity spread, churches, hospitals, and monasteries
appeared in Roman cities, and nowhere was this more evident than in Rome itself. Christian festivals and holidays also began to replace traditional celebrations, and years began to be dated from the birth of Christ.

3. Old Gods Under Attack

The exclusivity of a monotheistic religion like Christianity made the diverse range of religious expression of a polytheistic culture intolerable, and Christians attacked “paganism,” both in public practice and private belief.

III. New Christian Communities and Identities

The spread of Christianity created new identities based on faith and language which both unified and divided communities.

A. The Creation of New Communities

By providing a well-defined set of beliefs and values, Christianity fostered the growth of large-scale communities of faith in which Christian principles had to be integrated with daily life and older ways of thinking.

1. Christian Doctrine and Heresy

Church leaders often conflicted on the interpretation of Christianity’s sacred texts, so councils of bishops met to resolve doctrinal differences – especially regarding the nature of the Trinity and the nature of Jesus Christ. The decisions of these councils became correct, or orthodox, belief, and those who continued to hold other views were now guilty of wrong belief or heresy.

2. Communities of Faith and Language

Differences in interpretation combined with differences in language to produce “zones” that cemented different communal and ethnic identities within the Christian world.

3. The Monastic Movement

Near the end of the third century, a movement known as asceticism called on Christians to subordinate physical needs and temporal desires in a quest for spiritual union with God. The first ascetics lived solitary lives, but as ascetics joined together to form communities, monasticism was born and monastic communities soon spread throughout the eastern and western provinces.

4. Monasticism, Women, and Sexuality

In monastic communities, some women found independence and exercised an authority and influence that would not have been possible for them otherwise. Monasticism, however, also reinforced negative ideas about women and sexuality.

5. Jews in a Christian World

With the spread of Christianity, Jews were no longer one people among hundreds of different peoples in the Roman Empire, but a distinct, non-Christian group that found itself liable to marginalization and discrimination.
B. Access to Holiness: Christian Pilgrims

The Christian practice of undertaking a religious journey, called a pilgrimage, to visit a sacred place offered a new means to participate in religious culture. Pilgrimages helped foster a shared sense of Christian community.

C. Christian Intellectual Life

Classical learning was criticized as dangerous by some Christian leaders when Christianity was still a marginalized and persecuted religion, but once the persecutions ended, many Christians, actively participating in the empire’s intellectual life, examined the meaning of Christianity in the context of classical learning.

1. The Reconciliation of Christianity and the Classics

After the conversion of Constantine, church leaders at first grudgingly accepted the practical necessity of classical learning. Influential churchmen soon drew freely from classical texts and methods of discussion, eventually transforming their understanding of both classical learning and Christianity. Christian historians such as Eusebius promoted the idea that the development of the Roman Empire was part of God’s plan for the salvation of mankind. The decline of that empire led other Christians, such as Augustine, to formulate a new interpretation of the Roman Empire as only one of many earthly empires that rise and fall in human history, all of which were spiritually insignificant. In the western empire, monasteries became important in the preservation of classical learning, while in the eastern empire the traditional schools of classical learning disappeared.

2. Neoplatonism and Christianity

Neoplatonism, a spiritualized version of Plato’s philosophy, had a great impact on Christianity, especially Christian thinking about the soul and asceticism.

IV. The Breakup of the Roman Empire

The Roman government lost control of its Latin-speaking western half, while the Greek- and Syriac-speaking eastern half remained under the control of the emperor in Constantinople.

A. The Fall of the Rome’s Western Provinces

The causes of the fall of the Western Roman Empire were complicated and multifaceted, and the topic remains one of the most hotly debated ones in history.

1. Loss of Imperial Power in the West

The cumulative effect of unwise decisions, weak leadership, and military failure allowed Rome to slowly but surely lose her western provinces, which were replaced by independent Germanic kingdoms. Eventually, Italy itself became one of these.

2. The Empire of Attila

Both sophisticated and brutal, Attila, the ruler of the Huns, briefly established an empire that challenged Rome in the east, but fell apart
quickly after his death.

3. Cultural Encounters After the End of Roman Rule
   Roman culture did not end with Roman political power but had to negotiate with new Germanic masters, taking various forms in the west.

   B. The Survival of Rome's Eastern Provinces
   While the western provinces were transformed, the Roman Empire continued without interruption in the east.
   1. Christianity and Law Under Justinian
      Justinian asserted the power of the emperor over matters of Christian faith, and attempted to create a Christian society by joining Roman law to military force; in the process he both reformed Roman law and created the Corpus of Civil Law, which became a pillar of western European civilization.
   2. Reconquering the Provinces in the West
      Justinian’s determination to retake the western provinces provoked fierce resistance and prolonged fighting in Italy, with devastating consequences for both Italy and Byzantium.
   3. The Struggle with Persia
      Justinian fought several brutal wars with the Persian Empire to the east, which was much more dangerous to Byzantium than the western Germanic kingdoms. Accordingly, Justinian devoted more resources to this conflict, which continued under his successors. The drain on Byzantine resources of the Persian conflict ensured that Byzantium would not be able to maintain any lasting control over the western provinces.

V. Conclusion: The Age of New Boundaries

The collapse of Roman rule in the West and the establishment of Germanic kingdoms there created a new concept of the West in which the legacy of Roman civilization was filtered through Christianity. Meanwhile, in the eastern Mediterranean, the Roman Empire continued as the Byzantine Empire, home state of the Greek Orthodox Church.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. To gauge the impact of Christianity on Rome, have students compare their “tourist’s guide” to imperial Rome with a “pilgrim’s guide” to a Christianized Rome.

2. Have students investigate the many ways in which the end of the Western Roman Empire has been portrayed, from Gibbon’s work through popular motion pictures. In what ways do these works reveal concerns about their own eras?

3. Compare works of Christian and Byzantine art with classical Greco-Roman art. Are there changes reflecting different purposes to these artworks?

4. Use the Internet to explore the cult of the saints, which first developed in this
period. Which saints date back to late antiquity? Is there a common pattern to saints’ lives? What sites and relics were associated with these saints?

5. After looking over Augustine’s *Confessions*, have each student write a similar “autobiography” for one of the major figures mentioned in this chapter.

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

1. Diocletian’s reforms saved the Roman Empire, but they also led to the conditions that allowed the western empire to fall. Could his reforms have been modified in any way to prevent that?

2. What benefits did the spread of Christianity bring to an ordinary inhabitant of the Roman Empire? What might have been the disadvantages?

3. In the series of mistakes and errors in judgment that led to the “fall” of the Western Roman Empire, when and where might better decisions have “saved” the western empire?

4. What obstacles and issues were involved in the Christian Church’s shift from a persecuted outlaw institution to a part of the “establishment”?

5. How did the spread of Christianity both create unity and enhance differences within the Roman Empire?

**CASE STUDIES**

1. Have students research early theological controversies, such as that between Chalcedonian, Monophysite, and Arian Christians, and stage debates or even trials to contrast their views.

2. Perhaps working in groups, have students study the *Corpus of Civil Law*. How does it differ from – or is similar to – modern law as they know it?

**FURTHER RESOURCES**

1. A recent and highly readable biography of Augustine is Garry Wills’ *Saint Augustine* (1999).

2. The *Institutes* of Justinian can be found online at the Online Reference Book for Medieval Studies (formerly the Internet Medieval Sourcebook): www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/535institutes. (If directed to the Fordham University Web site, use their search engine to reach the Reference Book for Medieval Studies.)

3. The Internet Ancient History Sourcebook contains information on both late antiquity and the development of Christianity at
4. The Winter 1998 issue (number 57) of *Christian History* is devoted to “Converting the Empire.” Other relevant issues are “St. Anthony and the Desert Fathers” (number 64, Fall 1999), “Heresy in the Early Church” (number 51, Summer 1996), and “Augustine” (number 67, Summer 2000). These are available on-line (www.christianitytoday.com/history); some earlier issues, not yet on-line, covered such topics as worship, persecution, and women in the early church.

5. Several reader-friendly but scholarly articles from *History Today* that can be used in classes are: Stephen Williams and Gerard Friel: “The Survival of the Eastern Roman Empire” (volume 48, issue 11, November 1998); James A. Arvites: “The Military Campaigns of Adrianople” (volume 31, issue 4, April 1981); and Brent Shaw: “Women and the Early Church” (volume 44, issue 2, February 1994).
CHAPTER 7

Medieval Empires and Borderlands: Byzantium and Islam

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to:
* discuss how the Roman Empire's eastern provinces evolved into the Byzantine Empire.
* describe the development of Islam in Arabia.
* explain how the followers of Islam created a vast empire so quickly.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* At the heart of medieval culture lay the dynamic interactions among three great civilizations: the Latin-Christian kingdoms of western Europe, the Greek Christianity of Byzantium, and the Arabic-speaking Islamic world.
* All three civilizations centered on a monotheistic religion, and all three drew on Rome’s legacy, although in different ways.
* Each of these civilizations defined itself primarily as an exclusive community of faith, in which boundaries and differences were emphasized.
* Expansive empires within these civilizations brought together diverse peoples and made possible greater political cohesion, bringing greater uniformity of religion, language, and governing principles.
* Despite hardships, the Byzantine Empire, or Byzantium, continued as the dominant Christian power in the eastern Mediterranean.
* Islam was a new religion whose followers conquered an empire, in the century after the death of Islam’s founder, the Prophet Muhammad.
* These great civilizations also encountered barbarian peoples in the borderlands between them.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Byzantium: The Survival of the Roman Empire

Justinian integrated classical culture and Christianity to a new degree but he failed in his attempt to unify his empire through Orthodox Christianity. After the death of Justinian, the Byzantine Empire was militarily reorganized by its emperors. Meanwhile, differences in language and religious opinion divided eastern and western Christians, while polytheists inhabited Byzantium's unstable borderlands. Key Roman institutions continued from late antiquity: the emperor and his bureaucracy, the army, and the Orthodox Church.

A. An Embattled Empire

By 750, a much smaller Byzantine Empire was struggling for survival
against many enemies.

1. Out of the Steppes: Borderlands in Eastern Europe

The nomadic and fierce Avars created an empire of conquered peoples that included the Slavs. Both Slavic and Avar groups migrated across the Balkans, seizing Byzantine lands. Along with the Bulgars, these groups maintained a constant pressure on Byzantium’s northwestern frontier. The weakening of Byzantium created problems in the Balkans, whose population was ethnically diverse and divided between Latin and Orthodox Christianity. Eventually these divisions were solidified into the kingdoms of Bulgaria, Poland, and Kievan Rus (later Russia).

2. The Loss of the Western Provinces

Already semi-autonomous, Byzantine possessions in Spain and North Africa fell to the Visigoths and Muslims, respectively, while Byzantine lands in Italy fell to the Lombards.

3. The Old Enemy: Persia

The chronic struggle between the Byzantine and Persian empires reached a climax in a war that Byzantium won, but at such a cost that both Byzantium and Persia were vulnerable to the Muslims.

4. The New Enemy: Islam

The armies of Islam seized Egypt, took North Africa, raided deep into Byzantine territory, and laid siege to Constantinople itself. Although Byzantium survived, for now, Islamic raiders continued to harass Byzantine lands.

B. Byzantine Civilization

Three institutions did much to enable the tumultuous Byzantium to withstand the attacks against it.

1. Imperial Administration and Economy

Absolute in power, the emperor governed through a large, hierarchical bureaucracy that served to unite the provinces with the central administration. The emperor controlled Byzantium's economy but could not keep it from declining as territory and trade routes were lost to the Muslims.

2. The Military System of Themes

Reorganizing Byzantium into four military districts, the emperor managed to maintain the military strength necessary to prevent the empire from collapsing, while the Byzantine navy successfully used “Greek fire” to keep Arab forces at bay.

3. The Church and Religious Life

The dominant form of Christianity in Byzantium was Orthodox Christianity, led by the Patriarch of Constantinople, who in turn was controlled by the emperor. Education declined, and among the few who were educated, an explicitly Christian education replaced a classical one.

4. Icons and the Iconoclastic Controversy

Byzantines believed that icons enabled Christians to encounter a holy presence, and Emperor Leo’s attempt to suppress icons was fiercely resisted, and later overturned.
5. The Macedonian Renaissance

The Macedonian dynasty strengthened Byzantium against invaders by pushing back the Arabs, continuing to convert the Slavs and Bulgars, and forging diplomatic relations with the Rus, eventually converting them to Christianity, as well. The economy thrived and religious unity increased, resulting in an impressive outpouring of scholarship. The political stability and energetic leadership provided by the Macedonian dynasty began to erode in the eleventh century, leading to governmental stagnation, economic deterioration, and military decline. As a result, the Byzantine Empire was not able to fend off the Normans in southern Italy or the Seljuk Turks in Asia Minor.

II. The New World of Islam

Originating in the Arabian peninsula in the early seventh century, Islam quickly spread and its followers had established an Islamic Empire by 750.

A. Arabs Before Islam

Before Islam, Arabs were tribal people linked by a common language who lived in diverse communities, followed different religions, and had no unity.

B. The Rise of Islam

Islam is based on the Qur’an, a book that records the revelations made to the prophet Muhammad. From these revelations and other teachings, Muhammad forged a religious community that drew in the Arab tribes and, by Muhammad’s death in 632, had unified Arabia.

1. Muhammad’s Teachings

A monotheistic religion, Islam holds that Muhammad was the last in a line of prophets of God that began with Abraham. Islam enjoins five principles on its believers: faith in the one God and in Muhammad as his prophet, prayer five times a day, fasting during Ramadan, charity, and a pilgrimage to Mecca. These principles, especially the pilgrimage, helped to create a common Muslim identity. Muhammad also taught his followers to struggle (jihad) for the good of the Muslim community.

2. The Succession Crisis After Muhammad: Sunnis and Shi’ites

After his death, Muhammad was succeeded by Abu Bakr as the first caliph. A minority of Muslims would not accept Abu Bakr and eventually some of them formed the Shi’ite sect of Islam. In preserving the Islamic community in Arabia, Abu Bakr created a highly trained Muslim army. After Abu Bakr’s death in 634, the Muslim armies swept out of Arabia through Persia and across North Africa, their advance halted only by civil war over the caliphate.

C. The Umayyad Caliphate

The Umayyad family won the civil war in 661 and established a dynasty that lasted until 750.

1. The "House of War"

The resumption of wars of conquest to spread the faith led Muslim armies into Spain, but they were defeated in France and successfully
resisted by the Nubians and the Byzantines. The Muslim armies also advanced across Central Asia but did not advance into territories held by the Chinese.

2. Governing the Islamic Empire
The Umayyads turned the caliphate into a hereditary monarchy and developed a new administrative system that produced a highly centralized and autocratic regime, which was eventually unified by the adoption of the Arabic language. Arab settlers followed the Muslim armies to the newly conquered lands where the Muslims built new cities and transformed old ones, as the buildings that once supported Greco-Roman culture gave way to Islamic mosques.

3. Becoming Muslims
Understanding themselves as a community of faith, the Muslim conquerors sharply distinguished between Muslims and non-Muslims, and only converts to Islam could gain full participation in the Islamic community. Muslims did not forcibly convert other monotheists but did convert polytheists by the sword.

4. Peoples of the Book
The Umayyad caliphate distinguished its subjects not by ethnicity but by religion and allowed Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians to practice their religion freely, although they had less status than Muslims and had to pay extra taxes.

5. Commercial Encounters
The Umayyads fostered long-distance commerce, both overland camel caravan trade and maritime trade, by maintaining peace within their far-flung borders and creating a new currency.

6. The Breakup of the Umayyad Caliphate
Never firmly in control of the entire Islamic world, the Umayyads faced a series of rebellions from Shi’ites and the Abbasid clan. After the Abbasids seized the caliphate in 750, the Muslim world split apart into rival caliphates.

D. The Abbasid Caliphate
Although Arabs, the Abbasids considered all Muslims equal and the distinctive Islamic civilization that emerged under Abbasid rule fused Arabic, Persian, Syrian, and Byzantine elements. This eclecticism is reflected in the Arabian Nights stories. Philosophical and scientific studies also thrived. Actual Abbasid political power ceased in 945, although the Abbasid caliphs continued as figureheads for another 300 years.

E. Islamic Civilization in Europe
Muslim raids contributed to the decline of cities on the coastal areas of the Christian Mediterranean, while Sicily and Spain became zones of intense cultural interaction between Christians, Muslims, and Jews. In Spain, the caliphate of Cordoba dominated early in this era, but the Christian kingdoms began to assert themselves and became the dominant power in the eleventh century. Border areas not only saw military conflict between Muslims and Christians, but more peaceful contact, as well. Borderlands were areas of intense cultural interactions. For
example, during the tenth century, the ethnically and religiously mixed city of Cordoba became the most important intellectual capital in western Europe.

IV. Conclusion: Three Cultural Realms

Between 550 and 750, western Europe, the Mediterranean world, and the Middle East were transformed into three distinct realms: the Christian Byzantine Empire, the Islamic caliphate, and Latin Christendom which, unlike the other two, was politically fragmented. Each realm shared something of the heritage of ancient Rome, as well as ancient religious traditions (especially Judaism), yet each was distinctly different – differences that would come into sharp focus in the ensuing centuries.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Use icons as a means of exploring Orthodox spirituality. How do these act as “doorways to heaven”? What is the interaction between image and believer?
2. Conversely, Islamic art discourages representation, not only of God or Muhammad but of the human figure, and instead encourages abstract and natural designs. Using the Internet and other sources, have students compare the different approaches of Islam and Christianity to religious art.
3. On maps of the Islamic world, trace the caravan routes of the camel-based overland trade.
4. Have students read excerpts from the Qu'ran and compare them with excerpts from the Bible.
5. How would Constantinople have appeared to a traveler from Baghdad, or vice versa? Ask students to engage their historical imaginations and compose such a “travel diary.”

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. How does the relationship between religion and political authority in the Byzantine Empire compare with that in the Islamic caliphates?
2. What does the Iconoclastic Controversy say about the relationship between politics and religion in Byzantium?
3. Why do you think Islam spread so quickly?
4. What were the differences in the way the Byzantines and the Muslims dealt with the legacy of the classical world?
5. For a woman, what were the advantages and disadvantages of living in an Islamic society?

CASE STUDIES

1. How would a particular crime, such as murder or theft, have been dealt with
under Byzantine and Islamic law? Divide students into two groups to research this and present their findings. What common ideas are present in both? In what ways do the legal systems exhibit distinctive cultural traits?

2. This was a great era of conversions, as Islam and Christianity, both Orthodox and Catholic, spread. Compare and contrast the different strategies and tactics undertaken by Muslim and Christian “missionaries.”

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. The Online Reference Book for Medieval Studies (formerly the Internet Medieval Sourcebook) www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook, contains Byzantine and Islamic texts. (If directed to the Fordham University Web site, use their search engine to reach the Reference Book for Medieval Studies.)

2. A Web site devoted to Byzantine materials, including icons and chants, is at www.fordham.edu/halsall/byzantium/. Another good Web source for articles, images, maps, and a timeline for the Byzantine Empire can be found at Byzantium.seashell.net.nz.

3. For an outstanding Web source of information about Islam and Islamic history and culture go to www.wsu.edu and use their search engine to find “Islam.”.

4. CDs of Byzantine chants include Metropolitan Museum of Art: Music of Byzantium; Epiphany: Medieval Byzantine Chant for the Feasts on January 1st and 6th; and Chants de L'Eglise de Rome: Periode Byzantine.

5. Islam: Empire of Faith (2001), part of the PBS series Empires, covers a longer scope of time than this chapter, but early parts of the film can be very useful, as can the interactive features of the accompanying Web site: www.pbs.org/empires/islam
CHAPTER 8

*Empires and Borderlands: The Latin West*

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:
- identify the ways in which the new kingdoms of western Europe built on Rome’s legal and governmental legacies.
- describe how Christianity spread in these new kingdoms.
- identify the ways in which the Carolingian Empire contributed to establishing a distinctive western European culture.
- describe how, after the collapse of the Carolingian Empire, the Western kingdoms consolidated.
- explain how Latin Christianity spread to Europe’s periphery.
- identify the causes and the consequences of the Crusades.

**SIGNIFICANT THEMES**

*In western Europe, Germanic and Roman cultures mixed, producing Christian kingdoms on a Roman foundation collectively known as Latin Christendom.*
- Monasteries played a key role in spreading Christianity and literacy in the new western European kingdoms.
- Ethnically and linguistically diverse peoples were brought together in new political formations in western Europe.
- In this period a distinctive Latin Christian culture began to emerge in western Europe, despite the impact of hostile invaders.

**CHAPTER OUTLINE**

1. **The Birth of Latin Christendom**

   By 750, several new kingdoms emerged in what had been the western part of the Roman Empire. The kingdoms were politically, ethnically, and linguistically diverse, yet they shared certain social and religious characteristics.

   A. **Germanic Kingdoms on Roman Foundations**

   The Germanic peoples who established these kingdoms maintained their own cultural identity despite borrowing from Roman law. Christianity and the Latin language provided other unifying forces.

   1. **Anglo-Saxon England**

   Roman civilization vanished more completely from Britain than
anywhere else in Europe and left virtually no mark on the culture of the Germanic Anglo-Saxons who established kingdoms there.

2. The Franks: A Dual Heritage
   Following the collapse of imperial authority in Gaul, the Franks, under their ruler Clovis, established a large, powerful kingdom, which later split into the realms that would eventually become France and Germany.

3. Visigoths in Spain
   The Visigoth kings of Spain failed to impose their Arianism on the local population, instead converting to Catholicism themselves before being defeated by invading Muslim armies.

4. Lombards in Italy
   Lombard rule in Italy suffered from internal division, as well as pressure from the Byzantines and Franks, and eventually the Frankish king Charlemagne crushed them in 774.

B. Different Kingdoms, Shared Traditions
   Everywhere but in England, Germanic rulers blended Roman and Germanic traditions in government and law to unify their kingdoms with Christianity also serving as a common bond.

1. Civil Authority: The Roman Legacy
   Germanic rulers such as Clovis continued to maintain parts of the Roman administrative system and controlled all appointments to these offices. He also adopted the Roman practice of the monarch as the source of all law.

2. War Leaders and Wergild: The Germanic Legacy
   The leaders of the Germanic tribes had been war chiefs and the personal loyalty of warriors to their leader continued to be an important element in the Germanic kingdoms, as did the hierarchical networks of clan and kin, which revenged any harm done to one of their own unless appeased by financial compensation for that person’s worth – the wergild.

3. Unity Through Law and Christianity
   By 750, all of the western kingdoms had become Latin Christian, which facilitated the intermarriage of Germanics and Romans and helped give unity to the kingdoms. Unity was also enhanced when Romans increasingly chose to live according to Germanic, and not Roman, law.

4. Women and Property
   The influence of Roman law on Germanic societies can be seen in the way that Germanic settlers came to accept a woman’s right to inherit land.

C. The Spread of Latin Christianity in the New Kingdoms of Western Europe
   Missionary monks played a key role in the spread of Latin Christianity throughout the new kingdoms.

1. The Growth of the Papacy
   Through clever diplomacy and shrewd political maneuvering, the popes were able to build support in western Europe and eventually make
themselves the independent rulers of part of Italy.

2. Converting the Irish

Never part of the Roman Empire, Ireland also never developed any sort of urban living, and so its missionaries, like Patrick, had to adapt the institutional and educational structures of the Church to an overwhelmingly rural environment. They did this by establishing monasteries, which became centers of learning, eventually sending out their own missionary monks to establish monasteries elsewhere.

3. Converting the Anglo-Saxons

Irish monks seeking to convert England found themselves working with missionary monks sent from Rome. The two groups disagreed on several practices, a dispute that was finally resolved in Rome’s favor, in 664.

4. Monastic Intellectual Life

The monks sent from Rome were Benedictines, who emphasized religious learning and whose monasteries became centers of learning and intellectual activity. Part of this was the copying of manuscripts, and though most of these were religious texts, the monks preserved classical texts, as well. Monks also wrote books, transported books to new places, and operated schools.

5. Jews in a Christian World

A religious minority throughout Latin Christendom, the specific circumstances of the lives of the Jews varied depending upon in which kingdom they lived. While Christian attitudes toward Jews tended to be hostile, the actual treatment of the Jews ranged from persecution to protection.

II. The Carolingians

The kingdom of the Franks was powerful, but suffered from the succession custom of the Franks that caused a king to divide his kingdom among his sons.

A. The Leadership of Charlemagne

Charlemagne managed, in a reign of almost constant warfare, to make himself the mightiest ruler in western Europe, heading up an empire that included all of western Europe, except southern Italy, Spain, and the British Isles. This was a dramatic departure from the small, loosely governed kingdoms that had prevailed since the end of the western Roman Empire.

1. Coronation of Charlemagne as Emperor

Charlemagne’s coronation as a Roman emperor in 800 exemplified the two most prominent characteristics of the Carolingians: conscious imitation of the ancient Roman Empire and an obligation to protect the pope, in exchange for which the pope sanctioned Carolingian rule.

2. Carolingian Rulership

The Carolingian system of government was personal, not institutional. Despite the use of capitularies (collections of written decrees) and counties (territorial units in which counts represented royal power),
the strongest bond unifying the Carolingian realm was personal loyalty to the emperor. What little administration that did exist, however, depended entirely on the church, an institution the Carolingians supported and whose monasteries provided what literate administrators the Carolingians had.

3. The Carolingian Renaissance

Under Charlemagne’s patronage, there was a revival of interest in ancient literature and an intensified effort at education, including the establishment of a school staffed by the finest scholars in Europe, which made Charlemagne’s court a lively center of intellectual exchange.

B. The Division of Western Europe

The personal empire created by Charlemagne was not maintained by his less capable successors, as subsequent generations divided up what had been one empire. This fragmentation increased warfare and violence.

III. Invasions and Recovery in the Latin West

In the ninth and tenth centuries, polytheist tribes raided the Christian heart of Europe, but Christianity not only survived, it eventually converted the invaders.

A. The Polytheist Invaders of the Latin West

Of the pagan raiders that harassed Christian Europe, the two most important were the Magyars, who eventually accepted Christianity, and the Vikings, who caused the most havoc in western Europe. By the mid ninth century, the Vikings, or Northmen, were shifting from raiding to invading and settling, which had the most significant impact on the British Isles.

B. The Rulers in the Latin West

The disintegration of the Carolingian order resulted in a shift of power to local warlords.

1. Lords and Vassals

By the eighth century, the Germanic society of warriors led by chiefs had been formalized into relationships between lords and vassals. Vassals swore loyalty and obedience to their lord, and in return the lord promised to protect his vassal and sometimes granted him land, called a fief, in a system known as feudalism. In the disorder of the ninth and tenth centuries, lords gained extensive political and legal rights over the communities in their lands. Although feudalism, in theory, created a hierarchy of authority, in actuality the situation was more complex.

2. The Western European Kingdoms After the Carolingians

Feudalism transformed kingship. The king’s power now lay in his role as the lord of other lords, which made maintaining royal authority difficult. Kings sought to ensure loyalty by granting favors to loyal vassals and by emphasizing the sacred character of kingship, in the process enhancing the idea of kingship and encouraging the perception of the kingdom as both separate from the king’s person and more than the sum of its parts. Kings in East Francia and West Francia tried to expand monarchical power. The Saxon dynasty of East Francia promoted
Christian missions to the Slavs and revived the title of emperor. In West Francia, the Capets used Christianity to elevate the monarchy and eventually gave the name of their feudal domain -- France -- to the entire kingdom. Anglo-Saxon England became united under Alfred the Great and his successors, and experienced a revival of learning under royal patronage.

C. The Conversion of the Last Polytheists
In the frontiers of the Latin West, when a king or chieftain converted to Christianity, his people followed, although the inculcation of Christian principles and forms of worship took more time and effort. To combat the tendencies towards localism, bishoprics were established.

IV. The West in the East: The Crusades

Pope Urban II gave powerful religious sanction to a Christian military expedition against the Muslims in Palestine, calling for a holy war known as a crusade. Crusaders, a new sort of armed pilgrim, sought both spiritual and material rewards as they battled to take Jerusalem, which many identified with Paradise itself.

A. The Origins of Holy War
The original call for a crusade came in response to the threat that the Muslim Seljuk Turks posed to Christians in the eastern Mediterranean.

B. Crusading Warfare
The First Crusade (1095-1099) captured Jerusalem and established Latin principalities in what is today Lebanon, Israel, and Palestine. This was the only really successful crusade. Subsequent crusades either failed or, in the case of the Fourth Crusade, blatantly subverted religious aims to worldly ones.

C. The Significance of the Crusades
The Crusader hold in the Middle East did not last long. The Crusades also did not facilitate the transmission to Europe of Islamic cultural and intellectual influences, which instead came via Sicily and Spain. However, the Crusades stimulated the expansion of European trade, which was important, as it led to an era of exuberant economic growth.

V. Conclusion: An Emerging Unity in the Latin West

In the Early Middle Ages, the distinction between eastern and western Europe emerged primarily based on different forms of Christianity. This helped develop a tentative unity among western European Christians, most of whom practiced Latin Christianity. However, by the end of this era, western Europe was also characterized by the system of lordship and vassalage, and had ventured beyond its borders to wage war in the Muslim world.
ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. The Irish and Anglo-Saxon missionary period produced numerous stories about saints’ lives. Have students write essays analyzing the blending of Christian and native cultures in these stories.

2. Use the examination of old Germanic law codes to help students gain insight into the formation of Latin Christendom.

3. Einhard’s Life of Charlemagne and Asser’s Life of King Alfred both portray monarchs who conceived their role to be beyond what was customary for their times. Have students read these two early biographies and write essays in which they compare and contrast the similarities and differences in how these men were portrayed.

4. Have students read excerpts from The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Then let them search the Internet to see if they can find a “chronicle” that would be a modern equivalent to the medieval one.

5. Show the 1961 Hollywood epic El Cid, and lead a discussion on its fidelity to the spirit of The Poem of My Cid. Are there aspects of it that demonstrate a more modern sensibility?

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Discuss the very concept of “crusade.” Has this idea produced more negative or positive results in history?

2. What role did women play in the feudal world? How did their position compare with that of elite Byzantine and Muslim women?

3. What factors might have influenced whether an area converted to Latin or Orthodox Christianity?

4. What aspect of the Carolingian Empire could already be classified as distinctively “Western”?

5. In what ways did religion and political power reinforce and support each other in the Latin, Byzantine, and Islamic worlds? Are there more similarities or differences?

CASE STUDIES

1. The “Justice in History” section describes the western judicial procedure of the ordeal. Ask students to research how the sort of cases mentioned here would have been tried in Byzantium or the Islamic world. Compare cases to explore the cultural
determinants that define “justice.”

2. The early medieval world had multiple legal jurisdictions, which occasionally overlapped or conflicted. Have students research and determine what sort of cases would go before the following courts: feudal courts, church courts, royal courts. Where might there be aspects in which jurisdictions could conflict?

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. “The Vikings” (2000) is a two-hour program that originally aired as part of PBS’ NOVA series, and is supported by an interactive Web site: www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/vikings.

2. A capitulary of Charlemagne’s issued in 802 outlines better than anything else how his empire was conceived, and can be found through the Yale Law School’s Avalon Project at www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/medieval/capitula.htm.


4. A useful video from Films for the Humanities and Sciences that pertains to this chapter is The Feudal System (1989).


6. Germanic law codes, saints’ lives, maps, and many other resources are available through the Online Reference Book for Medieval Studies (formerly the Internet Medieval Sourcebook) at www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook. (If directed to the Fordham University Web site, use their search engine to reach the Reference Book for Medieval Studies.) This site also contains Byzantine and Islamic texts, as well.

7. Bede’s History of the English Church and People is available at a low price from Penguin Classics.

8. Thomas Cahill’s How the Irish Saved Civilization (1996) is a lively and best-selling account of early medieval Ireland that students will find entertaining and informative.
CHAPTER 9

*Medieval Civilization: The Rise of Western Europe*

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

* explain how the medieval western European economy and society organized around manors and cities.
* describe how the Catholic Church consolidated its hold over the Latin West.
* discuss how western European monarchies strengthened themselves.
* identify what made European culture distinctive.

**SIGNIFICANT THEMES**

*The Roman Catholic Church encouraged creative and intellectual activity even as it consolidated its control over the West.*

*European kings created political stability by consolidating their authority through financial and judicial bureaucracies.*

*Christian, Jewish, and Muslim scholars sought to reconcile the philosophical methodology of critical reasoning with their faiths.*

**CHAPTER OUTLINE**

**I. Two Worlds: Manors and Cities**

Thanks to agricultural innovations, the population of Europe increased dramatically, especially after the year 1000.

**A. The Medieval Agricultural Revolution**

Over the course of the eleventh century, medieval agriculture became much more productive.

1. **Technological Innovations**

The harnessing of new power sources – wind, water, and animal – combined with a heavier plow and a shift to a three-field system increased Europe’s food supply and produced patterns of cooperation and collective decision-making among Europe’s peasants.

2. **Manors and Peasants**

A manor was essentially an agricultural unit owned by a lord, and a manor also served as a judicial unit. Most peasants were serfs, tied to a specific manor, unable to leave. Serfs were under high levels of obligation to their lord, but they had some legal rights. Other peasants were freeholders or cottagers, and the most important social unit was the family.

3. **The Great Migrations and the Hunger for Land**

The population increase due to the agricultural revolution soon resulted in a shortage of farmable land, causing many individuals,
families, and even peoples to move into uncleared land or into someone else's land.

B. The Growth of Cities
The population growth fueled a repopulation of the cities, as well.

1. The Challenge of Free Cities
The newly thriving cities attempted to gain autonomy from their lords. An example of this is the communes that were established in Italy.

2. The Economic Boom Years
Building on the foundations of the agricultural revolution and population growth, an economic boom resulted from advances in transportation networks facilitating long-distance trade, the creation of new business techniques needed for long-distance trade, and the development of cities themselves.

II. The Consolidation of Roman Catholicism

New religious orders, intellectual creativity, and the last conversions of polytheists marked one of the greatest periods of religious vitality in Roman Catholicism, thanks largely to able popes who gave the Church the most advanced, centralized government in Europe. But the papacy’s intervention in worldly affairs helped undermine its spiritual authority.

A. The Task of Church Reform
The success and growing wealth of the Church led to corruption, even of the papacy. The movement for reform came from the monasteries, especially the monastery of Cluny, which produced morally pure monks and a beautiful, simple, sung liturgy. From the monasteries reform spread to parish priests and bishops, and generated a desire among some churchmen eliminate practices like simony and lay investiture. As a result, redefining the boundaries between secular and spiritual authorities became a major issue.

B. The Pope Becomes a Monarch
Increasingly, a uniform liturgy and obedience to the pope defined being a Catholic, but medieval popes had to make their authority real. Pope Gregory VII sought to do this by pursuing the intertwined objectives of internal reform in the church and independence of the church from external, secular control. The latter goal resulted in a struggle with the German emperor, which was known as the Investiture Controversy. Pope Gregory also centralized authority within the church and asserted a theory of papal supremacy over all other authorities.

1. How the Popes Ruled
The actual power of the papacy lay in the sophisticated legal, administrative, and financial systems that succeeding popes built up and maintained.

2. The Pinnacle of the Medieval Papacy: Pope Innocent III
Possessing a clear concept of papal monarchy, Innocent III provided the papacy with an independent territorial base, the Papal State; expanded the idea of crusading to include war against heretics; successfully asserted papal power over political affairs; and clearly
defined both the church’s liturgical rites and its dogma.

3. The Troubled Legacy of the Papal Monarchy

Innocent’s less capable successors undermined the pope’s spiritual authority as they continued to blatantly and more aggressively interfere in secular politics. Finally, King Philip IV of France not only accused Pope Boniface VIII of heresy, but sent armed men to arrest him, marking the end of papal monarchy.

B. Discovering God in the World

This was an era of unprecedented spiritual awakening, best seen with the success of new religious orders.

1. The Patron Saints

Saints – holy persons with a special relationship to the sacred – provided divine protection and interceded with God on behalf of individuals and communities. Material objects associated with the saints, called relics, were in high demand and often helped establish the legitimacy of political authority. Later in the Middle Ages, there was a shift of emphasis toward the veneration of Jesus and, especially, the Virgin Mary, who achieved tremendous popularity and was held up as a positive model of womanhood.

2. The New Religious Orders

After the Cistercians developed a very austere and strict form of Benedictine monasticism, there emerged an entirely new, unclad form of monasticism, that of the mendicant friars such as the Dominicans and Franciscans, who devoted themselves to preaching and ministering in the world.

3. The Flowering of Religious Sensibilities

For all Christians, religious enthusiasm and experimentation pushed piety in new directions, such as veneration of the Eucharist, which provided identification with Christ. Many Christians became mystics and some female mystics practiced extreme forms of asceticism.

C. Creating the Outcasts of Europe

With the rise of religious unity and moral reform was also an increase in the persecution of those who did not fit into the official idea of Christian society.

1. The Heretics: Cathars and Waldensians

The impulse toward a “purer” Christianity led Cathars and Waldensians to deviate from Catholic doctrine, earning them the unremitting hostility of Church authorities, who sought to search out and exterminate the heretics through inquisition and crusade.

2. Systematic Persecution of the Jews

The Crusades fostered hostility and violence against the Jews, who found themselves increasingly marginalized, deprived of legal protections, and subjected to persecution.

3. “The Living Dead”: Lepers

Victims of this feared, disfiguring disease found themselves increasingly segregated from their communities and classified with heretics and Jews as "outcasts."
4. The Creation of Sexual Crimes

The church first legislated against homosexual relations in 1179, and male “sodomites” were -- like heretics, Jews, and lepers -- identified as outcasts and subjected to persecution. However, male church authorities appear to have been unable to imagine female homosexuality.

III. Strengthening the Center of the West

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, western Europe reached new heights of political and economic might as kings, especially in England and France, achieved unprecedented power within their kingdoms.

A. The Monarchies of Western Europe

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the monarchs of France and England were able to form stable borders, develop permanent, impersonal bureaucracies to manage finance and administration, establish themselves as the ultimate, or sovereign, authority, and make the law the object of their subjects’ fundamental loyalty. This made them the most powerful kingdoms in this period.

1. Expansion of Power: France

The kings of France achieved unity through military conquest and administrative reform, aided by a lucky streak of dynastic continuity.

2. Lord of All Lords: The King of England

Claiming all land in England by right of conquest, William I of England made sure that every bit of it was held, directly or indirectly, as a fief from the king. William’s great-grandson, Henry II, further enhanced royal power by using sheriffs to enforce the king’s will and making the king’s justice available to all. Although Henry’s son John was forced to concede some limitations to royal power in regard to the barons, John’s grandson Edward I increased royal power through legal reforms and the foundation of Parliament.

3. A Divided Regime: The German Empire

Lacking the feudal or legal foundations for building monarchical authority that the kings of England and France had, German emperors had to rely on forceful personality and military skill to make themselves effective. They also faced the ongoing hostility of popes wary of any imperial rule in Italy which, like Germany, remained disunited.

IV. Medieval Culture: The Search for Understanding

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the West re-engaged with classical Greek philosophy, and theologians tried to reconcile that philosophy’s rational approach with their religious faith.

A. Revival of Learning

A great increase in literacy occurred over the 400 years of the Middle Ages. The two centers of medieval education were the monasteries and the cathedral schools, but these had different educational goals.

1. Scholasticism: A Christian Philosophy
Out of a growing need for training in logic, the cathedral schools began to train their students in methods of critical reasoning, which gave rise to scholasticism. A broad philosophical and theological movement that dominated medieval thought, scholasticism relied on the use of logic as learned from Aristotle to interpret the Bible and early Christian writers. In their lectures and disputations, scholastics considered all subjects, even sacred ones, open to their rational inquiry.

2. Universities: Organizing Learning

Arising from the cathedral schools, medieval universities formulated the basic educational practices still in place today, such as curricula, examinations, and degrees.

3. The Ancients: Renaissance of the Twelfth Century

Between 1140 and 1260, a flood of Latin translations of ancient Greek works brought Christian thinkers into a greater familiarity with the philosophical method of reasoning, and, like Jewish and Muslim thinkers, they were anxious to demonstrate that philosophy did not contradict the truth of their faith. This quest to reconcile philosophy and faith found its most successful resolution in the work of Thomas Aquinas, who distinguished between natural truth and revealed truth, both coming from God, with the latter perfecting and completing the former. Both Aquinas’s work and that of the jurists revealed a new systematic approach to things.

B. Epic Violence and Courtly Love

A remarkable flowering of vernacular literature occurred as orally transmitted epics were written down, and troubadours created a new literary form, the courtly love poem, which introduced the idea of romantic love and idealized women.

C. The Center of Medieval Culture: The Great Cathedrals

Most European cathedrals were built between 1050 and 1300, symbolizing the soaring ambitions and imaginations of their era, and were centers for all kinds of arts.

1. Architecture: The Romanesque and Gothic Styles

The arched stone roofs of Romanesque cathedrals created an intimate, comforting space, but gave way to the high pointed arches of the Gothic style that evoked feelings of mystical awe.

2. Music and Drama: Reaching God’s Ear and the Christian’s Soul

Whether plainchant or polyphony, liturgical music was a form of enhancing the mystical experience of worship. Liturgical plays, intended for education as well as worship, began the Western dramatic tradition.

V. Conclusion: Asserting Western Culture

During the High Middle Ages, the West looked both inward and outward; it measured itself, defined itself, and promoted itself as it matured into its own self-confident identity and extended its power outside of Europe itself. The West cultivated critical methods of thinking that produced an almost limitless capacity for creative
renewal and critical self-examination. This critical spirit is what has most distinguished the West.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. To allow students to get a feel for how small and compact early medieval cities were, have them compare maps of these cities with a map of the city or town they reside in. How much of the modern city would fit into a medieval one? What was the population density compared with today?

2. The cult of the saints was very important to medieval religion. Have students use the Internet to research saints. How does the modern understanding of saints – both by the Church and in popular culture – contrast with the medieval understanding?

3. Thanks to the development of a notational system, medieval chants are still sung today, and recently have enjoyed some renewed popularity. Expose your students to this musical form; it might be interesting to play music composed by figures that students can research biographically, such as Peter Abelard and Hildegard von Bingen (see below).

4. Representing, in a way, the two educational and intellectual centers of the Middle Ages – the cathedral school and the monastery – are Peter Abelard and Hildegard von Bingen. They are compelling figures in different ways, and rewarding topics for biographical inquiry.

5. Have students exercise their own creative muscles by writing within a medieval form, such as a dialectical question or a courtly love poems. Encourage students to consider how literary and rhetorical forms both shape and express thought.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Why do you think intolerance increased during this period?

2. Do you think there was any connection between the development of courtly love and the greater veneration of the Virgin Mary?

3. Was the failure to create a unified empire in Germany the result of inadequate emperors or more fundamental problems?

4. The Cluniac reform movement could not have succeeded without secular help. Why would powerful feudal lords support the cause of church reform?

5. If the methodology of ancient philosophy was so potentially at odds with faith, why didn’t European thinkers simply ignore it? What does their determination to grapple and reconcile philosophy and reason reveal?
CASE STUDIES

1. The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 forbade priests to take part in ordeals, thus creating a dilemma for European secular courts of justice. The courts depended on the ordeal to determine the accused’s guilt or innocence, by appealing to divine judgment, and hence the priest had been essential to the performance. Have students research how European legal systems developed other means of reaching verdicts, and how those relate to modern judicial systems.

2. Henry II is considered a key figure in the development of English law because of his many juridical innovations. Have students research these more extensively, and construct “cases” showing how particular offenses or legal causes were handled before and after Henry’s changes.

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. Hymns and laments written by Peter Abelard can be found on the CD Monastic Song (1998). Hildegard von Bingen's compositions have also had modern recording, such as Hildegard von Bingen: Heavenly Revelations (1995). There are also vast numbers of chant recordings that are easily available.

2. Through The Letters of Abelard and Heloise (1974), students can become acquainted with one of history’s best-known love affairs, as well as gain insights into medieval understandings of sexuality and spirituality.

3. Jean Claude Schmitt’s The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, healer of children since the thirteenth century (1983) is a wonderful illustration of the persistence of folk belief in medieval Christianity.

4. More advanced students will enjoy exploring the Domesday Book, an economic survey of Norman Britain in 1086, now entirely accessible online at www.domesdaybook.co.uk.

5. Two films, Becket (1964) and The Lion in Winter (1968), feature King Henry II as a central character, played in both films by Peter O’Toole.


7. A useful video from Films for the Humanities and Sciences that pertains to this chapter is Cluny: A Light in the Night (1995).
CHAPTER 10

The Medieval West in Crisis

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
  * identify the causes of the deaths of so many Europeans.
  * describe how forces outside of Europe, in particular the Mongol and Ottoman Empires, affected conditions in the West.
  * explain how disturbances in the global economy of the Middle Ages caused almost complete financial collapse and widespread social discontent in Europe.
  * discuss why the church failed to provide leadership and spiritual guidance during these difficult times.
  * explain how incessant warfare transformed the most powerful medieval states.
  * describe how European culture offered explanations and solace for the calamities of the times.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* Caught in an almost endless cycle of famine and disease, Europe almost totally collapsed under the onslaught of the Black Death: trade disappeared, industry shriveled, and the economy imploded, causing widespread social unrest.
  * The Church, beset by internal problems, was unable to fully respond to the crisis, leading to a search for religious alternatives.
  * France and England became locked in an ongoing conflict that threatened to consume both.
  * Turning inward upon itself in an age of continual crisis, European culture became obsessed with death and increasingly intolerant.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. A Time of Death

Death by starvation and disease became the fate of millions, as Europe’s population plunged from approximately 74 million to just 52 million, with the greatest suffering falling on the poor, the very young, and the old.

