

## FOUNDATIONS (8000 BCE TO 600 CE)

### ENVIRONMENTAL AND PERIODIZATION ISSUES

The ability to settle was based almost entirely on successful cultivation of crops and domestication of animals. These drastic changes in human life are known collectively as the Neolithic Revolution that almost certainly happened independently in different places over a large span of time. Although the Neolithic Revolution was one of the most significant Marker Events in world history, it occurred gradually and probably by trial and error.

#### The changes that resulted include:

- **Increase in reliable food supplies** - Agricultural skills allowed people to control food production, and domestication of animals both helped to make agricultural production more efficient and increased the availability of food.
- **Rapid increase in total human population** - Reliable food supplies meant that people were less likely to starve to death. With increasing life spans came increasing reproduction, and more children meant that there were more people to tend the land and animals.
- **Job specialization** - Other occupations than farming developed, since fewer people were needed to produce food. Some early specialized jobs include priests, traders, and builders.
- **Widening of gender differences** - Status distinctions between men and women increased, as men took over most agricultural cultivation and domestication of animals. Women were responsible for raising children, cooking food, and keeping the house, but in virtually all of the early civilizations men became more and more dominant. A patriarchal system commonly developed, with men holding power in the family, the economy, and the government.
- **Development of distinction between settled people and "nomads"** - All people did not settle into communities but remained as hunters and gatherers. As more settled communities developed, the distinction between agriculturalists and hunters and gatherers grew.

### THE NATURE OF CIVILIZATION

These changes in turn allowed the development of "civilization," a basic organizing principle in world history. Civilization may be defined in many ways, but it is generally characterized by:

- Large cities that dominate the countryside around them - Growing populations required more food production, so the cities controlled their hinterlands in order to guarantee a reliable and continuous supply of food for their inhabitants.
- Monumental architecture and public building projects that take many forms - They may include temples, palaces, irrigation projects, city walls, public arenas, government buildings, and aqueducts.
- A complex political organization - In order to coordinate activities and provide protection for the cities and hinterlands, governments developed. The larger the area and population, the more demanding political positions became, and control of the government began to move away from kinship ties. Although many early rulers passed their authority down to their sons, other factors became important, such as military prowess and ability.
- A written language - This important development in human history allowed societies to organize and maintain the growing political, social, and economic structure that followed settlement into agricultural areas. Those societies that developed a written language were able to communicate multiple ideas and large amounts of information that in turn encouraged greater complexity and growth.
- Specialization of labor - With basic food needs taken care of by fewer people, others may specialize in jobs that help to improve the quality of life. For example, engineers may construct bigger and better irrigation systems, and bureaucrats may increase their level of government services.
- Advanced art and literature - In prehistoric times and in simple communities, most artwork and literature was (is) produced by people who were preoccupied with activities that sustained their lives, such as hunting and gathering or farming. Art consisted of simple drawings, and literature usually took the form of oral stories passed down from one generation to the next. With the advent of civilization, some people had the time to concentrate on art and literature, making them their primary occupation.
- Long distance trade - As technologies improved and specialization increased, trade with other civilization centers began. This trade led to cultural diffusion, or the spreading and sharing of cultural characteristics. Not only was material culture - objects such as pottery, tools, and textiles - shared, but nonmaterial culture - such as beliefs, customs, and values - also spread, contributing to the cosmopolitan nature of cities.

## THE CIVILIZATION CONTROVERSY

Advantages of Civilization	Disadvantages of Civilizations
Development of specialized skills, inventions, arts, and literature	Increase in class and gender distinctions, creating oppression for some
Building of economically and politically coordinated cities	Overproduction of land, depletion of soil, eventual destruction caused by increase in population
Increased ability to protect people from dangers both inside and outside the city	Increased attacks from outsiders attracted to wealth; internal crime promoted by crowded conditions
Growth of prosperity, improving quality of life	Creation of life-threatening congestion, pollution, disease, and decrease in sanitation

## PERIODIZATION

The Foundations time period (8000 BCE to 600 CE) is so vast that there are many ways to divide it into periods or eras. However, some major breaks within the time period are these:

- 1) **Early agricultural and technological development (about 8000 BCE to 3500 BCE)** - Small groups of settlers grew into kinship-based villages that practiced both crop cultivation and domestication of animals. Tools and inventions helped villages to stabilize and eventually grow.
- 2) **Development of the earliest civilizations (about 3500 to 1500 BCE)** - Villages grew into cities that came to dominate the land around them. Collectively known as the "river valley" civilizations, they include:
  - Mesopotamia (developed by 3500 BCE or so) - between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in the Middle East
  - Egypt (developed by 3000 BCE or so) - along the Nile River in northeastern Africa
  - Indus Valley people (developed by 2500 BCE or so) - along the Indus River in south central Asia
  - Shang China (developed by 1700 BCE or so) - along several rivers in the north China plains
- 3) **Classical civilizations (approximately 1000 BCE to 600 CE)** - These civilizations were generally much larger than the earlier ones, and their political economic, cultural, and military organizations usually were more complex. All traded extensively with others, and conquered many new territories. Classical civilizations include Zhou and Han China, the Roman Empire, and the Gupta Empire in India.

## COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RIVER-VALLEY CIVILIZATIONS

Each early civilization developed its own unique ways of life, but they all shared some common characteristics:

- **Location in river valleys** - Rivers provided water for crops, as well as the easiest form of transportation. All four river valleys of the earliest civilizations had very fertile soil called loess, or alluvial soil carried and deposited as river water traveled downstream.
- **Complex irrigation systems** - Controlling the flow of the rivers was a major issue for all of the civilizations, and all of them channeled the water for agricultural use through irrigation systems.
- **Development of legal codes** - The most famous set of laws was Hammurabi's Code, but all wrote and implemented laws as political organization and long-distance trade grew more complex.
- **Use of money** - Long distance trade made the barter system (trading one type of good for another) impractical, so all the civilizations developed some form of money for economic exchanges.
- **Elaborate art forms and/or written literature** - These took different forms, but all civilizations showed advancements in these areas. For example, Egyptians built pyramids and concentrated on decorate arts, and Mesopotamians wrote complex stories like the Epic of Gilgamesh.
- **More formal scientific knowledge, numbering systems, and calendars** - Developments in these areas varied from civilization to civilization, but all formalized knowledge in at least some of these areas.
- **Intensification of social inequality** - In all river valley civilizations, gender inequality grew, and all practiced some form of slavery. Slaves were often captives in war or hereditary, and they were used for household work, public building projects, and agricultural production.

## **NOMADS AND MIGRATIONS (3500 - 500 BCE)**

During the era of the earliest river valley civilizations, numerous nomadic groups migrated to new areas, with many resulting repercussions. Many of the kingdoms and empires themselves were founded by nomadic groups that took control and settled into the area of the people that they conquered. Mesopotamia in particular, largely because of its geography, was always subject to frequent invasions from outsiders. As we saw earlier, nomads also played a large role in the fall of empires around 1200 BCE. Other groups migrated westward to Europe, setting the stage for later developments there.

Three major migrations of the era from 3500 - 1100 BCE are:

- **Phoenicians** - By about 2000 BCE this small group of seafaring people from a coastal area of the eastern Mediterranean Sea had set up colonies in North Africa and southern Europe. Pressured by both lack of space in their homeland and desire for prosperity from trade, the Phoenicians traveled widely over the entire Mediterranean area. To facilitate their trading, they simplified the cuneiform system, producing an alphabet with 22 characters that was far easier to learn and use. Not only did the Phoenicians spread their maritime skills, but their alphabet became the basis for alphabets in Greece, Rome, and eventually for many modern languages.
- **Israelites** - According to Judaism, the Israelites actually originated about 2000 BCE in the Mesopotamian city of Ur with the founder of the religion, Abraham. Abraham and his family migrated to the eastern Mediterranean, where they settled in a land they called Canaan. The Jews were distinctly different from other people of the area because they were monotheistic, believing in only one god. They later migrated to Egypt to escape a spreading drought. There they became slaves, and under their leader Moses, they returned to Canaan where they eventually formed the kingdom of Israel. The Jewish religion greatly influenced the people that they contacted, although it did not actively encourage conversion of non-Jews. Jewish beliefs and traditional stories were written down and later became basic to Christianity and Islam. The religion stressed the importance of prayer, worship, and good behavior — tenets that have become characteristic of many other monotheistic religions.
- **Aryans** - These herding peoples originated in the Caucasus area, but they began migrating in many directions about the mid 2nd millennium BCE. Waves of Aryan migrants invaded the Indian subcontinent, decimating the cities of the Indus Valley. The Aryans remained a nomadic people for many years, but eventually pushed eastward, settling in the fertile Ganges River area as agriculturalists. The Aryans imposed their caste system on the natives, a complex social structure with strict social status differences and virtually no social mobility. Their stories also became the basis for Hinduism.