  A. Mass Starvation

    Reaching the limits of its agricultural production and experiencing a drop in temperatures, Europe by 1300 could no longer continue to feed a growing population, which resulted in widespread malnutrition, starvation, and disease.

  B. The Black Death

    A savage epidemic -- either bubonic plague or an unknown virus -- swept into Europe in 1348, leaving approximately 20 million people, or about one third of Europe’s population, dead.
II. A Cold Wind from the East

Charging westward out of central Asia, Mongols and Turks had an important influence on world history.

A. The Mongol Invasions

Highly skilled horsemen and warriors, the Mongols transformed themselves under the leadership of Genghis Khan from disunited tribes into a vast empire that eventually stretched from Korea to Hungary. Within their empire, the Mongols reestablished the caravan routes that made trans-Eurasian trade possible, but the later fracturing of the Mongol Empire eventually destroyed this trade.

B. The Rise of the Ottoman Turks

Mercenaries employed by the Mongols, the Muslim Turks gradually became dominant, and took over central Asia. The most successful were the Ottomans, whose dynasty lasted more than 600 years, and whose empire continually harassed a weakened Byzantium. The eventual conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks in 1453 marked the end of the Byzantine Empire.

III. Economic Depression and Social Turmoil

In the fourteenth century, a major economic depression added to the suffering.

A. The Collapse of International Trade and Banking

Disorder in the Mongol Empire and pressure by the Ottoman Turks on Byzantium led to a virtual collapse of overland luxury trade between east and west, which in turn caused the collapse of Europe’s fledgling, and fragile, banking system.

B. Rebellions from Below

The collapse of the luxury trade led to the unemployment of urban workers, causing them to rebel.

1. An Economy of Monopolies: Guilds

Medieval cities were controlled, politically and economically, by guilds that protected the interests of their trade or craft and had monopoly control over the production and trade in the guild’s goods. Their power and monopoly privileges made them the focus of mounting social tensions in a time of economic decline.

2. “Long Live the People, Long Live Liberty”

In Italy, the Netherlands, France, and England, economic pressures caused workers and peasants to rebel. None of these rebellions had lasting success, but the rebels did, for the first time, question and protest the existing social and economic order.

IV. An Age of Warfare

Europe was further weakened when the two largest and previously stable monarchies, France and England, engaged in a prolonged conflict that drained resources
and deepened and lengthened the economic depression. The resulting desire to strengthen and control military resources led monarchs to begin to transform feudal states into the beginnings of modern ones.

A. The Fragility of Monarchies

The most dangerous threat to monarchy in this era was an aristocracy protective of its privileges. These aristocracies limited monarchical power and endangered stability, especially when weak kings combined with a disputed succession.

B. The Hundred Years’ War

The causes of this war sprang from the feudal relationship between the kings of England and the kings of France, as well as differences between English and French royal succession traditions, which resulted in the king of England having, in his view, a claim to the French crown. This war was not a continuous conflict but a series of occasional battles, in which the French, numerically superior, usually fell victim to greater English discipline and weaponry.

1. From English Victories to French Salvation

English successes, including the capture of the French king in battle, led to what appeared to be an English victory by 1420. Ruling France, however, proved more difficult than conquering it. Beginning in 1429, the French rallied and, led by Joan of Arc, began to turn the tide against the English, leading to eventual French victory in 1453.

2. The Hundred Years’ War in Perspective

Other European areas were occasionally drawn into this Anglo-French conflict, so that at certain times this was a European-wide conflict. The war also prolonged the Great Schism and helped hasten the decline of the economy. It devastated France, adding to the death toll from the plague, and resulted in England becoming more English, as the English aristocracy’s ties to France were broken.

C. The Military Revolution

There was a gradual replacement of heavily armored cavalry by disciplined infantry, armed with new weapons such as the longbow and gunpowder. However, for this infantry to be effective, armies became much more complex organizations and were much more expensive, leading royal governments to pursue centralizing policies that lay the foundations for the modern state.

V. A Troubled Church and the Demand for Religious Comfort

During an era of extreme suffering, people turned to religion, but the Church, dangerously weakened in spiritual authority and moral leadership, was unable to provide the solace people craved, leading them to seek alternatives.

A. The Babylonian Captivity of the Church and the Great Schism

Beginning in 1305, the popes voluntarily relocated from Rome to Avignon, an event known as the Babylonian Captivity of the Church. Once there, the popes’ perceived subservience to the French kings dangerously politicized the papacy and their lack of revenues led them into questionable financial schemes.
The determination of Pope Urban VI in 1378 to relocate the papacy back to Rome led to the Great Schism, in which rival popes ruled in Avignon and in Rome. An attempt to solve the problem of the Great Schism led to the Conciliar Movement, which argued that a general council of the Church had greater authority than any pope, and thus was competent to resolve the schism and initiate reform. The Great Schism was, in fact, ended by the Council of Constance, which met between 1414 and 1417, but further reform by councils was thwarted by popes who disliked any limitation on their authority.

B. The Search for Religious Alternatives

The weakened papacy was unable to control those who brought messages of direct experience of God and a return to apostolic purity.

1. Protests Against the Papacy: New Heresies

Medieval religion was primarily sacramental, which elevated the clergy over the laity. Discontented with the privileges of the clergy, papal authority, and the efficacy of the sacraments, some reformers challenged the church. John Wycliffe and Jan Hus argued for more equality between clergy and laity, and were condemned as heretics.

2. Imitating Christ: The Modern Devotion

Unable to find solace in the institutional Church, some turned to a movement known as the Modern Devotion, which stressed individual piety, intense religious education, and ethical behavior.

VI. The Culture of Loss

The anxiety produced by the widespread suffering of this era caused Europeans to be preoccupied with death.

A. Reminders of Death

Death became a pervasive cultural theme, reminding people that life was fleeting, death inevitable. Moralists emphasized ethical behavior and repentance, and both moralists and artists graphically depicted death and dying.

B. Illusions of a Noble Life

Seeking an escape from the reality of death, nobles indulged in fantasy worlds, especially an intensified, otherworldly chivalry, which was belied by the often sensual lifestyles of the nobility.

C. Pilgrims of the Imagination

Another form of escape was the pilgrimage, which became a model for creative literature.

1. Dante Alighieri and The Divine Comedy

One of the richest, most fantastic of these literary pilgrimages, The Divine Comedy imagined a journey through Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise.

2. Giovanni Boccaccio and The Decameron

In contrast to the loftiness of Dante Alighieri’s masterpiece, Boccaccio’s collection of tales is a celebration of life in the face of death.

3. Geoffrey Chaucer and The Canterbury Tales

Chaucer interwove the worldly and the spiritual in this collection of pilgrims’ tales.
4. **Margery Kempe and the Autobiographical Pilgrimage**
   Understanding her own life as a spiritual pilgrimage, Margery Kempe dictated the first autobiography in English.

5. **Christine De Pisan and the Defense of Female Virtue**
   Not a spiritual pilgrimage, the work of Christine De Pisan addressed the issues of the day, especially the cause of defending women in a male-dominated society.

D. **Defining Cultural Boundaries**
   During this period, systematic discrimination against certain ethnic and religious groups increased as ever-higher levels of religious uniformity spread intolerance.

1. **Spain: Religious Communities in Tension**
   Once home to thriving communities of Muslims, Jews, and Christians, the later Middle Ages saw the now-dominant Christian kingdoms becoming increasingly intolerant, eventually outlawing the practice of Islam and forcing Jews to either convert or face expulsion or murder.

2. **German and Celtic Borderlands: Ethnic Communities in Tension**
   In England and Ireland, as well as Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary, ethnic divisions hardened, with laws forbidding intermarriage and restricting citizenship or guild membership.

3. **Enemies Within**
   After the Black Death, vague biases toward minorities hardened into systematic persecution and violence, especially against Jews and alleged witches.

VII. **Conclusion: Looking Inward**
   In a catastrophic century, political and religious frontiers shifted and Europeans turned inward and reinforced their identity as Christians, as well as became more aware of the country in which they lived. Thus people in the West began to think more self-consciously in terms of “us” and “them.”

**ENRICHMENT IDEAS**

1. More information on the Black Death, as well as other persons and events discussed in this chapter, can be found at [www.themiddleages.net](http://www.themiddleages.net).

2. Margery Kempe sought sanctity, and one of the people she visited in search of it was the mystic and visionary anchoress, Julian of Norwich. Have students read and compare Margery’s book with Julian’s, *The Revelations of Divine Love*.

3. The artistic representation of death in this period can make this theme vivid for students. Explore the Remembrance of Death, Dance of Death, and other motifs such as Death and the Maiden and the Triumph of Death.
4. Have students map the literary pilgrimages discussed in this chapter. How would these compare with the geography of actual pilgrimages?

5. For an interesting change of pace, show students the movie *The Advocate* (1993), in which a young French lawyer in this period is called upon to defend a pig accused of murder, a case that involves racism, suspicion of witchcraft, possible heresy, and political and religious corruption. This film can lead to several different discussions or essay possibilities.

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

1. In arguing for the superiority of a council over a pope, the conciliarists argued for the supremacy of the community over the individual ruler. What would be the political ramifications of this theory? Does it have meaning in our own day?

2. Why were the peasants’ and workers’ revolts unsuccessful? Was this due to the rebels themselves, or the structure of later medieval society?

3. Could the collapse of the Byzantine Empire have been avoided? Were internal problems or outside pressures more to blame?

4. The new heresies and the Modern Devotion both expressed a desire for direct communication with God without the intermediation of the church or clergy. In addition to the inadequacies of the church in this era, what other factors might have been at work here?

5. What were the unique opportunities – and obstacles – facing monarchy in this era?

**CASE STUDIES**

1. Jan Hus was much less extreme in his positions than John Wycliffe, yet he was condemned as a heretic by the Council of Constance and executed. An investigation into this trial can be very illuminating. On what grounds was Hus charged with heresy? How did he defend himself? Were his positions beyond any reconciliation with the Church? Why might the Council have been so determined to condemn Hus?

2. Beginning with Christine De Pisan’s works, have students research widespread attitudes toward women in this period and have them stage a debate, arguing the late medieval cases for and against womankind.

**FURTHER RESOURCES**

1. A Web site devoted to Dante and his work can be found at www.greatdante.net.
2. There have been numerous dramatizations of the life of Joan of Arc, including the most recent, *The Messenger* (1999), but perhaps the best is Carl Theodor Dreyer’s *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928). It is historically accurate, as well as one of the great films of all time. The film is a silent film, but the video version comes with an added musical score.

3. A book that deeply explores the impact of the Black Death and other crises on art is Millard Meiss’ *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (1979).

4. Georgetown University maintains a Web site for resources in Medieval Studies called the Labyrinth. Check it out at http://labyrinth.georgetown.edu/.

CHAPTER 11

The Italian Renaissance and Beyond: The Politics of Culture

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* identify the ways in which the political and social climate of the Italian city-states helped create Renaissance culture.
* describe how Renaissance thinkers created historical perspective and devised methods of criticism for interpreting texts.
* discuss how the monarchies of western Europe gathered the strength to become more assertive and effective.
* explain how attempts to imitate antiquity in the arts altered perceptions of the natural world.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* The term “Renaissance” means “rebirth” and refers to a movement that sought to understand and imitate the culture of ancient Greece and Rome.
* Men who embraced the Renaissance believed the ancient past offered the cure for their own troubled times.
* The Renaissance also had a new optimism about the ability to improve both individuals and the world.
* The Renaissance was born in Italy because the political structures of those city-states fostered both cultural experimentation and the idea that the past contained the principles that could re-make and improve the present.
* The Renaissance refashioned the concept of Western civilization to go beyond identification with Christianity and include the pre-Christian legacy of the ancients, as well.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. The Cradle of the Renaissance: The Italian City-States

Renaissance Italy was distinguished by the large number and political autonomy of its thriving city-states, the development of which can be divided into two distinct phases: the republicanism phase of the eleventh century and the principality phase of the fourteenth century.

A. The Renaissance Republics: Florence and Venice

In contrast to the majority of the Italian city-states, Florence and Venice held steadfastly to the traditions of republicanism under the patriciate system of
political and artistic influence by a few great families.

1. **Florence Under the Medici**
   The amazingly wealthy banker Cosimo de' Medici emerged as the greatest of the Renaissance patrons. Seizing Florentine political power in 1434, Cosimo enforced a long period of unprecedented peace in which the arts could flourish. Always at the center of Florence's political affairs, Cosimo nevertheless rarely held formal office and shrewdly preferred to leverage influence behind the scenes. His grandson Lorenzo the Magnificent continued the Medici tradition of patronage and expanded the family's political dominance.

2. **Venice, the Cosmopolitan Republic**
   The need to work together to prevent flooding fostered cooperation among Venice's citizens. Venice, one of the first European powers to control colonies abroad, conquered a number of ports along the Greek coast. Those colonies, and Venice's international trade, made the city-state very cosmopolitan. Defined primarily by its social stability, the Venetian city-state became the longest surviving republic in history, with roughly five hundred years of independent affluence.

**B. Princes and Courtiers**

The ideals of the Renaissance, though created within the republican city-states, soon spread to the principalities ruled by one man (the prince). Patronage in the principalities was largely confined to the prince and close members of the court. Most Renaissance princes came from local aristocratic families who seized political control and established dynasties.

1. **The Ideal Prince, the Ideal Princess**
   Federico II da Montefeltro, the Duke of Urbino (1422-1482), was an example of an ideal prince. A paternalistic ruler who showed genuine concern for his subjects, Federico's military prowess and love of learning granted the mountainous duchy of Urbino a cultural importance far greater than that warranted by its size. A woman of exceptional education and connections, Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua (1474-1539) rose to sole power after the death of her husband. A savvy politician and diplomat, her influence spread far beyond Mantua.

2. **The Ideal Courtier**
   A courtier was a man or woman who lived in or regularly visited the palace of a prince. Ideal qualities for aspirants to the court were outlined in Baldassare Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* (1528), including refined manners, artistic knowledge, education, and an air of nonchalance and ease.

3. **The Papal Prince**
   The Renaissance popes, in addition to being the heads of the Church, were also the ruling princes of the papal state that included the city of Rome. The removal of the Holy See to Avignon, France, during the Great Schism of 1305-1418 left the papal state virtually bankrupt and the city of Rome in ruins. After 1418, a succession of Roman popes sought to regain revenues and rebuild Rome, often causing them to resort
to military force. The popes also engaged in squabbles with neighboring city-states causing the reputation of the papacy to fall.

C. Contradictions of the Patriarchal Family

Much of what happened in Renaissance Italy was a result of the departure of societal practice from the accepted theories of how families interacted. Although the age-old theory of husband/father rule held firm in the literature of the times, the reality of family life often departed from this premise. Widespread disease and death made the family a tenuous unit. Death came from disease and misadventure. Regardless of the patriarchal theory of the family, the patriarchs were often absent or dead because of the wide gap between the ages of husbands and wives.

II. The Influence of Ancient Cultures

Renaissance patrons, artists, and scholars developed new historical and critical perspectives, by imitating the culture of the past that they so admired.

A. Petrarch and the Illustrious Ancients

The founder of the Renaissance's historical critical perspective was Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374), known in English as Petrarch. He posited that the ancients, long admired as founts of eternal wisdom and invention, were mere men much like himself. Petrarch's famous written dialogues with the long-dead Roman orator Cicero underscored how the ancient world was a specific time and place inhabited by real men, not a repository of timeless truths. He demonstrated that the years can change our perceptions of our ancestors. His new critical approach to history led Petrarch to study persuasion and rhetoric and embrace them as devices to motivate people toward moralistic behavior.

B. The Humanists: The Latin Point of View

Following in Petrarch's footsteps were the humanists: linguistic champions who sought to revive the ancient usage of Latin that had been diluted by the Church, law courts, and universities over time. The humanists created a solid niche for themselves in the landscape of the Renaissance as teachers, bureaucrats, historians, and diplomats. Humanists held wide opinions on any given subject; it was their use of language and ability to draw upon ancient knowledge that was revolutionary. By developing what may be called the Latin point of view, humanists created new categories of experience that widely changed people’s perceptions of themselves, society, and the universe. Lasting humanist contributions include the ideas of responsible citizenship and a well-rounded education. There were a few women humanists, most of whom sought to improve the education and status of women.

C. Understanding Nature: Moving Beyond the Science of the Ancients

In a natural progression of the humanist movement, intellectuals began revisiting the ancient science texts and questioning what was found within. Men in the fields of astronomy and anatomy made great progress during this time. Printing and cheap paper, however, was the breakthrough scientific feat that changed the intellectual landscape of the world forever.
III. Antiquity and Nature in the Arts

Following the ideas of the humanists, Renaissance artists strove to gather and adapt the art of the ancients for their own use, resulting in a creative tension between the ideal and the real in their work. That work was also influenced by patrons.

A. Sculpture, Architecture, and Painting: The Natural and the Ideal

In architecture, men like Brunelleschi invented as much as they imitated. Sculpture became more realistic, trying to create idealized versions of the human form and common myths. The Renaissance style of art that evolved in Florence was based on the new ideas of linear perspective, the use of illusion via light and line to create a recreation of three dimensions on a flat surface.

B. Music of the Emotions

The Renaissance-humanist approach to music was problematic: no one alive had ever heard ancient music. An important innovation was the madrigal, a song in which the music closely followed a poetic lyric to accentuate the shades of textual meaning. Happy text suggested a higher pitch on the musical scale, while negative emotions prompted lower pitches. Agitation or fear suggested an increase in rhythm that would imitate the beating heart. Opera, with its unprecedented ability to create emotions in the listener, was a result of this direction in music.

IV. The Early Modern European State System

The independence of the Italian city-states fell to larger and better-organized monarchies.

A. Monarchies: The Foundation of the State System

The early modern European state system was the consequence of five developments. First was the establishment of standing armies by the emerging monarchies. The need to keep these armies modern and strong led to the second development: systematic taxation. Enforcing these taxes by elimination of the traditional exemptions enjoyed by regional assemblies and parliaments was the third development. The fourth development was a general attempt in all emerging monarchies to suppress or constrain the existing aristocracies and the Church. The exchange of formal ambassadors between the emerging monarchies constituted the fifth development.

1. France: Consolidating Power and Cultivating Renaissance Values

Free from the burdens of the Hundred Years' War with England, a succession of French kings created and maintained a new professional army, gained control of the Church in France, and began a tradition of heavy taxation through the taille.

2. Spain: Unification by Marriage

In the early fifteenth century, the Iberian Peninsula was composed of myriad cultures and peoples. Numerous kingdoms with contrasting laws struggled against each other for dominance. Political unification came with the marriage of Isabella (future Queen of Castile) to Ferdinand (future King of Aragon). Together, Isabella and Ferdinand managed to
partly subdue their nobles and build up a bureaucratic administration. They conquered the last Muslim part of Spain and used dynastic marriages to make Spain a great power.

3. The Holy Roman Empire: The Costs of Decentralization

Members of the Hapsburg family had been elected to the throne of the Holy Roman Empire since 1438. Unlike other monarchies based on inherited rule, the Holy Roman Emperor was selected by seven electors who were influential members of the aristocracy. Factional, dissent-ridden, and disorganized, the Empire could not hold a candle to the centralized monarchies of Europe or even the Italian city-states.

4. England: From Civil War to Stability Under the Tudors

Defeat in the Hundred Years' War returned thousands of mercenaries back to England where an unfit royal family split into the two factions that formed the basis for the English War of the Roses. Decades of bloodshed produced Richard III, whose cruel and scandalous rule was opposed by Henry Tudor. Tudor was supported by many of the English nobles who collectively defeated Richard in battle. Henry Tudor became Henry VII in 1485. By taming the nobles and administering his realm efficiently and frugally, Henry began the process of building up monarchical power in England.

B. The Origins of Modern Historical and Political Thought

The development of stronger monarchies and the defeat of the Italian city-states stimulated new political thinking, in particular in Florence where two men took an historical approach to analyzing recent events.

1. History: The Search for Causes

In the fifteenth century, there were two kinds of historians: chroniclers who listed events without any consideration of causation, and the humanists, who emphasized the distance of the past, which had to be approached on its own terms. Guicciardini developed a strong interpretive framework for history by combining an understanding of causation with psychological insight.

2. Political Thought: Considering the End Result

Political theorist and humanist Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) worked as a diplomat and military official but had been exiled from Florence for his role in a plot against the Medici family. While exiled, Machiavelli wrote his treatise *The Prince* (1513), which encouraged rulers to understand the underlying principles of power, especially the need to know when to make a moral decision and when to make an immoral decision to protect the interests of the state.

V. Conclusion: The Politics of Culture

The Renaissance began simply as an attempt by Europeans to imitate and absorb the style of ancient Latin writers. Soon, however, this had developed into an attempt to refashion human society on the models of antiquity. The result was a critical/historical perspective that turned Europeans in new directions.
ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. The film *Artemisia* (1998) dramatizes the difficulties faced by a Renaissance woman artist. Use the film to stimulate discussion on women’s contributions to the Renaissance.

2. The Renaissance viewed history as an essential “conversation” between themselves and the ancients. Encourage your students to similarly engage with history by composing a “conversation” or letter to a historical person from the Renaissance.

3. Certain words that are still used today first began to be current in the Renaissance: humanist, artist, science. Have students use the Internet to perform their own exercises in philology, documenting the change between what those words connoted then and how they are used today.

4. Instead of only showing students the art of the Renaissance, combine that with the music of the period to enhance their experience and appreciation of Renaissance artistry.

5. There are numerous Web sites devoted to the Renaissance, covering everything from art, literature, and music to clothing, food, and much more. A guide to these Web sites, with an emphasis on England, can be found at: [http://renaissance.dm.net/sites.html](http://renaissance.dm.net/sites.html). Students may use these to recreate the everyday life of the Renaissance man or woman.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. The Florentine civic humanist Leonardo Bruni argued that Florence’s cultural flowering was directly related to Florence’s republican form of government. Bruni claimed that the republican form was the only form of government in which individual men could achieve their full potential. Does the Renaissance support this claim?

2. Was the Renaissance beneficial to women?

3. Did the Renaissance avidity for the ancients and omnivorous intellectual appetite undermine the Church?

4. In any given European kingdom, what factors would help, or hinder, the five developments that were creating the early modern state system?

5. What were the key elements of the new Renaissance understanding of history and political thought?
CASE STUDIES

1. The image we have today of England’s King Richard III is mostly beholden to William Shakespeare’s characterization, but was Richard really such an evil person? The Richard III Society (www.richardiii.net) argues he was not. Let your students give Richard his day in court. Did he really have his two nephews murdered?

2. Machiavelli’s works were condemned in his own day as immoral, and they remain controversial even today. If Machiavelli went on trial, what would be the case against him? How might he defend himself?

FURTHER RESOURCES


2. Not only are there numerous copies of Machiavelli’s works available, but there is an entire Web site devoted to him: www.the-prince-by-machiavelli.com.

3. Renaissance: A Fresh Look at the Evolution of Western Art (2000) is a recent, excellent six-part series by the BBC.


CHAPTER 12

The West in the World: The Significance of Global Encounters, 1450 - 1650

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* explain why European incursions into sub-Saharan Africa led to the vast migration of Africans to the Americas as slaves.
* discuss how the arrival of Europeans in the Americas transformed native cultures and life.
* explain why the European encounter with Asian civilizations was far less disruptive than the European encounters in Africa and the Americas.
* describe how the world was tied together in global biological and economic systems.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* Europe emerged from its earlier inwardness to engage Africa, Asia, and the Americas in trade and conquest.
* In Africa and the Americas, the intrusion of Europeans had profound consequences for African and Native American civilizations and peoples.
* In the course of the sixteenth century, and especially with the settlement of the Americas by Europeans, European technology and culture began to spread around the globe, so that the West became more an idea than a place.
* Europeans came under the influence of the far-flung cultures they encountered.
* The result of Europe’s encounter with the larger world was to integrate the earth biologically and economically.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Europeans in Africa

Ancient writers of the Latin world had knowledge of the northern part of the African continent but were completely ignorant of the lands south of the Sahara Desert.

A. Sub-Saharan Africa Before the Europeans Arrived

Several kingdoms that resembled those in Europe arose in the sub-Saharan lands of Africa during the Middle Ages. Africa meant gold to the Europeans of the age, gold controlled largely by the king of Mali, known as the Mansa, who controlled the flow and distribution of gold from the continent's interior. Ethiopia, alone in its embrace of Christianity, became an early source of fascination about the region for Europeans. Internal conflicts weakened the regional kingdoms and allowed a European foothold on the continent during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.
B. European Voyages Along the African Coast

Although the sub-Saharan regions remained mysterious to Europeans, merchants from Italy, Spain, and Portugal had long visited the ports of North Africa along the Mediterranean coast. Trade was decidedly lopsided: a multiplicity of luxury goods from Europe in exchange for the gold from Mali. Prevented from using the Sahara Desert as a trading route because of Muslim hostility, the Europeans began to round the continent via water.

1. New Maritime Technology

To round the southern tip of Africa, a new style of ship emerged that combined features of the Mediterranean and Atlantic vessels then in use. This hybrid ship, called a caravel, used the square sails of the Atlantic ships and the triangular "lanteen" sails of the Mediterranean galleys, the combination of which gave the new ship remarkable steering. No less important were the developments of the compass, astrolabe, and portolanos sailing directions.

2. New Colonialism

New types of colonial expansion emerged as the Portuguese and Spanish began exploration of the Canary Islands. The first new type, a settler colony, resulted from the issuance of a permit from the monarch for a particular person to seize all or part of an island. These were usually populated by European settlers. The second type was a plantation colony, usually run by a few emigrants from the colonizing country and relying heavily on African slave labor.

3. The Portuguese in Africa

The early explorers of the African coast were the Portuguese, whose voyages were sponsored by Prince Henry the Navigator. After Henry's death, the Portuguese royal house took control of the African trade and constructed a permanent fortress at Elmina near the mouth of the Volta River. Rather than establishing new settler or plantation colonies, the Portuguese on the African coast busied themselves with trade in pepper, slaves, ivory, and gold.

II. Europeans in the Americas

Like early European explorers along the African coast, early expeditions to the Americas went out in search of gold and an alternative route to India and China. The need to sail west to reach the Orient was due to the Ottoman Empire’s block of the easterly paths. Although the Americas stood in the way of reaching these destinations, they were ultimately rich finds for these explorers.

A. The Americas Before the Conquistadores

Prior to European contact, the Americas hosted a wide variety of cultures and peoples, some with extensive empires and sophisticated societies.

1. The Aztec Empire of Mexico

The Aztecs (1325-1522) found safety from regional warfare on an island in Lake Texcoco, now Mexico City. Their empire stretched across much of central Mexico and encompassed many other conquered peoples.
The Aztecs valued warfare and integrated it into every facet of their social and religious rituals, which included human sacrifice.

2. The Incan Empire of the Andes

   As the Aztecs were thriving in Mexico, the Incas were expanding their empire in present-day Peru. Unlike the Aztecs, the Incas were careful to integrate conquered peoples into the Inca culture. Although widespread, the centralization of the Inca government led to factionalism on the eve of the Spanish Invasion, fatally weakening the empire.

B. The Mission of the European Voyagers

   The initial arrival of Europeans in the Americas was a result of the colossal miscalculation in navigation by Christopher Columbus, who sailed west from Spain in hopes of finding a quick passage to China. He mistakenly landed in the Americas, probably in the Bahamas. The Spanish monarchs who had sponsored the voyage applied to Pope Alexander VI for a monopoly to explore the lands of the western Atlantic. The pope ordered a line of demarcation drawn from North to South, dividing the "explorable" world between Spain and Portugal, negotiated further in the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494). Still, the quest for the Orient continued. The Portuguese continued to—and finally conquered—the southern tip of the African continent in 1487; this led to several tenuous voyages of exploration into Asia. Meanwhile, the Spanish pursued Columbus's proposed route west across the Atlantic. Ferdinand Magellan finally rounded the tip of South America and crossed the Pacific in a voyage lasting three years and costing most of the crew's lives.

C. The Fall of the Aztec and Incan Empires

   In the wake of the seafaring Spanish came the conquistadores (Spanish adventurers), seeking fortune and royal recognition through conquests and explorations. The Spanish crown received a "royal fifth" of everything of value found in the "New World." Making war on the indigenous peoples only demanded the reading of the requerimiento to legitimize all actions.

1. Hernan Cortes and Conquest of Mexico

   Possibly the most successful of the conquistadores was Cortes, who managed to sack the Aztec capital with 450 Spanish troops, 15 horses, and 4,000 disgruntled native allies. Confused that Cortes might have been one of their deities in the flesh, the Emperor Montezuma was slow to mount a defense. Cortes eventually controlled a territory in "New Spain" bigger than Old Spain itself.

2. Francisco Pizarro and the Conquest of Peru

   Another freelance conquistador, Pizarro tracked down the Incan emperor. Treacherously, Pizarro invited the Incan ruler for a conference and then took him captive. The Incan empire immediately went into a crisis, as the extremely centralized government allowed only the emperor to make important decisions. Pizarro killed the emperor and sacked the capital at Cuzco. The wealth of the Americas was completely at the mercy of Spain.
D. Spanish America: The Transplanting of a European Culture
   After the conquest of the Aztec and Inca empires, the Spanish conquest of the Americas jumped into high gear. Many indigenous peoples died quickly as a result of conquest and European diseases. The encomienda system of economic and social control over the natives was originally a royal grant awarded for military or other services that gave the conquistadores (and their lineage) the right to gather "tribute" from the natives within a determined area. By the seventeenth century these royal grants had become great landed estates called haciendas. A shortage of immigrant Spanish women led to many native women becoming the partners of Spanish men. These women were intermediaries between native and Spanish cultures. The Spanish imported many African slaves to the New World for labor, and these were sometimes the partners of the Spanish in the process of conquest. The various orders of the Roman Catholic Church fanned throughout "New Spain" to spread Christianity to the natives of the Americas.

E. Portuguese Brazil: The Tenuous Colony
   The growing demand for sugar in Europe spurred Portuguese efforts to colonize Brazil, as the Brazilian climate was perfect for growing sugar cane. Unwilling to do the backbreaking work of sugar farming, the Portuguese increased their use of African slave labor, thereby increasing the Portuguese presence on the African continent, as well as the number of Africans in Brazil.

F. North America: The Land of Lesser Interest
   European experience in present-day North America consisted of a small number of exploratory missions and failed attempts at colonization. Any attraction North America had for Europeans at first lay in the cod fisheries off Newfoundland and the continued hope of a Northwest passage to China and the Indian Ocean. The English were among the last of the European powers to begin exploration and colonization in the New World, planting a failed colony on Roanoke Island and a successful colony at Jamestown.

III. Europeans in Asia

   All of this frantic activity in exploration stemmed from the quest to easily reach, and trade with, Indonesia, the Spice Islands, Malaysia, India, and China. As we have seen, various European powers took different routes to try to gain access to this lucrative trade.

   A. Asia Before the European Empires
      After the collapse of the Mongol Empire of present-day India, the overland routes to China and the Indian Ocean were blocked to Europeans by plague, political unrest, and Muslim hostility. The greatest rival to European domination of Asian trade was Ming China, a highly advanced society with a seafaring tradition superior to that of Europe. Yet the Chinese were only interested in learning about the world, not extensive trade.

   B. The Trading Post Empires
      Despite the Portuguese success in conquering the southern tip of Africa and reaching the Indian Ocean, voyages remained prohibitively long and the number of people who could go was few. Asian empires could also well defend
themselves against any attempt at European conquest. As a result, European contact with Asia was slight for 300 years. In Asia, the Portuguese established trading posts along the coasts of India, China, and the Spice Islands, using force, bribery, or trickery to obtain the most desirable and defendable land. Yet their influence did not spread far beyond the coast. The trading posts dealt mostly in the trade of guns, knives, and various cloths in return for silver, gold, spices, and medicines. Only secondary to the desire to trade was the mission to convert the Asian peoples to Christianity. Missionaries had to learn the languages of the East and something of foreign cultures. The Jesuit Order of the Catholic Church had the most success at this. At the end of the sixteenth century, the Spanish and Portuguese faced competition in Asia from the English, the French, and the Dutch, while Russia extended its empire to the Pacific in a quest for furs. European influence on Asia was far less than Asia's cultural influence on Europe.

IV. The Beginnings of the Global System

These voyages of exploration set into place a network of cultural, biological, and economic connections, creating a global system that has continued into the present. Today's electronic global economy is faster, but based on the same system that emerged during the sixteenth century. Europeans dominated this new global system, and transformed large areas of the Americas into plantations that were worked by African slaves.

A. The Columbian Exchange

The most dramatic changes produced by international connectivity were those involving the trade of peoples, plants, animals, microbes, and ideas between the Old and New Worlds in a process known as the Columbian Exchange.

1. The Slave Trade

The institution of slavery was well established in Africa before the first European incursions. However, the involvement of the Europeans greatly increased the demand for slaves, which was met by African chieftains who eventually organized slave-hunting expeditions deep into the African interior. During the almost 400 years of the transatlantic slave trade, more than ten million Africans were sent to the Americas. Slave ships sailed the "Middle Passage" across the Atlantic with holds filled beyond capacity with slaves. Once on American plantations, the blending of African slaves with different points of origin and different languages helped to prevent rebellion.

2. Biological Exchanges

Most of the deaths inflicted on the peoples of the New World by the Europeans occurred by accident. Diseases long tolerated by the European explorers traveled the oceans with them and ravaged whole societies. Native Americans had virtually zero immunity to the smallpox, measles, typhus, scarlet fever, and chicken pox brought over from the Old World. Europeans also introduced their livestock herds and plants, but the Americas provided Europeans with new and more nutritious crops, as well.
3. The Problem of Cultural Diversity

One of the basic problems presented to Europeans upon discovery of the New World was the realization that it was not accounted for in the Bible, which presented both Jews and Christians alike with a challenge to their belief systems. The greatest difficulty of all was interacting with the Native Americans. Some thinkers suggested these peoples were sub-humans, and unworthy of equal consideration. Some called the natives complete innocents and demanded they be protected. Another scenario saw the natives as merely "different" and deserving at least of cultural toleration.

B. The Capitalist Global Economy

The increase in world exploration naturally led to the beginnings of a truly global economy. Agrarian capitalism, the growth of cash crops on a large scale for wide distribution, created the need for slave labor and led to the establishment of European empires of trading posts, as well as settler and plantation colonies. However, the emerging scope of this global economy made it impossible for one government to control all the factors, so the system thrived as free-market competition among imperialist states. Much of the history of Western civilization from this point on can be understood as the triumph of capitalism and the economic integration of a world dominated by the West.

V. Conclusion: The Significance of the Global Encounters

The world was changed forever by the voyages of discovery from 1450 to 1650. Their impact lies not in the actual discoveries made, but in the permanent contact established between diverse peoples. Much harm was done and many lives lost, but the earlier semi-isolation of parts of the human race was a thing of the past.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Using the Internet, students can engage in research to find out the origin of their favorite foods. To what degree is this food a product of originally European, American, or African foods?

2. The increasing understanding of the world that Europeans gained in this era is vividly reflected by their maps. Use contemporary maps to demonstrate this growing awareness.

3. Suitable for classroom use, and a great way to engage students, is an interactive Web site produced in conjunction with a museum exhibition, "The Sport of Life and Death: The Mesoamerican Ballgame." It allows students to explore the world of the pre-European Americas, as well as both explore – and play – the first team sport in human history: www.ballgame.org.

4. Ask students to imagine an encounter between a European and one of the peoples of Africa, Asia, or the Americas. Have them write an essay comparing how the
encounter might have been viewed by both parties.

5. This period has often been called the “Age of Exploration.” Have students select and research the life of one of these explorers. (A good source here for both European and non-European explorers is www.win.tue.nl/cs/fm/engels/discovery. If you are directed to a Dutch university Web site, first click on “English,” then on “Find,” and type in “Discovery.”)

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

1. Can the European conquest of the Americas in the sixteenth century be viewed as a religious “crusade”?

2. What responsibility did Europeans bear in the African slave trade?

3. Which was the most deciding factor in the conquest of the Aztecs by Cortez: Aztec culture, Spanish military strength, or disease?

4. How, and to what extent, might the discovery of the Americas have challenged Europe’s Christian beliefs?

5. Why were Christian missionaries less successful in Asia than the Americas? Why did they seemingly ignore Africa entirely?

**CASE STUDIES**

1. Christopher Columbus’s “discovery” of the Americas initiated a series of events that transformed the world, and as such, he is both honored and reviled. In a “trial” of Christopher Columbus, what might the charges be against him? What would he offer in his own defense?

2. Some Europeans took Native Americans to be “natural men,” while others viewed them as less than fully human. How did the natives’ concept of justice compare with the Europeans? Have students research how both European and various Native American societies would have dealt with specific legal questions, such as criminal actions, property rights, marriage, and so forth. Did their concepts of justice show more similarities or differences?

**FURTHER RESOURCES**

1. For more on Africa, both before and during the era of European contact, visit a Web site sponsored by The History Net: http://africanhistory.about.com. For the same information on the Americas, there is a Web site maintained through the University of Minnesota’s Anthropology Department: www.angelfire.com/ca/humanorigins. (If directed to the angelfire Web site, simply type in “Mesoamerica” under “Search.”)
2. An additional source of early maps of the age of exploration can be accessed by clicking on “Map image sites” at a site sponsored by the British Library: www.maphistory.info.


5. Aztec Empire (2000) brings to life this civilization and shows its continuing influence in Mexico today.
CHAPTER 13

The Reformations of Religion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* identify the causes of the religious rebellion that began in German-speaking lands and spread to much of northern Europe.
* discuss how the Lutheran reformation created a new kind of religious culture.
* explain how and why Protestant denominations multiplied to such an extent in northern Europe and Britain.
* discuss how the Catholic Church responded to the threat to its religious dominance in the West.
* describe how the religious turmoil of the sixteenth century transformed the role of the visual arts and music in public life.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* Martin Luther’s challenge to the Catholic Church was successful because many agreed with him that the Catholic Church was failing in its fundamental obligation to help Christians achieve salvation.
* Catholics considered Luther and the Protestants to be dangerous heretics who offended God.
* Western Christianity was permanently split into two distinct religious cultures: Protestant and Catholic.
* The chief issues that divided the Protestants and Catholics were their understandings of salvation, the role of the sacraments, conducting worship services in Latin, and obedience to the pope.
* Throughout western Europe, countries became officially either Protestant or Catholic as the police powers of the state enforced obedience to one or the other.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Causes of the Reformation

The Protestant Reformation had been building within the Catholic Church for 200 years. At the forefront was the discrepancy between a Church tasked with a spiritual mission of salvation and a Church of money, power, and influence. Corruption in the papacy resulted in popes who were unable to effectively respond to the new religious concerns of ordinary people. A growing demand for reform was fueled by a search for free private religious expression, a print revolution, and northern Renaissance interest in Scripture and the early church.
A. The Search for Spiritual and Fiscal Freedom

Between 1305 and 1378, a succession of Catholic popes abandoned the traditional seat of Church power in Rome and moved to Avignon, France. Dangerous feuding among the aristocratic families of Italy had initiated the move, and loss of revenue to the Papal State exacerbated the problem. This Babylonian Captivity was followed by an equally contentious period between 1378 and 1417 called the Great Schism in which the Church was split into factions supporting Italian and French popes. The Conciliar Movement was an attempt by a group of bishops to solve the schism and to liberate the Church from abuses of papal authority. The schism was ended and reforms planned but not implemented, causing the moral authority of the papacy to continue to decline. As a result, many lay Christians were drawn to new religious forms such as the Modern Devotion, promoted by the Brothers of the Common Life. The religious fervor of the Modern Devotion led people to question the moral authority of the papacy and the often less-than-holy lifestyles of higher clergy. In some areas, in particular Germany and the Netherlands, city magistrates attempted to stop many of the excesses of the Church and secure fiscal freedom for local laypeople.

B. The Print Revolution

Until the mid-fifteenth century, the only way to communicate ideas in print was to copy texts in longhand script, a process requiring much time and labor. A "copy" of an original document often did not match it exactly, and books were very expensive. Around 1450, the invention of moveable metal type and cheap paper meant that books could now be mass-produced with identical content. There was a huge demand for inexpensive books because literacy rates had been steadily rising and the university system had been expanded. Print culture radically changed how information spread, and allowed Luther's ideas to circulate quickly among many people.

C. The Northern Renaissance and the Christian Humanists

Humanists were writers devoted to rediscovering the lost knowledge of the ancients, and in that process they had developed philology, the study of how the meaning of words changes over time. Those who applied philology to the Bible and early Christian sources are called the Christian humanists. They believed the answer to the problem of reform in their own time lay in imitating Christianity at the time of Jesus and the apostles. Most of the Christian humanists came from northern Europe, among them Erasmus and Thomas More. Although the Christian humanists did not want to challenge Catholicism, they paved the way for Protestantism by testing religious practices against Scripture, insisting that all religious practices must promote moral behavior, and demonstrating the discrepancy between the early church and that of their own day.

II. The Lutheran Reformation

The Protestant Reformation began with the protests of Martin Luther, who gained the support of local politicians in Germany who had their own grievances against the pope.

A. Martin Luther and the Break with Rome
Martin Luther, a law student, abandoned his professional career to become a monk, joining the Augustinian Order where he continued his education, this time in theology. The Augustinians sent Luther to Wittenberg to teach at that town's university. While there, Luther spent much time wrestling with the Church's doctrine of penance, finally concluding that salvation came purely from God's grace, unmerited, what Luther called "justification by faith alone," with the ability to have faith the sign of having received grace. Rejecting free will, Luther held that humans were incapable of performing good works alone, they needed God's help. Therefore, the performance of good works was an outward proof of an individual's receipt of God's grace and salvation. Because he rejected free will, Luther eventually denied the sacraments were a means to salvation, and he rejected all of the sacraments except communion and baptism as being unauthorized by Scripture.

1. The Ninety-Five Theses

Striving to finance the construction of the new St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Pope Leo X issued a special new indulgence to raise funds. An indulgence was a unique penance whereby a sinner could remove years of punishment in Purgatory from his soul by performing a good work, and popes had begun selling indulgences in the fourteenth century. Leo's indulgence was audacious as it promised a one-time-only exemption from all previous sins for the purchaser (or for his departed relative already in Purgatory.) Asked his advice on the indulgence, Luther prepared for debate ninety-five arguments against the practice of indulgences and had a few copies made, one of which he posted on the doors of the Wittenberg Cathedral. Luther's central argument was that salvation could not be bought and sold. This act gained Luther followers… and attracted the attention of Rome.

2. The Path to the Diet of Worms

Threatened by the pope with excommunication, Luther began a pamphlet campaign, using the new technology of printing to spread his concerns about the Church. He emphasized "justification by faith alone" and a "priesthood of all believers" which reasoned that all those of pure faith were themselves priests, a doctrine that undermined the authority of the Catholic clergy over the laity. Pope Leo demanded Luther's arrest, but was foiled by the protection of Fredrick the Elector of Saxony, who refused to arrest Luther without giving the monk a chance to speak at the Imperial Diet (parliament) in the German city of Worms in 1521. Unconvinced, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V was prepared to turn over Luther to Rome when the monk disappeared, spirited away to the castle of Fredrick the Wise for a year of quiet seclusion.

B. The Lutheran Reformation in the Cities and Principalities

Hidden in the castle of Fredrick, Luther could not constrain his followers. The Reformation quickly spread into a vast movement far beyond the control of any one human. Spreading fastest among the educated urban classes, the Reformation won acceptance with both German princes and local magistrates. Emperor Charles, facing a two-front war against France and the Turks, allowed
the empire's princes to decide for themselves how to apply this revolution in religious doctrine.

1. **The Appeal of the Reformation to Women**

   Luther's "priesthood of all believers" held a special appeal to women of the age who were excluded from virtually all aspects of the religious life of the Church. Women also benefited because Luther and other reformers saw a positive religious value in the role of wife and mother, and many reformers' wives became partners in the Reformation. In the early phases of the Reformation, women preached and published on its behalf, and some female rulers brought their realms over to the Reformation, but any female challenge to male political and religious authority was quickly put down. Most women's participation in the Reformation was limited to the domestic sphere.

2. **The German Peasant's Revolt**

   The Reformation appealed to the average German peasant by offering a simpler, purer religion and local control over religious affairs. Some peasants, however, saw the movement as including radical social reforms, as well. Citing Luther's rhetoric, groups of peasants began to rise up against their feudal lords. Luther, a conservative thinker who believed in law and order and was terribly afraid of the lower classes, would have none of it and advocated the slaughter of rebellious peasants. They were butchered by the thousands.

3. **Lutheran Success**

   In 1530, Emperor Charles V ordered all Lutherans to return to the Catholic fold or face arrest. The Lutherans refused and the Protestant princes began to actively unite in a military alliance, the Schmalkaldic League. Renewed troubles with France and the Turks made military confrontation between the league and the emperor impossible for fifteen years. In the meantime, Lutherans established a more concrete method of regulating Protestant churches and Lutheranism spread into Scandinavia. In 1552, Charles finally extricated himself from the French and Turks and turned his army against the Protestants, only to be defeated soundly and forced to relent. The 1555 Peace of Augsburg established the doctrine of "he who rules determines the religion of the land." The legal foundations were now in place for two distinctive religious cultures: Catholic and Protestant.