## **THE CLASSICAL CIVILIZATIONS (1000 BCE - 600 CE)**

The period after the decline of river valley civilizations (about 1000 BCE - 600 CE) is often called the classical age. During this era world history was shaped by the rise of several large civilizations that grew from areas where the earlier civilizations thrived. The classical civilizations differ from any previous ones in these ways:

1. They kept better and more recent records, so historical information about them is much more abundant. We know more about not just their wars and their leaders, but also about how ordinary people lived.
2. The classical societies provide many direct links to today's world, so that we may refer to them as root civilizations, or ones that modern societies have grown from.
3. Classical civilizations were expansionist, deliberately conquering lands around them to create large empires. As a result, they were much larger in land space and population than the river civilizations were.

Three areas where civilizations proved to be very durable were

- The Mediterranean - Two great classical civilizations grew up around this area: the Greeks and the Romans.
- China - The classical era began with the Zhou Empire and continued through the Han Dynasty.
- India - Although political unity was difficult for India, the Mauryan and Gupta Empire emerged during the classical era.

## COMMON FEATURES OF CLASSICAL CIVILIZATIONS

The three areas of classical civilizations developed their own beliefs, lifestyles, political institutions, and social structures. However, there were important similarities among them:

- Patriarchal family structures - Like the river valley civilizations that preceded them, the classical civilization valued male authority within families, as well as in most other areas of life.
- Agricultural-based economies - Despite more sophisticated and complex job specialization, the most common occupation in all areas was farming.
- Complex governments - Because they were so large, these three civilizations had to invent new ways to keep their lands together politically. Their governments were large and complex, although they each had unique ways of governing
- Expanding trade base - Their economic systems were complex. Although they generally operated independently, trade routes connected them by both land and sea.

## GLOBAL TRADE AND CONTACT

During the classical era the major civilizations were not entirely isolated from one another. Migrations continued, and trade increased, diffusing technologies, ideas, and goods from civilization centers to more parts of the world. However, the process was slow. Chinese inventions such as paper had not yet reached societies outside East Asia by the end of the classical era. The Western Hemisphere was not yet in contact with the Eastern Hemisphere. Nevertheless, a great deal of cultural diffusion did take place, and larger areas of the world were in contact with one another than in previous eras.

One very important example of cultural diffusion was Hellenization, or the deliberate spread of Greek culture. The most important agent for this important change was Alexander the Great, who conquered Egypt, the Middle East, and the large empire of Persia that spread eastward all the way to the Indus River Valley. Alexander was Macedonian, but he controlled Greece and was a big fan of Greek culture. His conquests meant that Greek architecture, philosophy, science, sculpture, and values diffused to large areas of the world and greatly increased the importance of Classical Greece as a root culture.

Trade routes that linked the classical civilizations include:

- **The Silk Road** - This overland route extended from western China, across Central Asia, and finally to the Mediterranean area. Chinese silk was the most desired commodity, but the Chinese were willing to trade it for other goods, particularly for horses from Central Asia. There was no single route, but it consisted of a series of passages with common stops along the way. Major trade towns appeared along the way where goods were exchanged. No single merchant traveled the entire length of the road, but some products (particularly silk) did make it from one end to the other.
- **The Indian Ocean Trade** - This important set of water routes became even more important in later eras, but the Indian Ocean Trade was actively in place during the classical era. The trade had three legs: one connected eastern Africa and the Middle East with India; another connected India to Southeast Asia; and the final one linked Southeast Asia to the Chinese port of Canton.
- **Saharan Trade** - This route connected people that lived south of the Sahara to the Mediterranean and the Middle East. The Berbers, nomads who traversed the desert, were the most important agents of trade. They carried goods in camel caravans, with Cairo at the mouth of the Nile River as the most important destination. There they connected to other trade routes, so that Cairo became a major trade center that linked many civilizations together.
- **Sub-Saharan Trade** - This trade was probably inspired by the Bantu migration, and by the end of the classical era people south of the Sahara were connect to people in the eastern and southern parts of Africa. This trade connected to the Indian Ocean trade along the eastern coast of Africa, which in turn connected the people of sub-Saharan Africa to trade centers in Cairo and India.

### TRADE DURING THE CLASSICAL ERA (1000 BCE to 600 CE)

Route	Description	What traded?	Who participated?	Cultural diffusion
Silk Road	Overland from western China to the Mediterranean Trade made possible by development of a camel hybrid capable of long dry trips	From west to east - horses, alfalfa, grapes, melons, walnuts  From east to west - silk, peaches, apricots, spices, pottery, paper	Chinese, Indians, Parthians, central Asians, Romans  Primary agents of trade - central Asian nomads	Chariot warfare, the stirrup, music, diversity of populations, Buddhism and Christianity, wealth and prosperity (particularly important for central Asian nomads)
Indian Ocean Trade	By water from Canton in China to Southeast Asia to India to eastern Africa and the Middle East; monsoon-controlled	Pigments, pearls, spices, bananas and other tropical fruits	Chinese, Indians, Malays, Persians, Arabs, people on Africa's east coast	Lateen sail (flattened triangular shape) permitted sailing far from coast  Created a trading class with mixture of cultures, ties to homeland broken
Saharan Trade	Points in western Africa south of the Sahara to the Mediterranean; Cairo most important destination  Camel caravans	Salt from Sahara to points south and west  Gold from western Africa  Wheat and olives from Italy  Roman manufactured goods to western Africa	Western Africans, people of the Mediterranean  Berbers most important agents of trade	Technology of the camel saddle - important because it allowed domestication and use of the camel for trade
Sub-Saharan Trade	Connected Africans south and east of the Sahara to one another; connected in the east to other trade routes	Agricultural products, iron weapons	Diverse peoples in sub-Saharan Africa	Bantu language, "Africanity"

## **THE LATE CLASSICAL ERA: THE FALL OF EMPIRES (200 TO 600 CE)**

Recall that all of the river-valley civilization areas experienced significant decline and/or conquest in the time period around 1200 BCE. A similar thing happened to the classical civilizations between about 200 and 600 CE, and because the empires were larger and more connected, their fall had an even more significant impact on the course of world history. Han China was the first to fall (around 220 CE), then the Western Roman Empire (476 CE), and finally the Gupta in 550 CE.

### **SIMILARITIES**

Several common factors caused all three empires to fall:

- Attacks from the Huns - The Huns were a nomadic people of Asia that began to migrate south and west during this time period. Their migration was probably caused by drought and lack of pasture, and the invention and use of the stirrup facilitated their attacks on all three established civilizations.
- Deterioration of political institutions - All three empires were riddled by political corruption during their latter days, and all three suffered under weak-willed rulers. Moral decay also characterized the years prior to their respective falls.
- Protection/maintenance of borders - All empires found that their borders had grown so large that their military had trouble guarding them. A primary example is the failure of the Great Wall to keep the Huns out of China. The Huns generally just went around it.
- Diseases that followed the trade routes - Plagues and epidemics may have killed off as much as half of the population of each empire.

### **DIFFERENCES**

Even though the empires shared common reasons for their declines, some significant differences also may be seen.

- The Gupta's dependence on alliances with regional princes broke down, exhibiting the tendency toward political fragmentation on the Indian subcontinent.
- Rome's empire lasted much longer than did either of the other two. The Roman Empire also split in two, and the eastern half endured for another 1000 years after the west fell.
- The fall of empire affected the three areas in different ways. The fall of the Gupta probably had the least impact, partly because political unity wasn't the rule anyway, and partly because the traditions of Hinduism and the caste system (the glue that held the area together) continued on after the empire fell. The fall of the Han Dynasty was problematic for China because strong centralized government was in place, and social disorder resulted from the loss of authority. However, dynastic cycles that followed the dictates of the Mandate of Heaven were well defined in China, and the Confucian traditions continued to give coherence to Chinese society. The most devastating fall of all occurred in Rome. Roman civilization depended almost exclusively on the ability of the government and the military to control territory. Even though Christianity emerged as a major religion, it appeared so late in the life of the empire that it provided little to unify people as Romans after the empire fell. Instead, the areas of the empire fragmented into small parts and developed unique characteristics, and the Western Roman Empire never united again.

### **COMMON CONSEQUENCES**

The fall of the three empires had some important consequences that represent major turning points in world history:

- Trade was disrupted but survived, keeping intact the trend toward increased long-distance contact. Trade on the Indian Ocean even increased as conflict and decline of political authority affected overland trade.
- The importance of religion increased as political authority decreased. In the west religion, particularly Christianity, was left to slowly develop authority in many areas of people's lives. Buddhism also spread quickly into China, presenting itself as competition to Confucian traditions.
- Political disunity in the Middle East forged the way for the appearance of a new religion in the 7th century. By 600 CE Islam was in the wings waiting to make its entrance onto the world stage.

## **BELIEF SYSTEMS**

Belief systems include both religions and philosophies that help to explain basic questions of human existence, such as "Where did we come from?" Or "What happens after death?" or "What is the nature of human relationships or interactions?" Many major beliefs systems that influence the modern world began during the Foundations Era (8000 BCE to 600 CE).