III. **The Diversity of Protestantism**

   The term "Protestant" eventually came to mean all western European Christians who refused to accept the authority of the pope. The varieties of Protestantism can be divided into two types: Magisterial Reformation churches, which received official government sanction, and Radical Reformation churches.

   A. **The Reformation in Switzerland**

      Independent of the Holy Roman Emperor, local authorities in Switzerland were free to opt for religious reform without imperial opposition. The majority of the Swiss were peasants unable to farm the mountainous region. Their main
supplement was working as professional soldiers of fortune, often for the pope.

1. **Zwingli's Zurich**

   Named the People's Priest of Zurich in 1520, Ulrich Zwingli called for general reformation of the Church, advocating the marriage of priests, the abolition of the Roman Catholic mass, and the closing of monasteries. He set an emphasis on the preaching of the Gospels during services rather than the ritual of the Church and removed all painting and statues from the churches under his jurisdiction, calling them a distraction. Two features distinguish Zwinglian Reform from Lutheran Reformation: one was Zwingli's desire to involve reformed ministers in governmental decisions; the other was Zwingli's understanding of the nature of the Eucharistic bread as a symbol and not the physical body of Christ. This latter position proved to be a barrier to full cooperation between Zwingli and Luther.

2. **Calvin's Geneva**

   The generation following Luther and Zwingli saw the momentum of the Reformation moving to the Swiss city of Geneva under the leadership of John Calvin. Calvinism eventually became the dominant form of Protestantism in France, the Netherlands, Scotland, and New England. Calvin's theology took Luther's and Zwingli's positions to their logical conclusions: the salvation of any individual by the grace of God was predetermined or "predestined." The will of God in this matter was beyond human influence, and only those predestined for salvation, the Elect, could truly follow the will of God. Calvin produced the first systematic Protestant theology and placed an emphasis on building a holy community of the Elect, in which the family played a key role.

**B. The Reformation in Britain**

In the sixteenth century, the Tudors ruled over Wales, England, and Ireland. Scotland remained its own separate kingdom. The Tudor kings of England imposed the Reformation as royal policy, but were unable to influence the religious culture of Ireland, which remained Catholic. Scotland wholeheartedly accepted the Reformation despite having a Catholic monarch.

1. **The Tudors and the English Reformation**

   In 1527 King Henry VIII of England clashed with the Church of Rome. Henry wanted his marriage annulled in order to marry again and produce a son, but as Henry's first marriage had been granted a papal dispensation, to annul it would be to admit the papacy had made a mistake, so Pope Clement VII refused the requested annulment. The subsequent departure of England from the Catholic Church, while hardly a royal whim, was largely the work of the crown and a few top agents. Henry's Reformation could be called Catholicism Without the Pope, as Henry had virtually no interest in changing doctrine, but did seize personal control of the English church, and went on to close the monasteries and redistribute the monastic lands. The English Reformation was more about consolidating the power of the Tudor dynasty than about any religious reform. As such, the official religion of England changed with each succeeding ruler of the Tudor house. Between 1559 and 1563, Elizabeth I
(Henry's daughter, who succeeded Edward and Mary) issued her own set of laws, thereby establishing the Church of England as being distinguished by a moderately Protestant theology, an ecclesiastical hierarchy of bishops, and an English liturgy that retained many Catholic aspects.

2. **Scotland: The Citadel of Calvinism**

With encouragement from Elizabeth of England, Scotland, an independent kingdom at the time, embraced Calvinism in 1560 despite the fact that Scotland's monarch, Mary, was an avowed Catholic. John Knox created the official liturgy for the Scottish church in 1564. The most significant difference from the English Church was the Scottish Presbyterian system of organization, which did away with bishops and placed church decisions in the hands of pastors and church elders.

C. **The Radical Reformation**

Magisterial reformers in Germany, Switzerland, England, and Scotland gained official sanction for religious change, usually at the cost of some compromise. Therefore, they were often challenged by more radical reformers who wanted faster, more extensive change. The number of radicals was low in comparison with all Protestants, but their significance was felt by local authorities constrained to answer their arguments. Radicals can be divided into three categories: Anabaptists, Spiritualists, and Unitarians.

1. **The Anabaptists: The Holy Community**

   Anabaptism means "to rebaptize," and was a central doctrine to this group of radicals. Anabaptists saw the Bible as a living document for the operation of society, as well as the church. They rejected infant baptism, believing only an adult could make a choice of accepting salvation. As a result, Anabaptist congregations contained only members who had made a conscientious choice to join the sect. Anabaptists wanted the separation of church and state; they sought to live in "holy communities," rejecting established religious and political authorities. Some Anabaptists even rejected private property and called for communal wealth. Attempting to reorganize society along biblical lines drew a violent reaction from other Protestants, and the Anabaptists were subject to persecution.

2. **Spiritualists: The Holy Individual**

   Personal introspection was at the heart of this Radical Reformation sect, which held that personal salvation came only as the result of divine intervention during intense prayer and meditation. The resulting spiritual illumination was referred to as "the inner Word." Spiritualists pursued a physical demeanor devoid of stress and cravings, a "castle of peace."

3. **Unitarians: A Rationalist Approach**

   Christian theology is built upon the supposition that Jesus Christ was in fact God made into human flesh. The idea of the Trinity, the three identities of God, made this deification of Jesus possible for Christians. Unitarians and other smaller sects rejected the divinity of Christ, holding that Jesus was a divinely inspired man but not divine himself. Unitarians thought the Trinity went against common sense and had no biblical basis.
Like Anabaptists, Unitarians were viewed with hostility by other Protestants.

D. The Free World of Eastern Europe

During the sixteenth century, Eastern Europe was a refuge of religious freedom and tolerance, a result of the relative weakness of many East European monarchs (all Catholic) and the embrace of the Reformation by the aristocrats who dominated the parliaments. The most tolerant country was Transylvania (in modern Romania), whose ruler allowed the establishment of any religion. Poland was tolerant of all forms of Protestantism in the sixteenth century.

IV. The Catholic Reformation

The Catholic Reformation, also known as the Counter Reformation, was a series of efforts to purify the Church. It was not a result of the Protestant Reformation, but evolved out of late-medieval spirituality. New religious orders, like the Jesuits, were products of these purifying efforts. However, the Catholic Reformation did include a response to the Protestant Reformation, most notably by the establishment of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, the creation of the Index of Prohibited Books, and the implementation of the decrees of the Council of Trent.

A. The Religious Orders in the Catholic Reformation

The most evident by-product of the Catholic Reformation was the creation of invigorated religious orders. The new orders held fast to a very traditional Catholic theology, but they were committed to active ministry in the world.

1. Jesuits: The Soldiers of God

The Society of Jesus (Jesuits) was headed by Ignatius Loyola, whose book *Spiritual Exercises* became the foundation of Jesuit practice. The Jesuit order quickly distinguished itself by ministering to other peoples, with Jesuits often immersing themselves in a foreign culture, to better gain converts. The Jesuit order also became famous for its commitment to education and establishment of schools, and Jesuits often became influential members at the courts to Catholic monarchs.

2. Women's Orders: In, But Not Of, the World

Women found a difficult time in ministering to others. Traditionally, religious orders for women emphasized reclusion behind the cloistered walls of a convent. Reform of traditional convent life by women like Teresa of Avila included a rational approach to mysticism and potentially harmful acts of contrition, such as extreme fasting. Many orders of nuns in this era of the age developed a uniquely female culture, with the nuns themselves exercising considerable influence in the arts and education.

B. Paul III, The Reforming Pope

More than twenty years after Luther's first attack on the Church, Pope Paul III finally launched a counterattack against Protestantism. In 1542, Paul reorganized the Roman Inquisition, the Holy Office, whose purpose was to uncover heresies such as Protestantism. Unlike other inquisitions, like the Spanish Inquisition, the Holy Office was under the direct control of the pope
himself. Another tactic to squelch the Protestant movement was the first *Index of Forbidden Books*.

C. The Council of Trent

The most significant measure produced by Pope Paul III was to order a council of the Church hierarchy, which began to meet in 1545 in Trent on the German-Italian border. The council remained in session for nearly eighteen years, covering the reigns of three popes, and set the principles that defined the Catholic Church for the next 400 years. The ultimate objectives of the council were to re-assert the authority of the pope and the Church and to launch reforms that would guarantee an honest and well-educated clergy.

V. The Reformation in the Arts

One of the major issues during the Reformation was the proper role of the arts in Christian worship. Although the more radical reformers sought to abolish all representational art from houses of worship, the biggest differences between Catholic and Protestant on this issue was a matter of degree.

A. Protestant Iconoclasm

Radical Protestants sometimes enacted reform by breaking into churches and destroying artistic images, an act known as iconoclasm. This iconoclasm can be explained by three factors: the fear of the power of religious images, the belief that religious art drained church resources that could be better used elsewhere, and the concern that religious art might tend to distract the masses from the Word of God.

B. Catholic Reformation Art

The Catholic Reformation recognized the value of religious art, but recognized that abuses had taken place in the past. The Council of Trent challenged artists to use their skills to promote correct doctrine and evoke piety. Masterpieces of the past were examined and altered for reasons of modesty.

C. Sacred Music: Praising God

Many reformers, including Luther, recognized the emotional power of music in worship. Luther and others wrote a number of hymns for the Lutheran services, beginning a long tradition of brilliant Protestant religious music. In Switzerland, Zwingli banished all organs from his churches and some radicals banished music altogether. The Catholic music of the age sought to encourage a sense of worship.

VI. Conclusion: Competing Understandings

The Reformation permanently divided the West into two religious cultures: Protestant and Catholic. The unity of religion that had been achieved through centuries of Church effort was lost within a generation. This division had dire consequences as kingdoms divided over religious issues, making the West a place of intense ideological conflict.
ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Have students read *Imitation of Christ* and *Utopia* and write essays comparing the views of religion they present. Additionally, either work can be studied in contrast with *The Freedom of a Christian*.

2. From its initial beginnings with Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli, have students research and construct Protestantism’s “family tree,” noting the branching off of different movements.

3. Henry VIII is one of the more fascinating figures from this period, and has often been represented dramatically. Have students compare how he was portrayed by William Shakespeare in *Henry VIII* (written during the reign of Henry’s equally media-represented daughter Elizabeth) with more modern portrayals in such films as *A Man for All Seasons* (1966) and *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (1933) or in television mini-series like *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (2001).

4. Martin Luther has also been the subject of films, most recently *Luther* (2003), as well as numerous books, plays, Web sites, and so forth. These various representations can be used to explore how historical figures are subject to reinterpretation over time.

5. The Reformation was promoted through hymns and hymn-singing, many written by Martin Luther himself. To add this dimension to your classroom, you can find the texts of early Protestant hymns at the Project Wittenberg Web site: [www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-home.html](http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-home.html). For musical settings, see [www.hymnsite.com](http://www.hymnsite.com).

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Given the situation in the Catholic Church around 1500, would a break like the Reformation have occurred even without Luther?

2. In the past, the church had always been able to respond to calls for reform and spiritual renewal. Why was it unable to do so in this instance?

3. How crucial was the role of printing in the Reformation?

4. Protestants elevated the role of wife and mother and increased literacy among women, but the closing of nunneries deprived women of a means to live in fairly independent, female-run communities. Overall, was the Reformation beneficial to women?

5. To what extent can the Reformation be considered a “revolt of the laity” against the clergy? Did it result in a larger place for lay people in Protestantism? What still limited the laity’s role?
CASE STUDIES

1. Present students with this situation: You are the (fictional) Duke of Hasenpfeffer, a small duchy in the Holy Roman Empire. The year is 1526, and you have just returned home from the first Diet of Speyer. You’re mulling over the religious issues addressed there, as well as the choice you now have to enforce the Edict of Worms, or to bring in Lutheran changes. You decide to hold a debate between the proponents of Luther’s ideas and those who would defend traditional Catholicism. The issues are those of faith, including the authority of Scripture, the sacraments, and salvation; worship, or how services should be conducted; and the control of the church as well as the roles and status of the clergy and laity. Have your students present this debate, either as an essay exercise, or by actually staging it. At the end, each of them (or the student taking on the role of the duke) should make a decision.

2. Leaders of the early English Reformation, such as Thomas Cranmer, were tried for heresy under Queen Mary, convicted, and burned. So were hundreds of ordinary English men and women. Protestants were no more tolerant than Catholics, as the trial and execution of Michael Servetus illustrates. Have students research and examine the growth of heresy trials in this period. Certainly the development of profound differences in religious opinion between Protestant and Catholic would increase the number of trials, but was there an overall decrease of tolerance for ideas that, while perhaps a bit eccentric, would not previously have been classified as unorthodox?

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. Robert Kingdon’s Adultery and Divorce in Calvin’s Geneva (1995) and Steven Ozment’s The Burgermeister’s Daughter (1996) are both studies of how the Reformation affected family life.

2. Revolution of Conscience: The Life, Convictions, and Legacy of Martin Luther (2003) is a recent documentary that runs under one hour.

3. The Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, based at the University of Toronto, maintains a Web site that is full of resources: www.crrs.ca.

4. Another resource Web site is maintained by the Memorial University of Newfoundland, which provides links to texts and pictures related to the early Reformation: www.mun.ca/rels/reform.

5. Several issues of Christian History have been devoted to a particular early reformer, and help explain religious issues in easy-to-understand language: Ulrich Zwingli (Issue 4), John Calvin (Issue 12), the English Bible translator William Tyndale (Issue 16), Martin Luther (Early Years, Issue 34; Later Years, Issue 39), and Thomas Cranmer and the English Reformation (Issue 48).
CHAPTER 14

*The Age of Confessional Division*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

* discuss how Europe’s expanding population and price revolution increased religious and political tensions.

* describe how religious and political authorities attempted to discipline the people.

* explain how religious differences provoked violence and started wars.

* identify the ways in which eastern Europe became enmeshed in the religious controversies that arose in western Europe.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* In the wake of the Protestant Reformation, hostility over religious differences led to religious extremism during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

* A fear that hidden forces were controlling human events led to a combined effort by authorities in both church and state to discipline common people, hunt witches, and attack popular culture.

* Western governments reinforced religious divisions and attempted to unify their peoples around a common set of beliefs, thereby creating confessional states; that is, political units bound together by a shared religious ideology.

* Religious diversity flourished in eastern Europe, thanks to the relative weakness of eastern European monarchs.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. The Peoples of Early Modern Europe

The European population rebounded in the sixteenth century from the losses of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Fueled by the transformation of agriculture from subsistence to commercial farming, the population growth produced a shift in power, social strains, and a price revolution that caused widespread anxiety.

A. The Population Recovery

The population growth of the “long sixteenth century” (ca. 1480-1640) was greater in northern Europe than southern Europe, signaling a massive and permanent shift of power to the north, especially to the northwest, where France, with a quarter of Europe’s population, became the dominant European power. In part, the population increase can be explained by the development of commercial agriculture in some areas of Europe, in particular those villages with proximity to big-city markets.
B. The Prosperous Villages
Proximity to big-city markets, access to capital for investment, and a free and mobile labor supply allowed successful commercial agriculture to make many villages prosperous, but the resulting growth in the rural population also created landless, impoverished vagabonds.

C. The Regulated Cities
Both the human and the agricultural surpluses of the countryside flowed into the wealthy, crowded, and unhealthy cities, where rich and poor lived close together. Cities were highly regulated places, where guilds controlled all economic activity, authorities attempted to address the plight of the poor, and the wealthy were the bastions of social stability.

D. The Price Revolution
Beginning in approximately 1540, after a long period of stable or falling prices, Europe experienced sustained inflation that lasted for a century and increased overall prices as much as six-fold. This “price revolution” was the result of population increase, exacerbated by an influx of gold and silver, but these causes were not understood by the people experiencing a severe decline in their standards of living. As a result, the price revolution contributed to the widespread fear that hidden forces were controlling events.

II. Disciplining the People
Religious leaders, in cooperation with secular authorities, sought to revitalize their communities by enforcing moral rigor, a process that led to attacks on popular culture.

A. Establishing Confessional Identities
A confession of faith is a statement of religious doctrine, and between 1560 and 1650, loyalty to a particular confession reshaped European culture. It governed relationships between European states, bound together religious and secular authorities, and led those authorities to promote distinct confessional identities in their people, primarily through a ritual system.

B. Regulating the Family
All confessions agreed on the necessity of the authority of fathers in families. Because patriarchy served the authoritarian needs of church and state, all confessions sought to strengthen it.

1. Marriage and Sexuality: The Self-Restrained Couple
During the early modern period, in northwestern Europe, a married couple was expected to be able to set up an independent household. This necessitated a later marriage age, meaning that individuals had to have the self-control, reinforced by the social control of authorities, to endure a long period of sexual restraint before marriage. Even within marriage, methods of birth control requiring self-restraint helped to limit family size. Moreover, the positive Protestant attitude toward marriage did not mean a more positive view of women, who were subordinate to husbands and fathers.

2. Children: Naturally Evil?
Authorities, especially Calvinist ones, also encouraged fathers to
enforce a rigorous discipline over their children to turn them from evil to godliness, but how much of this was actual practice is disputed.

C. Suppressing Popular Culture

The authorities’ quest for discipline led them to attack popular culture. They sought to reform or abolish practices, such as Carnival, that they believed were un-Christian or gave too much opportunity for sin. They also attempted to provide people with better religious instruction.

D. Hunting Witches

The anxiety of this era manifested itself most tragically in the dramatic increase in witch trials. Authorities believed that a witch’s power to perform harmful magic came from a pact with the devil, and they were willing to employ torture and instigate hunts to combat the menace of witchcraft. Between 1550 and 1650, some 100,000 people, most of them women, were prosecuted as witches; approximately half were executed.

III. The Confessional States

In an age of sharp confessional divisions, unity of faith within a state was thought to be essential to the peace of the state. In states with significant religious minorities, the resulting tension and suspicion easily erupted into civil war. Yet this era of anxiety and fanaticism also produced magnificent literature.

A. The French Wars of Religion

The unexpected death in 1559 of the peacemaking French king Henry II led to forty years of civil war.

1. The Huguenots: The French Calvinist Community

Although France was predominantly Catholic, by 1560 some 10% of the French population had converted to Calvinism. Moreover, thanks to the system of patronage and the influence of aristocratic women, as many as half of the lesser French nobility were Calvinists, which gave them a political clout much greater than their numbers would indicate.

2. The Origins of the Religious Wars

Three distinct groups, headed by the Guise family, the royal family, and the families of Chatillon and Bourbon, vied with each other for supremacy. The Guise led the Catholic nobility, the Chatillons and Bourbons led the Huguenot nobility, and the royal family remained Catholic but was willing to ally with the Huguenots to thwart the Guise.

3. Massacre of St. Bartholomew’s Day

On August 14, 1572, the royal family and the Guise attempted to permanently solve the Huguenot problem by assassinating the Huguenot leaders and sponsoring the massacre of more than 20,000 Huguenots throughout France. In response, Calvinist thinkers developed theories justifying political revolution. However, the leader of the Bourbon family, Henry of Navarre, had managed to escape the massacre. In 1589 the last son of Henry II, Henry III, died without an heir like his brothers before him, and Henry of Navarre became King Henry IV of France by hereditary right. Realizing that mostly Catholic France would never accept
a Huguenot king, Henry IV converted to Catholicism in 1593, but in the Edict of Nantes, 1598, he tried to ensure the security of his former co-religionists. A Catholic fanatic assassinated Henry IV in 1610.

B. Philip II, His Most Catholic Majesty
While the Wars of Religion kept France weakened, Spain became the most dominant power in Europe. The King of Spain, Philip II, commanded more resources and territories than any other monarch, yet Philip was a virtual prisoner of his own bureaucracy, and Spain’s military expenses caused financial disaster. Philip’s religious intolerance also led him to pursue unwise policies against Muslims at home and abroad, and to launch the doomed Armada against England in 1588.

C. The Dutch Revolt
One of Philip II’s prized possessions was the wealthy Netherlands, but here Philip’s religious intolerance and his attempt to impose direct Spanish rule on the Dutch led to a revolt in 1566. The cruelty and brutality of the Duke of Alba (the man Philip sent in to put down the revolt) only intensified the conflict, and led to the Netherlands formally declaring itself independent from Spain in 1581, although the fighting continued sporadically until 1648.

D. Literature in the Age of Confessional Division
Despite the demand by authorities for discipline and conformity, cheap printed books helped stimulate a burst of literary creativity, in which the vernacular languages of Europe replaced Latin.

1. French Literature During the Religious Turmoil
Francois Rabelais’s satirical novels expressing an optimistic view of human nature and Michel de Montaigne’s calm, meditative, and religiously skeptical essays contrast with the anxiety and violent fanaticism produced by the religious controversies of their era.

2. Stirrings of the Golden Age in Iberia
The Portuguese lyric poet Luis Vaz de Camoes and the Spanish novelist Miguel de Cervantes crafted works that were hailed as national masterpieces.

3. The Elizabethan Renaissance
Queen Elizabeth I provided patronage and inspiration for courtier-poets like Edmund Spenser, but the greatest literary figure during her reign was the playwright, William Shakespeare.

IV. States and Confessions in Eastern Europe
Although eastern European states initially escaped the religious controversies of western Europe, dynastic problems led to political conflicts that had an increasingly strong religious dimension.

A. The Dream World of Emperor Rudolph
Emotionally unstable Emperor Rudolph was unable to face the challenges of ruling the virtually ungovernable Holy Roman Empire, which was in fact the loosest confederation of independent political units. So he withdrew into a court where he gathered together a widely diverse collection of people, from brilliant
thinkers to outright con men, all for the purpose of discovering universal principles that would unify all religions and cure all maladies. Meanwhile, simmering religious tensions in the empire began to boil over.

**B. The Renaissance of Poland-Lithuania**

Poland-Lithuania was remarkably religiously diverse and had a unique governmental system best described as a “nobles’ republic.” It experienced a remarkable cultural and political flowering during this era. Yet by the end of the sixteenth century, Poland had become an overwhelmingly Catholic country, largely through nonviolent persuasion.

**C. The Troubled Legacy of Ivan the Terrible**

Russia’s rulers concentrated on throwing off Mongol control, expanding Russia territorially, and extending their own personal power and authority. The cruelty and terror of Ivan’s reign, however, destabilized tsarist rule, and by the early seventeenth century, Russia had fallen into chaos. This Time of Troubles ended when the Romanov family secured the throne in 1613, and set about restoring both order and the power of the tsar.

**V. Conclusion: The Divisions of the West**

The later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were a time of tremendous anxiety, when demographic and economic pressures eroded the confidence and security of many Europeans. Confessional faith provided reassurance in uncertain times, as did the imposition of strict social discipline. Where different confessions continued to persist in one state, the result was violence as distinctive religious communities competed for power. Meanwhile, states determined their foreign policy based on other states’ confessions, and the West split into religiously driven national camps.

**ENRICHMENT IDEAS**

1. To develop students’ understanding of maps as cultural products, have them examine contemporary maps to see if they can discern the anxieties and biases of this era.

2. Have students use the Internet to research modern images and understandings of witches. What are the similarities and dissimilarities? What traces of early ideas and images remain?

3. Have students investigate the art of this era, particularly the work of El Greco (1541-1614). Discuss the ways in which art both enforced confessional identities and expressed the anxieties of the era.

4. Queen Elizabeth I remains an inspiration to this day, especially to the producers of motion pictures and television series. Students will find it interesting to research the historical Elizabeth and compare what they find with the Elizabeth presented in such films as Elizabeth (1998), The Virgin Queen (1955), Young Bess (1953), and The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex (1939), or in TV series like Elizabeth R (1971).
5. Have students read one of Shakespeare’s nonhistorical plays, then choose a character from that play and write that character’s “autobiography,” reflecting not only the events of the play from that character’s point-of-view, but incorporating wider contemporary attitudes on religion, family, gender roles, and so forth.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Although adherence to a confessional faith helped people to deal with the uncertainties of their times, did such allegiances also contribute to tension and anxiety?

2. Why do you think such unsettled times nonetheless stimulated great literature?

3. Why were some areas—such as the Netherlands and Poland-Lithuania—religiously tolerant, while others were not?

4. Overall, what seems to have been the general view of women in this era? Was this view different from preceding centuries, and if so, how?

5. In the auto-da-fe described in this chapter, why do you suppose it included those who had already died and effigies of those who had escaped?

CASE STUDIES

1. Few things in this era are as compelling as the witchcraft trials. Have students research the trials in different areas, paying special attention to differences in legal procedure and the circumstances that made the difference between the occasional accusation and a witch hunt.

2. The primary means of enforcing social discipline in Geneva, which became a model for reformers, was the Consistory Court. Now available in print and in translation is The Registers of the Consistory of Geneva at the Time of Calvin (Robert M. Kingdon, et al., editors; 2000). Have students use this to analyze the enforcement of social discipline based on actual cases.

3. Ironically, although this was a patriarchal age, there were also women who exercised great political power, either in their own right or on behalf of their children: Elizabeth I and Mary I of England, Mary Queen of Scots, and Catherine de Medici. Have your students stage a debate in which one side defends these women rulers, while the other side presents the patriarchal case against them, as John Knox did in his First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regimen of Women (1559).

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. H. C. Erik Midelfort’s Mad Princes of Renaissance Germany (1994) not only explores the mental (and political) problems of these rulers, but also the light their cases throw on the shifting definitions of madness in this era.
2. *Queen Margot* (1994) is a recent film depicting this famous woman and the infamous St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre.

3. One of the best Internet sources for early modern England is www.quelle.org.

4. Gervase Markham’s *The English Housewife* (1615), describes both the “inward and outward virtues” expected of a married woman, offering insight into both the gender roles and the homemaking practices of this era. (This was republished in 1994 in a version edited by Michael R. Best.)

5. *The Return of Martin Guerre* (1983) is an excellent film that not only tells a fascinating story, but provides insights into family and identity in this era. Students could also compare the movie to the book it is based on by the historian Natalie Zemon Davis.
CHAPTER 15

Absolutism and State-Building, 1618 - 1715

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* define absolutism, both as a political theory and as a practical program.
* relate absolutism to the growth of the power of the state.
* explain how the encounters that took place in seventeenth-century France and Spain resulted in the establishment of absolutism.
* describe how powerful France and Spain became in the seventeenth century.
* identify the nature of royal absolutism in central and eastern Europe.
* explain how the policies of the Ottoman Empire and Russia helped to establish the boundaries of the West during this period.
* discuss why absolutism failed to take root in England and the Dutch Republic during the seventeenth century.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* In the aftermath of European religious turmoil and warfare, the political order of Europe virtually collapsed in the 1640s.
* The disorder of the early seventeenth century led to the political theory of absolutism, in which one ruler possessed complete power. The submission of the people to that ruler was believed to be the only guarantee of peace and security.
* The political history of the West in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is largely the efforts of European monarchs to introduce absolutism and strengthen the state.
* Although the impact of these efforts varied, for the most part, state building and absolutism prevailed.
* As a result, by the end of the seventeenth century, the West was composed of a number of large states, governed by rulers with unrivaled power.
* In addition to acquiring a clear political identity during this time, the geographic boundaries of Europe shifted, as Russia moved into the sphere of the West and the Ottoman Turkish Empire moved out.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. The Nature of Absolutism

To best understand absolutism we need to differentiate between theoretical definitions as postulated by writers such as Thomas Hobbes and practice as applied by the various monarchs of Europe. Although the term absolutism may conjure images of despotic rulers, seventeenth-century kings did not have the resources and power to
impose their will on the entire people of their country.

A. The Theory of Absolutism

When seventeenth-century political writers such as Jean Bodin refer to the king as having absolute power, they meant that he did not share the power to make laws with national representative assemblies; in other words, he was “sole legislator.” In addition, many absolutists claimed that kings held power by divine right and were above the law. That meant that when kings acted for the benefit of the entire kingdom, they were not strictly bound by the laws of their realms. However, absolute monarchs were expected to observe the rights and liberties of their subjects, and this emphasis on the rule of law was a distinctive feature of Western politics in this era.

B. The Practice of Absolutism

In the seventeenth century, European monarchs took several steps to ensure their authority was held supreme within the state. First, they eliminated or weakened national representative assemblies. Second, they subordinated the nobility to the king and made them dependent on his favor. While excluding nobles from positions of power at the core of the national government, monarchs enlisted them as junior partners in managing the localities. Third, the kings established centralized bureaucracies that collected taxes, recruited soldiers, and operated the judiciary.

C. Warfare and the Absolutist State

The growth of European states in the seventeenth century was largely the result of war. Between 1600 and 1721 European powers were almost constantly at war. By the end of the Thirty Years’ War in 1648, most European countries had a standing army, which could be used in foreign wars, as well as in maintaining internal order. In the seventeenth century and early eighteenth century these armies became larger. They were equipped with new gunpowder technology, such as the musket, which required more intensive training. The cost of recruiting soldiers, equipping them, and training them was so high that only the state could afford it. The need to meet the financial cost of the military forced the states to improve the bureaucracy and tax collection.

II. The Absolutist State in France and Spain

The two European countries where royal absolutism first became a political reality were France and Spain. While France under Louis XIV became the model of an absolutist state, Spain established forms of absolutist rule, but never matched the achievements of France.

A. The Foundations of French Absolutism

The first steps toward absolutism were taken by Henry IV who established religious peace and strengthened the crown financially. After Henry IV's death, the aristocracy tried to take advantage of the youth of Louis XIII, but Cardinal Richelieu suppressed rebellions led by nobles and restricted the independence of the regional high courts or parlements. Richelieu improved royal administration by establishing a system of professional bureaucrats called intendants to supervise local administration. Richelieu also increased such taxes as the taille and imposed
a tax on office holders. After Richelieu died, he was succeeded by Cardinal Mazarin. As chief minister during the early reign of Louis XIV, Cardinal Mazarin faced a challenge to the crown called the *Fronde*, which began when the judges of the Parlement of Paris refused to register a royal edict. Within a decade, however, the French state had recovered from these challenges.

**B. Absolutism in the Reign of Louis XIV**

After the death of Cardinal Mazarin in 1661, Louis XIV personally took over the government of France. Louis XIV acquired a reputation as the most powerful European monarch of the seventeenth century, both through his policies and the image he conveyed. Art and architecture were used to convey the enormous power of the king. Louis built a new royal palace at Versailles in the baroque style, which through its size emphasized the unrivaled power of the king.

In a more practical manner, Louis curbed the power of the nobility, by requiring members of noble families to live at Versailles for part of the year. At court they participated in the ritual of court life that revolved around the person of the king, but were excluded from the running of the government. At the local level, intendants ensured the cooperation of city councils, judges and parish priests to enforce the royal will. The government took an active role in the economic life of the country. The financial minister Jean Baptiste Colbert endorsed a set of policies called mercantilism to promote the economic expansion of France by improving the transportation network, fostering industry, and expanding the merchant fleet. Louis also promoted religious uniformity by revoking the Edict of Nantes, forcing the Huguenots to either convert or leave the country.

**C. Louis XIV and the Culture of Absolutism**

Louis XIV successfully influenced French culture, mainly by his patronage of cultural institutions. To promote the fine arts, Louis XIV granted royal patronage to the Academy of Fine Arts and established the Academy of Music and the theatre company called *Comédie Française*, which had among its dramatists Jean Baptiste Molière and Jean Racine. He also founded the Royal Academy of Sciences, as well as the *Académie Française*, which produced the first French language dictionary. Louis introduced order and uniformity to his personal life, the royal bureaucracy, and the army. Other monarchs openly imitated him.

**D. The Wars of Louis XIV, 1667-1714**

Louis XIV waged four wars to increase the territory of France at the expense of the German states and Spain. These wars led Great Britain, Spain, Austria, and the Dutch republic to form coalitions to stop French expansion. Louis XIV’s last war was known as the War of the Spanish Succession, an attempt to place Louis XIV’s grandson on the Spanish throne. The other powers refused to accept this increase of French power, and after a decade of war, agreed to allow Louis XIV’s grandson, Philip V, to remain king of Spain on the condition the French and Spanish crowns never be unified. Also, the Spanish territories in Italy and the Netherlands were awarded to the Austrian Habsburgs.

**E. Absolutism and State-Building in Spain**

In the seventeenth century, Spain faced military defeat, population decline,
and economic failure. Spain in 1600 was a collection of territories with their own separate institutions unified only by the person of the monarch. In the first half of the seventeenth century, the Count-Duke of Olivares attempted to integrate the various principalities into a more centralized state. He reformed the tax system and required all territories to contribute to national defense. He also attempted to reduce the autonomy enjoyed by the different principalities. Opposition to taxation in Castile, military defeat, and resistance to centralization doomed his policies, leading to separatist revolt in the various principalities. As a result, Spain lost Portugal. In the end the Spanish monarchy failed to reproduce the absolutist state of France because it could never throw off the control of the nobles and did not encourage economic growth. Faced with decline and defeat, Spanish culture turned toward nostalgia. Writers like Miguel de Cervantes in his *Don Quixote* wrote of elusive dreams of military victory, but artists like Diego de Velazquez painted in a heroic style at odds with Spanish political and military realities.

III. Absolutism and State-Building in Central and Eastern Europe

The forces which created the absolutist states in France and Spain also contributed to the creation of absolutist states in the German lands and eastern Europe.

A. Germany and the Thirty Years’ War, 1618-1648

The German lands were a confederation of kingdoms, duchies, principalities, cities, and church territories known as the Holy Roman Empire. The empire was not a unified, sovereign state. In 1618 a political incident in Bohemia known as the Defenestration of Prague, where Protestant members of the Diet threw two royal officials out of a castle window, triggered the Thirty Years’ War. The war devastated German lands and retarded economic growth for more than half a century. The war ended with the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, which allowed the German territories to develop as independent states. The two most powerful were the Austrian Habsburg Monarchy and Brandenburg-Prussia.

B. The Growth of the Prussian State

In 1648 Prussia was made up of a series of territories scattered throughout northern Germany. Under the Great Elector Frederick William, King Frederick I and King Frederick William I, Prussia became a powerful state. The Great Elector secured the support of the Prussian nobles, known as Junkers, mainly by confirming their power over the serfs on their estates. Prussian rulers then enlarged and centralized the royal bureaucracy in Berlin, improved tax collection and expanded the army, which became the best trained army in Europe. Heading up a model military state, Prussian rulers were sole legislators who attained absolute power.

C. The Austrian Habsburg Monarchy

The Habsburg rulers of Austria were less successful in centralizing and consolidating their state. The Habsburg territories were made up of several autonomous principalities, which were politically, religiously, and ethnically diverse. The Habsburgs were most successful in imposing some aspects of absolutism in the Austrian and Bohemian lands. After Bohemia had been defeated at the Battle of White Mountain, its Protestant nobility was deprived of power.
However, Hungary was able to resist the Habsburg attempts to limit its constitutional autonomy.

**D. The Ottoman Empire: Between East and West**

The military frontier between the Habsburg monarchy and the Ottoman Empire marked both a political and a cultural boundary. Europeans did not consider the Ottoman Turks to be part of the West because they were Muslims. Europeans also thought the Turkish rulers, known as sultans, were cruel despots who ruled over their subjects as slaves. In practice, the sultans' power, like that of Western absolutist monarchs, was limited, in the sultans' case by the spirit of Muslim law. Although Ottoman Turks and Europeans were frequently at war, contacts between the two also included diplomatic, economic, and cultural exchanges. Although most Europeans viewed the Ottoman Empire as “oriental,” it was a really a border between East and West.

**E. Russia and the West**

Russia also was a border state between East and West. Russia for several centuries had not participated in the European cultural experience. During the reign of Peter the Great, however, Russia began to adopt Western ways. Peter established a standing army that was trained in Prussian methods; he also created a centralized bureaucracy, westernized his court, and built the new capital city of St. Petersburg as a “window to Europe.”

**IV. Resistance to Absolutism in England and the Dutch Republic**

While the absolutist state was being established throughout most of Europe, England and the Dutch Republic successfully resisted centralization of power in the hands of the crown.

**A. The English Monarchy**

The English had a long tradition of relying on Parliament to make laws and levy taxes. The first Stuart king, James I, was a strong believer in the royal prerogative and argued that the function of Parliament was only to give advice. When his successor, Charles I, proceeded to impose forced loans on his subjects, Parliament responded with the Petition of Right defending the fundamental rights of the people. In response, Charles did not call Parliament from 1629 to 1640. During this period of personal rule, Charles collected taxes on his own authority. At the same time, his chief religious advisor, Archbishop William Laud, proceeded to restore ritual practices associated with Catholicism. When Charles I tried to introduce a new liturgy to Scotland, it produced an uprising. Desperate for money to fight the Scots, Charles summoned Parliament.

**B. The English Civil Wars and Revolution**

Tensions between Charles and Parliament brought about the first modern revolution. The Long Parliament impeached royal officials and judges and declared the taxes not passed by Parliament illegal. Suspicion and distrust of the king caused civil war to break out in 1642. Parliament created an efficient army and defeated the king. Radicals in Parliament, supported by the army, put the king on trial. He was convicted and executed in January of 1649. England then became a republic, with the House of Commons as supreme legislator. However, the commander-in-chief of the army, Oliver Cromwell, intervened, and had himself
named Lord Protector of England. After Cromwell died, the monarchy was
restored.

**C. Later Stuart Absolutism and the Glorious Revolution**

Charles II and his successor James II both favored absolutism, but neither tried
to rule without Parliament. Their policy was to influence Parliament by packing it
with their supporters and to weaken parliamentary statutes through the exercise of
the royal prerogative. The major political crisis of Charles II’s reign came when a
group of members of Parliament known as the Whigs attempted to exclude the
king’s brother James from succeeding the English throne on the grounds that he
was Catholic. The attempt failed and James succeeded the throne when Charles II
died in 1685. When James II exempted Catholics from the Test Act of 1673,
which excluded them from public office, the country revolted against him. James
II fled, and Parliament invited his Protestant daughter, Mary, and her husband,
William of Orange, to become the new rulers. They were required to accept a Bill
of Rights, which limited royal power and excluded Catholics from the throne.
These events, known as the Glorious Revolution, shifted the center of power from
the king to the aristocracy sitting in Parliament. The Glorious Revolution was
justified by John Locke in his *Two Treatises of Government*. Locke argued that
man left the state of nature and established a government to protect his property
and avoid chaos. But if the government acted against the interests of the people,
they could overthrow it.

**D. The Dutch Republic**

The Dutch Republic was in actuality a loose confederation of provinces, which
were all sovereign republican states. Throughout the seventeenth century, it was
the only major European government to resist both absolutism and centralization,
although the military necessities of war led to the development of a military
executive invested in the House of Orange. Most political power, however, lay in
the hands of the wealthy merchants and bankers, reflecting the highly commercial
character of the Dutch economy. The Dutch played an important role in
international trade, and established institutions to support this trade, such as
Amsterdam’s Exchange Bank and stock market. Some of the most important
contributions of the Dutch to European culture were to the visual arts, including
the works of famous painters such as Rembrandt van Rijn. In the early eighteenth
century the Dutch Republic lost its economic superiority to France and Great
Britain.

**V. Conclusion: The Western State in the Age of Absolutism**

Between 1600 and 1715, three fundamental political changes that redefined the
West were the growth of the state, the introduction of royal absolutism into these states,
and the conduct of a new style of warfare by Western absolutist states.

**ENRICHMENT IDEAS**

1. The image of the king was very important in absolutism. Use royal portraits
   from this period to illustrate absolutist concepts of kingship. One good source of these is
the Web Gallery of Art at www.kfki.hu/~arthp/index.

2. An interactive feature allowing your students to explore seventeenth-century London can be found at www.channel4.com/history/microsites/H/history/guide17/index.html.

3. Part of the A&E Biography series, Peter the Great: The Tyrant Reformer (2000), can be used as a classroom video to further explore this complex figure.

4. This era produced classic works of political theory – by Hobbes, Locke, and Bodin – that are still in wide circulation. Have students read some of these primary sources and write essays about them.

5. Winstanley (1975) has been hailed as the finest film ever made about the radical ideas that sprang up during the English Civil War. Use it in your class to explore how the English Revolution stimulated political thinking at all levels of society, perhaps with background material from Christopher Hill’s classic book, The World Turned Upside Down (1976).

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. What was the interplay between absolutism as theory and as practical practice? Did both theory and practice impose limits on even an absolute monarch’s exercise of power? What were these limits?

2. How did the Christian religion both support and challenge absolutism?

3. In what ways can the Thirty Years’ War and the English Civil War be considered both religious and political conflicts?

4. Can Oliver Cromwell and his supporters be considered revolutionaries in the modern sense – that is, people who consciously set out to replace an existing political system, based on one set of political principles, with a new political system based on a different set of principles?

5. Why did the English fail, and the Dutch succeed, in establishing a republic?

CASE STUDIES

1. Was the ultimate source of the English Revolution the English Bible? That’s the intriguing idea argued by Christopher Hill in The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution (1995), and suggested as well by Benson Bobrick’s Wide as the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired (2001). Have your students stage a debate on this question.

2. Monarchs like Louis XIV of France and Peter the Great of Russia implemented
policies in their countries that strengthened the state and transformed culture, but caused widespread suffering and laid the foundations for dissent. As models of absolutism, how can the reigns of these two men be analyzed as case studies in royal absolutism?

**FURTHER RESOURCES**

1. Robert Ritchie’s *Captain Kidd and the War Against the Pirates* (1986) is an outstanding study of the emergence of the modern state at the end of this period.

2. An excellent Web site for the English Civil War, complete with timelines, biographies, and links to other sites, is [www.british-civil-wars.co.uk](http://www.british-civil-wars.co.uk).

3. The following is a Web site devoted to Louis XIV covers not only his life, but the court, art, architecture, and more: [www.louis-xiv.de](http://www.louis-xiv.de).

4. *Charles II: The Power and the Passion* (2003) is a four-part BBC series chronicling the English monarch and his times.

5. Geoffrey Parker’s *The Thirty Years’ War* (second edition, 1988) is one of the best, clearest brief accounts of this major conflict.
CHAPTER 16

The Scientific Revolution

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* identify the scientific achievements and discoveries of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that historians refer to as the Scientific Revolution.
* describe the methods scientists used during this period to investigate nature, and how they thought nature operated.
* discuss why the Scientific Revolution took place in western Europe at this particular time.
* explain how the Scientific Revolution influenced the development of philosophical and religious thought in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.
* discuss how the Scientific Revolution changed the way in which seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europeans thought of their relationship to the natural world.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* The centerpiece of the Scientific Revolution was a series of remarkable achievements in astronomy, physics, chemistry, and biology.
* The effects of the Scientific Revolution went beyond science itself to fundamentally alter European thought.
* The impact of the Scientific Revolution set the West apart from other contemporary civilizations.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. The Discoveries and Achievements of the Scientific Revolution

The Scientific Revolution began in the middle decades of the sixteenth century and continued through the early part of the eighteenth century. Although it involved gradual developments in astronomy, physics, chemistry, and biology, it was revolutionary in that it brought about a radical transformation of human thought.

A. Astronomy: A New Model of the Universe

The major change in astronomy was that people accepted that the sun (rather than the Earth) was the center of the universe. Until the sixteenth century, Europeans followed the cosmology theory of the Greek astronomer Ptolemy. He believed that the Earth was the center of the universe and the sun, the moon, and the other planets revolved around the Earth. This theory could by verified by human observation, but it failed to explain the path of the planets. The first challenge to Ptolemy’s cosmology came from Niclaus Copernicus, who proposed that the sun was the center of the universe. His work was too complicated to gain much acceptance. In the late sixteenth century the Dutch astronomer Tycho Brahe agreed that the planets revolved around the sun, but said that the sun revolved around the Earth. In the early seventeenth century,
Johannes Kepler confirmed that the sun was the center of the universe by demonstrating that the Earth and other planets revolved around it. Galileo Galilei used his skills as a writer to popularize the idea of the sun-centered universe. Galileo was eventually tried by the Inquisition for challenging the Bible.

B. Physics: The Laws of Motion and Gravitation
   Galileo’s most important scientific contributions were in the field of physics. He formulated the laws governing the motion of material objects. Galileo proposed the theory of inertia, according to which an object moves or rests until something outside of it changes its motion. The most important achievements in physics were those of Sir Isaac Newton. Building on the work of Kepler, Galileo, and others, he explained theories of motion and inertia with the force of gravity.

C. Chemistry: Discovering the Elements of Nature
   Until the seventeenth century, chemistry was connected to either alchemy or medicine. The Swiss physician Paracelsus rejected the ancient theory that disease was caused by an imbalance of the four humors (that is, blood, phlegm, black bile, and yellow bile). He began using chemicals to treat patients for diseases. The Englishman Robert Boyle made chemistry respectable by his discovery that the arrangement of atoms determines the characteristics of matter.

D. Biology: The Circulation of the Blood
   William Harvey demonstrated that blood circulates through the human body.

II. The Search for Scientific Knowledge

Scientists in the sixteenth century began to engage in extensive observation, experimentation, and deductive reasoning to solve scientific problems. They expressed their theories in mathematics and argued that nature operated like a machine.

A. Observation and Experimentation
   Scientists in the sixteenth and seventeenth century were willing to abandon ancient theories and preconceived notions. Instead they extensively observed nature and tested their hypotheses with experiments. They began using a process of induction, whereby their theories emerged only after the systematic accumulation and analysis of data.

B. Deductive Reasoning
   Another feature of sixteenth and seventeenth century research was the use of rational deduction. This idea was promoted by René Descartes, who argued that the best way to solve problems was to establish fundamental principles and then deduce more specific ideas.

C. Mathematics and Nature
   A third feature of scientific research was the application of mathematics to help explain the physical world. Theories were explained in mathematical formulae by both experimental and deductive scientists.

D. The Mechanical Philosophy
   Much seventeenth-century research assumed that the natural world worked like a machine, in a regular, predictable way. The human body was understood as being dualistic; according to Descartes, the body was a machine, but the mind was an immaterial substance. This understanding of nature was called *mechanical philosophy* and it challenged the earlier view of the Neoplatonists, who saw the natural world as having a soul.
III. The Causes of the Scientific Revolution

A series of intellectual developments dating back to the Middle Ages helped bring about the Scientific Revolution.

A. Developments Within Science

Three causes of the Scientific Revolution came from within scientific research.

1. Late Medieval Science

The Scientific Revolution was partly caused by research on motion done by the scholastic philosophers of the fourteenth century, whose theory of impetus helped call Aristotle’s mechanics into question. They also began to recommend direct, empirical observation.

2. Renaissance Science

The humanists rediscovered many ancient works on science that stimulated new thinking on scientific issues. Scientists were also influenced by such Renaissance cultural trends as Neoplatonism and natural magic.

3. The Collapse of Paradigms

Several of the older conceptual frameworks or paradigms collapsed because they could no longer account for observable phenomena.

B. Developments Outside Science

There were also a number of nonscientific developments that encouraged the acceptance of new scientific ideas.

1. Protestantism

Protestantism was more open to new scientific ideas because Protestants did not prohibit scientific publications as the Papal Index did. Protestants also believed that God revealed himself in both the Bible and in nature, so nature should be studied because it helped better understand God. Many Protestants encouraged science because they believed it was part of the approaching millennium.

2. Patronage

Patronage enabled science to develop as a distinct field. Early scientists not only found support at the courts of individual princes, but in the rise of new academies that provided support for scholars to do their research.

3. The Printing Press

The printing press provided a more accurate way to publicize scientific discoveries.

4. Military and Economic Change

The military’s need for new technologies for war and the needs of capitalist enterprise encouraged research to solve scientific problems.

5. Voyages of Exploration

The voyages of discovery disproved ancient beliefs about the southern part of the globe and revealed new continents not previously known, thus challenging established authority.
IV. The Intellectual Effects of the Scientific Revolution

The Scientific Revolution had a great impact on intellectual life.

A. Education

Science, and the new philosophy associated with it, became an important part of university education by 1720. Knowledge of science was also promoted widely among the educated classes by learned societies, public lectures, coffeehouse discussions, and publishing. As a result, science gained a permanent place in Western culture, although humanists championed "the ancients" against "the moderns" who emphasized science.

B. Skepticism and Independent Reasoning

One of the most important effects of the Scientific Revolution was the rise of skepticism. Descartes reached the extreme of skepticism by doubting his own existence. Then he realized that his own act of thinking proved his existence. Baruch Spinoza argued that truth should be based only on solid reason. He also believed that there was no distinction between matter and spirit, and called for complete intellectual freedom.

C. Science and Religion

The Scientific Revolution presented two challenges to traditional Christianity. One was the conflict between a sun-centered universe and the Bible. The other was the idea that the universe worked like a machine according to natural laws and without the intervention of God. This position was adopted by the Deist philosophers in the eighteenth century. Others, however, argued that science and religion dealt with separate areas and so did not conflict. Eventually religion began to accommodate to scientific thought, producing a new emphasis on reasonableness in religion.

D. Magic, Demons, and Witchcraft

The new science led to a decline in the belief in magic. By the eighteenth century the educated classes also denied the existence of demons and the power of witchcraft. The skeptical views of the educated classes were not shared by the common people and the result was a divide between learned culture and popular culture.

V. Humans and the Natural World

The spread of scientific culture led the educated people to reconsider their relationship with nature.

A. The Place of Human Beings in the Universe

By making humans the inhabitants of a tiny planet circling the sun, the Copernican universe reduced the importance of humanity. It led people to begin to question the place of mankind in creation, as well as the possibility of other inhabited worlds.
B. The Control of Nature

The Scientific Revolution increased the belief that humans could control nature. Some philosophers argued that by gaining knowledge of the laws of nature, humans could acquire dominion over nature. They began to believe that science and technology could improve human life.

C. Women, Men, and Nature

The new scientific ideas challenged the ancient and medieval beliefs about the physical and mental inferiority of women by concluding that both men and women made an equal contribution to reproduction. But, despite new theoretical foundation for sexual equality, such as Descartes’s position that there was no difference between male and female minds, traditional notions about women continued to dominate.

VI. Conclusion: Science and Western Culture

Uniquely Western, the Scientific Revolution had no counterpart in other parts of the world, where religious traditions prevented an objective study of the natural world. Thus, the Scientific Revolution gave the West a new source of identity: modern science. It also gave the West a science-based technology, which resulted in both power and a sense of superiority.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. The “Student Work” section of the Galileo Project (see “Further Resources” below) includes exercises that allow students to recreate early scientific experiments.

2. The challenge of the “new learning” of empiricism to older ways of thinking is vividly illustrated in the exercise “Science and the Natural World: Competing Renaissance Views,” available through the History Net site at http://europeanhistory.about.com/cs/sciencetechnology.

3. Rene Descartes’s Discourse on Method is widely available, relatively brief, and fairly accessible. Students can read it, and write essays in which they discuss Descartes’s approach.

4. The multimedia presentation “A Brief History of Cosmology” at www.bbc.co.uk/history/discovery/revolutions documents the changes from Ptolomy to Galileo.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. What were the respective roles taken by new intellectual outlooks and new inventions in the Scientific Revolution?

2. Why did men like Copernicus and Galileo begin to challenge the authority of Aristotle?

3. Why was it that England in particular became such a center of scientific thinking, inductive reasoning?

4. How did the development of science serve the interests of the ever-strengthening early modern state?

5. Why did the early scientists not distinguish between “science” and “magic”?

CASE STUDIES

1. Have students research and stage a debate between advocates of "the ancients" and "the moderns."

2. The year is 1700, and Minerva, goddess of science and wisdom, has filed a lawsuit against the scientists, living and dead. She claims that men have masculinized science unfairly, making it an all-male profession, excluding women. She seeks damages and restoration as the embodiment of knowledge. Encourage your students to have fun with this “trial,” while learning about early modern gender beliefs as they prepare and present Minerva’s case and the scientists’ defense.

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. “The Galileo Project” is an outstanding Web site maintained by Rice University, which provides information and links to Galileo and the Scientific Revolution: http://es.rice.edu/ES/humsoc/Galileo.

2. An additional guide to Web sites on the history of science and technology is offered by The History Net at http://europeanhistory.about.com/cs/sciencetechnology.


CHAPTER 17

The West and the World: Empire, Trade, and War, 1650-1815

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* discuss how the composition and the organization of European empires changed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
* identify the ways in which the wars waged by European powers in this period involved competition for overseas possessions and trade routes.
* explain how the European empires created an Atlantic economy in which the slave trade was a major feature.
* describe the cultural encounters between European and Asian peoples, and how those encounters changed Western attitudes toward outsiders.
* explain why the European powers began to lose control of some of their colonies, especially those in the Americas, between 1775 and 1825.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* In the second period of empire-building, the economic motive for establishing colonies became dominant.
  * This Western geographical expansion was also an expansion of the West as a cultural realm.
  * Slavery was an integral part of the trade patterns that established Western economic dominance.
  * Cultural encounters between Europeans and other peoples throughout the world, in particular Asians, brought changes to the cultures of the West.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. European Empires in the Americas and Asia

The main European political units during this time were states; a state is a consolidated territory with its own political institutions that recognizes no higher authority. Many of these states were the center of empires, which included other territories in Europe, as well as vast expanses of land in the Americas, Africa, and Asia, which European states either acquired, settled, or controlled. European governments were usually willing to allow their colonies considerable political autonomy as long as they traded exclusively with the metropolis. In this era, Great Britain, France, and the Dutch Republic began to replace the Spanish and Portuguese as the new imperial powers, with the British eventually becoming the dominant power.
A. The Rise of the British Empire

The fastest growing European empire of this era was the British Empire. By 1700, it had acquired colonies in North America, as well as several islands in the Caribbean and trading posts in India. In the Caribbean and in North America several colonies developed a highly profitable commercial economy based on slave labor. In India, the British presence was limited to a few members of the British East India Company who had established trading posts, called factories, in a few Indian seaports. British contact with India's large population was limited at first, but that changed as the British gained direct political control of India in the late eighteenth century. At the same time, the British effectively challenged Dutch and Portuguese control of the spice trade with Indonesia. In 1770, the British explorer Captain James Cook also laid claim to Australia and New Zealand for the British. This empire, however, had little administrative coherence and its parts were united only in the bond of loyalty to the monarch.

B. The Scattered French Empire

French expansion into India and North America paralleled that of the British. France claimed colonies in the Caribbean, Canada, and the Mississippi Valley, while the French East India Company established trading posts in India. A series of defeats in the eighteenth century reduced the French presence in Asia and the Americas.

C. The Commercial Empire of the Dutch

The Dutch Republic acquired an overseas empire in the early seventeenth century and became the center of a global economy with colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The Dutch were the most likely to use military and naval power in expanding their empire, as they did when they seized Portuguese trading posts in West Africa. The Dutch West India Company also seized northern Brazil. When they were forced out of Brazil in 1654, they acquired two small islands in the Caribbean and a part of present-day Suriname. From there, they carried on trade with the colonies of the other empires in the Americas. The Dutch also set up a colony in the Hudson River Valley named New Netherland, which the English took in 1664 and renamed New York. In Asia, the Dutch East India Company established trading posts in India and Indonesia that allowed them to trade throughout Asia. On the southern tip of Africa, the Dutch established a colony at the Cape of Good Hope, designed to provide support for ships involved in the Asian trade. Dutch farmers, called boers, settled there and established an agricultural economy based on slave labor.

D. The Vast Spanish Empire

At its height in 1650, the Spanish Empire controlled western North America from California down through Mexico and Central America, as well as several Caribbean Islands, half of South America, Florida, and the Philippines in Asia. Like other European empires, the Spanish Empire was intended primarily to foster trade, but the Spanish crown held stronger control over its territories -- both economically and politically -- than the British did. Colonies were ruled by royal officials, and in the eighteenth century Spanish kings implemented reforms to increase the efficiency of the imperial bureaucracy and increase revenue collection. These reforms created tensions with the American-born Spaniards, known as creoles.
E. The Declining Portuguese Empire

The Portuguese had been the earliest European state to expand overseas, and it established colonies in South America, Africa, and Asia. By the eighteenth century, however, it had lost territory to other European countries. Brazil remained the most important Portuguese colony because of its wealth, from plantations and, later, gold and diamond mining. Both mining and agriculture depended on slave labor, and so Brazil remained the major importer of slaves into the first half of the nineteenth century.

F. The Russian Empire in the Pacific

Russia was the only eastern European state to maintain an overseas empire in the eighteenth century. Having already expanded eastward across Siberia to the Pacific, Russia acquired a large part of Poland and the Crimea during the reign of Catherine the Great. The Russia-American Company, established in 1789, built a series of trading posts along the Pacific, from Alaska to Fort Ross in California, leading to disputes with Spain and the United States.

II. Warfare in Europe, North America, and Asia

As the European powers expanded overseas, their conflicts over control of trade extended their war theatres to distant parts of the globe. As a result, all European powers built large navies.

A. Mercantile Warfare

The theory that lay beneath the wars for empire was mercantilism, a protectionist policy based on the idea that the wealth of a state required having fewer imports than exports. Colonies provided a state with raw materials, and served as markets for domestic industry. Thus going to war over control of colonies and trading routes was a part of mercantilist policy. In the seventeenth century, the English and Dutch fought several wars over Dutch access to English ports, followed by wars over trade between England and Spain that lasted into the eighteenth century.

B. Anglo-French Military Rivalry

The major rivalry in the eighteenth century was between England and France.

1. The Wars of the Spanish and Austrian Successions, 1701-1748

During the War of Spanish Succession, England opposed the proposed succession of a French candidate to the Spanish crown. Such a succession would have united the French and Spanish empires and deprived British merchants of much valuable colonial trade. The Treaty of Utrecht allowed the Spanish crown to pass to the Bourbon Philip V on the condition that the Spanish and French empires remain separate; in addition, France conceded parts of Canada to Britain. In the War of Austrian Succession, Britain allied with Austria to keep France from acquiring the Austrian Netherlands.

2. The Seven Years’ War, 1756-1763

Colonial rivalries continued as part of the Seven Years’ War, where, in addition to fighting in Europe, France and England fought each other in America and Asia. At the war’s end, France ceded to Britain all of French Canada east of the Mississippi.

3. The American and French Revolutionary Wars, 1775-1815
The French provided aid to the American colonists seeking independence, as well as fighting the British in India. Another phase of the confrontation between France and Britain took place during the era of the French Revolution, when Britain expanded its holdings in India and Africa.

III. The Atlantic World

The empire-building of the European powers moved the center of the West from the European continent to the Atlantic Ocean.

A. The Atlantic Economy

The Atlantic economy was based on a commercial network between the ports of Europe, Africa, and the Americas that exchanged goods and slaves. The colonies in the Americas were a source of agricultural products that were in high demand, such as sugar, tobacco, and coffee, despite criticism that the last two were harmful. Africa was the source for slaves, and Europe the source for manufactured goods. This Atlantic economy was part of the larger global economy, which included trade with Asia.

B. The Atlantic Slave Trade

The slave trade was crucial to the Atlantic economy because it provided the labor for American plantations. Slaves were preferred over free labor because slaves were easily disciplined and could be forced to work longer hours in a difficult work environment. The transporting of slaves across the Atlantic was known as “the Middle Passage,” part of a triangular trade that linked Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Slavery has been present throughout world history, but the Atlantic slave trade was unique in three respects. First, in terms of size, it involved the transportation of more than 11 million people from Africa to the Americas. Only 4% of these slaves came to the British colonies in North America. Second, this slave trade had a racial character, with slavery becoming equated with black skin and African racial “inferiority” used to justify slavery. Third, slaves were reduced to property, a commercial commodity whose trade involved African chiefs, slave traders, and the planters in the Americas. This commercial character made American slavery especially dehumanizing, barbaric, and exploitative. Once in the Americas, the survival of the slaves depended on the local economy, climate, and population trends. Slaves on sugar plantations died within a few years from overwork and mistreatment. In places where the ratio of black to white people was high, laws regulating slave life were very harsh. Until the late eighteenth century, most slave traders and owners saw no moral problem in the slavery. In the early nineteenth century opposition to slavery began to grow, and the transatlantic slave trade was slowly brought to an end. Slavery was abolished in the western hemisphere in the course of the second half of the nineteenth century.

C. Cultural Encounters in the Atlantic World

The presence of many people from different parts of Africa and Europe in the Americas and their interaction with each other and with the native population of the Americas produced very complex societies and cultures, especially in Latin America. Encounters between blacks and whites involved an unequal power relationship that fostered the idea of white supremacy.
D. The Transmission of Ideas

The Atlantic Ocean became a path for the transmission of political and religious ideas. North American colonists, in particular, were attracted to such things as the belief that a republic was the best form of government, or the concept of the rights of man, or the conviction that government has a responsibility to improve society. Political ideologies based on European ideas that were developed in the Americas not only spread there, but came to influence Europe, as well. Religious ideas similarly experienced such transmission and transportation.

IV. Encounters Between Europeans and Asians

Between 1650 and 1815, European empires in Asia developed along a pattern very different from that of the empires in the Americas. At first the Europeans did not attempt to conquer territory and rule Asian peoples. When eventually Europeans did turn to military force, they discovered that conquering Asian peoples was far more difficult than conquest in the Americas.

A. Political Control of India

The Europeans’ first attempts to take over India came in the later eighteenth century. Having established trading posts in India, Europeans competed with each other to build alliances with the provincial governors (nawabs).

1. Military Conflict and Territorial Acquisitions, 1756-1856

In 1756, a conflict erupted in Calcutta because the local nawab was determined not to be dominated by any European power. He attacked the British East India Company’s Fort William and most of the British taken prisoner died. The following year, the British retook Calcutta with a force of British troops and Indian sepoys. Within a few years the British East India Company dominated the southern provinces of India. The British acquisition and annexation of Indian territory continued until 1856, introducing Western technology and culture, as well as the English language and British criminal procedure, to India.

2. The Sepoy Mutiny

In 1857, resentment over British dominance fueled a large rebellion. After this was put down, the British government abolished the British East India Company and began to rule India directly.

B. Changing European Attitudes Toward Asian Cultures

Greater familiarity with Asia gave Europeans a clearer sense of their own Western identity. Europeans had historically displayed a negative view of Middle Eastern culture, but not of Asian culture. Enlightenment writers praised Asian culture and favorably contrasted aspects of it to parts of Western culture. Europeans also praised Asian arts, which began to influence Western art, architecture, and design. By the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, this positive attitude disappeared as Europeans began to view Asian culture unfavorably. These new attitudes of Western superiority were reinforced by a sense of racial superiority.
V. The Crisis of Empire and the Atlantic Revolutions

Between 1780 and 1825 European empires in the Atlantic World experienced a crisis over their ability to maintain the loyalty of their colonists, resulting in the birth of new nations and states.

A. The American Revolution, 1775-1783

The first Atlantic Revolution took place in the thirteen British colonies in North America, which had developed their own political traditions of representative self-government. When the French and Indian War ended, the British government stationed troops on the frontier to maintain the peace and attempted to tax the colonists to support their own defense. This raised a constitutional issue of whether Parliament had the right to legislate for parts of the British Empire that had no representation in Parliament. Resistance to British rule in the North American colonies became increasingly organized, leading to the eruption of military conflict in 1775 and the colonies’ declaration of their independence in 1776. To justify their actions, the colonists drew on the theories of John Locke, English common law, and the republican ideas of ancient Greece and Rome. After several years of war, the British accepted American independence in the Treaty of Paris in 1783.

B. The Haitian Revolution, 1789-1804

The second successful Atlantic Revolution was in the French colony of Saint Domingue, now known as Haiti, and it was directed less at France than at the island's white planters. These Haitian planters, or colons, had little desire for independence as they feared that a revolution would undermine their control of the slave population. In 1789, the free coloreds revolted under the leadership of Vicent Ogé because the planters refused to allow them representation. In 1791, the revolt turned into a massive slave rebellion led by Toussaint L’Ouverture. British, Spanish, and French attempts to subdue Haiti failed. In 1804, Haiti was also established as an independent state, but unlike the United States was governed entirely by non-whites. Banning slavery, redistributing land, and proclaiming total racial equality, the Haitian regime was the most radical and egalitarian of all the Atlantic revolutions.

C. The Irish Rebellion, 1798-1799

Inspired by the American Revolution, the people of Ireland rose up in rebellion against the British in 1798. Although Ireland had long been divided between the Catholic Irish and the Protestant Scots-Irish and Anglo-Irish, these groups were united by increasing resentment of political subservience and economic exploitation at the hands of the British government. Great Britain put down the rebellion and abolished the political institutions of Ireland, fully uniting Ireland with the United Kingdom but not extinguishing Irish nationalism.

D. National Revolutions in Spanish America, 1810-1824

As in North America, discontent with Spanish rule in South America developed into demands for political independence. However, revolution here developed more slowly than in North America, in part because Spanish American elites relied on Spain for military support against the threat of lower-class revolt. However, the collapse of the Spanish monarchy in 1807 caused these colonies to seek greater autonomy, which quickly moved to armed resistance when the Spanish monarchy was restored. One of the key leaders in these early revolts was Simon Bolivar, who
was more responsible than any other individual for most of the Spanish colonies’ independence in the Americas. By 1824, Spain was left in control only of Cuba and Puerto Rico.

VI. Conclusion: The Rise and Reshaping of the West

During this second period of European empire-building, the West expanded geographically and, by dominating trade and exploiting the Americas, gained control of the world economy. The slave trade was an important part of this process and a main source of Western wealth. From economic power came political control, as Britain acquired India and, along with other European powers, easily gained colonies in the Americas, thus expanding the part of the world that was culturally Western. However, in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, British, French, and Spanish colonies threw off European rule to become independent nations.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. To better understand the lasting influence of this era, provide students with a blank world map and have them identify francophone countries (research on the Internet will provide several guides from francophone organizations). Then have students identify Spanish-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries, as well.

2. Have students identify and research the importance of various commodities in the European trade networks, such as coffee, tobacco, tea, sugar, and so forth.

3. Have students research and write an essay on some aspect of the British antislavery movement (a leader, an organization, etc.).

4. Have students research the triangular trade and write a short paper explaining how the Middle Passage functioned as part of that trade.

5. The documentary/detective story of the film The Language You Cry In combines history, anthropology, and linguistics to trace the connections (through a Mende song) between eighteenth-century Sierra Leone and twentieth-century Georgia. Can students identify other cultural practices or products that made their way from Africa or Asia into Western culture?

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Why did European attitudes toward Asian culture change?

2. What were the chief similarities and differences among the Atlantic revolutions?

3. Why was it the British who won the wars for empire?
4. How did western Europeans rationalize slavery?

5. What are some of the visible legacies of Western empire-building?

CASE STUDIES

1. The text details the court-martial of the *Bounty* mutineers. Have students research another famous mutiny, of slaves on board the *Amistad*, and compare the two cases (similarities, differences, role of race, and so forth).

2. Have students put “Europe” on trial for its imperialism. How might Europe defend itself? Did the world ultimately benefit from these empires?

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. Robert Allison’s *The Interesting Life of Olaudah Equiano*, from Harvard University Press, is a good edition of this story.

2. The home page for the six-hour PBS series *Africans in America* is found at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/.

3. At http://www.echodhaiti.com/history/, you will find an account of the Haitian Revolution.


6. Steven Spielberg’s 1997 film *Amistad* is now available on DVD.

7. The home page for the Royal Pavilion at Brighton is found at http://www.royalpavilion.org.uk/. It contains some truly beautiful photographs of the architecture and gardens.

CHAPTER 18

Eighteenth-Century Society and Culture

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

* identify the social groups that belonged to the eighteenth-century aristocracy.
* explain how these groups exercised their power and influence.
* describe how subordinate social groups -- rural peasants and urban dwellers, in particular -- challenged the aristocracy in the late eighteenth century.
* identify the main features of Enlightenment thought.
* discuss how Enlightenment thought presented a threat to the old order.
* describe the impact the Enlightenment had on Western culture and politics.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* In the eighteenth century, the aristocracy dominated Europe socially, politically, economically, and culturally.
  * This dominance began to wane in the latter part of the eighteenth century because of a series of challenges from the rural peasantry, the urban bourgeoisie, and the ideas of the Enlightenment.
  * The Enlightenment, the defining cultural and intellectual movement of the eighteenth century, had profound effects on the West, producing a set of political and social ideals that became the basis of a new Western identity.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. The Aristocracy

In the eighteenth century, the aristocracy was a fairly small social group, usually no more than 4% of the population, which included the wealthiest and most powerful people in society. The aristocracy was made up of the nobility and lesser aristocrats, sometimes referred to as the gentry. The nobility held hereditary titles and privileges, possessed great wealth and political influence, and were numerically smaller than the gentry, who were much less powerful and wealthy than the nobility. The aristocracy was not completely closed to outsiders. Commoners with great wealth and land could sometimes gain entrance, especially to the lower aristocratic ranks.

A. The Wealth of the Aristocracy

As the wealthiest social group in European society, the aristocracy lived in luxury and showed off wealth as a sign of social status. Most of their income came from land. Aristocrats owned at least one third of the land. In the eighteenth century, their wealth continued to increase: in western Europe through investment in new economic
enterprises, and in eastern Europe through increased demands on the serfs. Despite the aristocratic disdain of "commerce," a great many aristocrats often behaved in capitalistic and entrepreneurial ways.

**B. The Political Power of the Aristocracy**

In the mid-eighteenth century the aristocracy was at the height of its power. In England it had achieved political dominance in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. In Poland and Hungary the aristocracy dominated the provincial assemblies. Even in the absolutist monarchies the aristocracy exercised power by controlling the institutions through which monarchical power was exercised, such as the provincial assemblies, the royal bureaucracy, and the judiciary.

**C. The Cultural World of the Aristocracy**

The lifestyle of the aristocracy emphasized learning, refinement, and appreciation of the fine arts. This was reflected in aristocratic homes that were built in the neoclassical style and often held art collections, as well as in the aristocratic patronage of classical composers such as Franz Joseph Haydn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

**II. Challenges to Aristocratic Dominance**

Beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, the aristocracy’s power, as well as their values and lifestyle, came increasingly under attack, resulting in a weakening of the aristocracy by the century's end.

**A. Encounters with the Rural Peasantry**

One of the groups challenging the aristocracy was of peasants and serfs who worked the land and over whom the aristocracy exercised direct control. In central and eastern Europe, serfs suffered oppressive burdens and had no personal freedom. Austria and Prussia abolished serfdom so that the monarchs could tax the peasants, who still found themselves financially overburdened. In western Europe, serfdom had given way to tenant farming, but the peasants there were coming under great pressure because of increased taxation and the elimination of common pasture rights, resulting in a decrease in peasant land ownership and an increase in peasant wage-earners throughout the century. Economic pressures led to conflict between peasants and aristocrats. In western Europe, these conflicts ranged from peasant lawsuits against their seigneurs or landlords to rural violence, especially against aristocratic property. In eastern Europe, the decaying economic conditions of the peasants led to large-scale revolts, such as the Pugachev Rebellion in Russia. Peasant revolts, however, did not seek social or political revolution but merely sought to regain lost privileges.

**B. The Social Position of the Bourgeoisie**

Another and more serious challenge to the aristocracy came from the bourgeoisie, an urban, untitled, propertied group that included prosperous merchants, professionals, minor governmental officials, early industrialists, and some skilled artisans and shopkeepers. In the eighteenth century, the bourgeoisie grew in size, especially in the North Atlantic countries. While the upper levels of the bourgeoisie often blurred into the lower ranks of the aristocracy, the middle and lower ranks of bourgeoisie emerged as a group that had its own social,
political, and cultural identity. Highly literate, the bourgeoisie were capable of becoming the leaders of organized movements seeking political change.

**C. The Bourgeois Critique of the Aristocracy**

The bourgeois criticism of the aristocracy was centered on three themes: first, the aristocracy’s luxury, hedonism, and idleness, which contrasted with the thrifty, sober, hard-working bourgeoisie; second, the sexual immorality and promiscuity of the aristocracy, which contrasted with faithful bourgeois marriages; and third, aristocratic participation in a decadent international culture, which contrasted with the wholesome patriotic values of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois critique of the aristocracy laid the foundation for political demands such as equal rights and opportunities, and received much support from the intellectuals who were part of the movement called the Enlightenment.

**III. The Enlightenment**

The Enlightenment, the defining intellectual and cultural movement of the eighteenth century, was an attempt to gain understanding solely through the use of reason, discarding dogma, superstition, and the opinions of others. Although France was the home of the most famous Enlightenment thinkers and writers, known as philosophes, the movement was inspired by such seventeenth-century English writers as Sir Isaac Newton and John Locke, and Europeans of many nationalities made contributions to Enlightenment thought. Moreover, participants in the Enlightenment thought of themselves as members of an international movement.

**A. Themes of Enlightenment Thought**

The writers of the Enlightenment emphasized several themes.

1. **Reason and the Laws of Nature**

   Enlightenment writers elevated human reason to a primary position and had unlimited confidence in it. They believed that the universe was governed by natural laws that human reason could discover, and that society and human beings were also governed by similar laws. As a result, they argued for the application of natural law to human society, which is the most novel and distinctive aspect of Enlightenment thought. For example, David Hume proposed a science of the human mind in his *Treatise of Human Nature*, and Adam Smith proposed a set of natural laws of economics. The search for natural laws that directed all human life also led to an unprecedented interest in non-European cultures.

2. **Religion and Morality**

   The spread of scientific knowledge gave the Enlightenment a new understanding of the relationship between God and mankind. Most believed that God was the creator of the universe and the author of natural law, but not that he intervened in the day-to-day operation of the universe or humanity. This was known as deism. Deists, in particular, believed that morality did not need to be based on religion, but that humans could use reason to discover God's natural laws and live accordingly. The Enlightenment thinkers minimized the importance of religion in the
3. Progress and Reform

The Enlightenment writers were firm believers in progress, which was itself a new idea produced by the Enlightenment. Philosophes argued that civilizations develop gradually from simple into complex forms, and believed that their own societies could advance to a higher level by reforming corrupt institutions. A prime area of such reform was judicial practice, with critics calling for an end to such things as torture. Cesare Beccaria called for such legal reforms and introduced the idea that prison could be used to rehabilitate the criminal.

B. Voltaire and the Spirit of the Enlightenment

The philosophe who best expressed both the ideas of the Enlightenment and its spirit was Francois Marie Arouet, better known as Voltaire. Committed to scientific rationality, Voltaire attacked Christianity and was tireless in the pursuit of liberty and justice.

C. Enlightenment Political Theory

Enlightenment thinkers were best known for their political theories and calls for reform of the state, but they did not share a common ideology.

1. Baron de Montesquieu: The Separation of Powers

Baron Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, was the most influential political writer. In *Spirit of the Laws*, he argued that the best constitutional structure was one that separated and balanced political power.

2. Jean-Jacques Rousseau: The General Will

The unconventional but influential political theorist Jean-Jacques Rousseau rejected the Enlightenment's dominant view of progressive civilization, and idealized man in a "state of nature." He attacked aristocracy and monarchy and instead called for the sovereignty of the people, with laws determined by the General Will, or the consensus of the community.

3. Thomas Paine: The Rights of Man

The English writer Thomas Paine was involved in both the American and French revolutions. In *The Rights of Man*, Paine argued that people possess natural rights that could never be taken away, a theme that appeared in much Enlightenment writing.

D. Women and the Enlightenment

The Enlightenment thinkers spoke of human beings as being equal in a state of nature, but did not believe that natural law made men and women equal, arguing that women had different natures than men and should be consigned to a domestic role. This helped support the growing theory of separate spheres, which laid the foundation for the ideology of female domesticity in the nineteenth century. Women were identified with the private, domestic sphere and so were denied civil rights and full membership in civil society. In the 1790s, however, some Enlightenment writers did begin to argue for the equality of men and women and women's rights.
E. The Enlightenment and Sexuality

One theme of the Enlightenment was the call for greater sexual permissiveness. Many philosophes argued that the standards of sexual morality imposed by the Church went against human nature, and some of them lived openly with women out of wedlock. Although few eighteenth-century Europeans adopted the libertinist lifestyle of Giacomo Casanova, whose name is still synonymous with womanizing, there was a growth of public sexual permissiveness among all social groups.

IV. The Impact of the Enlightenment

The ideas of the enlightenment spread among the educated classes of Europe and the Americas, inspiring reform and radical political movements.

A. The Spread of the Enlightenment Ideas

The ideas of the Enlightenment spread quickly because printing technology allowed for the publication of books, pamphlets, and newspapers in large quantities. The literacy rates increased dramatically in Western Europe, although only a minority of the population was highly educated. The establishment of public libraries in major cities also helped make widely available such publications as the Encyclopedia, edited by Denis de Diderot and Jean de Rond d’Alembert. Its seventeen volumes were filled with articles that advanced the ideas of the Enlightenment. Enlightenment ideas were also spread by literary societies and book clubs, as well as by public lectures on scientific topics. Freemasons advocated such Enlightenment ideas as liberty and equality, calling for the creation of a society based on reason and virtue, while discussions in the salons encouraged Enlightenment ideas among aristocrats and the bourgeoisie, and included women as well as men.

B. The Limits of the Enlightenment

The influence of the Enlightenment was limited. Most philosophes' books did not sell well, as readers preferred religious literature or the new form of fiction known as the novel. Banned books were also popular in France. The illiterate masses remained untouched by the Enlightenment, widening the gap between the elite, educated culture of the Enlightenment and popular culture. For example, the latter continued to believe in magic and witches, while educated elites did not.

C. Enlightened Absolutism

Some European rulers enacted reforms based on Enlightenment ideas, causing them to be known as enlightened despot. King Frederick II “the Great” of Prussia introduced religious toleration, codified Prussian law, abolished judicial torture and capital punishment, and introduced compulsory education. In Austria, Empress Maria Theresa enacted a new code of criminal law and abolished torture. Her successor, Joseph II, reorganized the legal system, abolished capital punishment and serfdom, and granted religious toleration. Catherine II of Russia abolished torture and capital punishment and implemented some educational reforms, but failed to abolish serfdom.
D. The Enlightenment and Revolution

Enlightenment ideas also inspired the movements for reform and revolution in Europe and the Americas by placing an emphasis on individual liberty, natural rights, and political reform. In France many of the leaders of the French revolution were influenced by the Enlightenment, as were such advocates of colonial independence in the Americas such as Thomas Jefferson and Simon Bolivar.

V. Conclusion: Enlightenment and Western Identity

A distinctly Western phenomenon, Enlightenment ideas influenced Western values, especially law and politics, but have never been fully accepted because of their attack on religion and the social order. Nonetheless, while not universally adopted, the acquisition of Enlightenment values gave Europeans a clear sense of their own identity in respect to the rest of the world.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Have students create a fictional character, either an aristocrat, peasant, or bourgeoisie. Have students identify the geographical location (country of residence, rural or city dweller) in which the character lives, and have them write an essay describing a week in the life of their character. (The written form could be a diary, correspondence, or so forth.)

2. Olympe de Gouges’ *The Rights of Woman* is readily available on the internet from several sources. Have students read the document. Have them write a short essay on whether most women today have achieved the rights de Gouges demanded. Another essay topic could be to have them consider what about the document was so inflammatory that it lead to her execution.


4. This chapter’s “Justice in History” feature focuses on a young French woman accused of infanticide. Allow your students to further investigate the criminal trials of this period through the excellent Web site www.oldbaileyonline.org, which contains the searchable proceedings of the London criminal court in the eighteenth century, as well as much useful background information.

5. The music of Mozart, Haydn, and many other classical composers is readily available. Have students listen to this music and relate it to the Enlightenment.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. What were the opportunities, and limitations, for social advancement in the eighteenth century? Did these differ for men and women?
2. How does the aristocracy of the eighteenth century compare with that of the Middle Ages?

3. Why did the Enlightenment’s ideas about God and religion have so little impact?

4. Which Enlightenment philosophe do you think had the greatest impact overall, and why?

5. Why do you think the ideas of the Enlightenment were embraced both by absolute monarchs and revolutionaries?

CASE STUDIES

1. The text describes the case of Marie-Jeanne Bartonnet and her trial for infanticide. Have students research recent cases of infanticide on the internet and compare them with Bartonnet’s case. Ask them to consider what kind of sentence Bartonnet might receive in today’s courts.

2. Imagine that Frederick II of Prussia, Joseph II of Austria, or Catherine II of Russia is “on trial” for not implementing Enlightenment reforms more extensively, in particular for not granting political rights. How might these monarchs defend themselves?

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. Alexander Pushkin’s historical novel *A History of Pugachev* is an outstanding way to explore the Pugachev Revolt from a Russian perspective, and expose students to one of the great Russian writers. The story and its companion piece, *The Captain’s Daughter*, are included in the Everyman’s Library edition of *Alexander Pushkin: The Collected Stories*.


4. Roger Spottiswoode’s film *Mesmer*, starring Alan Rickman, is now available on VHS and DVD. Its production values are outstanding and it provides an interesting look at the man who caused such a stir in eighteenth-century Vienna.
5. An online exhibit, *Smallpox: Inoculation, Vaccination, Eradication* is available at [http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/biomed/smallpox/index.html](http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/biomed/smallpox/index.html) and includes details about the use of inoculation in Europe.

6. Among the films that illustrate the lives of eighteenth-century aristocrats are *Dangerous Liaisons* (1988) and *Barry Lyndon* (1975), both available on DVD.
CHAPTER 19

The Age of the French Revolution, 1789-1815

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* explain why the Old Regime in France collapsed in 1789.
* describe the revolutionary changes that took place in French government and society between 1789 and 1791.
* discuss how, beginning in 1792, a more radical revolution led to the creation of a regime using the power of the state in the Reign of Terror.
* identify the ways in which the political events of the revolution changed French cultural institutions and created a new political culture.
* discuss how the authoritarian rule of Napoleon Bonaparte from 1799 to 1815 both confirmed and betrayed the achievements of the French Revolution.
* describe the impact Napoleon’s conquests had on Europe and the world.
* explain what the French Revolution ultimately achieved and in what ways it changed the course of European and Western history.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* Heralding the destruction of a political order dominated by monarchy, aristocracy, and the church, the French Revolution brought about fundamental changes in European political life.
* The ideas of the French Revolution, in particular its democratic republicanism and its concept of the nation, spread far beyond France itself and long outlasted the actual revolution itself.
* The revolution extended beyond purely political issues and attempted to remake French society and culture.
* Both in France and beyond, the challenge to established authority was met with opposition, which resulted in a return to more conservative rule.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. The First French Revolution, 1789-1791

A political revolution involves a fundamental change in a political system, and on this basis the French Revolution had two distinct revolutions. The first revolution brought about the destruction of royal absolutism and the drafting of a constitution. The second and more radical revolution, which began in 1792, abolished the monarchy and set up a republic.
A. The Beginning of the Revolution

The immediate cause of the French Revolution was the bankruptcy of the French government, which deprived the monarchy of its authority. King Louis XVI could no longer pay the enormous debts France had acquired in the wars it fought with England in the course of the eighteenth century. The worsening financial situation forced the king to call the Estates General, which was made up of three chambers representing the three social groups, or estates, in French Society: the nobility, the clergy, and the commoners, or Third Estate. In the months before the Estates General convened, the debate raged about how the Estates General should vote. If voting was by chamber, the First and Second Estates would block any action of the Third Estate. If voting was by head, there was more parity, as the number of representatives for the Third Estate equaled the combined number of the other two estates. The question remained unresolved when the Estates General convened at Versailles on May 5, 1789. When the king said he favored the voting by chamber, the Third Estate declared itself the national assembly and asked the other two estates to join it. When, shortly afterwards, the Third Estate was locked out of its meeting hall, the members moved to an indoor tennis court and took an oath not to disband until France had a constitution. After many nobles and clergy joined the Third Estate, the king was forced to accept the new situation. As the summer progressed, an economic crisis, triggered by a harvest failure the previous year, caused an ever-deepening social crisis that was causing a breakdown in public order. In June, King Louis XVI began massing troops near Paris and dismissed his popular finance minister, Jacques Necker. The people -- worried that the king was about to move against the National Assembly -- formed a National Guard and attacked the Bastille. In the meantime, a crisis known as the “Great Fear” spread through the countryside, and the National Assembly took steps to deal with it.

B. The Creation of a New Political Society

In the period between August 1789 and September 1790, the National Assembly took three revolutionary steps: they abolished the privileges of the nobles and clergy, making every Frenchman an equal citizen; they issued the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, which, influenced by the Enlightenment, proclaimed the natural right of all men to liberty, property, equality before the law, freedom from oppression, and religious toleration; and they reorganized the church by issuing the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, which made the church a department of state and the clergy government employees. The property of the church was seized and clergy were required to take a loyalty oath to the nation. In 1791, a new constitution made France a constitutional monarchy, and the newly elected Legislative Assembly passed revolutionary legislation that changed inheritance and marriage, and made all citizens equal before the law.

C. Responses to the First French Revolution

While events in Paris were changing the French political structures, the people in countryside villages and towns were rising up and overthrowing the local rulers and replacing them with supporters of the revolution. At the same time considerable opposition to the revolution was also appearing. Many of the clergy refused to take an oath of allegiance to the nation, southern nobles began to organize opposition to the new regime, and conflicts erupted between Catholics and Protestants. While some
reformers in other countries hailed the changes brought by the revolution, Edmund Burke and the Pope criticized the revolution. Absolute monarchs in Europe, worrying about the impact of French developments on their own countries, prepared to invade France and took actions to curb dissent in their own realms.

II. The French Republic, 1792-99

Starting in 1792, France experienced another revolution that replaced the constitutional monarchy with a republic, and the state used its greater power to attempt a radical reform of French society.

A. The Establishment of the Republic, 1792

In the first two years of the revolution, it appeared that the new French government would be a constitutional monarchy, as most French people did not support abolishing the monarchy. The only advocates of a republic were the radical Jacobins, who drew support from militant Parisian citizens called the sans-culottes. King Louis XVI was partly responsible for undermining the constitutional monarchy, as he made it clear he opposed the changes brought by the revolution. But the final blow came from the pressure of war. Convinced that Austria and Prussia were about to invade France, the Legislative Assembly declared war on Austria. The war went badly for France and produced a mood of paranoia, especially in Paris, where, on August 10, 1792, radical republicans overthrew the city government and set up a revolutionary commune. The Legislative Assembly suspended the monarchy, handed the royal family over to the commune, and ordered elections held for delegates to write a new constitution. The hysteria produced by the war defeats continued, but a French victory at Valmy on September 20, 1792, saved the revolution. Two days later, the newly elected constitutional convention abolished the monarchy and declared France a republic.

B. The Jacobins and the Revolution

By the time a republic was declared, the major political party had become the Jacobins. Soon, however, the Jacobins split into the moderate Girondins and the radical Montagnards, or “the Mountain.” Although both factions wanted to advance the goals of the revolution, they disagreed on how to do so. The Mountain pushed for the centralization of power in Paris and greater egalitarianism, while the Girondins favored local control and were afraid that any more equality might lead to anarchy. The two factions split over the treatment of the king, who was nonetheless tried, convicted, and executed by guillotine for treason in January 1793. The factional splits worsened as France was beset by new enemies from without and by rebellion within. Mountain leaders like Maximilien Robespierre believed the internal opposition was linked to the Girondins. Meanwhile, the military threat was handled by national conscription, the levee en masse, increasing resistance to the radical Jacobin government.

C. The Reign of Terror, 1793-1794

To deal with its internal enemies, the republican government claimed extensive powers and established special courts to prosecute the enemies of the state. Executive power was entrusted to a Committee of Public Safety, led by Robespierre, which essentially became a dictatorship and implemented a terror campaign to crush
opposition. Between October 1793 and August 1794, 17,000 persons were executed, 500,000 imprisoned, and another 20,000 were killed without any trial. Not just royalists, but Enlightenment figures and revolutionary leaders died. Finally, moderate Jacobins overthrew Robespierre and ended the Terror.

D. The Directory, 1795-1799

After the Terror, moderates proceeded to abolish the Paris commune, the Committee of Public Safety, and the Jacobin clubs. A new constitution in 1795 created a five-man Directorate to govern the country, established a bi-cameral assembly, and limited the franchise to property holders. Soon, opposition arose from Jacobins and sans-culottes over the rising price of bread. By the end of 1798, inflation was out of control, tax revenues had plummeted, and the currency had become almost worthless. The government was forced to alienate wealthy citizens by canceling more than half the government debt. Military setbacks brought the situation to a crisis point. In 1799, a coup brought a new government called the Consulate to power. It was dominated by a young general named Napoleon Bonaparte, who was named First Consul. A popular military hero, Napoleon preserved the forms of republican government, but France was now a military dictatorship in all but name.

III. Cultural Change in France During the Revolution

The French Revolution also brought important changes to French culture.

A. The Transformation of Cultural Institutions

Between 1791 and 1794, the cultural institutions of the old regime were either destroyed or radically changed.

1. Schools

   The confiscation of church property and abolition of religious orders devastated the system of schools and universities run by the church. The government created a system of public primary schools, offering free instruction by state-paid teachers, but a lack of sufficient funding caused the system to languish. Secondary education was slightly more successful, especially after it was improved during the Napoleonic era.

2. Academies

   The old scientific and artistic academies were abolished and their work taken over by government committees. The Commission of Weights and Measures established the metric system as the new measuring standard. The Royal Academy of Arts was replaced by the Popular and Republican Society of the Arts.

3. Libraries

   The Royal Library became the National Library and was given the book collections of the abolished aristocrats, monasteries and academies.

4. Museums and Monuments

   The Commission of the Museum established the old Louvre royal palace as a gallery to house and display the objects and paintings confiscated from the homes of royals, émigrés, and the churches. The revolutionary government also attempted to erase the memory of monarchy by destroying the tombs of France’s kings.
B. The Creation of a New Political Culture

The revolutionaries wanted to set up a new revolutionary political culture that would glorify the new regime and its ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Genuinely popular with almost the entire population, the new political culture was based on the doctrine of popular sovereignty, which claimed that the people were the highest political power in the state. The dress of ordinary people was now fashionable, while various forms of media -- from pamphlets to ballads -- promoted a distinctive revolutionary language. The new revolutionary culture also attempted to de-Christianize France, with churches turned into temples of reason, but this did not win widespread support. (Later radical leaders like Robespierre sought to at least pay lip service to traditional religious beliefs and modeled revolutionary festivals on religious ones.) The government even introduced a new calendar, which dated years from the founding of the republic. The new revolutionary culture was disseminated widely but was always contested; nonetheless, some elements of it, such as popular revolutionary rhetoric, survived to become a part of mainstream Western civilization.

C. Cultural Uniformity

The new revolutionary culture pushed standardization and simplicity, and so it divided France into roughly equal *departements*, established a national school system, adopted the metric system and the decimal system, and made plans for one body of law to apply to the entire nation. All of this sprang from the desire to build a new French nation based on a society of equal citizens.

IV. The Napoleonic Era, 1799-1815

The Consulate introduced a period of authoritarian rule as the republic gave way to a dictatorship.

A. Napoleon’s Rise to Power

Napoleon Bonaparte was born on the island of Corsica and sent to a French military school. The revolution provided the opportunity for his rise to prominence. During the Terror, he led armies against the federalists and royalists, and his victories against Austria made him popular. Authoritarian by nature, with great ambition and a high opinion of himself, Napoleon always took a pragmatic approach to problems. His acquisition of power was systematic and shrewd, and the army was his main political tool. From first consul in 1799, he then became consul for life in 1802, and two years after that, emperor.

B. Napoleon and the Revolution

Using the radical vocabulary of the revolution, Napoleon presented himself as an ally of the common man and a supporter of popular sovereignty. As a ruler, Napoleon was authoritarian, but he was, in fact, a promoter of equality, both equality of opportunity and equality before the law. Napoleon can also be viewed as an heir to the revolution in the sense that he continued to centralize and rationalize the French state and continued the expansion of France and the spread of the revolution to the rest of Europe.
**C. Napoleon and the French State**

Once in power, Napoleon set out to strengthen the French state by creating an efficient, centralized bureaucracy and a uniform legal system. He also settled the conflict between church and state that had erupted during the revolution.

1. **Concordat with the Papacy**

   Napoleon, like the revolutionaries, was a committed secularist who wanted the church under the control of the state, but he realized that the Civil Constitution of the Clergy had pushed the church too far. To settle the conflict between church and state, Napoleon signed the Concordat of 1801 with Pope Pius VII, who gave up all claims to the property confiscated by the revolution, agreed that the clergy would take an oath of allegiance to the state or resign, and promised not to appoint bishops without prior approval of the French government. In exchange, Napoleon recognized Catholic Christianity as the religion of the majority of Frenchmen, agreed to pay the salaries of the clergy, and restored Sundays and holy days. However, the Organic Articles added to the Concordat in 1802 make it clear that the French church remained a department of state.

2. **The Civil Code**

   Napoleon's most enduring achievement was to promulgate a new legal code, the Civil Code of 1804, also known as the Napoleonic Code, that standardized French law. The Civil Code guaranteed the rights to private property, equality before the law, and freedom of religion, but gave men control of all family property and denied women rights of inheritance.

3. **Administrative Centralization**

   Napoleon also overhauled French civil administration. All power rested in Paris where government ministers oversaw a vast bureaucracy and exercised direct control over the provinces. In both the civil bureaucracy and the army officer corps, appointment and promotion were based on talent, not birth.

**D. Napoleon, the Empire, and Europe**

Napoleon created a massive European empire by defeating the armies of Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Spain between 1797 and 1809. His stunning military successes secured Napoleon's reputation as a brilliant military leader, although he made strategic and tactical mistakes. Napoleon was less successful at sea, and he was unable to restore France's American empire and was defeated by the British at the naval Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Following his conquest of central Europe, Napoleon reorganized the German states into the Confederation of the Rhine, ending the Holy Roman Empire. By 1807, Napoleon was the master of Europe. After invading and occupying Spain in 1807, Napoleon installed his brother Joseph as king, but Joseph’s policies, such as closing convents and abolishing the Spanish Inquisition, prompted the Spanish people to rebel and begin guerilla warfare against the French. In the meantime, resentment of French rule led to the rise of nationalism in Germany and Italy.

**E. The Downfall of Napoleon**

By 1810, Napoleon was facing dissent within France, as well as throughout Europe. In 1812, Napoleon began an invasion of Russia. As the Russian army retreated farther inland, Napoleon overextended his lines of communication and resources. When he reached Moscow, he found it burned and deserted. Facing the
Russian winter, Napoleon ordered retreat. The retreat was a disaster, with 380,000 men lost to death, imprisonment, or desertion. At this point, other European powers formed an alliance, and defeated Napoleon at Leipzig in 1813. After further defeats, Napoleon abdicated in April of 1814 and was exiled to the island of Elba. The French monarchy was restored when Louis XVIII, brother of Louis XVI, was placed on the throne. A foe of the revolution, Louis XVIII nonetheless accepted a Constitutional Charter that left most changes brought by the revolution to the French government unchanged. However, Napoleon remained very popular, and when he escaped from Elba in March 1815, most Frenchmen rallied to him, but the European powers again allied against him and defeated him at the Battle of Waterloo. He was exiled to the Island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic and died there in 1821.

Meanwhile, even before Waterloo, the major powers of Europe had gathered at the Congress of Vienna to work out a post-Napoleonic settlement of Europe that would uphold the principle of dynastic legitimacy and also preserve the balance of power in Europe.

V. The Legacy of the French Revolution

The impact of the French Revolution was felt throughout the Western world. Almost 2,000,000 soldiers were killed in the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Empire, while internal political violence killed hundreds of thousands of civilians. Men of property, regardless of social background, profited from the revolution, while women, regardless of rank, did not benefit much from the revolution and continued to be limited to the private sphere. The major legacy of the revolution was in politics. The revolutionary era saw an enormous growth in the competence and power of the state. But even more important was the revolution’s promotion of the doctrine of popular sovereignty. The idea that the people were the highest political authority in the state could never be completely suppressed. Another permanent political legacy was the active participation of a nation’s citizens in politics.

VI. Conclusion: The French Revolution and Western Civilization

The French Revolution was a central turning point in not only French history, but the history of the West, because of the spread of the ideals of the revolution. Aside from confirming the French in their belief that they were the standard-bearers of Western civilization, the export of French revolutionary culture caused permanent change that had transformed Europe by 1815. The ideas of the revolution and the changes it wrought did not go unchallenged, but they were never completely reversed, and the conflict between demands for, and resistance to, political reform continued into the nineteenth century.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Have students write an essay tracing the various governing bodies of revolutionary France, from the initial revolution to the Consulate. Have them focus especially on the transitions from one government to the next and look for patterns.
2. In small groups, have students create a list of some of the most symbolic actions in revolutionary France (some examples include the destruction of the tombs of former kings, the execution of the monarch, the creation of a new calendar, changes in fashion). Have each group present their lists to the class, and discuss the importance of these symbolic acts. Have them consider the larger question of the role of symbolism in establishing patriotism and loyalty to a government.

3. Have students examine the lyrics of the Marseillaise (an English translation can be found at the Web site in Further Resources, below). As a group, have the students discuss the language, symbols, and rhetoric found in them. Are there references to specific revolutionary events, people, and so forth?

4. Have students research and compare Napoleon’s relationship to French churches with that of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I of England. Have them compare motives, effects upon the churches and their adherents, and the success of each relationship.

5. Have students compare Napoleon’s geographical empire with that of Constantine and Charlemagne.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. What was the role of women in revolutionary France?

2. What are the differences between the French and American revolutions? What are the similarities?

3. Was Napoleon the preserver or destroyer of the French Revolution?

4. What was the role of religion and religious institutions in revolutionary France (through the reign of Napoleon)?

5. What, if anything, could have been done to avoid the Reign of Terror?

CASE STUDIES

1. While Robespierre argued for the execution of Louis XVI, the Marquis de Condorcet was in opposition. Have students consider both arguments. If a majority had not supported Robespierre, and Louis had survived, how might the revolution have continued? Have students consider the symbolic aspect of the execution of the monarch.

2. Have students conduct a mock trial of Napoleon, on the grounds suggested by Discussion Suggestion #3.
FURTHER RESOURCES

1. The French Embassy Web site includes a section on Bastille Day at http://www.info-france-usa.org/atoz/14july.asp. It is interesting not only for the photos and links to speeches, but also for its interpretation of what Bastille Day means in French society.


3. Historian Simon Schama’s *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* is now available in paperback from Vintage Books. This is generally regarded as an innovative interpretation of events.

4. The Marquis de Condorcet, who argued against the execution of Louis XVI, is the author of the Condorcet Method, an alternative to winner-take-all elections. There is considerable information about this method, which could be an interesting research project, available on the Internet.


6. The U.S. Metric Association’s Web site includes a timeline covering the history and future of the metric system (http://lamar.colostate.edu/~hillger/dates.htm).


8. The Web site for the Louvre is found at http://www.louvre.fr/louvrea.htm.

9. Though most people are familiar with the melody of the Marseillaise, the lyrics are a compelling artifact of the French Revolution. They can be found, in English, at http://www.marseillaise.org/english/english.html.

10. PBS’s series *Empires* includes a four-episode program on Napoleon’s quest for empire. Details are available at http://www.pbs.org/empires/napoleon/home.html.

11. Andrej Wajda’s film *Danton*, starring Gérard Depardieu, was made in the early 1980s, amidst the upheavals of eastern Europe. Students can debate the historical accuracy while watching a really great film. Eric Rohmer’s 1981 *The Lady and the Duke* is another beautiful and discussion-provoking film.
CHAPTER 20

The Industrial Revolution

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* define what historians mean when they refer to the Industrial Revolution of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
* identify the social and economic changes that made industrial development possible.
* explain how industrialization spread from Great Britain to the rest of Europe and the United States.
* describe the economic, social, and cultural effects of the Industrial Revolution.
* discuss the relationship between the growth of industry and Britain’s dominance in trade and imperial strength during the nineteenth century.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* The process of the Industrial Revolution, which involved the extensive use of machinery in the production of goods, brought about a fundamental transformation of human life.
* The Industrial Revolution changed human relations to technology, and also changed human interaction with the natural environment, work patterns, and family life.
* The Industrial Revolution, confined to the West until the late nineteenth century, redefined the West as industrial and capitalist, and increased divisions between the West and the rest of the world.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. The Nature of the Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution, a series of economic and social changes, took place in England in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was made up of four related developments: first, the introduction of new technology; second, the use of new mineral sources of energy; third, a concentration of workers in factories; and fourth, new methods of transportation.

A. The New Industrial Technology

The Industrial Revolution introduced the machine age, and the most significant machines were steam engines and the machines used to make cloth.

1. Textile Machinery
   Until the late eighteenth century, the manufacturing of cloth was done by hand. In 1767, James Hargreaves invented the spinning jenny, which increased the
amount of cotton yarn that could be spun. In 1769, Richard Arkwright introduced the water frame, which produced stronger warp yarn. A decade later in 1779, Samuel Crompton combined the jenny and the water frame into one machine called the mule. The mule could produce 300 times as much yarn as a person on a spinning wheel. Because these machines produced more yarn than weavers could handle, in 1787 Edmund Cartwright invented the power loom. Because of these machines and improvements made to them, English weavers were working 200 times more cotton in 1850 than they had in 1780.

2. The Steam Engine
The steam engine, invented by James Watt in 1763, was even more important to the Industrial Revolution. The steam engine was used to raise minerals from mines, provide heat for smelting iron ore and drive machines in textile mills, as well as eventually powering the railroad locomotive.

B. Mineral Sources of Energy
Until the late eighteenth century, humans or animals provided the power for most economic activities, including transportation. Heat was produced by burning wood or charcoal. Such organic sources of energy were renewable, but only over a long period, and that slowed down economic growth. Windmills and waterwheels could also provided energy, but not heat, and were not widely or easily available. The Industrial Revolution made a decisive change by relying on minerals, such as coal, as the main source of a much more efficient energy.

C. The Growth of Factories
One of the major developments of the Industrial Revolution was the large factory, where workers toiled among the great machines which produced goods. This form of production evolved out of rural household industry and the large handcraft workshop, the main places where goods were previously produced. In the sixteenth century, businessmen, to reduce costs, began employing families in the countryside to produce such things as cloth. This process was known as “domestic industry”; the businessman provided the materials and all members of the rural family participated in production. Large handcraft workshops, located in urban areas, employed various skilled workers, who collaborated to produce a product for the workshop’s owner-operator. These workshops often increased production by the division of labor. Both the workshops and domestic industry were eventually replaced by the introduction of machines, which did not require skilled labor. The factory gave its owner greater control over production, and factory owners enforced much stricter discipline on workers whose work was now dictated by the needs of the machines.

D. New Methods of Transportation
As industry expanded so did the transportation networks that were necessary to move raw materials and finished products. Thousands of miles of canals and all-weather roads were built in the eighteenth century. The main innovation in transportation during the nineteenth century was the railroad, which provided quick, cheap transportation via coal burning, steam-powered locomotives. The railroads became a major new industry. Because of the cost, the construction of transport facilities usually involved a combination of private and public investment, although in Britain the railroads were built almost entirely through private capital.
II. Conditions Favoring Industrial Growth

To the immediate causes of the Industrial Revolution – competitive pressures encouraging innovation in technology, the switch to coal power, the development of factories and railroads – must be added the social and economic factors that allow industrialization to occur: a large population, improved agriculture, sufficient capital, people with scientific knowledge and entrepreneurial skills, and a demand for manufactured goods. The role of these factors can best be seen in the example of Great Britain.

A. Population Growth

The population of England more than doubled between 1680 and 1820, increasing demand for factory-made goods and providing a large supply of cheap labor. However, the population did not grow so rapidly that it discouraged factory owners from investing in new technology.

B. Agricultural Productivity

In the eighteenth century, British agriculture experienced a revolution of its own that greatly increased agricultural productivity. Enclosure -- consolidating land into compact fields under the control of one farmer -- allowed the introduction of such things as new crops and new crop rotations that restored nutrients to the soil allowing for greater yield. New fertilizers, soil additives, and scientific breeding also helped increase productivity with fewer agricultural workers. Thus more people could leave the farms to work in the factories while being supplied with cheap food.

C. Capital Formation and Accumulation

The term capital refers to the assets necessary for production, such as factories and machines (fixed capital), as well as raw materials and finished products (circulating capital). It also refers to the money, or investment capital, necessary to purchase these things. Investment capital for the Industrial Revolution came from merchants engaged in domestic and foreign trade, from landowners who profited from agriculture at home and in the colonies, and from industrial entrepreneurs. Britain also had financial services, such as banks and a stock market, which allowed large amounts of capital to be utilized.

D. Technological Knowledge and Entrepreneurship

Industrialization is the application of technology to manufacturing, which requires scientifically trained people. England had been a leading center of the scientific revolution and consequently had plenty of people with the scientific knowledge to mechanize the industry. Industrialization also requires entrepreneurship -- the ability to make profitable business ventures -- and Britain had merchant capitalists who had organized domestic industry. The combination of science and capitalism is exemplified by the partnership of James Watt and Matthew Boulton.

E. Demand from Consumers and Producers

In addition to the supply of capital, labor, food, and skill necessary for industrialization, there must also be a demand for goods. This demand originated with a “consumer revolution,” an ever-increasing demand for goods among the bourgeoisie in the eighteenth century. The demand for goods was enhanced by advertising and also stimulated by the increasing ability of the working class to buy goods as their purchasing power increased.
III. The Spread of Industrialization

The Industrial Revolution spread to the rest of Europe and North America over the course of several decades after it developed in Britain.

A. Great Britain and the Continent

Part of the reason for the delay in the start of the Industrial Revolution in the rest of Europe was the political situation in individual countries. Germany, for example, was politically fragmented into scores of sovereign states, each with its own tariffs and taxes, which hindered the free passages of resources and goods across the country. Local privileges in France also hindered the free internal trade until the early nineteenth century. By contrast, all of Britain was a single market. Another factor in delaying industrialization was protectionism, which limited markets and economic growth. Industrialization was also hindered by aristocratic hostility or indifference. And finally, parts of Europe lacked the necessary natural resources.

B. Features of Continental Industrialization

After 1830, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Austria, and Germany began to introduce machinery into the production process, utilize steam power in production, concentrate workers in factories, and build railroads. Although they imitated British industrialization to a certain extent, each European nation had to respond to its own unique circumstances. However, the industrialization process on the European continent differed from British industrialization in a number of ways. First, the governments played a greater role; for example, by providing capital, especially for railroads and roads. Second, banks played a central role in financing industry. Third, the development of the railroad system helped begin industrialization by stimulating other industries. Moreover, with the exception of Belgium, other European countries tended to concentrate in coal, iron, or textiles, instead of all three.

C. Industrialization in the United States

The Industrial Revolution began in the United States in the 1820s in New England, with textiles first, then clocks and guns. After 1865, U.S. industry began to expand rapidly, and heavy industry developed in the Pittsburgh and Cleveland regions. U.S. industrialization followed the same patterns as in Britain and Europe. Most American machinery was based on English models, although the United States did contribute the sewing machine. Another major American contribution to the industrial process was the assembly line. Like Britain, the United States had a vast supply of raw materials and an absence of governmental involvement in industrialization, although individual states did play a more active role than the federal government, especially in developing the railroads. A relatively short supply of labor in the United States helped American workers avoid the awful conditions suffered by the English working class.

D. Industrial Regionalism

The industrialization process not only varied by nation, but different regions of countries developed different types of industry. Geography had long caused some regional specialization, but industrialization increased regionalism. Yet the development of regional industries and economies did not mean regional markets.
Industrial markets were national and international, and included rural areas. However, the contrast between industrial and agricultural areas increased.

IV. The Effects of Industrialization

Industrialization affected every aspect of human life.

A. Population and Economic Growth

The most important change was the continuous expansion of the population and the economy. Most observers in the eighteenth century did not believe that expansion of the population and the economy could be sustained indefinitely. Thomas Malthus argued that population naturally grows faster than the food supply, and therefore malnutrition, famine, and disease will correct the imbalance. But Malthus’ cycle of expansion and contraction did not take place. In the nineteenth century, the population continued to expand as greater agricultural productivity permitted an adequate food supply, and the industrial economy was able to employ large numbers of workers. Despite swings, the broad view shows that industrialized nations experienced sustained economic growth.

B. Standards of Living

There has been much debate about the impact of industrialization on the working class. The optimists have pointed to the positive, long-term effects of industrialization, such as the rise in individual income. Pessimists have emphasized the negative effects, not so much of industrialization itself as the rise of industrial capitalism, which they argue works systematically to oppress workers. Much of the evidence to support the pessimists’ position comes from the early period of industrialization when workers’ standards of living were declining and conditions in the factories monotonous and demeaning.

C. Women, Children, and Industry

During the early Industrial Revolution in Great Britain, large numbers of women and children were part of the work force. Employers valued the manual dexterity of women and children, their greater amenity to factory discipline, and the fact that they accepted lower wages. Although the participation of women and children in the workforce was not new, factory work separated people from their homes, so that they could no longer combine occupational and domestic labor. As a result, family life changed. As mothers found it impossible to care for their small children while working, they began to leave the paid workforce. This trend began to receive governmental support in the form of legislation that restricted the employment of children and women.

D. Class and Class Consciousness

Writers began to describe industrial society as divided into three classes based on the type of property they owned and how they acquired it. The aristocracy owned land and derived their income from it. The bourgeoisie owned capital enterprises and gained their wealth from profits. The working class owned only their labor and received wages. This social model was used by theorists as different as David Ricardo, at one extreme, and Marx and Engels, at the other. However, there is great debate by historians over the extent to which the people of the nineteenth century were conscious of their class status. Some historians argue that worker exploitation
and conflicts between capital and labor over wages led to the formation of class identity. Others maintain that workers were more conscious of their trade, ethnic, or local identity than they were of their class identity.

**E. Industrial Landscape**

The Industrial Revolution changed the landscape. Small towns grew into huge cities, dominated by factory smokestacks. In the countryside, railroads and canals altered the land. However, some of the new industrial architecture was not only impressive but beautiful, while some artists found inspiration in the railroad.

**V. Industry, Trade, and Empire**

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Britain outstripped all other nations in the volume of its industrial output, the extent of its international trade, and the size of its empire. Industry, trade, and empire were closely linked, as Britain sought raw materials for its industry and new markets for its industrial product.

**A. East Asia: The Opium War, 1839-1842**

For three centuries, China maintained a tight control over trade with Europeans. In the 1830s, conflict broke out between the Chinese and the British over the trade of opium, which was causing severe problems in Chinese society. When the Chinese authorities began seizing and destroying chests of opium, the British declared war and, with their superior naval technology, defeated China. In the aftermath, the Chinese were forced to open five ports to international trade and allow these ports to be governed by British consuls who were not subject to Chinese law.

**B. India: Annexation and Trade**

British political control of India served the interests of British trade by not only giving British merchants control of the trade between India and the rest of Asia, but by making India a market for British industrial goods while supplying British industry with raw materials. India also became a major source of revenue for the British government. Resentment of economic exploitation became one of the main sources of later Indian nationalism.

**C. Latin America: An Empire of Trade**

Great Britain was an ardent supporter of Latin American independence movements since, once independent, these countries became markets for British goods and capital. Although these countries remained politically separate from Britain, they became economically dependent on the British in the same way India had, and similarly, Latin America’s village artisan economies were transformed as Latin America became a market for British finished goods.

**D. Ireland: the Internal Colony**

Despite its proximity to England, Ireland was treated like a colony, subject to the British policy of promoting industry at home while importing resources from its imperial possessions, thus placing Britain's economic interests ahead of those areas it controlled.
VI. Conclusion: Industrialization and the West

Not since the Neolithic Age had anything so transformed human life as had the Industrial Revolution by the middle of the nineteenth century. Giving human beings unprecedented technological control over nature, industrialization affected everything from work routines to family life to the very appearance of the landscape. It changed the very definition of the West, making the West synonymous with industrialization and industrial capitalism, and creating new divisions between the West and the non-Western world.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Have students conduct research on one of the great international exhibitions of the nineteenth century (1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition in London, 1862 Great London Exhibition, 1855 or 1867 Exposition Universelle de Paris, 1873 Vienna Worlds Exposition, 1876 U.S. International Centennial Exhibition). Ask them to identify common themes and to consider how these exhibitions presented the ideas of civilization and progress.

2. Distribute blank world maps and ask students to map the progress of the Industrial Revolution from country to country.

3. Ask students to write a short essay imagining themselves as a member of a specific class, gender, and nationality in nineteenth-century Europe. What would the impact of industrialization have been on this person’s life?

4. Have students choose one aspect of the Industrial Revolution (textile manufacture, railroad or canal-building, or steam engine development, for example) and trace its origins and history.

5. Have students conduct research on early (nineteenth-century) advertising. (A good resource example is the Harper’s Weekly Web site at http://advertising.harpweek.com/). Ask them to collect some examples to present to the class as a whole and discuss what has changed and what has remained the same in advertising strategies, language, kinds of appeals, and so forth.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. In what ways was the Industrial Revolution revolutionary?

2. Which has had the greatest impact, the Industrial Revolution or the French Revolution?

3. Do you agree with the optimistic view or the pessimistic view on the standards of living of the laboring classes in an industrial society?
4. Was the Industrial Revolution beneficial for women?

5. How crucial was Britain’s global empire to its leadership in the Industrial Revolution?

CASE STUDIES

1. Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* (1843) can be viewed as a work dealing with the problems of industrialization. In this light, have students re-interpret the “trial” of Ebenezer Scrooge.

2. Divide students into groups and have them research the impact of industrialization on different parts of the world and present their findings as part of an effort to determine if industrialization has had mainly positive or negative effects.

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. Some good photos and information on the Crystal Palace are found at http://www.victorianstation.com/palace.html.

2. An interesting Geocities site that provides information on the shirt-making industry so crucial to the city of Derry, Northern Ireland, is found at http://www.geocities.com/historyofshirtmakinginderry/founderofderryshirts.htm.

3. Three classic texts on the Industrial Revolution are E.P. Thompson’s *The Making of the English Working Class* and Eric J. Hobsbawm’s *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914* and *The Age of Capital, 1848-1875*.

4. A PBS series that helps further students’ understanding of the power of the British Empire is *Queen Victoria’s Empire*. Its Web site can be found at http://www.pbs.org/empires/victoria/.

5. BBC Two has an excellent Web site, *A Nation on Film*, which has outstanding resources on tin mining, early textile mills, early railways, and North Sea fishing industries. The site is found at http://www.bbc.co.uk/nationonfilm/.
CHAPTER 21

Ideological Conflict and National Unification, 1815-1871

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* identify the main features of the ideologies that inspired people to political action from 1815 to 1871.
* explain how encounters among people who adhered to these ideologies shaped the political history of Europe between 1815 and 1848.
* describe how liberal and conservative leaders used nationalism to unite people into nation-states between 1848 and 1871.
* discuss the role ideology played in international warfare and diplomacy, especially in efforts to maintain the balance of power during this period.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* Between 1815 and 1871, Europe witnessed many reform movements, uprisings, and revolutions.
  * The participants in these events were inspired by ideologies, or theories of society and government, that lay the foundation for political action.
  * These ideologies – liberalism, conservatism, socialism, and nationalism – were produced by Western historical developments and endowed the West with a distinctive political culture.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. New Ideologies in the Early Nineteenth Century

   European politics in the nineteenth century were influenced by liberalism, conservatism, socialism, and nationalism -- four new ideologies with roots in the works of eighteenth-century authors.

   A. Liberalism: The Protection of Individual Freedom

       The ideology of liberalism is centered on the principle that political, social, and economic freedoms are paramount, and the main function of government is to protect these freedoms. Although liberals’ specific agendas varied from country to country, all of them had three objectives: 1) to establish and protect the individual rights, such as freedom of religion, that liberals sought to have enshrined in constitutions; 2) to expand the right to vote to all property owners, especially the middle class; and 3) to promote free trade, a view grounded in the ideas of Adam Smith, who argued for free-market capitalism. This kind of capitalism, often called laissez-faire, maintains that government generally should not intervene in the economy. Liberals opposed aristocratic privilege and supported equality before the law. Most liberals favored limited monarchy as the
ideal form of government. Liberalism drew most of its supporters from the urban middle class of professionals, merchants, and manufacturers, a group that felt most aggrieved by their lack of political rights and whose growing wealth gave them a basis for claiming a share of political power.

**B. Conservatism: Preserving the Established Order**

The ideology of conservatism sought to preserve the established order, in particular monarchy and aristocracy, and prevent the spread of those movements born of the French Revolution: liberalism and nationalism. The leading conservative theorist was Edmund Burke, who had a great respect for the established social order, viewing it as both the work of God and a partnership between past, present, and future. Burke rejected the ideas of equality and natural rights, arguing instead that rights were privileges inherited from the past. Other conservatives like Louis de Bonald and Joseph de Maistre used religion to justify monarchy. A fine line separates conservatism, which accepts gradual change, and reaction, which rejects any change and desires to restore the old order. Conservatism was the ideological foundation for the reactionary movements in Europe after 1815, which sought, within a country, to reclaim power for aristocrats and clergy and, between countries, to use the Concert of Europe to preserve the peace settlement of 1815 by taking action against liberals and nationalists who challenged monarchs.

**C. Socialism: The Demand for Equality**

Socialism arose as a reaction to the rise of industrial capitalism and the liberalism that justified it. Socialists advocated community ownership of the means of production, to reduce inequalities of wealth and opportunity. Although some small socialist communities in the early nineteenth century practiced collective ownership, most forms of socialism advocated the ownership of property by the state, which represented the people. Similarly, while Utopian socialists sought to create ideal communities, others sought to use the political process to improve life for workers. The most radical form of socialism was developed by Karl Marx. Drawing from the ideas of the German philosopher Friedrich Hegel, Marx argued that history advances through a process called the dialectic. But, although Hegel believed that history advances because of the conflict of ideas, Marx and his associate Friedrich Engels argued that historical change was the result of economic factors, so his theory was known as dialectical materialism. According to Marx, history had advanced to a new stage when the bourgeoisie took power from the aristocracy, and he predicted that a further stage of advancement would result from conflict between the bourgeoisie and the working class or proletariat. Marx and Engels’s form of socialism, known as communism, emphasized class conflict, calls for a workers’ revolution, and complete economic equality.

**D. Nationalism: The Unity of the People**

Nationalism first appeared during and after the French Revolution. A nation refers to a large community of people who have a sense of unity based on a shared homeland and culture. Nationalism believes that nations have a right to have their own political institutions and that the interests of the nation are supreme. Nineteenth-century nationalists wanted to establish nation-states, based
on self-determination, the idea that a nation has the right to be ruled only by its own members, and that all members of the nation should be included in the state. Although nationalists spoke of the antiquity of their nation, most people who were identified in the nineteenth century with a particular land shared little cultural unity. Moreover, even within a nation-state a certain amount of linguistic, religious, and ethnic diversity persists, so in a sense the “nation” is a myth. Ironically, imperialism abroad often increased nationalism at home, and nationalism promoted each nation's sense of its own supremacy. In the early nineteenth century, nationalism was often identified with liberalism since both shared a belief in representative government. However, liberalism emphasized the individual while nationalism stressed political unity, and later in the nineteenth century nationalism was identified more with conservatism.

E. Culture and Ideology

The four great nineteenth-century ideologies were influenced by scientific rationalism and romanticism, two sharply divergent aspects of Western culture.

1. Scientific Rationalism

Scientific rationalism had its origins in the Scientific Revolution and peaked in the Enlightenment. It stressed the powers of human reason, elevated science above all other forms of knowledge, and sought to create a science of human nature. Scientific rationalism, which produced the Industrial Revolution, continued to have a profound impact in the nineteenth century, where it gave birth to positivism. Positivism was developed by Auguste Comte and held that science is not only the highest form of knowledge but will inevitably lead to human progress. Comte argued that the highest stage of human development was the positive stage in which scientific or positive knowledge would allow people to discover the laws of human behavior and use them to improve society.

2. Romanticism

Scientific rationalism was challenged by romanticism, which began as an artistic and literary movement but developed into a more general worldview. Romantics recognized the limits of human reason in comprehending reality, and preferred to rely on intuition and imagination to reach more profound levels of being. Romantics did not limit reality to the material, like the positivists, but believed there was a spiritual and emotional dimension of reality. As artists, romantics rejected the order and rationalism of eighteenth-century classicism. In literature, romantic writers utilized a new poetic style that employed imagery, symbols, and myth, often exploring the exotic, mysterious, even evil aspects of human nature. Romanticism, whether as art, literature, or music, sought to appeal primarily to the emotions, and could be used to support either liberalism or conservatism but was most often linked to nationalism.
II. Ideological Encounters in Europe, 1815-1848

The confrontation of ideologies of the nineteenth century frequently led to violent political conflict. In the years after the Congress of Vienna, conservatives, led by the Austrian minister Metternich, were determined to suppress any signs of revolution.

A. Liberal and Nationalist Revolts, 1820-1825

A series of revolts in Europe in the early 1820s revealed the explosive influence of liberalism and nationalism, and the determination of conservatives to crush those ideologies.

1. The Liberal Revolts of 1820 in Spain and Portugal

After the fall of Napoleon, King Ferdinand VII was returned to power in Spain in 1814, but he continued to refuse to accept the liberal constitution adopted by the Spanish cortes, a representative assembly, in 1812. In 1820, liberals allied with military officers and seized power. This was a test for the Concert of Europe, which, with Great Britain alone dissenting, intervened to restore Ferdinand to the throne. Thus, the Spanish revolt of 1820 was a failure. An 1820 revolt in Portugal established a liberal regime that suppressed the Portuguese Inquisition, confiscated church lands, and established a constitutional monarchy.

2. The National Revolt of 1821 in Greece

Nationalism had its earliest success in Greece, mainly because members of the Concert of Europe lent their support. The Greek revolt against the Ottoman Empire received support because Europeans identified the Greeks with the foundation of western civilization and also viewed this as a struggle of Christianity against Islam. In 1833, the Turks were forced to accept Greek independence.

3. The Decembrist Revolt of 1825 in Russia

The least successful liberal revolt took place in Russia in December of 1825 when a group of army officers who had served in western Europe led a rebellion against Tsar Nicholas I. The rebels became known as the Decembrists, their revolt was quickly suppressed, and liberalism continued to struggle in Russia for the rest of the century.

B. Liberal and Nationalist Revolts, 1830

A second and more successful group of liberal and national revolts erupted in the early 1830s in France, the Netherlands, and Poland.

1. The French Revolution: The Success of Liberalism

The most important and successful revolution took place in France. When the monarchy had been restored after Napoleon, the king had agreed to observe the 1814 Charter of Liberties. When the conservative King Charles X took steps to undermine the charter in 1830, violence erupted in the streets of Paris and Charles was forced to abdicate. Liberals offered the crown to Louis-Philippe, who accepted a revised Charter of Liberties and expanded the franchise to include the middle class. Louis-Philippe’s reign is often referred to as the “bourgeois monarchy” because he catered to the
bourgeoisie by supporting economic growth and limiting aristocratic privilege.

2. The Belgian Revolution: The Success of Nationalism

The revolution in France triggered a liberal and nationalist revolution in Belgium. The Congress of Vienna had united the Belgians with the Dutch by creating a kingdom of the Netherlands, but the two differed too much in language and religion for the union to work. When the Belgians heard of the revolution in Paris, they rose up and managed, with British help, to achieve independence, although the Dutch refused to recognize the new Belgian kingdom until 1839.

3. The Polish Rebellion: The Failure of Nationalism

The revolution in France also triggered an unsuccessful uprising in Poland. In 1815, Poland had been made a separate kingdom but its king was the Russia tsar, and this situation increasingly alienated the Poles, who in 1830 revolted against Russian control. As no western European power was willing to support the Polish Rebellion, it was easily crushed by the Russians, who then incorporated Poland into the Russian Empire.

C. Liberal Reform in Britain, 1815-1848

The situation in Britain was different from that of the continent as the British had long enjoyed many rights for which other European liberals were still fighting. Thus British liberals called for reform rather than revolution, and focused on three demands. The first, parliamentary reform and the expansion of the franchise, was achieved with the Great Reform Bill of 1832, which extended the vote to the urban middle class and created new parliamentary seats. The second demand, for repeal of the legislation that denied non-Anglican Protestants and Catholics political rights, was achieved in 1828 and 1829, respectively. The third demand, for free trade, centered on protective tariffs, in particular the Corn Law of 1815. It took longer to achieve this demand as landed interests held considerable power in Parliament, but it finally happened in 1845. A push for even more democratization of the political system was undertaken by the Chartist Movement in the 1830s and 1840s, but it failed to produce results.

D. The Revolutions of 1848

A third, more extensive set of revolutions exploded in 1848, fueled by the bad harvests of 1845 and 1846 and the economic recession of 1847. These revolutions involved greater popular participation and gave greater attention to nationalist and socialist issues.

1. The French Revolutions of 1848

In 1848, workers in Paris demonstrated for the right to vote and demanded government assistance. When the troops of Louis-Philippe killed several demonstrators, the revolution broke out. Louis-Philippe abdicated and the revolutionaries proclaimed the Second French Republic. The provisional government implemented universal manhood suffrage and, showing the influence of socialists, established national workshops to provide work for the unemployed. In June of 1848, the newly elected conservative-dominated National Assembly closed the workshops, and riots exploded, only to be crushed. In December 1848, Napoleon’s
nephew, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, was elected president. He had support from conservatives, liberals, and moderate republicans. In 1851, he seized power and one year later proclaimed himself Emperor Napoleon III.

2. The Revolutions of 1848 in Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia

The revolution in France triggered political violence in German cities and the countryside, which forced the king of Prussia to summon an assembly to write a constitution. In Austria, as well, the emperor was forced to give into demands for a constitutional assembly. In Bohemia and Hungary, nationalists demanded autonomy within the Hapsburg Empire. A Pan-Slav Congress was held in Prague and called for the unity of all Slavs within the empire. In the meantime, an assembly of German representatives was meeting at Frankfurt and writing a constitution for a united Germany. By the middle of 1849, however, conservative forces had regained the upper hand in central Europe. The Frankfurt Assembly’s plan for a united, constitutional Germany failed to win the support of the Prussian king, who was also able to use military force to disband the constitutional assembly in Prussia. Similarly, the revolutions in Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary were crushed by military force.

3. The Revolutions of 1848 in Italy

The spread of revolts in Italy raised the hope of unifying Italy into one state. King Charles Albert of Piedmont-Sardinia assumed leadership of the Italian nationalist cause, but failed to defeat the Austrian army, ending that attempt at Italian unification.

4. The Failure of the Revolutions of 1848

Liberals, socialists, and nationalists were defeated in the revolutions of 1848, primarily because of divisions among the groups that started the revolutions. The failure of these revolutions, however, did not mean the end of the ideologies of liberalism, nationalism, and socialism.

III. National Unification in Europe and America, 1848-1871

Prior to 1848, nationalism had only been successful in Greece and Belgium, smaller territories that had seceded from larger ones. The nationalist efforts of 1848 in Germany and Italy had sought to combine small territories into nation-states, and had failed.

A. Italian Unification: Building a Fragile Nation-State

Italian unification faced several problems: first, Austrian military control of northern Italy; second, disparities in wealth between north and south, which hindered economic integration; third, a strong tradition of local autonomy; fourth, the presence of the Papal States in central Italy; and fifth, the question of who would provide leadership. Despite the failure of 1848, Piedmont-Sardinia remained the strongest and most prosperous Italian state. The liberal prime minister of Piedmont-Sardinia, Camillo di Cavour, favored unification through diplomacy under the leadership of the Piedmontese monarchy. This was the
antithesis of the nationalism of Guiseppe Mazzini, who saw national unification as a moral force that, through uprisings and invasions, would result in a democratic republic. In 1859 an alliance of France and Piedmont defeated Austria, and by 1860 Piedmont had secured all of northern and central Italy except for Venetia and the Papal States. When a rebellion broke out in 1860 in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, a force of nationalist volunteers known as the Red Shirts, led by Guiseppe Giribaldi, intervened, and soon Naples, Sicily, and most of the Papal States had joined Piedmont. Austria’s cession of Venetia to Italy in 1866 and Italy’s annexation of the rest of the Papal States in 1870 completed the unification of Italy.

B. German Unification: Conservative Nation-Building

The leadership for German unification in the 1860s came from the conservative chancellor of Prussia, Otto von Bismarck, whose primary interest in unification was strengthening Prussia. Bismarck had a pragmatic approach to politics, called Realpolitik, and he achieved German unification through two wars. The first, the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, resulted in the unification of the northern German states in the North German Confederation. In 1870-71, the Franco-Prussian War allowed Bismarck to annex the remaining German-speaking territories into a German Empire, which won the support of the middle class by supporting free trade. France’s defeat in this war led to the ousting of Napoleon III and the establishment of the Third French Republic in September 1870.

C. Unification in the United States: Creating a Nation of Nations

In its early years as an independent republic, the people of the United States thought of themselves primarily as citizens of particular states rather than as member of a national community. The ongoing growth of the United States, and its diversity, made difficult the development of European-style nationalist sentiment, based on a common language and culture. The great test of American national unity came in the 1860s, when eleven southern states left the union over the issue of slavery, an issue that had deeply polarized North and South. But the chief issue of the Civil War itself was the preservation of the union, as the northern states fought to keep the southern states from seceding. By the end of the war in 1865, slavery was abolished and the union was not only preserved, but strengthened.

D. Nationalism in Eastern Europe: Preserving Multinational Empires

In contrast to the development of nation-states in western Europe, the Habsburg and Russian empires continued to be multinational political entities in eastern Europe. Although the Habsburg Empire met the challenge of nationalism primarily through repression, it made the concession of creating the Dual Monarchy of Austro-Hungary in 1867, which allowed a certain amount of autonomy and independent identity to Hungary.

IV. Ideology, Empire, and the Balance of Power

The rise of nationalism and process of national unification disrupted the balance of power as governments began to engage in imperial expansion.
A. Britain, the United States, and the Monroe Doctrine of 1823

In North America, the United States became fearful that the conservative powers of Europe might intervene to restore the Spanish Empire. The United States allied itself with Britain in supporting Latin American independence. In 1823, U.S. President Monroe issued the Monroe Doctrine, which declared that the U.S. would view any attempt to colonize in the Americas as a hostile act. The doctrine was enforced by the British navy.

B. Russia, The Ottoman Empire, and the Crimean War, 1853-1856

Another challenge to the balance of power was Russian expansionism into the Balkans. Russia claimed the right to intervene in the Ottoman Empire to protect fellow Slavs and Orthodox Christians. After Russia occupied the Ottoman provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia, the Ottoman Empire and its allies, Britain and France, declared war on Russia. Despite suffering enormous casualties, Britain and France defeated Russia. Defeat forced Russia to begin internal reforms, including the emancipation of the serfs.

C. The German Empire and the Paris Commune, 1870-1871

Another challenge to the balance of power came from Prussia’s unification of Germany, a country that now dominated central Europe and had the strongest army in Europe. After France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, Adolph Thiers was appointed head of the provisional government in January, 1871. Thiers hoped to restore the monarchy or establish a conservative republic. The provisional government asserted its control over France and crushed the Paris Commune. The crushing of the Commune marked the defeat of French socialism and radicalism. The regime that emerged in France was the Third Republic, based on conservative nationalism.

V. Conclusion: The Ideological Transformation of the West

Ideological encounters between 1815 and 1871 changed the political culture of the West. As ideologies became political movements, those ideologies themselves were often refined to accommodate political realities. The ideologies that so transformed the West, and were themselves modified and adapted in this period, have lasted into the twentieth century and have extended their influence beyond the Western world.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Have students research, draw, and compare maps of Europe based on ethnicity and political divisions.

2. The Frankenstein story has become such a part of popular culture that students may find it very surprising and enlightening to read Mary Shelley’s original version.

3. Have students identify and research a current struggle over national self-determination (for example, Palestine, Sudan, Bosnia). Ask them to compare the current struggles with those described in the chapter.
4. Have students compare the demands of the Chartists with those made by liberals in other countries in the 1830s and 1840s.

5. Have students listen to the work of romantic composers like Beethoven and discuss how his music differs from Mozart’s.

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

1. To what degree, and in what forms, are the ideologies discussed in this chapter present today?

2. What are the strengths and the weaknesses of ideologies as agents of political action?

3. Why was Britain practically the only European country that did not experience a revolution in 1848-1849?

4. How was the experience of nation-building different in the United States than in Europe?

5. What were the differences in the unification processes in eastern and western Europe?

**CASE STUDIES**

1. Have students stage a debate between a positivist and a romantic on the question, “What is the most important aspect of human nature?” What other questions can be used to establish the fundamental differences between ideologies and philosophies?

2. The text discusses the arguments for and against the use of corporal punishment in the nineteenth-century West. Have students research arguments for and against capital punishment today and stage a debate on the issue.

**FURTHER RESOURCES**


3. The 1963 film *The Leopard*, about the unification of Italy, is available on DVD.


6. Ken Burns’ award-winning documentary series The Civil War can be used in whole or in part to illustrate nation-building in the United States.
CHAPTER 22

The Coming of Mass Politics: Industrialization, Enfranchisement, and Instability, 1870-1914

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* explain how the economic and social transformation of Europe after 1870 shaped the encounters between established political elites and those new to the political process.
* describe the response of the ruling classes to the challenges of mass political participation.
* identify the forms that mass politics assumed during this time of industrial expansion and the spread of nationalism.
* discuss the ways in which the emergence of feminism in this period illustrates both the potential and the limits of political change.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* Economic developments after 1870 intensified and widened ideological competition.
* Individuals and groups traditionally excluded from power began to demand access to it.
* European governments tried to contain social discontent and ensure loyalty, most often by defining a national identity.
* Most European governments extended the vote to the working class, creating a new era of mass politics, which included radical parties on the left and the right.
* As most men gained the right to vote, European women also began to demand it, but this was only part of an international feminist movement.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Economic Transformation

Europe’s political life in the period from 1870 to 1914 was transformed by several economic developments. Among these economic developments were the economic depression of 1873, the industrialization of new regions, new patterns of production and consumption of industrial goods, and rapid urbanization and immigration.

A. Economic Depression

From 1873 to the mid-1890s, Europe seemed unable to shake off what was called the “Great Depression in Trade and Agriculture.” Despite continual rise in production and investment, interest rates, prices, and profits fell, as cheaper
transportation brought Europe lower-priced foodstuffs from other parts of the world while industrial production exceeded consumption. The agricultural sector was the hardest hit, but business also suffered as much as a 50% decline in prices for finished goods while labor costs remained high.

B. Industrial Expansion

The start of the economic depression was closely linked to expansion of industrialization to new regions. Although many people in the periphery of Europe lived mostly untouched by industrialization in 1870, by 1914 their isolation was disappearing because of the expansion of the railroad network. For example, in the 1890s Russia underwent rapid industrialization under the leadership of Sergei Witte. His greatest achievement was doubling the size of the railroad network. By 1914, Russia was the fourth industrial power in the world and it supplied 50% of the world's oil.

C. The Second Industrial Revolution

The 1870s also witnessed the introduction of new techniques and technologies that historians label the “Second Industrial Revolution.” More mechanization replaced handcraft production and new innovations in steel technology ensured that inexpensive, high-quality steel was widely available. In construction, the introduction of steel, cement, plate glass and the mechanical crane permitted the building of the first skyscrapers. The development of electric power and the light bulb created a new energy-producing industry to provide power to shops and homes. A number of new features distinguish the second industrial revolution from the first. In the Second Industrial Revolution, the state played a greater role in encouraging economic modernization; for example, by developing and operating the railroad networks, or providing financial assistance and tariff protection to industry. Another innovation was much larger and more complicated business structures. The new technique of *vertical integration* allowed owners to buy up the companies that produced the raw materials and those that distributed the finished products. Another business method was *horizontal integration*, which linked up companies in the same industry to control prices. The result was huge multinational companies. Another new change was the introduction of the department store, which began replacing the small retailer as the major distributor of goods.

D. On the Move: Emigration and Urbanization

As the great depression hit agricultural regions hard, it increased immigration from the village to the industrialized city. At first, most of the immigrants came from the surrounding countryside and eventually returned to their villages. By 1910, however, large percentages of immigrants were coming from the industrially underdeveloped regions of Europe to the more developed ones, and many were leaving Europe altogether heading to North and South America. By the 1890s, a truly global labor market had developed.

E. Growing Social Unrest

The rapid economic changes, combined with rising immigration and urbanization increased social tensions and destabilized political structures. As business owners attempted to protect their profits by cutting labor costs, the workers became increasingly hostile. In rural regions the collapse in agricultural
prices led to social and economic crises and violence. The new lower-middle class found it harder to maintain their class status and they became very hostile toward the working class. The dramatic increase in population through immigration also increased social and ethnic tensions.

II. Defining the Political Nation

In this new environment, political leaders sought to overcome social discontent and ensure loyalty.

A. Nation Making

After 1870, most European governments concluded that they needed to create a sense of national identity to overcome regional, social, and political divisions.

1. Franchise Expansion

By the end of the nineteenth century, many European states had extended the right to vote to the middle class and the working class, thus ushering in an age of mass politics in which politicians had to woo these new voters.

2. Social Reform

To win over voters from the working class (but more important, to ensure their loyalty and prevent radicalism), European governments enacted social welfare measures. For example, in Germany, Bismarck outlawed the socialist party, but enacted social welfare legislation, such as sickness benefits, accident insurance, and old-age pensions. In Britain, the Conservative Party in the 1870s enacted measures to protect and help workers, but the real foundation of Britain's welfare state was laid between 1906 and 1912, when the Liberal Party introduced sweeping social welfare measures, a direct response to the formation of a working-class Labour Party in 1906. Similar social welfare legislation was used to stem the growth of socialism in Italy.

3. Schooling the Nation

A social welfare measure that was important in forging a new national identity was the public school system. Schools taught children to read and write in the national language and taught history lessons that increased a sense of national superiority. Schools also ensured that the children participated in nationalistic rituals.

4. Inventing Traditions

Not limited to the school, nationalist rituals were based on newly invented traditions that celebrated the greatness of the country.

B. Crisis, Revolution, and Civil War: The Examples of France, Russia, and Ireland

Creating a sense of national identity and fostering national unity were both crucially important and very complex.

1. France: A Crisis of Legitimacy

Although France had long been a nation-state, there was no consensus on just what France was. Moreover, the Third Republic lacked
legitimacy because it was born of defeat, and the French political scene was dominated by a dozen parties, none of which could command a majority. The result was corruption and mediocrity, which fueled anti-republicanism. The Dreyfus Affair revealed both the depth of the lack of consensus in France and the strength of anti-republicanism. As a result, the Republic’s supporters placed the army under civilian control and rescinded the governmental privileges of the Catholic Church. By 1914, the Radical Party dominated French politics, and its opposition to social welfare programs caused workers to turn increasingly to extremism.

2. Russia: Revolution and Reaction
In Russia the tsarist regime failed to build loyalty by developing a national identity, and was promoting rapid industrialization while having no intention of accepting Western political ideas. Those who embraced Western ideologies such as liberalism and socialism were driven underground or into exile by the repressive tsarist government, but this did not stop the social unrest that was the consequence of economic change. In 1905 this discontent erupted into a revolution that forced Tsar Nicholas II to accept a representative assembly. By 1910, the tsar had regained most of his absolute power, thanks to the loyalty of his army, but the causes of deep discontent remained.

3. The Irish Identity Conflict
In Ireland, two different forms of national identity developed that led to the brink of civil war. The Catholic Irish remained poor peasants, and had a strong sense of political, economic, and religious repression at the hands of the British. The Fenian Movement in the 1860s began to agitate for political independence. By 1914 Irish Catholics had organized themselves into an armed political movement, Sinn Fein, and were determined to win independence for Ireland by any means necessary. However, Irish Protestants thought of themselves as British, and opposed a plan to grant Ireland limited autonomy. By 1914 these Unionists were also arming.

III. Broadening the Political Nation

Despite the efforts of liberal and conservative politicians to ensure support through nation making, socialist and racist-nationalist parties challenged traditional elites.

A. The Politics of the Working Class
Class hostilities escalated with the rise of working-class socialist parties and more radical forms of trade-unionism, as workers sought to define their own political vision and influence the political nation.

1. The Workers' City
The economic crisis and industrial expansion created large working-class communities in the cities. At the same time the new technologies, such as the electric tram, allowed the middle classes to move to the suburbs. The result was that the classes became increasingly separated and hostile.
2. Working-Class Socialism and the Revolutionary Problem

The period saw an increase in socialist parties.马克思's key point of class conflict appealed to workers who had already identified their boss as the enemy. In 1890, the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) was the largest political party in Germany and became the model for socialist parties in other countries. Although the rapid growth of socialist parties raised socialists' hopes for a workers' revolution, the expansion of the franchise indicated that workers could gain access to political power without revolution. Socialist revisionism abandoned the idea of revolution and instead advocated working within the existing political system to bring benefits to the working classes. Although the revisionist position was condemned by socialist party leaders, in practice they did, in fact, focus efforts on making the political system more responsive to the needs of the working class. Thus, despite middle- and upper-class fears of socialist parties, they actually helped to forestall revolution and strengthened parliamentary political systems.

3. Radical Trade Unions and the Anarchist Threat

The depression that began in 1873, however, caused many industrial workers to turn to radical trade unions. The radical trade unions were more willing to use large-scale strikes and violence. Another ideology that radicalized workers was the syndicalism, which sought to overturn the existing social and political order by using general strikes and violence. Syndicalism was influenced by anarchism, which sought not to control the state, but destroy it, and both created a climate of social unrest and political turmoil.

B. The Politics of Race and Nation

Socialism had little appeal for peasants and members of the lower-middle class; those people often turned to the right-wing ideas offered by nationalist, racist, and anti-Semitic parties. In the new mass politics, nationalist politicians relied on visual imagery, symbolism, and emotional appeals rather than reasoned debate, and defined the nation by identifying who was not included in it.

1. Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungary: The Politics of Division

Nationalist uprisings in the Balkans, which were aided by Russia, led to several Balkan nation-states becoming independent from the Ottoman Empire. The competition for power and privileges among the numerous ethnic and linguistic groups in the multinational Habsburg Empire was intensified by social and economic pressures. Language was a key battleground, with each group agitating for the primacy of its own language. In Vienna, where the Jewish population had increased rapidly, Karl Lueger was able to use anti-Semitism and promises of social reform to unite workers, middle classes, and conservatives in a coalition that elected him mayor, demonstrating the power of hate-based politics.

2. Anti-Semitism in Mass Politics

Anti-Semitism played a major role in nationalist politics, as nationalists blamed all problems on Jews, and violence against Jews
increased. This heightened anti-Semitism was linked to the increased emphasis on racial identity, the upsurge in the numbers of Jews in Western cities, and Jewish success in the new industrial economy. Nationalists saw race as determining who belonged in the state, and increasingly defined "Jewishness" racially, not religiously. Consequently, Jews came to be seen as outsiders, and this was exacerbated by the growth in immigrant Jewish urban populations after 1881. Moreover, not having gained civil and political rights until the second half of the nineteenth century, Jews were newcomers to mainstream European societies and tended to move into emerging modern economic sectors, causing them to be blamed by those who felt harmed by economic modernization.

3. Zionism: Jewish Mass Politics

As a reaction to the growing anti-Semitism, Jews under the leadership of Theodor Herzl developed their own brand of nationalism called Zionism. The movement called for establishing a Jewish state in Palestine.

IV. Outside the Political Nation? The Experience of Women

The extension of voting rights to working class men led middle-class women to demand voting rights. The feminist movement rejected the separate spheres ideology, and sought a radical change in the role of women, demanding not only access to the public sphere, but a reconfiguring of political and social life. The feminist movement remained mostly middle-class, as working-class women tended to be drawn to the socialist position that class, not gender, was the real obstacle to overcome.

A. Changes in the Position of Middle-Class Women

The role of middle-class women changed in the late nineteenth century, as they began to raise smaller families, leaving them more time for other pursuits, including political ones. Unmarried middle-class women gained new opportunities in employment, but these were not equal to the opportunities that men had. By the 1880s, the legal, political, and economic disabilities facing women in Europe and America were being challenged by an international feminist movement that consisted of a vast web of interconnected organizations, publications, and correspondence networks. This middle-class movement focused on the legal impediments of married women, employment and higher education opportunities for girls and women, the double standard of sexual conduct enshrined in European law, and national women's suffrage.

B. Women and the Law

Law codes in the early nineteenth century made wives and children dependent on husbands, giving the husband sole control over the family's property. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the feminist movement sought to improve the legal rights of married women, in particular property rights, and had its greatest success in England.

C. Finding a Place: Employment and Education

The feminist movement worked to improve and expand the educational and employment opportunities for women. Feminists sought to improve girls'
secondary schooling and to open universities to women. France introduced state-funded secondary education for girls in the 1880s, but girls did not get a university-preparatory curriculum, so few of them could enter French universities. By 1880, American women made up one-third of all higher-education students in the United States, but women were not allowed to enter German universities as full-time students until 1901. However, by the early twentieth century, women had begun to be employed as doctors, lawyers, and university faculty.

D. No More Angels

The women’s campaign to win rights and expand their opportunities helped them move into the public sphere. However, the feminist campaign to end the double standard of sexual conduct was more challenging to European society and proved much harder to achieve. Attempts to eradicate the double standard included attacking legislation on prostitution that criminalized the women only and pushing for legislation to solve the problem of heavy male drinking, a problem that was viewed as the reason why women suffered violence and poverty. In general, these moral reform campaigns gained little success and the sexual double standard remained entrenched.

E. The Fight for Women’s Suffrage

The slow progress in attaining their legal and moral goals convinced feminists that they needed the right to vote. In Britain, the National Society for Women’s Suffrage was founded in 1867, and over the next thirty years similar suffrage societies emerged in Europe and the United States, but they had little success. Before 1914 only Finland and Norway gave women the right to vote. The dramatic changes caused by World War I brought the right to vote to women in Russia, the United States, Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, and Austria. French and Italian women had to wait until after World War II. Several obstacles made progress slow. In Catholic countries, the Church remained opposed to women's suffrage, and Catholic women found many opportunities for emotional expression and intellectual satisfaction in their religion, which made feminism less appealing. In central and eastern Europe, economic underdevelopment meant that the middle class base of feminism was too small for much progress. Britain, in contrast, had a large middle class and an adaptable political structure, and as a result developed the strongest women’s suffrage movement in Europe, yet failed to win women the vote in the nineteenth century. The slow results led some English feminists to begin using radical tactics. Suffragettes interrupted political meetings, chained themselves to the steps of Parliament, broke windows, and burned churches. Once in jail they engaged in hunger strikes. The violence of the suffragettes was a direct assault on the ideal of the passive, domesticated woman, and resulted in brutal repression, including forced feedings in prison.

V. Conclusion: The West in an Age of Mass Politics

The period from 1870 to 1914 saw many encounters, often violent, between those who desired access to political power and those who wanted to limit that access. There were other encounters caused by changing patterns of industrialization and accelerated urbanization, and all of these led to key questions about the definition of "the West."
ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. The film *My Father’s Glory (La Gloire de mon pere)* (1990) is a charming story of a young boy and his teacher father in the France of the Third Republic which touches on many of the historical themes of the period. Available on VHS and DVD.

2. The textbook provides the dates women were granted suffrage in most Western countries. Expand upon this information by asking students to research and determine which country in the world granted this right earliest, which has been the most recent, and which country or countries continues to deny this right. (Two helpful Web sites are: [http://www2.worldbook.com/features/whm/html/whm010.html](http://www2.worldbook.com/features/whm/html/whm010.html) and [http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/suffrage.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/suffrage.htm).)

3. Have students conduct research on Yiddish and its development. What makes Yiddish unique among languages? What can we learn about Jewish history from studying the development of this language?

4. This period saw the flowering of one of the most revolutionary and important styles of art: impressionism. Have students examine the works of such artists as Renoir, Monet, and Manet, relating them to late-nineteenth century culture and society.

5. Have students find examples of men’s and women’s clothing styles from the late eighteenth century and the late nineteenth century. What changes did fashion undergo from the late nineteenth to the late twentieth century? What might this imply about continuing changes in society?

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. What were the similarities, and the differences, between anti-Semitism in Europe and racism in the United States in this period?

2. How was the Second Industrial Revolution different from the First Industrial Revolution?

3. What role did religion (especially the Catholic Church) play in the political crises in Germany, Italy, and France in the thirty years before World War I?

4. Compare the mass political movements of the left (socialist, syndicalist, anarchist) with those of the right (nationalist, racist, anti-Semitic). To whom did each movement appeal? What were their methods? What (and where) were their biggest successes and failures?

5. What role did immigration play in the transformation of European economies and mass politics?
CASE STUDIES

1. The textbook details the Dreyfus Affair. Ask students to conduct Internet research on anti-Semitism in France today. (The BBC archive at www.bbc.co.uk is a good source, and much of the literature on Jean-Marie LePen and the National Front contains links to other sources.) Is French anti-Semitism still tied to nationalism?

2. Have students conduct research on the British and American women’s suffrage movements. Ask them to compare their leadership, tactics, the obstacles they faced, and their successes and failures. Were there tangible connections between the two movements?

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. Emma Goldman’s *Anarchism and Other Essays* is a collection of short essays on various topics by the well-known anarchist. Many will spark classroom debate. The Dover Publications edition is very affordable.

2. For more on the creation of the Pale of Settlement, as well as the May Laws of 1882 and other restrictions placed upon Russian Jews, see http://www.jewishgates.com/linkedindex.asp?folder_id=44.


5. PBS’s Frontline program, *Behind the Mask: The IRA and Sinn Fein*, is an outstanding in-depth look at Northern Ireland. The companion Web site is as good as the program and is found at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ira/.

6. A Web site providing information on the struggle for women’s suffrage in Great Britain is www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/resource.htm.

7. An interesting BBC site on industrialization is found at http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/society_culture/industrialisation/victorian_technology_01.shtml. The site includes links to specific people and scientific and technological achievements from the Victorian age.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

* discuss how the scientific developments during this period led to greater intellectual and cultural optimism and also greater anxiety.
* explain the factors that led many Europeans in this period to believe there was a cultural crisis.
* describe the causes and consequences of the new imperialist ideology for both the West and the non-Western world.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* This era was one of internal fragmentation and external expansion, as the explorations of Western artists and scientists challenged social and intellectual norms even as Westerners explored and subjugated other parts of the world.
* These scientific, artistic, and physical explorations redefined the West and its relationship to the rest of the world.
* States such as Russia and Japan consciously sought to Westernize, while areas of white European settlement moved more firmly inside Western boundaries.
* The association of “the West” with “white” marginalized non-white peoples.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Scientific Transformations

In the last third of the nineteenth century, scientific transformation improved Westerners’ health and hygiene, but also caused both the human body and the wider universe to be encountered in new ways. Although some people believed these changes were proof of the West’s superiority, others found them very unsettling.

A. Medicine and Microbes

The scientific discoveries in the second half of the nineteenth century changed the practice of medicine. Urban epidemics focused attention on the relationship between overcrowding, polluted water, and disease, leading to the construction of modern water and sewer systems. In the 1860s, scientists began to develop germ theory, as Louis Pasteur discovered that bacteria were the source of contagion in epidemic diseases and Robert Koch isolated the tuberculosis bacillus and the cholera bacteria. The result was a drop in the number of people who died from infectious diseases, while the development of antiseptic and anesthetics improved the survival rate after surgery. These medical advances convinced
Europeans that the conquest of nature through science would make them healthier, but also increased anxiety as people became aware of living in a world with invisible, but potentially deadly, organisms.

B. The Triumph of Evolutionary Science

The development of evolutionary theory gave Europeans a scientific framework to justify their superior social and economic positions, but challenged basic religious beliefs and presented a new, unsettling view of the natural world. Geology had already provided a challenge to the Biblical account of creation when Charles Darwin proposed in 1859 that the variety of plant and animal species could be explained by the two basic ideas of variation – that there occur small but crucial biological advantages that assist in survival – and natural selection – that those with such advantages survive while those without perish. The development of genetics supported Darwin by explaining both the mechanism for evolutionary change and its gradualness. This established the process by which new species evolve, a process in which Darwin firmly placed humanity itself. Many Christians were appalled by the implications of Darwin’s ideas, although others argued evolution did not abolish divine purpose from the universe. Other Europeans thought Darwin’s theory was scientific confirmation of the value of competition and the inevitability of progress.

C. Social Darwinism and Racial Hierarchies

Herbert Spencer tied evolution to social progress, arguing that human society reflected the same trends as plant and animal life. The theory of Social Darwinism maintained that the non-white races – and all women -- had not “evolved” as far as white European males. Evolutionary theory was thus used to “prove” the deeply held cultural assumptions of Westerners, but also undermined Western confidence by blurring the boundary between humans and animals.

D. The Revolution in Physics

Between 1890 and 1910 a series of discoveries in physics challenged how humans viewed the universe. The discovery of X-ray changed the assumption about the solidity of matter. Marie Curie discovered radium, which did not have a constant atomic weight, and Max Planck theorized that heated bodies radiated energy in irregular clumps called quanta. Finally, Albert Einstein introduced the theory of relativity, arguing that time and space shift in relation to the position of the observer, meaning that matter itself shifts. These discoveries mark the point when much science became incomprehensible even to most educated people, and challenged nineteenth-century assumptions by presenting a vision of the universe, in which what you see is the product of subjective perception.

E. Social Thought: The Revolt Against Positivism

Social scientists who emphasized the role of nonrational factors in human behavior began to challenge the positivist belief that applying scientific methods to the study of human affairs would guarantee progress. Gustave LeBon created the field of collective psychology by demonstrating that crowd behavior could be influenced by appeals to emotion. Hoping to understand human behavior and treat mental illness, Sigmund Freud argued for the role of the subconscious in shaping individual conduct, but Freudian psychology convinced many people not that the irrational unconscious could be discovered and controlled, but that the irrational was in control.
II. Cultural Crisis: The Fin-de-Siècle and the Birth of Modernism

The fin-de-siècle cultural crisis was rooted in a sense of degeneration and decline, which produced a sense of cultural pessimism and a conviction that the old answers were no longer sufficient. The search for new answers produced modernism, a series of revolutions in thought, literature, and art.

A. The Fin-de-Siècle

Lamarck’s idea of the “inheritance of acquired characteristics” fostered fears that the conditions of industrial working life were producing degenerate characteristics among the working classes that would be transmitted to the next generations, causing Western civilization’s evolutionary ascent to go into reverse. The sense that Western civilization was in decline was reflected in literature. Emile Zola chronicled the decline of a family as symbolic of the decay of France, while Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Dracula showed the primitive irrational beast lurking beneath the civilized exterior. Friedrich Nietzsche viewed people as enfeebled by social constraint, Christianity, and rationalism to the point that they had been deprived of the emotional and instinctive aspects of human nature. He proclaimed to the world that God was dead and therefore there were no more restraints on human behavior. His ideas became popular in Germany and Austria in the 1890s and early 1900s.

B. Tightening Gender Boundaries

The fear of degeneration also increased the efforts to define appropriate male and female behavior. Homosexuals were now condemned as threats to the social order, as an emphasis in viewing homosexuality shifted from a focus on homosexuals’ immoral actions to identifying them as members of an abnormal and dangerous group, a shift in view reflected in increased legal penalties for homosexuality. At the same time the new science of sexuality made important discoveries about the sexual physiology of humans, including the process of human reproduction, which reinforced concerns about sexual practice. Western scientists sought to define “normal” sexual behavior, rejecting not only homosexuality but masturbation and frequent sexual intercourse. Others argued that female physiology incapacitated women for public life. The concern over appropriate sexual boundaries also appeared in the arts, where the female was depicted as dangerous.

C. The Birth of Modernism

Modernism in art and literature centered on the notion of rejecting established authority and questioning all accepted standards and truths, in particular middle-class liberal ones. Modernists rejected the notion that art should be an instrument of moral uplift, and instead argued it should be a value in itself. Modernists also insisted history was irrelevant and rejected faith in the power of human reason and observation, emphasizing individual emotion and experience. New musical styles such as ragtime and the works of Igor Stravinsky and Arnold Schoenberg used unexpected rhythms and rapid tempo changes. In art, painters such as Pablo Picasso juxtaposed different perspectives in the style called Cubism, while Expressionist painters like Wassily Kandinsky argued that art
should express the artist’s interior emotions and produced the first abstract paintings in Western art. Most middle-class people rejected these new forms of art.

D. Popular Religion and Secularization

Religious belief remained a powerful force in the late nineteenth century, reinforced by the large numbers of immigrants using religion as a tie to their homeland, the link between religion and nationalism in many areas, and imperialism interwoven with missionary efforts. However, Christianity in late nineteenth-century Europe was challenged from several sources. Among these were intellectual challenges derived from the scientific and medical discoveries, as well as the emergence of the social sciences. In response to these challenges, some Christians rejected science and others sought to accommodate it. The Roman Catholic Church's alliance with conservatism made it vulnerable to challenges from liberalism and socialism. But the most significant challenge to Christianity came from the growth of new, secular sources of entertainment, inspiration, and desire, such as spectator sports and material abundance.

III. The New Imperialism

Imperialist domination reassured Europeans of the superiority of Western civilization. Moreover, the conquest of other peoples was justified by Social Darwinism.

A. Understanding the New Imperialism

Imperialism itself was not new to Europe, which had extended its control over the Americas and African and Indian coastal ports in the fifteenth century and expanded its colonial empires in Asia and the Americas in the seventeenth century. But after 1870 Europe expanded into non-European territories with unprecedented aggression.

1. Technology, Economics, and Politics

A major reason for the new expansionism was economics. The technologies of the Second Industrial Revolution depended on raw materials that were available only in Asia, Africa, or South America. Also, the need for new markets in the face of the Great Depression of 1873 pushed expansionism, as did a boom in global investment in the 1890s. Lastly, political pressure in the age of mass politics contributed to imperialist expansion, which was popular with the lower classes as well as the elite, and imperialist national glory was a way to unify a national population as well as gain international power and prestige.

2. The Imperial Idea

New imperialism was a belief system whose core idea was the rightness of white European dominance over the world. Key factors shaping this idea included the perceived link between Western Christianity and civilization, with missionary groups agitating for Western territorial expansion to spread their message. European technological supremacy was also considered proof of European material and moral supremacy, and a justification for imperial rule. Social Darwinism gave scientific authority to imperialism by supposedly proving the superiority of white Europeans.
Some Europeans, however, rejected both the imperialist mission and its assumption of Western superiority. This group included artists and those who felt European countries should concentrate on domestic affairs.

B. The Scramble for Africa

New imperialism reached its zenith in Africa. In 1875, Europeans held 11% of Africa; by 1905, it was 90%.

1. Overcoming the Obstacles

For centuries, Europeans had traded with Africa for gold and slaves, but had not attempted to conquer it because of the climate, disease, and African resistance. Until the late nineteenth century, Africa was known as “the white men’s grave” because of the hot climate and heavy rainfall, as well as such diseases as malaria and sleeping sickness. Then, in the 1830s European explorers changed the West's vision of Africa as they revealed that continent’s natural and human resources. At the same time, the suppression of the slave trade severely disrupted and weakened African states, while the development of the steamship, quinine, and the repeating, breech-loading rifle enabled Europeans to penetrate and survive the African interior. The new rifles, which functioned well in damp weather, gave Europeans a huge military advantage.

2. Slicing the Cake: The Conquest of Africa

After 1870, Europeans began to carve up Africa, starting with King Leopold of Belgium whose claims to the Congo raised controversy in Europe. The Berlin Conference in 1884 agreed to Leopold’s claims and established the terms for other European states to make their own claims on Africa. King Leopold’s policies in the Congo caused an estimated three million Africans to die from forced labor, brutal punishments, starvation, and disease. In 1908 international outcry against the abuses forced the Belgian government to take control of the Congo, but the exploitation continued there and in other parts of Africa under European rule. When the Herero tribe rebelled against German colonial control, every member was forced into the desert to die of thirst.

3. African Resistance

Africans frequently resisted European encroachment, but only Ethiopia was successful, thanks to modernizing efforts by the Ethiopian government. African resistance could not overcome the technological advantage that Europeans had, and even when African leaders were able to obtain modern weaponry, they did not adopt new tactics to take advantage of their new technology. Moreover, even leaders like Samori Ture of West Africa, who had acquired modern weapons and adopted new tactics, were eventually overwhelmed by the weight of European imperialism.

C. Asian Encounters

Unlike Africa, many Asian states were already part of the Western economic network by 1870. Mercantilist empires had been established in the Pacific by several European powers in the eighteenth century, but the strategic importance of Pacific islands, new industrial processes that increased the value of
this region, anxiety about imperialist competition in Asia, and the erosion of Chinese political stability accelerated the pace in imperialism there after 1870.

1. Expanding the West: The United States and Australia
   Beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century, the United States joined in imperialist expansion in Asia, and by that century’s end had acquired Hawaii, part of Samoa, the Philippines, Guam, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. Imperialist expansion also included the takeover of Australia. Britain had originally used Australia as a dumping ground for criminals. But the expansion of the wool industry attracted large numbers of settlers to Australia. An initial policy of extermination of the native people of Australia, the Aborigines, was replaced with a policy of forced Christianization and assimilation as Aboriginal children were removed from their parents and educated in mission stations. At the end of the nineteenth century, this gave way to the new policy of “protection,” which made the Aborigines wards of the state who were required to live on reservations. The determination to make Australia primarily white also caused Australians to severely restrict Chinese immigration. In 1901, Australia became a self-governing commonwealth; an outpost of white, Western civilization in the East.

2. The Continued Expansion of the Russian Empire
   Russia continued and intensified its colonization of Siberia, with devastating results for the indigenous Siberians. Russia also expanded its control southward into Asia, increasingly encroaching on Chinese territory, which not only helped destabilize China but led to a war with Japan, which Japan won.

3. Japanese Industrial and Imperial Expansion
   Japan’s victory over Russia in 1906 demonstrated how quickly it had become a global and imperialist power since its opening to the West in 1853. After the tumult that resulted from that event, Japan began modernizing along Western lines. It developed a modern industrial and military system, as well as a modern centralized political system. By the 1890s, Japan was a formidable military force and began to engage in imperialism, particularly in China.

4. Scrambling in China
   China proved less successful than Japan in dealing with the West. Throughout the nineteenth century, Chinese sovereignty and independence eroded under pressure from Europe, the United States, and Japan, all of whom wanted access to China’s markets and resources. After China’s defeat in the Sino-Japanese War, the Western powers began a drive to create spheres of influence in China. Opposition to Western dominance produced the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, which was crushed by the West, who then required China to pay a large indemnity. The fatally weakened the Chinese government fell to a revolution in 1911, leading to four decades of tumult.
5. A Glimpse of Things to Come: The Boer War

At the end of the nineteenth century, the British found themselves involved in a bloody war that challenged the vision and self-confidence of the imperialists. The Boer War was the culmination of a century of conflict in South Africa between the British imperialists, the Dutch settlers, and the native Africans. The British in the Cape Colony became fearful that the Boers would work with the Germans to limit British expansion. When gold and diamonds were discovered in the Boer Republic of Transvaal, British investors pressed the government to put the Boer republics under British rule. War broke out in 1899, and the Boers proved to be skilled fighters who made effective use of guerilla warfare tactics. By 1901 the war had stalemated. The British then began burning Boer farms to the ground and confining Boer women, children, and their African servants in concentration camps. Disease decimated the Boers and blacks in the camps. The Boers were defeated in 1902. In 1910 the British granted self-rule to South Africa, and the Boers, now called Afrikaners, as the dominant white group created a society based on segregation. The military and humanitarian reputation of the British was tarnished by their actions in the Boer Wars. The opposition to the war at home showed that support for imperialism could erode quickly. The Boer War was an ominous opening for the twentieth century during which the use of concentration camps for civilians became common.

IV. Conclusion: Reshaping the West: Expansion and Fragmentation

The Western cultural and intellectual landscape, as well as colonial political boundaries, underwent tremendous, disturbing change between 1870 and 1914. Science and medicine undermined established assumptions, as did modernism and the redefining of sexual boundaries. Thus, this was an era of fragmentation as well as expansion.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Have students listen to recordings of Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring* and Schoenberg’s *Five Orchestral Pieces*. Ask them to compare them with popular works by earlier composers, such as Beethoven, Bach, or Brahms.

2. The text details the conquest of the Congo by Belgium under Leopold II. Have students research the conquest of another African area by a European power (such as Dahomey by the French). Have them write a short paper on the ways in which theories of Social Darwinism influenced these types of conquest.

3. Ask students to research and write a short paper on teaching evolution in today’s schools. Do anti-evolutionists still perceive the same threats as Darwin’s early critics? Is this strictly an American struggle (between evolution and creation)? A visit to http://www.cnn.com/2000/NATURE/09/21/evolution.enn/index.html would be a good place to start.
4. Ask students to research the history of racial classifications. When did the system begin? What role did science play? What traits were associated with the different races? What were the short- and long-term implications of racial classification?

5. Ask students to assemble an electronic portfolio of modernist works from the period before 1914. Include works of art, writings, music, etc. Ask them to write a short essay to accompany the portfolio describing what traits unify these works.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Why was there a perceived need for the “new” imperialism?

2. What made the “conquest” of Africa possible and how does that compare with the “conquest” in Asia?

3. Why was Japan able to adapt and resist the West, and China was not?

4. What new ideas, people, or theories threatened the Western social and cultural status quo as the nineteenth century drew to a close?

5. Given its history as a former colony, why did the United States become an imperialist power?

CASE STUDIES

1. The text details the trial of Oscar Wilde. In some ways, public acceptance of homosexuality seems to be growing today. But what about the legal status of homosexuals and homosexual couples? Ask students to conduct research on the legal status of issues such as gay marriage in the United States and the rest of the world. Which countries have the most liberal policies? Which have the most restrictive? Which groups are most opposed to gay marriage?

2. The text mentions the rise of spectator sports, such as professional soccer. Ask students to research American baseball and examine its cultural and societal implications. A good place to begin research is at PBS’s Web site for Ken Burns’s film on baseball at http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/baseball/. There is an impressive list of print and electronic resources, and the film itself is a wonderful source.

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. For more on the continuing controversy over the teaching of evolution in U.S. schools in recent years, go to CNN’s site at http://www.cnn.com/2000/NATURE/09/21/evolution.enn/index.html. There are links to specific cases.
2. A BBC Web site that details the development of modern medicine in this era is http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/discovery/medicine/victorian_medicine_01.shtml.

3. An art history professor at Sweet Briar College, Dr. Christopher L.C.E. Witcombe, has an outstanding Web site on modernism, complete with photographs, at http://witcombe.sbc.edu/modernism/.

4. The PBS Masterpiece Theatre multi-volume series _Bramwell_ follows the life of a female doctor in Victorian England. For more information, go to http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/schedule/index.html. The entire series is available on VHS.

5. Michigan State University’s site _Exploring Africa_ contains a particularly useful module on African resistance from 1870-1914. It is found at http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/curriculum/lm7/B/stu_7Bactivityfour.html. There are several other modules available, as well.


CHAPTER 24

*The First World War*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* identify the factors that led to the outbreak of World War I.
* describe when, where, and how the Allies defeated the Central Powers.
* discuss the war’s impact on the home front.
* explain the consequences of the war for the European and the global, social, political, and international order.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* The Industrial Revolution meant not only that the casualty rate of World War I was unprecedented, but that this was a total war, which caused nations to mobilize their economies, as well as their armies, and made no distinction between civilian and soldier.
* The First World War challenged many of Western culture’s core assumptions.
* World War I unleashed both democratic and anti-democratic forces.
* The First World War reshaped the political structures of Europe by shattering authoritarian empires, integrating the United States more fully into European affairs, and intensifying ethnic and nationalist conflicts.
* The First World War led to a communist regime in Russia, and undermined many of the economic structures of Western stability and prosperity.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. The Origins of the First World War

The trigger that started World War I was the assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, on June 28, 1914, by Serbian terrorists. A month later, Austria declared war on Serbia and in a week Europe was engulfed in a war that by 1918 had become a world war. Four interlocking factors caused the war: eastern European nationalism, the creation of rival alliance systems, the requirements of an industrialized military, and the growing belief among both leaders and ordinary people that war would solve social and cultural problems.

A. Nationalism in Eastern Europe: Austria-Hungary and the Problem of Serbia

One of the main causes of World War I was nationalistic conflict in Eastern Europe. Officials of the multiethnic Habsburg Empire felt threatened by the Serbian nationalists’ aspirations to create a greater Serbia, and in the aftermath of the archduke’s assassination, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.
B. International Competition and Rival Alliance Systems

The war between Serbia and Austria-Hungary turned into a European-wide war largely because of the alliance systems established in the previous decades. The creation of Germany and Italy destabilized Europe, so governments sought allies. The Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy Triple Alliance, formed in 1882, gave rise to an alliance between France and Russia in 1894. Meanwhile, Germany’s efforts to expand its imperial and naval might led Britain to make economic, imperial, and military agreements with France and Russia. These agreements made possible the formation of the Triple Entente among France, Russia, and Britain. Thus, by the beginning of the twentieth century, Europe was divided into two opposing camps. Germany gave Austria its full support in declaring war on Serbia, even at the risk of war with Russia, who saw itself as Serbia’s protector of the Slavs.

C. Mobilization Plans and the Industrialized Military

Neither Russia nor Britain was required by their alliances to go to war. Why and when they did so is explained by the demands of an industrialized military. In the preceding decades, military planning had fully incorporated the railroad, which allowed troops to be mobilized and put in place very quickly. Since the enemy could also mobilize quickly, and the advantage of making the first strike could be easily lost, once a nation mobilized, the momentum toward war was almost unstoppable. Because of the alliance between Russia and France, Germany’s Schlieffen Plan required fast mobilization against France and an attack through Belgium to defeat France and then turn around to face the more slowly mobilizing Russian forces in the east. When the Russian government ordered mobilization, Germany declared war. Germany proceeded to invade Belgium, which brought Britain into the war as the guarantor of Belgian neutrality.

D. The Will to War

Another key factor in the road to war was the pressure of public opinion. The popular press had involved the masses in foreign affairs by presenting foreign affairs news as a drama of “us versus them.” In large cities, pro-war crowds made up of the middle class gathered in support of war. For those who feared racial degeneration and gender confusion, war was seen as a chance to reassert male virility and superiority. It offered men the chance to move beyond the restrictions of their lives. For political leaders facing aggressive unions and socialist movements, war was seen as unifying the population. Most people expected the war to be short and the soldiers to be home by Christmas.

II. The Experience of Total War

This war transformed Europe even as it spread beyond European boundaries.

A. The Western Front: Stalemate in the Trenches

Following a modified version of the Schleifen Plan, the German troops advanced into France and seemed poised to take Paris by the first week of September. French and British forces stopped the German advance at the Battle of the Marne, saving Paris, but were unable to push the Germans out of France. For
the next four years, Germans faced the British and French troops along miles of trenches stretching from the Swiss border to the Belgium coast.

1. The Troglodyte War

The experience of the trenches was summed up by one historian as the “troglodyte war” where both sides found themselves confined to underground dwellings. For four years, men stood in a muddy ditch 3- to 4-feet wide and 7- to 8-feet deep, reinforced by sandbags and barbed wire. The trenches zigzagged at sharp angles to limit the range of fire, which also ensured that everywhere a soldier looked he saw mud. Between the lines was no-man’s land, pocketed by deep craters from the shelling and littered with the decomposing corpses of the dead. In 1915 a new deadly weapon, poison gas, was introduced, which blinded, blistered skin, and caused death by asphyxiation. During 1915, an average of 300 British men became casualties every day.

2. The Offensives

Throughout the war, offense remained the main strategy on both sides, as the casualties mounted and neither side gained any ground. Each offensive began with a massive artillery bombardment followed by the advancement of men against the no-man’s land to enemy lines only to be mowed down by the enemy’s machine guns.

3. A Modernist War

In the trenches, soldiers experienced a new reality that confirmed perceptions of the world presented by the modernist artists before the war: fragmentation, an emphasis on the isolation and incommunicability of individual perception, and surprising juxtapositions. Soldiers soon questioned accepted truths, mistrusted the past, and doubted human reason, like modernist artists. The war changed modernism, however, as artists abandoned the notion that art carried no message and began to use the canvas to convey the horrors of war. The mechanical nature of the war turned soldiers into interchangeable parts in the war machine.

B. The War in Eastern Europe

The war in Eastern Europe was one of movement as massive armies surged back and forth.

1. The Eastern Front: A War of Movement

Russian troops made surprising advances into Germany and Austria and were then chased deep into Russian territory. For the next two years, the pattern of Russian advance and retreat continued, revealing the inability of the Russian government and economy to wage total war. Defeated and demoralized, the Russian soldiers started deserting in ever-larger numbers, as discontent at home led to revolution. The revolutionaries, the Bolsheviks, withdrew Russia from the war and in March of 1918 signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, surrendering Russia’s western territories to Germany. Because of the large numbers of troops needed to hold these territories, Germany did not benefit as much as expected.
2. The Forgotten Front: The Balkans

For the Balkans, World War I was the third war in three years. Bulgaria joined the Central Powers. Romania joined the allies in 1916 and was quickly crushed by the troops of Germany and Austria-Hungary. In the first year of the war Austria-Hungary fought Serbia with little success, but in 1915 the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria joined Austria-Hungary on a joint invasion and Serbia was defeated and occupied. The brutal occupation cost the lives of 25% of the Serbian citizens.

C. The World at War

Because of the imperialist expansion of the late nineteenth century, the war became a world war. The British colonies and dependencies supplied 40% of British troops. Portugal joined the war to expand its holdings in Africa, while Japan seized German possessions in China. The Middle East became an important battleground after the Ottoman Empire joined the war on the side of the Central Powers. The British allied with Arab nationalists, and by 1917 had gained the Arabian peninsula, Sinai, and Jerusalem.

1. The War at Sea and the Entry of the United States

At sea, the British Navy had blockaded Germany and its allies, and the consequent food shortages caused riots in Germany. Desperate for a quick win, Germany adopted a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare in 1917. Other factors also helped to bring the United States into the war, including news of the withdrawal of Russia from the war, which meant the United States would not be allying with a repressive monarch; the growing economic importance of American trade with the Allies; and anti-German sentiment among Americans that was inflamed by stories about German atrocities in Belgium and the revelation of the Zimmermann telegram. The United States declared war on Germany in April 1917. Although American troops did not arrive in France until 1918, American entrance into the war provided a psychological boost for the Allies.

2. Back in Motion: The Western Front in 1918

In March 1918, before American troops had a chance to arrive, the Germans broke through the lines in surprise attacks and advanced to within 50 miles of Paris. The German military commanders had finally figured out plans of advance that worked in industrialized warfare, but their final offensive drive failed because it overstrained manpower and supply lines. The Allies quickly adopted the same new offensive strategies, and also made the first effective use of tanks. The Allies were also now reinforced with fresh American troops. The Ottoman, Bulgarian, and Austrian armies had collapsed by the end of October, and Germany signed an armistice on November 11, 1918.

III. The Home Fronts

The term “home front” was coined to highlight the fact that civilians at home fought this war, as well. Total war recast -- and even revolutionized -- the economic, political, social, and gender relations of combatant nations.
A. Industrial War

As the first industrial war, World War I required that economies be mobilized to supply the machine guns, poison gas, canned food, and uniforms that helped shape this distinctive style of war. Industrialization also made it possible for governments to deploy vast masses of men. It became clear that the war would be won in the factories, as well as on the front lines.

1. The Expansion of the State

At first the governments did not realize the role that would be played by industrial labor, but by 1915 governments on both sides began assuming power to requisition supplies, limit profits, dictate wages, and prevent workers from leaving their jobs.

2. The Politics of Total War

The war needs enhanced the position of the working class, as socialists and union leaders gained more influence in coalition governments. Despite a rise in the number of strikes in Britain and France in 1916 and 1917, and the emergence of war governments in those countries that were committed to total victory, political leaders realized they had to have public support. This support was cultivated in Britain and France by depicting the war as a struggle for democracy. Also, realizing that basic civilian needs had to be met to maintain morale, governments intervened regularly in the economy to ensure that happened, resulting in higher living standards for workers. German industry worked with the military to supply the war effort, resulting in huge profits for the industrialists, while workers suffered inflation and food shortages. By 1918, Germans were starving and industrial unrest was peaking, placing Germany on the brink of revolution.

B. The World Turned Upside Down

The war changed relations between the social classes and the sexes.

1. The War's Impact on Social Relations

In the battlefield the war had a leveling effect. Men from all classes found themselves side by side in the trenches and in battle. On the home front inflation eroded the savings of the middle class and left them desperate to maintain their social and economic position. The French and British working class, however, received higher wages and benefits. The result was hostility between the working class pushing for a bigger share of the economic pie and the middle class trying the preserve their share.

2. The War's Impact on Gender Relations

With the men at the front, women were employed in a wide variety of jobs, even dangerous jobs in the munitions factories or as ambulance drivers at the front. However, most women continued to work as domestic servants, and those women working in factories were paid much less than the men. Yet women’s war efforts validated their claim to full citizenship and many women, especially middle class ones, found their wartime experience liberating, as the war smashed many of the boundaries that had confined women. In a rather ironic turn of events, the men who had gone to war to be heroes were rendered powerless and immobile in the trenches.
while women were in charge and on the move, a total reversal of the usual
gender roles. Many of the more radical gender changes ended with the
war, but women continued to express a new freedom in their dress and
behavior, and many women finally gained the vote.

C. Identifying the Enemy: From Propaganda to Genocide

To ensure loyalty, governments regulated ideas, eliminating those
they viewed as dangerous and creating ideas through propaganda, which
emerged as a crucial political tool. Fostering a total war mentality meant
not only fostering love for one's own country, but hatred for the enemy. In
eastern Europe, this led to the shooting of ethnic groups thought to be
sympathetic to the enemy, and the mass deportation and slaughter of
Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.

IV. War and Revolution

Total war tore apart the social and political fabric of Europe and gave
revolutionaries the opportunity to attempt to create a new Europe.

A. The Russian Revolutions

In Russia, Tsar Nicholas II assumed command of the army at the front,
while his government disintegrated at home.

1. The March Revolution

Inept political leadership, high war casualties, and the
breakdown of economic and communication networks led people to
wonder not if but when the regime would fall.

In March 1917 the tsarist government was overthrown. Two
centers of power emerged in its place: the Provisional Government, led by
liberals from the Russian parliament, and the soviets, or councils of
workers and soldiers full of revolutionary socialists. The Petrograd Soviet
soon rivaled the Provisional Government. This revolution originated with
the Russian people who demanded land, bread, and peace. The Provisional
Government could not satisfy these demands, and became increasingly
unpopular.

2. The November Revolution

In November 1917 a second revolution by the Bolsheviks, led by
Vladimir Lenin, overthrew the Provisional Government. The Bolsheviks
proclaimed a policy of immediate land partition and immediate peace,
which resulted in the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in March
1918, which ended Russia’s war with Germany. For the next two years the
Bolsheviks fought a brutal civil war to hold on to power.

B. The Spreading Revolution

The victory of the Bolsheviks inspired socialists around the world,
resulting in strikes, riots, and attempted revolutions, of which the most important
was the attempted communist revolution in Germany.

C. The Failure of Wilson's Revolution

As the representatives of the powers gathered in Paris to write the peace
treaties ending the war, they hoped to do no less than create both a new Europe
and a new model for international affairs. The U.S. President Woodrow Wilson offered a vision for the future based on national self-determination. Another key feature was a democratic Germany. The new world order was to be organized around a League of Nations to resolve international disputes. Thus, World War I would be “the war to end all wars.”

1. The Treaty of Versailles and German Democracy

France’s chief concern was to ensure that Germany could never again threaten France. This was the main objective of the Treaty of Versailles that was signed between Germany and the Allies. Under the Versailles Treaty, Germany lost 13% of its territory, all of its colonies, 10% of its population, and the ability to make war because it was limited to only a defensive army. The Rhineland was demilitarized and the Saar region ceded to France for 15 years. The treaty also declared that Germany had caused the war and imposed a 132 billion mark reparation payment to the Allies.

2. The Failure of National Self-Determination

In central and eastern Europe, the old empires were replaced by new nation-states: Poland and Czechoslovakia became independent, and Romania, Greece, and Italy expanded, while Serbia became the heart of the new Yugoslavia. Yet this was not a victory for self-determination, because 30 million people remained as minorities in the eastern European states, setting up a volatile situation.

3. The Limits of the League

The League of Nations was also a failure because three of the major powers (Germany, the Soviet Union, and the United States) were not members. Germany and the Soviet Union were excluded and the United States refused to join. In addition, the League had no military power to enforce its decisions and the will to make the league work was lacking. European leaders used the League of Nations to pursue more traditional foreign policy, such as enforcing the provisions of the Versailles Treaty on Germany.

D. The Making of the Modern Middle East

The map of the Middle East was redrawn and new states emerged but it was not the end of European dominance in that region. The reconfiguration of the Middle East failed to provide long-lasting stability because the new map, by breaking promises made in indigenous groups, created mistrust and resentment. Moreover, the new states reflected the wishes and needs of the Allied victors, not the inhabitants themselves, and continued Western supervision led to Western practices and concepts destabilizing regional social and economic structures. Iraq, which erupted into full-scale rebellion in 1920, is a good example of this process. The Middle East was further destabilized by events in Palestine, an area many Arabs believed the British had promised to include in a postwar independent Arab state. At the same time, however, the British promised in the Balfour declaration support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, a conflicting pledge that set the stage for later disaster.
V. Conclusion: The War and the West

Nationalism, international competition, and the belief that war was the solution to political divisions and cultural fears helped spark World War I, which quickly escaped the control of European leaders as total war transformed political, economic, and social structures. The First World War also changed the idea of “the West,” solidifying the inclusion of both the United States and imperial territories while presenting the challenge of a communist regime in Russia. The destruction and carnage of World War I, followed by starvation and an influenza epidemic, caused many Europeans to lose faith in the idea of Western progress, yet the war also fostered hopes that a better world could be constructed out of the ashes of the old.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. On a blank world map, have students identify when each major country entered the war and alliances (or other factors) that triggered that entrance.

2. Have students research and compare posters from various countries during World War I (American, British, and French are readily available on the Internet). Ask the students to write a short description of each, including the imagery used, the intended audience, the method of persuasion (that is, guilt, patriotism, etc.), and an overall comparison of techniques.

3. Have students research and map Russian concessions in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany.

4. Ask students to research World War I memorials and write a short paper on common themes and symbolism. How do these memorials compare with more recent U.S. memorials, such as the Vietnam and Korean War memorials in Washington, D.C.?

5. Have students research the League of Nations to determine which countries joined, when they joined, which countries left, when they left, and why. What can this tell us about the changing international situation in the interwar years?

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. How did the Eastern Front compare with the Western Front?

2. How did entry of the United States affect the war?

3. Why did the experience of the war come to be seen as a failure of Western values?

4. What – if anything – might the Russian Provisional Government have done differently to prevent the Bolshevik Revolution?

5. Why did war seem so attractive to so many people in 1914?
CASE STUDIES

1. The text briefly explains the early twentieth-century Serbian nationalist movement. Have students conduct research and write a paper that compares the early movement to the Serbian nationalist movement of the late twentieth century.

2. Ask students to conduct Internet research to prepare for a class discussion of the idea of collective guilt (building upon the Justice in History section on the collective guilt of the Russian royal family). This idea is often linked to terrorist activity and incidents of so-called “ethnic cleansing,” issues that are hotly debated in the world today. With what recent events has this idea been linked?

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. On this site devoted entirely to World War I, the section on media includes downloadable audio of popular wartime songs. Find it at http://www.worldwar1.com/media.htm.

2. PBS’s series The Great War and the Shaping of the Twentieth Century is a useful resource. Its Web site is found at http://www.pbs.org/greatwar/.

3. One of the best online sources is Oxford University’s Virtual Seminars for Teaching Literature, which is found at http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ltg/projects/jtap/. It includes poetry, plays, interviews, letters, photos, etc.


5. Ernest Hemingway’s A Farewell to Arms is now available from Amazon.com as a Microsoft Reader download.

6. Letters from World War I participants (men and women) are available online through the Legacy Project and the History Channel at http://www.historychannel.com/letters/wwiletters.html.

7. The classic 1930 film version of All Quiet on the Western Front is available on DVD.

8. A unique book on the war is Simon Forty’s Historical Maps of World War I (hardcover, 2002, Sterling Publishers), which contains 125 maps on topics from the Gallipoli campaign to the Western Front trenches.

9. Peter Weir’s film Gallipoli (starring Mel Gibson) is now available on DVD.
CHAPTER 25

Reconstruction, Reaction, and Continuing Revolution: The 1920s and 1930s

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

* explain the impact of the war on European cultural life.
* discuss the ways in which reconstruction rather than revolution characterized the postwar era.
* explain the emergence of the Radical Right.
* identify the factors that led to the polarization of European politics in the 1930s.
* describe the change in the interaction between the West and the world after the war.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* The interwar period witnessed the political and cultural reactions to the horrors of war.
* Political reactions were found on the left (Soviet communism) and the right (Nazism and fascism), but both extremes rejected the Western ideal of individual rights.
* The world-wide depression and the collapse of the international economy after 1929 only intensified many people’s belief that the old system did not work.
  * In Germany, Spain, and the Soviet Union especially, the era of violence begun by World War I continued.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Cultural Despair and Desire

To many Europeans, World War I seemed to have irreparably destroyed European culture and society. Although modernist painters and musicians had been introducing their fragmented canvas and dissonant choruses before World War I, now their work did not seem so disturbing or alien. Along with anxiety was the excitement of perhaps building a new and better world.

A. The Waste Land

European culture after the war focused on the death tolls of the war and concluded that the end result of reason and science was mass destruction. This emphasis on death was reflected on the war memorials that were built in France and England. The sense of loss and despair also appeared in poetry, religion, and philosophy. The poetry of T. S. Eliot and others expressed a sense of loss and despair. Theologians gave up the nineteenth century practice of emphasizing the harmony of religion and science. Instead, Christian theologians like Karl Barth emphasized human sinfulness while Rudolf Bultmann looked at the Gospels as
based on folk tales. For Bultmann, it was through the Christian myths that we find spiritual truth and the way out of anxiety by submission to God. Bultmann’s theology is often called Christian existentialism because it draws on existentialist philosophy. At the core of existentialism was a profound despair. Jean-Paul Sartre argued that the key to existence is that man is condemned to be free in a universe devoid of meaning.

**B. Building Something Better**

In Germany, the Bauhaus architectural school epitomized the near-utopianism of much of European society after the war.

1. **Machinery and Movement**

   Much of this utopianism focused on the transforming power of technology. In Soviet Russia industrial motifs became central to art. For example, Shostakovich’s *Second Symphony* began with a factory whistle. Modernist architects like Le Corbusier designed spare buildings that often exposed machinery. Celebration of movement and speed was another important motif of 1920s culture. The car became a middle-class necessity and the airplane began to link European cities.

2. **Scientific Possibilities**

   In the early twentieth century Newton’s theory of the universe as a precise and predictable machine was replaced by Einstein’s theory of relativity where space, time, matter and energy were interchangeable. The new understanding of the cosmos changed the study of physics. Einstein’s theory of matter as frozen energy had great implications for the future. If this energy could be released, it would create a terrific force. In 1938 two Berlin scientists named Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassman broke open the uranium atom.

**II. Out of the Trenches: Reconstructing National and Gender Politics in the 1920s**

   Europe seemed on the brink of revolution after World War I, which overthrew empires, redrew the map of Europe, raised social expectations, and turned gender roles upside down. Nevertheless there was great continuity between the prewar and postwar periods.

   **A. The Reconstruction of Russia: From Tsar to Commisar**

   Even in the new Soviet Union there were important continuities between the old tsarist regime and the new communist regime, including authoritarian rule built on violent coercion, a highly centralized state, a large bureaucratic elite, and a peasant economy. This continuity is partly explained by the civil and international war that followed the October Revolution, which led the Bolsheviks to increasingly adopt authoritarian, even savage measures to win. Another source of communist authoritarianism was ideological. Vladimir Lenin changed Marxist theory to meet the Russian situation, arguing that an elite group of professional revolutionaries could bring about the workers’ revolution. Because the peasant masses could not be trusted, decisions were put in the hands of the party officials, and the result was that tsarist rule was replaced by rule of the party commissar. There were even economic continuities, since by 1921 famine and peasant unrest
forced Lenin to introduce the New Economic Policy (NEP), which gave the peasants an incentive to produce by allowing them to sell their produce for profit. Thus, while the state controlled heavy industry, transport, and banking, small private businesses and farms were encouraged, as had been the tsarist policy before the war.

B. The Reconstruction of National Politics in Eastern and Central Europe

Woodrow Wilson envisioned a new international order based on democratic politics, but democracy proved fragile and short-lived in eastern Europe.

1. The Defeat of Democracy in Eastern Europe

Postwar eastern Europe looked different, as small independent nations replaced the old empires. Yet these new states continued to suffer from ethnic disputes, economic underdevelopment, and antidemocratic politics. It had been impossible to create ethnically homogenous nation-states in eastern Europe. Much of eastern Europe was still dominated by peasants and aristocratic landlords, and there was too little industry and too few cities to attract the excess rural population, creating high unemployment. The combination of economic pressure and ethnic conflicts undermined democracy across eastern Europe and by the early 1930s had brought authoritarian regimes to every eastern European country except Czechoslovakia.

2. The Weakness of the Weimar Republic

The postwar changes in Germany masked important continuities. The kaiser’s empire was replaced by the Weimar Republic with a democratically elected parliamentary government. However, as a result of the civil war that occurred just after the First World War, the Weimar government left untouched the old bureaucracy and military, often deploying the “Free Corps” (volunteer paramilitary units made up of demobilized soldiers). Thus, antidemocratic forces remained strong and were able to feed off the resentment created by the severity of the Versailles Treaty. The shaky foundations of German democracy were further tarnished by hyperinflation. In 1922, the German government halted reparations payments. The French responded by occupying the Ruhr Valley and seizing coal as payment. The German coal miners responded by refusing to work. The German government continued to pay their salaries and raised the funds by printing money. As a result, the exchange rate of the German mark plummeted and the currency became worthless. This hyperinflation wiped out the savings of the middle class. In 1924, the French pulled out of the Ruhr, and the Dawes Plan stabilized the German economy, but the damage had been done. For many Germans, democracy meant disorder and degradation, and they longed for the stability of the prewar era.

C. The Reconstruction of Gender

World War I had brought great upheaval to gender roles, but in the postwar period, prewar gender patterns re-emerged.

1. The New Woman
The 1920s appeared to be a decade of profound change for women, who had gained the right to vote in many countries. Women stepped out of the confines of home and family and many women were now working, living, and traveling on their own, a change reflected in women's freer clothing and shorter hair. For many women, especially working-class ones, a major change was the limiting of family size.

2. The Reconstruction of Traditional Roles

Despite the perceptions of change, women’s roles actually changed little. There was also a strong reaction against the gender upheaval. The drop in the family size provoked fear about population decline. Several countries outlawed birth control and abortion. Governments began introducing social welfare benefits to promote having more children. Many women continued to work, but they were barred from management positions and paid less than men.

3. Women and the Bolshevik Revolution

In Bolshevik Russia, the early years saw important changes for women. The Bolshevik regime declared women equal to men, allowed civil marriages, legalized divorce and abortion, abolished the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children, and introduced communal daycare centers, laundry facilities, and dining rooms. By the early 1920s the revolutionary policies began to be reversed. The communal dining halls were closed as were half of the communal daycare centers. Women’s wages continued to be less than men’s and the traditional patriarchal peasant household remained.

III. The Rise of the Radical Right

The fascist revolution introduced Europe to the politics of the Radical Right.

A. The Fascist Alternative

Born of wartime exhilaration and postwar despair, fascism offered an alternative to existing political ideologies. Fascism originated with Benito Mussolini and was not just a set of political ideas but an ongoing, spectacular performance.

1. Mussolini’s Rise to Power

A veteran of the Italian army who had fought in the First World War, Benito Mussolini created fascism as a new political form that embodied the camaraderie of the trenches and the exhilaration of violence. Founded in 1919, by 1922 the fascists had become a powerful political force, in large part because they seemed the best defense against communist revolution. In 1922, King Victor Emmanuel III named Mussolini prime minister.

2. The Fascist Revolution in Italy

Over the next four years, Mussolini eliminated his opponents and made Italy a one-party state by using methods both legal and illegal, including murder. Fascism condemned conservatism, liberalism, and socialism, while exalting the nation as the dominant social reality. Mussolini’s promises of social and economic change were unfulfilled; he
introduced corporatism to replace capitalism, but workers’ rights vanished while private property and profits remained. Allegiance to Mussolini was reinforced through a cult of the person of the leader (the Duce).

**B. The Great Depression and the Spread of Fascism After 1929**

Following the crash of the American stock market in 1929, the Great Depression spread through Europe, because the European economy had become dependent on American loans. In the wake of the growing global financial disaster, fascist movements appeared across Europe, as the fascist promises of stability, order, and national strength gained more and more appeal.

**C. The Nazi Revolution**

Nazism, founded by Adolf Hitler, offered a different version of the Radical Right.

1. **Hitler’s Rise to Power**

   An Austrian, Hitler spent his youth in Vienna soaking up anti-Semitic German nationalism. During World War I, he fought in the German army. After the war, he settled in Munich and helped establish the Nazi Party. The Nazis rejected socialism, communism, trade unionism, and any emphasis on class, instead exalting the nation, but unlike the fascists, for Hitler race was the dominant social reality. He believed that all of history was a struggle between the races, in which the chief enemy was the Jews, whom Hitler defined racially rather than religiously. The Nazi Party remained small until the Great Depression. In the face of high unemployment and political instability, in 1932, the Nazi Party became the largest party in the parliament. In January of 1933, President Hindenburg appointed Hitler chancellor of Germany. When the German parliament building burned down, Hitler used this as the pretext to arrest his political opponents. At the end of March 1933, the parliament passed the Enabling Act, giving Hitler legislative power without consulting parliament.

2. **National Recovery**

   Those the Nazis defined as “enemies of the state,” such as Jews, communists, and socialists, faced grave threats in the 1930s, but life improved for those not in these groups as the Nazis created full employment, restored national pride, and instigated a cultural revolution that linked modernity and nostalgia. The Nazis engineered an economic recovery by massive government spending, and by 1938 Germany had reached full employment. Hitler ignored the restrictions of the Versailles Treaty and began rearming Germany. Germans quickly came to see Hitler as a national savior. Hitler’s power was reinforced through the use of radio and film to create the “great We,” which also utilized the power of nostalgia to create the image of the Nazis as the guardians of a mythic Germany.

3. **Campaigns of Repression and Terror**

   Hitler used persecution and terror to deal with his political enemies and those not part of the “great We.” It started with political opponents such as communists and included religious groups like Roman Catholics and Jehovah’s Witnesses, who were persecuted. The most severe measures
were used to deal with those the Nazis deemed biologically inferior. The Gypsies, as well as mixed-race children and the mentally and physically handicapped, were sterilized, but the chief targets of the Nazis’ attacks were the Jews, who were beaten and dismissed from their jobs, while their shops were boycotted and vandalized and their homes attacked. Moreover, the “Nuremberg Laws” labeled as Jewish anyone with three or more Jewish grandparents, and marriage or even sexual relations between Jews and non-Jews was criminalized.

C. Women and the Radical Right

As part of restoring order to society, the fascist and Nazi movements wanted to restore order to gender relations. The Nazi regime used incentives to keep women at home and also dismissed women from the civil service; women physicians could only work in their husbands’ practices. Economic and cultural incentives were introduced to encourage women to remain at home, while birth control became illegal and the penalties for abortion increased. The fascists enacted similar measures in Italy, limiting women in terms of employment, financially penalizing single men older than 30, criminalizing male homosexuality, and making fatherhood a requirement for public office.

IV. The Polarization of Politics in the 1930s

Fascism and Nazism provided one alternative to the inability of the democracies to deal with the Great Depression. Communism provided another alternative. Thus politics in the West became polarized between right and left; however, some leaders tried to find a middle ground to retain democratic values.

A. The Soviet Union Under Stalin: Revolution Reconstructed, Terror Extended

In contrast to Europe and the United States, the Soviet Union in the 1930s had booming industrial production and no unemployment. But this economic transformation had come at the cost of mass murder by a brutal regime headed by Joseph Stalin.

1. Stalin’s Rise to Power

Lenin died in 1924. Over the course of the next four years, the colorless figure of Joseph Stalin emerged as the new leader. As General Secretary of the Communist Party, Stalin controlled the party promotion system and was able to build up a large cadre of supporters who owed their positions to him. During the same years an ideological struggle over the NEP and the need to industrialize the country was taking place at the highest levels of the party. By 1928, Stalin had played the two sides against each other to seize control of the party and the state.

2. The “Revolution from Above”: Collectivization and Industrialization, 1928-1934

From 1928-1934 a revolution from above was imposed on the country, whose objective was to vault the Soviet Union into full industrialization. First was forced collectivization, in which private farms were replaced by agricultural cooperatives. Collectivization had both political and economic aims, but was resisted by the peasants, resulting in
brutal repression and a famine that killed millions. While collectivization was underway in the countryside, industrialization was taking place in the cities. Eighty percent of investment went into heavy industry, so consumer goods remained scarce. The communist regime played up the great industrial and engineering achievements that were being made, but much of that achievement came from the forced labor of the prison camps. Rural regions and Soviet agriculture remained backward.


In the second half of the 1930s, Stalin completed the consolidation of his power. In 1934, the seventeenth Party Congress celebrated the successes of industrialization and collectivization. Most of the delegates would in the course of the next few years be arrested and shot, victims of the “Great Purge,” which began with the Communist Party, government bureaucracy, and the military, and eventually eliminated hundreds of thousands of people. The Great Purge consolidated Stalin’s hold on the Soviet Union.

4. Stalin and the Nation

A cult of Stalin glorified him and identified him with the nation. Stalin revived the emphasis on Russian nationalism at the expense of the ethnic minorities. He also promoted the family by outlawing abortion and making divorce difficult, although Soviet women continued to work. The arts also came under state control.

B. The Response of the Democracies
The apparent economic success of Stalinism on the left and Nazism and fascism on the right polarized European politics, with many feeling they had no choice except between the two.

1. A Third Way? The Social Democratic Alternative

A third way to meet the challenges of the Depression emerged: social democracy, in which a democratic government assumes responsibility for ensuring a decent standard of living for its citizens. To do this, the government regulates the economy and oversees a welfare state. In the United States, President Roosevelt’s New Deal introduced agricultural subsidies, public works projects, and social security, but unemployment remained high and the GNP languished. The British economist John Maynard Keynes argued that in a depression, governments must engage in deficit spending to stimulate economic growth. In Sweden, the Social Democratic Party took office in 1932 and was able to revive the economy by 1937, following the ideas of Keynes. Other western European governments were more reluctant to follow Keynes.

2. The Popular Front in France

In France, the Popular Front, a coalition of radicals, socialists, and communists, won the national elections in 1936, and the resulting government increased workers’ benefits and nationalized critical industries. In response, the global financial community pulled capital out of France, and the Popular Front collapsed.

3. The Spanish Civil War

In Spain, the struggle between the polarized political ideologies turned into a civil war in 1936 when right-wing army officers revolted against the democratically elected Popular Front government. Both fascist Italy and Nazi Germany supported the right-wing rebels, but the only support the Republican government had came from the Soviet Union, as the democracies remained neutral, although some of their citizens volunteered to fight for democracy. The right-wing forces led by Francisco Franco were victorious in March of 1939.

VI. The West and the World: Imperialism in the Interwar Era

However much they might support national self-determination in Europe, the Allies had no intention of extending it to their imperial possessions. At the end of the war, the British and French divided up the German colonies among themselves and became the dominant powers in the Middle East. During the interwar period, the necessity and desirability of empire was impressed on European populations by their governments.

A. The Irish Revolution

The interwar years saw the development of powerful challenges to the empires. After two years of guerrilla warfare by the IRA, the British offered independence to Ireland in 1921.
B. Changing Power Equations: Ideology and Economics

Changing economic relationships and communist ideology accelerated anti-imperialist nationalist movements. Since communism equated imperialism with capitalism, the Soviet Union provided assistance to many of these nationalist independence movements. The economic demands of the war led to the development of colonial economies and the migration of workers to the cities. These unsettling changes led to anti-Western agitation. The Great Depression led to a disastrous drop in prices of colonial products and a rise in unemployment, while cuts in services and rising taxes caused many to question the benefits of imperial government. The result increased the numbers attracted to nationalist movements.

C. Postwar Nationalism, Westernization, and the Islamic Challenge

As the legitimacy of imperialist rule was increasingly questioned, anti-Western movements grew, often in a religious form. One of the most potent appeals was Islam, which embarked on a new era after World War I as the end of the Ottoman Empire and caliphate created a new religious and political environment for Muslims.

1. The Emergence of Pan-Arabism

In the Middle East, pan-Arabism emerged as a powerful form of nationalism, nourished by the collapse of the Ottoman regime, and resentment of a postwar map of the Middle East that placed Arabs in what they saw as artificial states.

2. Nationalism on the Western Model

Egypt did not embrace pan-Arabism, but did agitate for national independence. In Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Pasha led the revolt against attempts to partition Turkey among the victors of World War I. However, Pasha decided that there could not be modernization without Westernization, so in the 1920s he introduced a program of modernization and Westernization. He outlawed polygamy and ordered Turks to wear Western clothes and to take surnames, changing his name to Kemal Ataturk. He did not introduce democracy.

3. The Islamic Challenge

Many in the Middle East rejected secular nationalism like that in Turkey. In the 1920s and 1930s, the militant and puritanical form of Islam known as Wahhabism had a great revival in Arabia. In 1928, the Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt. The fundamentalist brotherhood rejected Western practices and political institutions on religious grounds. Both Wahhabism and the Muslim Brotherhood proved crucial in shaping the later relationship between Islam and the West.

D. Moral Revolution in India

In India, a different sort of anti-Western protest emerged. Mohandas Gandhi promoted Indian nationalism and independence through nonviolent means. Appealing to Indian customs and religious identity, Gandhi refused to equate modernization with Westernization; he rejected Western dress and presented himself in the traditional Indian role of a religious ascetic.
E. The Power of the Primitive

After World War I, some Westerners also questioned the superiority of Western civilization. Developments in psychology questioned the idea of Western superiority by postulating the persistence of the primitive within the civilized. The German novelist Hermann Hesse extolled Eastern mysticism as superior to the spiritual barrenness of the West, and the Négritude movement condemned European culture as weak and corrupt, calling on blacks to create a separate culture.

V. Conclusion: The Kingdom of Corpses

The aftermath of total war saw a dramatic re-evaluation of Western political and cultural assumptions in the 1920s and 1930s, as Soviet communism on the left and fascism and Nazism on the right challenged such Western tenets as individual rights and the rule of law. Such extremism only gained momentum with the failure of democracy in eastern Europe and the global depression that descended after 1929.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Students can benefit from comparing how the Soviet Union and the United States viewed their own histories in the emerging medium of the motion picture, by comparing D. W. Griffith’s Birth of a Nation (1915) with Sergei Eisenstein’s Battleship Potemkin (1925). An equally enlightening project would be to compare American films of the 1930s to those produced in Europe, in particular Nazi Germany.

2. Compare the European map in the chapter (Europe in the 1920s and 1930s) with a similar map from the 1870s, as well as a current map of Europe. List the changes chronologically.

3. Ask students to write a paper tracing political development in Germany from Free Corps to Nazi Party.

4. Ask students to write an essays detailing how they would deal with such an economic disaster as hyperinflation (for example, how would they pay their rent? How would they pay tuition?).

5. Ask students to research and report on the different ways in which fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and the communist Soviet Union dealt with religion.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Why was the “normalization” of gender roles so important to the Radical Right regimes?

2. Why would fascism and Nazism have such appeal to so many people?
3. Why did the Western democracies not come to the rescue of the Spanish republican government?

4. To what degree is the question of “Westernization” one that non-Western countries struggle with?

5. What were the major differences between Lenin’s Soviet Union and Stalin’s?

CASE STUDIES

1. The 1936 Olympics were held in Germany, and Hitler was anxious to demonstrate the superiority of his Aryan race. Yet the star of those Olympics was an African American, Jesse Owens, who won four gold medals and set three new world records. Ask students to research Jesse Owens’s life (www.jesseowens.com), and the 1936 Olympics, and consider how his struggle with American racism compares with the racism of the Nazi regime.

2. The text describes the trial of Hitler and a judge’s remark on his “patriotism.” What role did nationalism play in his rise to power? Is it significant that he was Austrian?

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. A good source for images of Walter Gropius’s work is found at http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/cas/fnart/fa267/gropius.html.

2. An interwar-era novel that works well in the classroom is F. Scott Fitzgerald’s This Side of Paradise, the book that made him a literary star. Several paperback editions are available.

3. Josef von Sternberg’s classic, The Blue Angel, starring Marlene Dietrich, is available on DVD.

4. The text of the Nuremberg Laws is found at www.mtsu.edu/~baustin/nurmlaw2.html.

5. The full text of Leon Trotsky’s History of the Russian Revolution is available at www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/works/1930-hrr/. There are also links to a large archive of Trotsky’s other writings, as well as a biography.

6. A selection from Spengler’s The Decline of the West (1922) is available through Modern History Sourcebook at http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/spengler-decline.html.

7. Hermann Hesse’s Siddhartha (1922) is widely available.
CHAPTER 26

World War II

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* identify the expectations concerning war in the 1920s and 1930s.
* describe how European hopes and fears led to armed conflict in both Europe and Asia.
* explain how Nazi Germany conquered the continent of Europe by 1941.
* discuss why the Allies won in 1945.
* explain how and why the war against the Jews took place and what its consequences were.
* discuss what total war meant on the home front.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* World War II was caused not only by Germany and Nazi ideology but global power relations, patterns of economic dependency, and the changing relationship between the West and the rest of the world.
* The Second World War caused massive killing and destruction on an unprecedented scale, and became central to the meaning of the twentieth-century West.
* The development of the atomic bomb raised disturbing questions.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. The Coming of War

Twenty years after the end of World War I, Europe and the world were again engulfed in total war. The immediate cause was Hitler’s desire for a German empire in eastern Europe, but there were other, longer-term factors that explain the origins of the war.

A. An Uneasy Peace

The origins of the Second World War are tied to the settlements of the First World War. The treaties signed after 1918 created a fragile peace for three reasons. First, redrawing the map of central and eastern Europe did not fulfill all groups’ nationalist ambitions. Second, the League of Nations was too weak to be the basis of a new international order. Third, the peace settlements created new resentments among both the winners and the losers.

B. The 1930s: Prelude to World War II

The Great Depression increased international instability, as the various countries used tariff barriers to protect their economies and some political leaders saw territorial expansion as a solution to their economic problems. In 1931, the Japanese seized Manchuria and in 1935 Italy invaded Ethiopia. The democracies
did not respond to the Ethiopian invasion, nor did they intervene on behalf of the democratically elected government of Spain at the start of the Spanish Civil War. This suggested that the democracies would not take action against aggressors, which seemed confirmed by the League of Nations’ inaction when Japan advanced its brutal conquest of China. In the face of the democracies’ passivity, Hitler made his first moves, withdrawing Germany from the League of Nations in 1933 and openly violating the terms of the Treaty of Versailles in 1935 by rearming Germany. In 1936 Hitler signed an alliance with Italy (Rome-Berlin Axis). Hitler again violated the Versailles Treaty in 1936 by sending troops into the Rhineland, and again in 1938, by annexing Austria to Germany. In each case France and Britain did not act against Germany. By September of 1938, Europe was on the brink of war because Hitler demanded the German-inhabited Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. War was averted by British Prime Minister Chamberlain’s negotiation of the Munich Agreement, giving Hitler the Sudetenland, but the peace thus gained lasted only six months before Germany proceeded to occupy all of Czechoslovakia. In August 1939, Hitler and Stalin agreed to the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, a promise of mutual neutrality in the others’ conflicts, which freed Germany from the threat of a two-front war. On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland, and two days later the British and French declared war against Germany.

C. Evaluating Appeasement

Since World War II there has been much debate on the issue of Britain’s policy regarding Hitler. Appeasement was not a policy of cowardice, but rather a reaction to the horror of total war experienced in World War I. It rested on the assumption that some of Germany’s grievances were legitimate, and that a strong Germany was the best defense against the communist Soviet Union. It was only in the summer of 1939 that Europeans realized how mistaken these assumptions were.

II. Europe at War, 1939-1941

Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. By the autumn of 1941, almost the entire continent was either allied to or occupied by Nazi Germany.

A. A New Kind of Warfare

The German military successes were the result of a new technology of modern offensive warfare that utilized a mobile, mechanized offensive force.

1. The Conquest of Poland

Germany invaded Poland using this new offensive strategy. Fast-moving motorized divisions wreaked havoc on the ground while the German air force, or Luftwaffe, attacked from the sky.

2. Blitzkrieg in Western Europe

This new style of warfare was called blitzkrieg, or lightning war. Western Europe experienced the blitzkrieg in the spring of 1940 when the German army rapidly invaded Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, and then France. By late May 1940, British and French forces were trapped at Dunkirk, until the British Royal Air Force (RAF) held off
the Luftwaffe while the British navy and civilian boats were able to rescue the troops. This was the only Allied success. On June 14, German troops entered Paris and the French parliament turned power over to Marshal Philippe Pétain, who set up an authoritarian French government at Vichy. This Vichy government pledged to collaborate with the Nazis.

3. The Battle of Britain

In Britain the head of a new coalition government, Winston Churchill, refused to negotiate with Hitler. On July 10, Germans bombers began the Battle of Britain, attempting to destroy the RAF in preparation for a cross-channel invasion. Britain’s higher aircraft production rate, its antiaircraft gun installations, and the fact that RAF pilots were fighting in their home skies, gave Britain the advantage. In September 1940, Hitler postponed the invasion of Britain indefinitely.

B. The Invasion of the Soviet Union

Hitler’s plan for a German empire in Europe centered on the conquest of the Soviet Union.

1. A Crucial Postponement

Hitler's plans to invade the Soviet Union in April 1941 were delayed because the Germany army had to reinforce the Italians in North Africa and the Balkans, as the latter were economically crucial to Germany.

2. Early Success

The invasion of the Soviet Union began on June 22, 1941. The German army smashed through the Soviet defenses and in four months was within eighty miles of Moscow. This success was due not only to the blitzkrieg, but to the fact that many of those being invaded were ready to welcome the Germans as liberators from Stalinist terror.

3. The Fatal Winter

Yet within a few months, the German advance had stalled, due to overstretched supply and communication lines, stiffening Soviet resistance, and the Russian weather. By the time the Germans resumed their advance in the spring of 1942, the Soviets had had time to re-locate their crucial war industries far away from the German threat, and those factories were out-producing Germany’s.

III. The World at War, 1941-1945

Japanese expansionism brought the United States into the war, providing a crucial advantage in industrial production for the Allies.

A. The Globalization of the War

Because of Europe’s imperialism, World War II involved people outside of Europe from the beginning. Britain relied on materials and manpower from its colonies and dominions, as well as help from its former colony, the officially still neutral United States, which nonetheless began supplying Britain’s need for military goods in March 1941 with the Lend-Lease Act. But it was a Japanese offensive in the Pacific that brought together the Asian and European conflicts
and caused the United States to officially enter the war. Between December 7 and December 10, 1941, Japan successfully attacked American, British, and Dutch territories in the Pacific, including a devastating assault on the American Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor. Impressed with the Japanese attack, Hitler declared war on the United States on December 11, 1941. At the start of 1942, it looked as if the Allies were going to lose.

B. From Allied Defeat to Allied Victory

By the start of 1943, the Allies were on the road to a victory that came primarily from American and Soviet industrial supremacy and the Allies’ superior military strategy. But the period from 1942 to 1945 was a time of horrific human suffering, as well as cataclysmic battles.

1. The Turning Point: Midway, El Alamein, and Stalingrad

The turning point on the Pacific came at the Battle of Midway on June 4, 1942, where the United States destroyed four Japanese carriers and the Japanese First Air Fleet. In North Africa, the British surprised the Germans at the Battle of El Alamein in October 1942, and one month later British and American troops landed in Morocco and Algeria; six months later they had pushed the Germans out of North Africa. In Europe the turning point was the Battle of Stalingrad (August 1942-January 1943). In an attempt to take control of Caucasus oil fields, Hitler decided to attack Stalingrad, which controlled the main waterway for transporting oil and food to the rest of the Soviet Union. The German and Soviet forces fought each other house by house, but by November the Russians had surrounded the Germans. Hitler refused to allow General Von Paulus to surrender. By the time Von Paulus did surrender, his army had been decimated. The Germans never recovered from the defeat.

2. The Allies on the Offensive

In July 1943 the Allies invaded Italy. Although Mussolini was overthrown, the Germans took control of Italy and the Allied campaign got bogged down. Meanwhile, the Russians pushed the Germans to the Polish border by the spring of 1944.

3. The Fall of Germany

On June 6, 1944, the British and American forces began the invasion of France. By February 1945, the Russians were approaching Berlin from the east and by April the British and American forces in the west were within fifty miles of Berlin. On May 2, Berlin surrendered to the Russians. Two days earlier Hitler had committed suicide. Germany formally surrendered to the allies on May 7, 1945.

C. The Air War, the Atom Bomb, and the Fall of Japan

In the Pacific, after the Battle of Midway, the Americans pushed the Japanese back, island by island. Both sides suffered tens of thousands of casualties. At Okinawa, 110,000 Japanese soldiers were killed and 50,000 Americans were killed or wounded.

1. The Air War

The use of aerial bombing in World War II escalated the civilian casualty rate. During the Battle of Britain, London endured “the Blitz” in
the autumn of 1940, when it was bombed nightly, and every main industrial city in Britain was bombed, as well. Allied bombers visited equal devastation on Cologne and Hamburg. The American conquests of Iwo Jima and Okinawa allowed the United States to bring aerial bombing tactics to Japan, which was also cut off from its supplies by a naval blockade.

2. The Manhattan Project

The Manhattan Project was the code name for the effort to construct an atom bomb. It was the biggest and most expensive weapons research project up until that time. It involved 120,000 individuals in nineteen states and Canada. The Manhattan Project originated as part of the war against Germany. Scientists, many of whom had fled the Nazis, feared Germany might develop the atom bomb, so they convinced the British and American governments to develop it first. On July 16, 1945, the first atomic explosions were detonated in the New Mexico desert; by then, Germany had surrendered and Japan was suffering the effects of a naval blockade and nightly bombardment. Given these circumstances, the decision to drop the bomb was controversial from the beginning. President Truman’s decision was based primarily on a desire to save American lives and the expectation that such a horrific weapon would have a tremendous psychological effect on the Japanese, and so end the war more quickly.

3. A Light Brighter Than a Thousand Suns

On August 6, 1945, an atom bomb was dropped over the city of Hiroshima. Temperatures at the site of the explosion reached 5,400 degrees Fahrenheit. By the end of 1945, 140,000 residents of Hiroshima had died as a result of the bomb and another 60,000 died in the next five years. The Japanese did not at first understand what had hit them, but the gradual realization of the atom bomb’s power strengthened the position of those who realized Japan must surrender. A second bomb was dropped at Nagasaki on August 8, 1945. It killed 70,000 people and another 70,000 died over the next five years. On August 10, the Japanese emperor met with military leaders and insisted that the time had come to surrender. On August 15, peace was announced. But the lingering horror of radiation sickness indicated the atom bomb was not only a new, but a completely different sort of weapon.

IV. The War Against the Jews

While anti-Semitism was a key component of Hitler’s worldview, it does not by itself explain the Holocaust. Nor for that matter was the Holocaust a product of a detailed plan. It seems to have evolved as a response to total war.

A. From Emigration to Extermination: The Evolution of Genocide

Nazi policies on Jews in the 1930s focused on forcing Jews to emigrate. The annexation of Austria, the Sudetenland, and Czechoslovakia added 300,000 Jews to the growing German empire, and the invasion of Poland brought two million more Jews under German control. For the Nazi regime, forcing Jews to
emigrate no longer seemed a workable solution to the “Jewish Problem.” The war brought about the radicalization of policy and made murderous violence more acceptable. Hitler intended the “biologically inferior” Slavs to be a labor pool for the superior Germans, and so the Nazis attempted to destroy Polish society and culture. At this point, Nazi discussion of “eliminating” the Jews from Poland was conceived in terms of mass deportations. Over the next two years, 30,000 Jews were either murdered or died from starvation or disease. The invasion of the Soviet Union led to the adoption of the “Final Solution” to murder the Jews. At first, this was done by special SS squads called Einsatzgruppen, who were assisted by the local populations that often welcomed the Germans as liberators.

In the first months after the invasion of the Soviet Union, Jews were rounded up, marched into the woods, stripped of their clothes, lined up along ditches, and then shot and covered with a layer of dirt. The Einsatzgruppen killed between 1.5 and 2 million Jews this way.

**B. The Death Camps: Murder by Assembly Line**

On January 20, 1942, a group of German officials met at Wannsee and formulated a systematic plan to destroy the Jews. The plan would avoid some of the problems encountered by the Einsatzgruppen by utilizing advanced killing technology and maintaining a comfortable distance between the killers and the killed. The result was the death camp, a specialized form of concentration camp. The first concentration camps were set up in 1933 to intern enemies of the regime, like communists and Gypsies. Once war began, the camps’ network was dramatically expanded. The camps became part of the Nazi economy with major German firms establishing factories in the camps to take advantage of their forced labor. The Nazis established concentration camps all across Europe, but the death camps were only in Poland. The death camp was the final stage in an assembly line of murder as, beginning in 1942, trains brought victims to the camps where they were promptly killed in gas chambers. Approximately three million Jews died in the death camps. The Holocaust claimed six million Jews, between 200,000 and 600,000 Gypsies, 5,000 to 15,000 homosexuals, as well as three million Polish Christians.

**C. The Allies’ Response**

The Allied governments had access to accurate information about the Holocaust and it quickly become available through the media to ordinary citizens. But most officials and ordinary people could not really believe the scale of the atrocities. In December 1942, the Allied governments issued a declaration condemning the Nazi regime for exterminating the Jews, but took no military action to stop it. Many historians have credited anti-Semitism in British and American society for this failure. Others have argued that the only feasible military option was winning the war as quickly as possible. After the war, Allied leaders tried to make Nazi leaders accountable for their actions in the Nuremberg trials, which introduced into international law “crimes against humanity.”
V. The Home Front: The Other Wars

During World War II, the home front was not safe from the violence of war. Spreading resistance against the Nazis, bombing raids and forced labor erased the distinction between combatant and noncombatant, blurred gender roles, and raised calls for radical social change.

A. The Limits of Resistance

Throughout the war, individuals and groups acted heroically to resist the Nazis, from hiding Jews and sabotaging equipment to spying for the Allies, disrupting transportation systems, and attacking German army units. One of the best-known acts of resistance was the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto in 1943. But the failure of that uprising, and the deaths that resulted, demonstrate the limits of resistance. Most Europeans simply hoped to survive. The willingness of Nazis to use brutal force against civilians, their practice of collective retribution, and divisions within the Resistance itself also limited its impact. In France, once General De Gaulle established the Free French provisional government, the French began more active participation in the resistance.

B. Civil War in Yugoslavia

In Yugoslavia, the struggle to free the country turned into a political and ethnic civil war. In Croatia, the Nazi-sponsored fascist regime engaged in a savage campaign of ethnic homogenization against Serbs, Bosnian Muslims, and Jews. The royalist Chetniks fought both the Germans and the fascist Croatians, but also engaged in the slaughter of Muslims and Jews. A second Resistance group led by the communist Josip Broz, or “Tito,” emerged to fight the Germans, the Nazi-supported Croatians, and the Chetniks.

C. Under Occupation

In occupied Europe, Nazi racial ideology determined the treatment of soldiers and civilians. The Nazis distinguished between western Europeans, deemed “racially superior,” and the Slavs of eastern Europe, who were treated much more brutally. In western Europe, the Nazis sought to work with, rather than exterminate, political and economic elites, but the German occupation was far from lenient, as the Nazis exacted money, material, and labor from the occupied areas. Millions of Europeans suffered as forced labor within Germany during the war.

D. The Women’s War

Women served in the Resistance, were used as forced labor by the Germans, and bore the brunt of the home front deprivations, but only in the Soviet Union were they mobilized for combat. Although British women did not serve in combat, they were drafted for the war effort to work in war industries, civilian defense, and the armed forces. In contrast, in Germany the Nazis rationed but did not dramatically cut consumption by civilians until 1943. Hitler’s belief that German women should primarily be producing Aryan babies meant foreign labor took the place of the mobilization of women. Only in the last year of the war were German women mobilized for the labor force. Uniquely among the combatant states, the United States never fully mobilized its economy, and more than 70% of adult American women remained outside the paid workforce. Rationing was
minimal, consumption levels high, and American cities were not bombed, thus the
distinction between soldier and civilian was maintained.

E. What Are We Fighting For?
All nations involved used propaganda campaigns to mobilize their
populations and maintain their morale.

1. Myth Making and Morale Building
Governments institutionalized myth making to provide the crucial
unity among their citizens needed to fight the war, an effort that involved
both propaganda and censorship. All nations recruited the arts,
entertainers, and the mass media in this cause, and the movie industry
played an important role in creating myths of national unity.

2. Planning for Reconstruction
A call for a new European society echoed throughout Europe
during the war. For example, in Britain, the Beveridge Report called for
the government to ensure public welfare and social justice. The radical
reorientation of Europe to social democracy was caused by four factors.
First, Europeans demanded that their war suffering be worthwhile.
Second, the war discredited the political far right and the Great Depression
had discredited the liberal-free market ideal. Third, the success of
European governments in mobilizing their economies for war created the
desire to regulate their economies in peacetime for prosperity. Fourth, the
role of communists and socialists in the resistance enhanced their
respectability. The end result was that Europeans concluded that they
should use the power of the state to improve the lives of their citizens.

VI. Conclusion: The New West: After Auschwitz and the Atom Bomb

Adolf Hitler did, indeed, create a new Europe, although not the one he planned.
The war ended with Europe facing an uncertain future in a radically changed world. It
also deepened the commitment of the West to democracy, but the war was not simply a
conflict between democracy and Nazism. The Soviet Union was victorious in eastern
Europe, and that set the stage for the Cold War that would soon emerge. Moreover,
World War II called into question the supremacy claimed by the West on account of its
advances in technology and science, as those advances had unleashed both the horrors of
the Holocaust and the atom bomb.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. The Holocaust was not the first case of genocide, but is often cited as different.
Ask students to research genocide both before and since the Holocaust, and to consider
the role of the Holocaust today (its role in history, etc.).

2. Ask students to conduct Internet research to determine how Londoners
survived the Battle of Britain (shelters, blackouts, etc.).
3. Ask students to write a short paper comparing the role of German, British, and Soviet women in the war.

4. Though often associated with the Nazi persecution, the Jewish ghetto has a long history in Europe. Ask students to conduct research and write a paper on the history of the ghettos.

5. Bikini Atoll, the site of nuclear testing in the 1940s and 1950s, has a Web site at http://www.bikiniatoll.com/home.html. It is an interesting source to use to understand the legacy of the early atomic age from the point of view of people who continue to be directly affected.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. What role did technology play in World War I?

2. Which had the greater effect in Europe: World War I or World War II? Can the same be said of the United States?

3. Was Israel justified in its actions against Adolf Eichmann?

4. How did the Nazis dehumanize the extermination process? Why was this necessary?

5. Was the decision to drop the bomb justified? What factors influenced the decision?

CASE STUDIES

1. The question of Jewish reparations continues to be hotly debated, and is often linked with the discussion of African-American reparations for slavery in the United States. Ask students to research the history of the Jewish fight for reparations; identify those who have paid, the procedure for reparations, and the arguments both in favor of reparations and against. Ask them to identify the main points of dissention. A good starting point for research on the Internet is the site for the PBS series Nazi Gold at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/nazis/.

2. Ask students to research and present the state of the nuclear arms race today, including which countries have, or are suspected of having, nuclear capabilities. How do nuclear weapons continue to influence international relations today?

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. The Web site found at http://history.acusd.edu/gen/WW2Timeline/Prelude05.html details Mussolini’s invasion of Ethiopia and includes some very nice maps.
2. For more information on the trial of Adolf Eichmann, see Hannah Arendt’s *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, available in paperback from Penguin. Penguin also has a discussion site, which includes compelling questions, at http://www.penguininputnam.com/static/rguides/us/eichmann.html

3. Good movies about World War II include 1942’s *Mrs. Minniver* (that year’s Best Picture winner), and the more recent *Saving Private Ryan*.

4. An affordable recording of Shostakovich’s Seventh Symphony (Leningrad Symphony) is available from RCA, catalog number 62548.

5. The University of South Florida site at http://fcit.coedu.usf.edu/holocaust/resource/gallery/NR1938.htm includes many photos of Nazi assaults on Jews and synagogues.


7. *Schindler’s List* and *Life is Beautiful* are both films that deal with the Holocaust.

8. Primo Levi’s classic, *Survival in Auschwitz* (available in paperback from Touchstone Books), chronicles his 10-month internment. It is beautifully written and raises many questions for discussion. Another standard account of experiencing the Holocaust is Elie Wiesel’s *Night*.

9. The PBS program *Frontline* aired *Memory of the Camps* in 1985, 40 years after the footage of the liberation of German concentration camps was collected in London. It is available for purchase on the Internet at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/camp/.

10. The Web site found at http://www.polishresistance-ak.org/4%20Article.htm details the Warsaw Uprising, and includes two particularly detailed maps.

11. Yale’s Avalon Project includes the text of the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials at http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/imt/imt.htm.

12. Akira Kurosawa’s 1991 film *Rhapsody in August* looks back at the Nagasaki bomb from the point of view of a woman who survived it and is now a grandmother.
CHAPTER 27

Redefining the West after World War II

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- explain why and how the world moved from World War II to the Cold War.
- discuss the impact of decolonization and the Cold War on the global balance of power.
- identify the patterns that characterized the history of the Soviet Union and eastern Europe after the death of Stalin.
- describe the patterns that characterized the history of western Europe in the 1950s and 1960s.

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

- The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union influenced European politics, society, and culture.
- The Cold War was an ideological conflict that forced a redefinition of “the West,” adding anti-Soviet sentiment and a fear of communism.
- American influence in western Europe and Soviet domination in eastern Europe caused many Europeans to feel they did not control their own destinies.
- The Cold War affected the entire world and turned “hot” in places like Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam.
- The postwar era saw colonial areas seeking, and gaining, political independence, but the economic gap between the developed and undeveloped parts of the globe increased.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. A Dubious Peace, 1945-1949

At the end of the war, postwar purges and deportations continued to add to the death toll in some countries, while elsewhere civil war broke out. Meanwhile, the Cold War began.

A. Devastation, Death, and Continuing War

By the end of World War II, an estimated 55 million people had been killed. The death toll continued to climb as the victors inflicted vengeance on the defeated. The task of reconstruction was overwhelming; Europe’s transportation and financial systems had been destroyed, and agriculture production levels were below 50% prewar production levels. One of the most serious problems was that of refugees or displaced persons, a result of both the war and Hitler’s racial policies. The problem was made worse by the peace settlements that led to forced deportations of ethnic groups. Guerilla wars and civil wars raged in the Ukraine, Greece, Poland, and Trieste.
B. From Hot to Cold War

The major conflict of the postwar years was the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, the origins of which lay in the hopes and fears aroused by World War II.

1. Fraying Seams, 1943-1945

Stalin’s chief postwar concern was to secure the Soviet Union’s western boundary by establishing communist regimes in eastern Europe. U.S. President Roosevelt favored establishing democracies based on liberal free market principles. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was concerned about the Soviet Union upsetting the balance of power in Europe and he also wished to maintain the British Empire. Roosevelt postponed hard decisions hoping they could be settled by a postwar United Nations. Hoping to avoid a new depression or the economic chaos that had followed World War I, American and European economists drew up the Bretton Woods Agreement in 1944. It established the U.S. dollar as the world reserve currency and created the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to maintain currency stability and promote economic development. However, Churchill and Stalin preferred to rely on armed force to shape the postwar world. At the summit meeting of the Big Three at Tehran in 1943, the Balkans were left open to communist occupation, despite Churchill’s objections. The summit meeting at Yalta in February 1945 resulted in the issuing of problematic compromises that left the ultimate future of Germany undecided. The final summit meeting was at Potsdam in July 1945, and by then Stalin had to deal with a new prime minister and a new president. The summit ended with hostile feelings, and the British pushed the new U.S. President, Harry S. Truman, to adopt a harder line toward Stalin.

2. Torn in Two, 1946-1949

The Cold War emerged over three key issues: Germany, the Truman Doctrine, and the Marshall Plan. The issue of Germany first led to the collapse of the war-time alliances. In 1946, the British and Americans decided to give priority to German economic recovery. They joined their zones into a single economic unit and stopped reparations payments to the Soviet Union. In 1947 the United States began the policy of containment—to resist communist expansion anywhere in the world—with the introduction of the Truman Doctrine, which promised to provide aid to countries resisting communist subjugation. The Marshall Plan of 1947 provided aid for the economic recovery of Europe, and was offered to any country that would join the Organization for European Economic Cooperation. The Marshall Plan helped stabilize and integrate western Europe’s economies and accelerated the return to prosperity, but the Soviet Union and eastern Europe refused to participate in the Marshall Plan, revealing the deepening breach between east and west. In 1949, the basic Cold War pattern took shape. The American, English, and French zones were merged to create democratic and capitalist West Germany. The Soviet zone became communist East Germany.
tested its first nuclear bomb. The United States and nine western European nations formed NATO as a military alliance to block Soviet expansion and in 1955 the Soviet Union and the eastern European countries formed the Warsaw Pact. Europe was once again divided between hostile military blocks, each side armed with nuclear weapons.

II. The West and the World: Decolonization and the Cold War

As the era of the European empires came to an end in the 1960s, the United States and the Soviet Union vied for influence over the newly independent states, and so Cold War concerns became entangled with nationalist independence struggles.

A. The End to the Age of European Empires

The European nations hoped to use their empires to enhance their power in the new international order and they regarded their empires as economically crucial in the hard times that followed World War II. However, that war had strengthened the nationalist independence movements in the colonies. After the war, nationalists resisted the re-imposition of European imperial rule, leading to bitter war, such as in Indonesia, and the British government relinquished India, Burma, and Palestine. In India, the Muslim nationalists refused to be part of a Hindu-dominated state, and the subsequent partitioning of India into a Muslim state (Pakistan) and a Hindu state (India) led to mass slaughter. The British retreat led to bloodshed in Palestine, as well, as the proclamation of the new Jewish state of Israel plunged the region into war. In the other parts of its empire, Britain hoped to use compromise and coercion to retain its colonies, but nationalism was too strong, and by the end of the 1960s the British Empire consisted mostly of island territories. France also saw its empire crumble in the postwar era. In Indochina, French rule ended in 1954 when the French were defeated at Dien Bien Phu in North Vietnam. France continued to resist the nationalist movement in Algeria, resulting in a brutal war that divided France and, after nearly plunging France into civil war, led to political change and a new constitution. Algeria became independent in 1962.

B. The Imperialist Legacy

Decolonization often had a profound impact on Western politics, and, in former colonies, the legacy of imperialism lingered on. In Rhodesia and South Africa the white settlers remained in control. In 1948 the Afrikaner National Party came to power in South Africa and imposed policies of apartheid that denied black South Africans basic civil rights. The economic legacy of imperialism is known as neo-colonialism. Although the European empires ended, the economies of the former colonies continued to be involved in a dependent relationship with the West. The former colonies continued to produce raw materials for export, while they became dependent on the importation of manufactured goods. Democratic forms of government failed to take root in the former colonies. Within a few years military governments came to power in most former colonies.

C. The Globalization of the Cold War

Decolonization was often entangled with the Cold War, which only became hot in developing countries where superpower rivalries intersected with nationalist conflicts.
1. The Korean War, 1950-1953

Korea had been divided after World War II, into a communist-allied North and an anticommunist South. In 1950 North Korea invaded South Korea in attempt to unite the country under a communist regime, a civil war that quickly became subsumed in the Cold War, as North Korea was supplied by Soviet arms and Chinese communist soldiers, while South Korea was assisted by a UN-sponsored force made up mostly of American troops. The Korean War accelerated the globalization of the Cold War. It allowed the French to convince the United States to support the struggle against communist nationalists in Vietnam, and welded Japan into the western alliance, which helped reinvigorate the Japanese economy and firmly established Japan as part of “the West.” Fearful that the Korean War was the first step in Soviet aggression, European leaders pushed for the transformation of NATO into a coordinated fighting force, which led to the rearmament of West Germany within NATO.

2. Changing Temperatures in the Cold War, 1953-1960

Stalin died in 1953, the same year that Dwight Eisenhower became president of the United States. The Eisenhower administration committed the United States to roll back communism and threatened nuclear retaliation against communist aggression. Stalin’s successor, Nikita Khrushchev, convinced his allies and foes of the Soviet’s nuclear superiority. The realization by Eisenhower and Khrushchev that because of nuclear weapons total war could not be won by either side led to a summit in 1955, a Soviet suspension of nuclear testing in 1958, and a visit by Khrushchev to the United States in 1959. This bridge-building between east and west was interrupted in 1956 by the Soviet invasion of Hungary, and the launch of the Soviet satellite Sputnik in 1957.

3. On the Brink: The Berlin Wall and the Cuban Missile Crisis

In 1960, the downing of a U.S. spy plane over Soviet territory initiated a dangerous phase of the Cold War in the early 1960s. In 1961, East Germany built the Berlin Wall, the Soviet Union resumed nuclear testing, and the new American President, John F. Kennedy, increased military spending and called for expanded civil defense. In the fall of 1962, nuclear war almost broke out when the Cold War intersected again with a nationalist revolution. In 1959, Fidel Castro had overthrown the United States–backed dictator in Cuba and drew Cuba closer to the Soviet Union. In 1962, President Kennedy learned the Soviet Union was building nuclear bases in Cuba. Over one week of crisis, secret diplomatic negotiations reached a compromise between the two superpowers, in which the Soviet Union withdrew its missiles from Cuba and the United States removed its missiles from Turkey and guaranteed that it would not invade Cuba. The Cuban Missile Crisis marked a turning point in Cold War politics. Both superpowers agreed to an above ground Nuclear Test Band treaty and a communications “hotline” to encourage personal consultation in future crises.
4. Cold War Arenas: Vietnam and the Middle East

Relations between the superpowers remained tense in the 1960s and globalization of the cold War accelerated. In Southeast Asia and the Middle East, the superpowers became powerbrokers as nationalist conflicts and regional power struggles escalated. In Vietnam the United States intervened directly in the war between the communist north and the anticommmunist south. By 1968, more than half a million American soldiers were fighting in Vietnam. In the Middle East, nationalist leaders like Egypt’s Gamel Abdul Nassar played the superpowers against each other, but the Six Day War in 1967 escalated the tendency of Middle Eastern states to align themselves with one side or the other.

5. The Third World

Many newly independent nations tried to remain outside the orbit of either superpower. They came to be collectively known as the Third World. In 1955 the first conference of nonaligned nations was held in Indonesia. Few of these nonaligned nations had much power, but they were able to make their voices heard at the United Nations.

III. The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the 1950s and 1960s

Because of the Cold War division, eastern and western Europe followed separate courses, with eastern Europeans and the Soviets suffering through a period of terror until Stalin’s death in 1953 brought political reform and the promise of prosperity. However, by the end of the 1960s, economic stagnation and political discontent still remained.

A. From Stalinist Terror to De-Stalinization

Freedom and peace did not come after the end of World War II for people in eastern Europe, who found themselves under Soviet domination and sometimes subject to forced deportation, like the Chechens. When communist Yugoslavia, under Tito, broke away from Soviet control, Stalin’s reaction was to use terror to attain complete control over the rest of eastern Europe. The Cold War only increased Stalin’s reliance on extreme measures; labor and prison camps proliferated. More communists died at the hands of their own party between 1948 and 1953 than had been killed by the Nazis in World War II. Soviet-trained security forces also targeted anyone remotely connected to “the West” for persecution. This situation only ended with Stalin’s death in 1953. His successor, Nikita Khrushchev, was determined to set communism on a new course. In a “Secret Speech” at the Communist Party’s Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956, he denounced Stalin’s crimes. The de-Stalinization campaign brought greater openness to communist countries. The governments allowed greater freedom of speech and publication. Dissent and debate reappeared, although this did not mean the end to all cultural controls or political and religious repression. Most important, de-Stalinization failed to solve the Soviet Union’s deep economic problems.

B. Re-Stalinization and Stagnation: the Brezhnev Era

Khrushchev’s reforms unsettled many high-ranking officials and, as a result, in 1964 Khrushchev was forced out of office. Khrushchev’s successor,
Leonid Brezhnev, brought economic stagnation. Growth in industrial production and labor productivity declined in the later 1960s and stagnated in the 1970s. Brezhnev returned to rigid censorship and repression of dissent. However, dissidents continued to make their voices heard by reviving the practice of self-publishing (samizdat) and circulating copies made by hand or duplicated on typewriters. Nationalism among non-Russians continued as a source of discontent inflamed by the immigration of Russians to areas inhabited by non-Russians.

C. Diversity and Dissent in Eastern Europe

In eastern Europe various states developed despite the uniformity imposed by Soviet style communist regimes.

1. 1956 and After

In 1956, protests in Poland brought back to power Wladislaw Gomulka, who had been purged in 1951. He abandoned collectivized agriculture and attempts to control the Polish Catholic church, but kept Poland in the Warsaw Pact. The de-Stalinization reforms in Hungary under Imre Nagy also set a “New Course,” but when Hungary attempted to break with the Soviet Union and leave the Warsaw Pact, Soviet troops invaded and crushed all resistance. The repression in Hungary defined the limits of de-Stalinization in eastern Europe: different courses but only within the confines of a one-party state and the Warsaw Pact. East Germany became the most industrially advanced, while Poland had family farms. Nagy’s successor, Janos Kadar, who had been purged by Stalin, allowed Hungary greater economic initiative and freedom of expression than other eastern European countries were allowed. Romania experienced one-person dictatorships under Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and Nicolae Ceausescu. In all of the eastern European countries, except in Romania and Albania, the living standards improved, there was a greater availability of consumer goods, political repression became less overt, and educational opportunities increased, but overcentralization, bureaucratic mismanagement, and political corruption kept living standards lower than in the West.

2. The Prague Spring

During the 1960s reform efforts emerged within the Czech Communist Party and brought to power Alexander Dubcek. He began to expand basic freedoms, remove communist controls from social and cultural life, and decentralize the economy, efforts that merged with a wider popular protest movement. The result was the “Prague Spring.” As Czech reform ideas began to spread to surrounding countries, other communist leaders demanded that Brezhnev take action. In August 1968, the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia and crushed the Prague Spring. Brezhnev issued the Brezhnev Doctrine, stipulating the Red Army would be used to stomp out fundamental change in any eastern European country. After 1968, eastern Europeans realized the futility of reform.
IV. The West: Consensus, Consumption, and Culture

Cold War concerns helped shape postwar society in western Europe. Europe’s economies further integrated and political centrist became the chief characteristic of political life. Most important, material prosperity returned to western Europe.

A. The Triumph of Democracy

In western Europe, the importance of parliamentary democracy was no longer in doubt, and universal suffrage prevailed in most countries, but citizenship was understood to mean not just political rights, but social ones as well, such as the right to a decent standard of living. Therefore, western European governments sought to ensure full employment and material well-being for their citizens, by nationalizing key industries, establishing public agencies to oversee and encourage investment and trade, and manipulating interest rates and currency supplies. Western Europeans also had access to extensive welfare systems.

1. Postwar Political Consensus

Social democracy was rooted in the desire for the suffering of World War II to result in a better world, but while that determination remained, much radicalism receded as the Cold War constricted political debate. Communist parties were not allowed to participate in governing coalitions, and the extreme right had been discredited by fascism and Nazism. The result was stability, as Christian Democratic parties dominated continental Europe. Christian Democratic parties succeeded because they benefited from Cold War anxieties and American aid; they were based on religion not class, thus appealing to the middle class, working class, and women; and they transformed themselves into a centrist political movement.

B. Prosperity in the West

Political developments unfolded as Europe entered an unprecedented period of prosperity and affluence by the second half of the 1950s.

1. Economic Integration

One important factor in this prosperity was economic integration. The idea of a European union first appeared during World War II as people looked for ways to ensure peace. After the war, two things pushed the idea of greater European unity. First, there was the common opposition to Stalin. Second, American postwar planners urged European governments to dismantle trade barriers and coordinate national economic plans. Recipients of Marshall aid were required to develop transnational economic institutions. In 1952, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg created the European Coal and Steel Community, joining together their coal and steel industries. Their success led them to form the European Economic Community or Common Market in 1957, which created a large free trade area and coordinated policies on wages, prices, immigration, and social security. The rapid expansion of trade among the members produced a flourishing economy.

2. The Age of Affluence
After years of depression and war-time rationing, the economic expansion sent Europeans on a spending spree. Many people were now able to buy homes and furnish them with the latest appliances, and the increase in car ownership led to an expansion of highways and parking meters.

C. Western Culture and Thought in the Age of Consumption

Existentialism and modernism remained dominant throughout the 1950s, but in the 1960s artists began to focus less on the horrors of war and more on the challenges of the Cold War. The consumer abundance began to influence artists, as well.

1. Finding Meaning in the Age of Auschwitz and the Atom Bomb

Existentialism—the idea that existence has no intrinsic meaning and the individual retains the freedom to act and create meaning—continued to be dominant throughout the 1950s, having been reinforced by the experience of the Holocaust and the Resistance. The terrors of the nuclear age also shaped culture, reinforcing the hold of abstract art, which also changed into more spontaneous styles. Nuclear fears were more popularly addressed in fiction and the movies.

2. Culture and Ideas in the World of Plenty

By the early 1960s, artists began to focus on the material items of everyday life, and consumer abundance was both celebrated and satirized. An example of this is pop art, which reflected the material rather than the spiritual, used the language of mass culture, even relied on mass production and mass marketing, challenging the role of both art and artist. In social thought, existentialism was replaced by structuralism, whose leading figure, Claude Levi-Strauss, argued that the myths of all cultures had the same “deep structures” and repeated patterns that give order to culture.

3. Science and Religion in an Age of Mass Consumption

In 1953, DNA, the basic building block of genetic material, was discovered, raising exciting but disturbing possibilities, such as cloning. Meanwhile, the Cold War–inspired space race put a man on the moon in 1969, freeing humans for the first time from the physical confines of the earth. In medicine, the development of penicillin, new vaccines, and organ transplants made a long, healthy life appear more possible. The first decade and a half after the war saw an increase in participation in religious life. Then, the 1960s saw a reversal and dramatic decline in religious activities. For the Catholics, the Second Vatican Council convened in 1963 and introduced important changes in religious practice, including the use of vernacular languages in the worship services. Vatican II reaffirmed traditional church doctrines on clerical celibacy. Following the council, the pope declared contraception to be against church teaching.

D. Social Encounters in the Age of Affluence

Economic prosperity brought the import of non-European goods, and it also brought immigrants and women into the workforce. Affluence permitted more young people to pursue higher education, as well.
1. Americanization, Coca-Colonization, and the Gaullist Protest

One of the most important cultural trends of postwar Europe was the increasing influence of the United States on European culture. The United States dominated scientific research and popular culture. European film and television industries were dominated by American films and programs. Although many Europeans embraced American culture, others were troubled by the Americanization of European culture. Many also worried about the “brain drain” of leading European scientists moving to the United States and feared they were essentially being colonized by America. One of the chief protestors was Charles De Gaulle of France, who sought to reduce American influence in Europe, and increase French influence, by pursuing independent foreign and military policies. However, the Europeans’ adoption of American culture also transformed it. For example, the Beatles adopted American rock-and-roll and mixed it with their own styles to transform popular music in Europe and America.

2. Immigration and Ethnic Diversity

A second cultural trend in industrialized European countries was the growing presence of immigrants, who came from the periphery of southern Europe and Europe’s former colonies. They provided the labor for the dirtiest and most dangerous jobs. At first they were mostly single men who eventually returned to their native countries. By the mid-1960s, however, families were starting to join these immigrants, and by the 1980s Europe had become multiethnic. The development of urban ethnic subcultures enlivened European cultures, economies, and diets, but complicated domestic politics and raised troublesome questions about national and ethnic identity.

3. The Second Sex?

In 1949, Simone de Beauvoir published The Second Sex as a critique of gender divisions in Western society. Over the next two decades, prosperity pushed women into higher education and the labor force, but in the short term, affluence and other changes in the postwar years reinforced female domesticity. In the postwar years, women began marrying younger, and Europe experienced a modest “baby boomlet.” Religious culture in the 1950s, in particular the Catholic devotion to Mary, reinforced the maternal identity of women. The maternal image of women was reinforced also by popular culture, which in magazines and on television portrayed women as staying at home and presiding over an array of new machines that made their lives easier. The Cold War hailed the domesticity of Western women as a sign of Western superiority. Prosperity, however, made families more isolated, and Cold War anxiety also encouraged the family to turn inward. For some women, domesticity seemed like a prison. Moreover, many women’s lives did not match the domestic ideal, as most poor women continued to work, and many middle-class women worked, as well, to afford the expanding list of household necessities. However, whatever jobs women did were thought to be secondary to their primary job of homemaker and mother, women’s
salaries remained substantially lower than men’s, and traditional gender roles remained firmly in place.

4. The Protest Era

Unprecedented prosperity allowed higher education systems to expand, and by the later 1960s university campuses were becoming the center of powerful political protests and demonstrations. Much of this discontent focused on the ideas of the New Left, which held that ordinary people possessed little power and warned that expanding state and corporate power threatened the individuality and independence of the ordinary citizen. Student protestors influenced by New Left thinkers demanded the right for ordinary people to participate in the structures that determined their lives. Unorthodox politics were accompanied by the overturning of traditional social rules, as student demands for “liberation” included cultural as well as economic and political issues, resulting in a sexual revolution. Protests were also linked to decolonization and the Cold War, as students identified with colonial independence movements and criticized the United States’ Cold War–inspired involvement in Vietnam.

V. Conclusion: New Definitions, New Divisions

The Cold War was an ideological encounter, but the Soviet Union’s claims to being democratic, and communist reformers’ hopes that social justice and political equality might develop, were crushed along with the Prague Spring. Meanwhile, democracy took firm root in western Europe, but the idea that Europe was truly democratic was challenged by the protests of the late 1960s.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Show popular American television shows of the era, such as Leave It to Beaver and Gunsmoke, and ask students to consider how they reinforce Cold War political positions, as well as traditional gender roles.

2. Ask students to research and write a short biography of Ho Chi Minh, including his early relations with the United States.

3. Ask students to choose a nation which was formerly a colonial territory (other than the Congo). Have them create a short in-class presentation on the nation’s decolonization efforts, successes and failures, and status today.

4. Using a current map of Africa, ask students to identify each country’s date of independence and their former colonizer(s).

5. Use the music of the 1960s, such as the songs of the Beatles, to illustrate the themes of protest of the 1960s. Ask students to research and identify other such songs. Play some of these in class, if possible.
DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Why did the Vietnam War arouse protest and the Korean War did not?
2. What role did race and racism play in decolonization?
3. Why did the reforms of Nikita Khrushchev fail?
4. Why did existentialism wane in the face of greater affluence?
5. To what degree has, or has not, European culture been Americanized?

CASE STUDIES

1. Which European countries have been more successful at incorporating immigrants into their societies, and why? Have students analyze different European experiences and policies and make presentations, including how such problems are or are not being met today.

2. In many ways the decolonization of Algeria is an excellent case study, involving questions of race, settler identity, colonial relations, and citizenship. Ask students to watch the classic 1967 film The Battle of Algiers (available on VHS only) and read Franz Fanon’s The Wretched of the Earth (available in paperback from Grove Press). Suggest that they explore the Internet site of the Permanent Mission of Algeria to the United Nations for current information on Algeria, at http://www.algeria-un.org/.

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. The NASA site found at http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/pao/History/sputnik/ includes a wealth of information on how Sputnik affected the United States.


4. A Best Picture winner, 1946’s The Best Years of Our Lives, chronicles the lives of three American servicemen as they return home after the war. This great film is now available on DVD.

5. The Internet site for CNN’s Cold War series includes the edited text of the Kitchen Debate as it appeared in the New York Times. The site is found at http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold_war/episodes/14/documents/debate/.

7. Some classic Cold War films include *The Manchurian Candidate*, *The Third Man*, and *Fail Safe* (all on DVD), and a John Wayne Film, *Big Jim McLain* (VHS only). Other films are listed on Amazon.com’s Cold War Listmania page at http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/listmania/list-browse/-/31OY0JKED5MTO/102-8624036-8567348.
CHAPTER 28

The West in the Contemporary Era: New Encounters and Transformations

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
* explain how economic and political developments in the 1970s and 1980s interacted to undermine the international structures of the postwar era.
* identify the factors that explain not only the outbreak but also the success of the revolutions of 1989-1991.
* describe the consequences of those revolutions for the societies of eastern Europe.
* discuss the implications of these developments for the meaning of “the West.”

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

* As the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union disintegrated, the West no longer had the enemy that had in many ways defined it for decades.
* The end of the Cold War did not automatically usher in democracy to the former Soviet states and the revolutions of 1989-1991 proved how violent the transition could be.
* One of the biggest challenges to the West has been Islam.
* Terrorism has replaced the Soviet Union as the West’s chief concern.
* The divide that now defines the world is one between North and South, though the division of East and West continues.

CHAPTER OUTLINE


At the end of the 1960s, the threat of nuclear war receded with the onset of détente, but that did not mean stability, as economic crisis heightened political and social polarization. The renewal of the Cold War at the end of the 1970s created further instability.

A. The 1970s: A More Uncertain Era

Détente relaxed Cold War tensions but economic developments signaled the end of postwar affluence.

1. The Era of Détente

The Cold War climate changed at the end of the 1960s, starting in West Germany. After 1969, the new West German chancellor, Willy Brandt, initiated a new Ostpolitik with the East. In 1972, East and West Germany recognized each other. Growing economic problems in both superpowers led them to embrace détente as an effort to stabilize
superpower relations. The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks led to an agreement in 1972, freezing nuclear weapons at the current balance. Division in the communist world contributed to détente. China and the Soviet Union were at odds over Mao’s industrialization programs. In 1960, Khrushchev suspended economic aid to China. By the time China exploded its own nuclear bomb in 1964, China and the Soviet Union were totally estranged. In 1971, the United States took advantage of these Sino-Soviet hostilities to improve relations with China. U.S. President Richard Nixon lifted travel and trade restrictions with China and then visited China.

2. Economic Crisis in the West

The 1970s saw an unprecedented combination of high unemployment and high inflation commonly labeled stagflation. The main causes of the economic crisis were war and oil. American support for Israel when it was attacked by Egypt and Syria in 1973 provoked the OPEC oil producers to retaliate by cutting oil supplies and increasing prices. Further price increases came in 1979 with a revolution in Iran. U.S. President Nixon’s decision to let market forces determine the value of the dollar contributed to the crisis, as did international competition, since the high cost of labor in the West caused manufacturers to move to the developing world.

3. Consequences of the Crisis

The result of the economic crisis was an increase in social tensions as workers struggled to maintain their share of the economic pie. The struggle heightened racial tensions as the unemployed began to wrongly blame immigrant labor for unemployment. The result was violence against immigrants and anti-immigration legislation. However, encounters with people of different religious and ethnic traditions reshaped European culture even as it posed a challenge to ideas of national identity. Some European countries did not allow immigrants to ever become citizens, and explicitly racist political parties, like the Front National led by Jean-Marie Le Pen in France, capitalized on anti-immigrant sentiment.

B. The 1980s: The End of Political Consensus in the West

The economic crisis of the 1970s challenged postwar social democratic assumptions, and discontented voters looked for radically new answers, either in socialism, as in Spain, Portugal, and Greece, or New Conservatism.

1. The New Conservatives

The leaders who epitomized the New Conservatism were Ronald Reagan in the United States, Helmut Kohl in West Germany, and Margaret Thatcher in Britain. New Conservatives did not emphasize social improvement, but instead promoted policies intended to create less governmental control and more opportunity for individual achievement, privatizing state-owned businesses and dismantling the welfare state. They argued that the economic crisis was due to the increase in spending on social services. Their fiscal policies did not break too sharply from their predecessors, but they were willing to tolerate high unemployment and they brought inflation under control with high interest rates. In the 1980s falling
oil prices and Reagan’s military spending spree allowed Western economies to begin growing, but unemployment rates remained high. There was now in place a new political culture of lowered expectations to which Europe’s leftist parties had to adapt. The socialist and social democratic parties in power were forced to cut social spending, as well.

2. New Challenges and New Identities: New Feminism

The economic crisis had shattered the social democratic consensus, as had the protests of the 1960s. The 1970s saw the increased activism of the feminist and environmental movements. The new feminism sought to liberate women from political and cultural limits, and coincided with increasing numbers of women working outside the home. Western politics reacted to these changes by increasing the number of women elected to public office, and feminists demanded women receive greater personal rights, equal pay for equal work, and more educational and professional opportunities.

3. New Challenges and New Identities: Environmentalism

Environmentalists challenged the structure of the industrial economies and emphasized the natural limits to growth without massive ecological devastation. In the 1980s environmentalism led to the rise of Green Parties throughout Europe.

4. From Détente to Renewed Cold War

The détente policies of the early 1970s were reversed in the late 1970s and Cold War tensions returned. Détente’s triumph came in 1975 when the United States, Canada, and European nations signed the Helsinki Accords, recognizing the existing borders and promising to safeguard human rights. Soon Soviet and eastern European dissidents were publicizing human rights abuses in their nations. The American president, Jimmy Carter, elected in 1976, placed human rights at the center of his foreign policy, alienating Soviet leaders, and the arms race accelerated. Détente died with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. The New Conservatives further increased the Cold War tensions by reviving anti-communist rhetoric, accelerating the arms build-up and deciding to deploy nuclear weapons in Europeans countries, a move that engendered widespread protest.

II. Revolution in the East

Between 1989 and 1991, revolution spread through eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, bringing to an end decades of communist rule.

A. The Crisis of Legitimacy in the East

Although the Soviet Union continued to have record-breaking production figures, the prosperity was an illusion. Overly centralized economic planning emphasized fulfillment of quotas without regard to quality or marketability, and there was little real economic growth. The elderly Soviet leadership was unable to respond to the economic crisis. The Soviet satellites in eastern Europe also experienced severe economic crises. Eastern European countries borrowed heavily from Western banks but the loans did not solve the fundamental economic
problems. In the 1980s, eastern European economic structures began to collapse from the burden of debt and the Soviet Union’s new policy of charging its satellites market value for its oil.

1. The Moment of Solidarity, the Moment of Punk

In Poland, discontent led to rise of the Solidarity movement in 1980. Solidarity not only demanded economic improvements, but also the right to form independent trade unions and basic freedoms. Fearful of Soviet intervention, the Polish government declared martial law in December 1981. However, Solidarity survived and continued to be active; in 1989 Solidarity emerged to lead Poland into democracy. Meanwhile, punk music, born of British economic decline and social division, became a cultural force among eastern European youth, demonstrating the gap between communist authorities and those they governed.

2. Nature and the Nation

Dissatisfaction in eastern European society and in the Soviet Union was also expressed by environmental protest over the wholesale ecological destruction wrought by Soviet-style industrialization. Environmentalism also reinforced nationalist identity and protest against Soviet control.

B. Gorbachev and Radical Reform

In 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev came to power at the age of 54, signaling a generational change in Soviet leadership.

1. Glasnost and Perestroika

Gorbachev hoped to restore and reform the Soviet system and he introduced the policy of glasnost, or openness, abandoning the deception and censorship that had characterized the Soviet system. Wary at first, the Soviet people became convinced that glasnost was real when their government was honest about the Chernobyl disaster. Gorbachev hoped glasnost would overcome the alienation and apathy among Soviet citizens. Another policy introduced by Gorbachev was perestroika, or the restructuring of the Soviet system along the lines of modernization, decentralization, and the introduction of a limited market. Perestroika applied to the political realm, as well, and in the May 1989 elections, Soviet voters were for the first time allowed a choice of candidates.

2. Ending the Cold War

Restructuring had to apply to international relations, too. Gorbachev concluded that the Soviet Union could not afford the arms race of the Cold War, and between 1987 and 1991, he signed a series of agreements with the United States, reducing the number of nuclear missiles.

C. The Revolutions of 1989 in Eastern Europe

In 1985, Gorbachev informed eastern European leaders that the Red Army would not be used to crush rebellions in their countries. In 1988 he declared in a speech at the United Nations that eastern Europe was free to choose its own path. Immediately, Hungary and Poland began to do away with the communist system. In the early 1980s, both countries had introduced limited market and political reforms, but now Hungary legalized noncommunist parties and negotiations with
Solidarity led to free elections in Poland in 1989. The Berlin Wall fell in November 1989. In December a revolution in Czechoslovakia toppled the communist regime and a dissident playwright, Vaclav Havel, became president. In East Germany, the Christian Democrats took power in March 1990, and East and West Germany were reunited. In Bulgaria, a party of reform-minded communists replaced the government of Todor Zhivkov. Only in Romania did revolution bring bloodshed as its dictator Nicolai Ceausescu used troops to try and retain power, but the army soon turned against Ceausescu and he was overthrown and executed.

**D. The Disintegration of the Soviet Union**

By 1990 Gorbachev had ended the Cold War and brought about change in eastern Europe but he had not succeeded in bringing prosperity to the Soviet Union. Instead, the communist system he was trying to save was falling apart. Food and other essential goods remained scarce, prices had risen, and productivity and incomes were falling. Thus Gorbachev faced fierce opposition both from hard-line communists opposed to his reforms and from liberal reformers who felt his policies were not going far enough. In August 1991, the hard-liners attempted to overthrow Gorbachev, but one of the more liberal reformers, the Russian Republic president Boris Yeltsin, led the resistance that defeated the coup. Ultimately, however, Gorbachev was defeated by nationalism, which had resurfaced as separatist nationalist movements under glasnost. Unwilling to wage all-out war to preserve the Soviet Union, at the end of 1991 Gorbachev resigned as president of a country that no longer existed.

**III. In the Wake of Revolution**

Like the former Soviet Union, eastern European countries struggled with high inflation, high unemployment, economic instability, nationalist hostilities, and even civil war.

**A. Crisis Throughout the Former Soviet Union**

For many, the end of the Soviet Union ushered in hunger, homelessness, and fear. In Russia, President Yeltsin applied “shock therapy” to the economy, lifting price controls, abolishing subsidies, and privatizing state industries, but the economy continued to get worse. In 1998 Russia essentially went bankrupt. Although the managers of state industries became rich when these industries were privatized, the majority of Russians experienced poverty. In many of the former Soviet Republics, economic and social collapse fostered extreme nationalism. The biggest challenge came when Chechnya demanded independence. Presidents Yeltsin and Putin kept Chechnya in the Russian federation, but only by fighting a bloody war.

**B. Eastern Europe: Stumbling Toward Democracy**

In eastern Europe the return to freedom brought a sudden change to a capitalist economy. Governments slashed government spending at the behest of the International Monetary Fund upon whose loans those governments depended. Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and the Baltic countries experienced economic hardship but the transition from communism to capitalism was fairly
rapid. In Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania economic instability continued longer and so did economic hardship. Political stability was also a challenge, as the anti-communist revolutionaries fragmented after their victory and voters fed up with economic hardship voted ex-communists into power. Yet the revolutions of 1989 were not reversed, and even the ex-communists continued the liberal economic reforms, albeit in a more gradual form. Ethnic hostilities were a greater challenge. In 1993, Czechoslovakia ceased to exist and was replaced by the separate states of Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Anti-Semitism and discrimination against ethnic minorities reappeared.

C. The “German Problem”? 

In Germany, unification produced economic troubles, and high unemployment in the eastern region fueled racial violence. By 2001 the German economy was standing still. The gap between the former East and West Germanies remained wide and there was no consensus about Germany’s direction in the twenty-first century.

D. The Breakup of Yugoslavia

The collapse of communism had horrific results in Yugoslavia, as the revival of nationalist hostilities caused civil war and mass murder. The communist guerilla leader Tito had used federalism to prevent any one of six equal ethnic republics from dominating the others, while communism provided a unifying ideology. Many Yugoslavs, however, believed it was Tito who held Yugoslavia together, and Tito died in 1980. The same year riots exploded in Kosovo between Serbs and Albanians. During the 1980s Yugoslavia experienced severe economic problems. As the 1989 revolutions swept through eastern Europe, ethnic nationalism surfaced in Yugoslavia. As Croats, Muslims, and other groups called for the breakup of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milosevic, a nationalist Serb leader, used the Serb-dominated Yugoslav army to retain Serb dominance. When Croatia declared independence in 1991, civil war erupted, spreading to Bosnia in 1992. All sides used ethnic cleansing to enforce their claims to territory, although the Serbs initiated the practice and used it most extensively. Women were sent to camps where they endured regular rape. In 1994, NATO intervened and bombarded Serbian positions. The Dayton Accords in 1995 established an uneasy peace in Bosnia. In 1998, another wave of fighting, mass rape, and ethnic cleansing erupted in Kosovo. After another NATO bombardment of Serbia, Russian and NATO troops moved into Kosovo. In 2001 Milosevic was placed on trial for genocide.

IV. Rethinking the West

The West, which had for so long defined itself as anti-communist, anti-Soviet, and anti-Warsaw Pact, had to revise its identity after communism and the Soviet Union’s collapse, at the same time that other social, political, and cultural changes were taking place.
A. The European Union

With the end of the Cold War, western European nations united as the European Union and took on a much more important role in global affairs. During the 1970s and 1980s, European nations worked toward greater unity. The European Economic Community was enlarged by the addition of Britain, Denmark, and Ireland (1973), Greece (1981), Spain and Portugal (1986), and Austria, Finland, and Sweden (1990s). In 1979 the first European Parliament was elected, and the European Court of Justice began to assert the primacy of the European Community over individual nations’ laws. The Single European Act in 1985 and Maastricht Agreements of 1991 replaced the European Community with the European Union (EU). In the 1990s, national passports were replaced by a common EU document and in 2003 a single currency, the euro, replaced national currencies. The end of the Cold War raised the question of admitting new members from eastern Europe. Rigorous qualifications were imposed as part of the admission process, which clearly defined “Europe” as capitalist and democratic. In 2004, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus, and Malta joined the EU. Although many Europeans welcomed these signs of a united Europe, “Euro-skeptics” questioned the economic value of unification. Small producers were hurt by the stream of regulations and they protested that the process of integration favored large, international firms. Other western Europeans saw the growing political power of the EU as a threat to national sovereignty and worried over a loss of jobs to eastern Europe. As a result, a proposed EU constitution was defeated in France and the Netherlands in 2005, raising doubts about Europe’s future political and economic unification.

B. Islam, Terrorism, and European Identity

Turkey was not included in admission to the EU in 2003, mostly for economic reasons, but also because most Turks are Muslim, and for many Europeans “Muslim” was incompatible with “European.”

1. Muslim Communities in Europe

Within Europe the number of Muslims is large, growing, and likely to continue to grow. Muslims in Europe vary tremendously. In eastern Europe, they are a part of old, established nations, while in western Europe they are mostly immigrants or the recent descendants of immigrants. The status of Muslims in European countries also varies; in Britain, Muslims from India and Pakistan had full citizenship because they came from the Commonwealth, while until 2004, Muslims in Germany did not. Overall, most Muslims in Europe were more likely to be less educated, more likely to be unemployed, and generally had a lower standard of living than non-Muslims. Moreover, the very presence of the Muslims led some non-Muslim Europeans to argue that their own cultures were under threat.

2. Terrorism, the West, and the Middle East

After the Cold War, terrorism replaced communism as the West’s chief enemy, against which the West defined itself. Terrorism is anti-
democratic in that it seeks to use violence and intimidation to achieve its political ends, but the history of the West’s political culture prevents an easy equation between the West and law and democracy. Terrorism grew out of late nineteenth-century anarchism, and anarchists, like contemporary terrorists, lacked access to political power. Unable to achieve their goals through the normal political process, anarchists attempted to destabilize governments through acts of terror. Thwarted nationalism can lead to terrorism. The Basque separatist group Eta in Spain and the Irish Republican Army in Northern Ireland used terror in their struggle to gain independence. However, by the 1990s, terrorism was particularly associated, in the mind of the West, with the Middle East and Islam. A major reason for this was the on-going Palestinian–Israeli conflict. The failure to implement the UN resolution promising a Palestinian state led to the formation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964. The occupation of all Palestinian territory by Israel in 1967 led the PLO to turn to terrorism. American support of Israel caused many Muslims to view the United States as backing a repressive regime.

3. Islamism and the West

Islamism is explicitly anti-Western and especially anti-American; however, Islamism is rejected by most Muslims. Also fueling Islamism was the fundamentalist surge, not only in Islam but in many religious traditions, which arose out of the confusing change and growing secularization of modernity. The dislocation, discrimination, and disempowerment of the Muslim immigrant experience was also a factor, as was the West’s willingness during the Cold War to support corrupt and unpopular governments, such as that of Iran, which fell to a popular Islamist revolution in 1979. During the 1990s, anti-West hostility increased as a result of the Gulf War of 1991, which freed Kuwait from Iraqi invaders. After the war, American forces remained in bases in Saudi Arabia. Their presence offended Muslims and fueled anti-Western sentiment. The wars in Bosnia and Chechnya also fed Islamist hatred of the West. Islamists included Russia as part of “the West,” especially after the Soviet–Afghan War of 1979-1989. On September 11, 2001, the most deadly Islamist terrorist attack yet seen was made on New York City’s World Trade Center and the Pentagon in Washington D.C. After the attack, the United States attacked Afghanistan in October 2001, and American and British forces invaded Iraq in March 2003, the first preemptive war ever waged by the United States.

4. Euro-Islam

The encounter between Islam and Europe was not entirely negative, as most European Muslims rejected Islamism. Instead, many Muslims in Europe saw themselves as both fully Muslim and fully European, and the creators of a new, Euro-Islam culture. These Muslims maintain there is no contradiction between Islam and the values of the West, and Islamic scholars of Euro-Islam like Tariq Ramadan argue that
Muslims in Europe and the United States can live and profess their faith in community with non-Muslims. European Muslim women have also had an important role in shaping Euro-Islam, in particular eradicating traditional practices harmful to women and girls.

C. Into the Postmodern Era

The end of the Cold War, the formation of the EU, and the development of significant Muslim communities in western Europe joined with intellectual, artistic, and technological developments to demand a re-definition of the West. Broadly speaking, postmodernism refers to a rejection of Western cultural supremacy, and more precisely a challenge to the notion that Western science and rationality represented a single, universally applicable standard of “modernity.”

1. The Making of the Postmodern

Postmodernism resulted from the union of postmodernist art and architecture with the literary theories of poststructuralism. Postmodernist architecture was anti-elitist, eclectic, and anti-universalist, reviving and combining traditional, regional, and local styles. Postmodernist artists rejected the ideas of the elite artistic genius and art for art’s sake, insisting art had to communicate with the public. In literature, postmodernism drew from poststructuralism, which argued that because experience is shaped by language, the idea of universal truth must be abandoned. The poststructuralist “decentering,” or challenge of any center of authority, led to a wide-ranging analysis of power and knowledge. The postmodern view that cultural values are always in flux was challenged by traditional critics.

2. Postmodern Cultures and Postindustrial Technologies

Popular culture in many ways confirmed postmodernism, recycling parts of the past in new ways and using technology to “decenter” into multiple popular cultures. Postmodern concerns with communication, interpretation, and authority seemed appropriate for what has been called “the Information Age,” or the postindustrial society. The industrial age was defined by production, but the postindustrial age is more interested in marketing than in manufacturing. Postindustrial society is characterized by images, ideas, and information, and is epitomized in the personal computer, which has given people access to unprecedented amounts of information and which governments find impossible to control. Similarly, developments in medical technologies such as assisted fertility treatments and genetic research have provided many new opportunities, but have also raised important ethical questions.

3. Postmodern Patterns in Religious Life

Postmodern patterns – the fragmentation of cultures, the collapse of centers of authority, the supremacy of image -- have also affected religious life and practice after the 1970s. Christianity was no longer a common cultural bond among Europeans, Islam became the fastest-growing religious community in the West while regular churchgoers became a small minority of the population, and religious faith became a private matter. Pope John Paul II experienced unprecedented popularity, despite his uncompromising stand on the church’s traditional teachings,
but much of that popularity was based on image, not authority, and he was unable to bring his rebellious flock in Europe and the United States into line with church teaching on birth control.

D. The Global Challenge

The globalization of market capitalism and a worldwide environmental crisis also called into doubt such assumptions of Western society as national borders, the scope of action open to individual governments, and Western habits of consumption.

1. The Global Economy

Technological innovations like the personal computer, the fax machine, and the wireless telephone not only made national borders more permeable, but required that businesses be more flexible and able to immediately respond to changing markets and technologies. This spurred globalization, and the worker became more vulnerable thanks to subcontracting, outsourcing, and downsizing in a world where companies were merging and fragmenting as they pursued efficiency and a competitive edge. Nonelected individuals and institutions increasingly determined national economies, not elected governments, as demonstrated by the effects in the 1990s of currency speculators as well as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Globalization, however, widened the gap between the “North” (wealthy nations) and the “South” (poor nations), leading to “antiglobalization” protestors who highlighted such costs of globalization as the “debt crisis” of the world’s poorest countries.

2. The Environmental Crisis

The environmental crisis also revealed the limits of Western governments, as environmental degradation proceeded despite treaties mandating environmental protection.

V. Conclusion: Where Is the West Now?

In the new millennium, “the West” may no longer be a conceptual border marker, but it still retains a distinct identity, in particular its ideal of democracy.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

1. Ask students to research and write a short paper on current French and British immigration policies (BBC and NPR Web sites are good places to begin). What are current policies? What are the current controversies?

2. Ask students to research and write a short paper on the state of the Green Party movement in the world.

3. Have students choose one of the current states that has been formed from the former Yugoslavia. Have them research and write a history of that state, focusing specifically on the role of nationalism and national identity.
4. Have students map members of the EU, including when they became members. Which other countries are seeking EU membership and which are not? What are the reasons for postponing some memberships?

5. Use the site of the International Forum on Globalization (at http://www.ifg.org/) to explore the goals and theories of the anti-globalization movement.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

1. Was the New Conservatism the same for Reagan, Thatcher, and Kohl, or were there differences?

2. Why did Gorbachev’s reform efforts not succeed in remaking the Soviet system?

3. Has terrorism replaced communism as the enemy of the West?

4. What is postmodernism?

5. What are the most pressing issues of the world today?

CASE STUDIES

1. Jean-Marie Le Pen’s startling success in the 2002 French presidential race (though he did lose in a landslide to Chirac) received extensive international news coverage. Ask students to research this coverage and address the following two topics, either in a paper or in class. How was Le Pen presented in different types of media (newspapers, television, etc.)? What explained Le Pen’s success?

2. After reading the text’s section on The Sentencing of Salman Rushdie, ask students to consider what other events (beyond the September 11 bombings) have also highlighted the seemingly growing separation between the Middle East and the West.

FURTHER RESOURCES

1. Michael Moore’s films Roger and Me (1989) and Bowling for Columbine (2002) are both available on DVD.


5. More information about the poststructuralist theories of Michel Foucault can be found at http://theory.org.uk/foucault/.