Religion was extremely important to the river-valley civilizations, and most areas of life revolved around pleasing the gods. Monotheism was first introduced about 2000 BCE by Israelites, but monotheism did not grow substantially till much later. Each of the classical civilizations had very different belief systems that partially account for the very different directions that the three areas took in succeeding eras. Rome and Greece were polytheistic, but Christianity had a firm footing by the time the western empire fell. Hinduism dominated Indian society from very early times, although Buddhism also took root in India. From China's early days, ancestors were revered, a belief reinforced by the philosophy of Confucianism. Other belief systems, such as Daoism, Legalism, and Buddhism, also flourished in China by 600 CE.

### **POLYTHEISM**

The earliest form of religion was probably polydaemonism (the belief in many spirits), but somewhere in the Neolithic era people began to put these spirits together to form gods. In polytheism, each god typically has responsibility for one area of life, like war, the sea, or death. In early agricultural societies, quite logically most of the gods had responsibility for the raising of crops and domesticated animals. The most prominent god in many early societies was the Sun God, who took many forms and went by many names. Perceptions of the gods varied from one civilization to the next, with some seeing them as fierce and full of retribution, and others seeing them as more tolerant of human foibles.

### **HINDUISM**

The beginnings of Hinduism are difficult to trace, but the religion originated with the polytheism that the Aryans brought as they began invading the Indian subcontinent sometime after 2000 BCE.

Hinduism assumes the eternal existence of a universal spirit that guides all life on earth. A piece of the spirit called the atman is trapped inside humans and other living creatures. The most important desire of the atman is to be reunited with the universal spirit, and every aspect of an individual's life is governed by it. When someone dies, their atman may be reunited, but most usually is reborn in a new body. A person's caste membership is a clear indication of how close he or she is to the desired reunion. Some basic tenets of Hinduism are

- Reincarnation - Atman spirits are reborn in different people after one body dies. This rebirth has no beginning and no end, and is part of the larger universal spirit that pervades all of life.
- Karma - This widely used word actually refers to the pattern of cause and effect that transcends individual human lives. Whether or not an individual fulfills his/her duties in one life determines what happens in the next.
- Dharma - Duties called dharma are attached to each caste position. For example, a warrior's dharma is to fight honorably, and a wife's duty is to serve her husband faithfully. Even the lowliest caste has dharma attached to it. If one fulfills this dharma, the reward is for the atman to be reborn into a higher caste.
- Moksha - Moksha is the highest, most sought-after goal for the atman. It describes the reunion with the universal spirit.

## **BUDDHISM**

Buddhism began in India in the Ganges River area during the 6th century BCE. Its founder was Siddhartha Guatama, who later became known as the Buddha, or the "Enlightened One." Siddhartha was the son of a wealthy Hindu prince who grew up with many advantages in life. However, as a young man he did not find answers to the meaning of life in Hinduism, so he left home to become an ascetic, or wandering holy man. His Enlightenment forms the basic tenets of Buddhism:

- **The Four Noble Truths** - 1) All of life is suffering; 2) Suffering is caused by false desires for things that do not bring satisfaction; 3) Suffering may be relieved by removing the desire; 4) Desire may be removed by following the Eightfold Path.
- **The Eightfold Path to Enlightenment** - The ultimate goal is to follow the path to nirvana, or a state of contentment that occurs when the individual's soul unites with the universal spirit. The eight steps must be achieved one by one, starting with a change in thoughts and intentions, followed by changes in life style and actions, that prelude a higher thought process through meditation. Eventually, a "breakthrough" occurs when nirvana is achieved that gives the person a whole new understanding of life.

Note that Hinduism supported the continuation of the caste system in India, since castes were an outer reflection of inner purity. For example, placement in a lower caste happened because a person did not fulfill his/her dharma in a previous life. Buddhists believed that changes in thought processes and life styles brought enlightenment, not the powers of one's caste. Although the Buddha actively spread the new beliefs during his long lifetime, the new religion faced oppression after his death from Hindus who saw it as a threat to the basic social and religious structure that held India together. Buddhism probably survived only because the Mauryan emperor Ashoka converted to it and promoted its practice. However, in the long run, Buddhism did much better in areas where it spread through cultural diffusion, such as Southeast Asia, China, and Japan.

## **CONFUCIANISM**

Three important belief systems (Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism) emerged in China during the Warring States Period (403-221 BCE) between the Zhou and Han Dynasties. Although the period was politically chaotic, it hosted a cultural flowering that left a permanent mark on Chinese history.

Confucius contemplated why China had fallen into chaos, and concluded that the Mandate of Heaven had been lost because of poor behavior of not only the Chinese emperor, but all his subjects as well. His plan for reestablishing Chinese society profoundly affected the course of Chinese history and eventually spread to many other areas of Asia as well. He emphasized the importance of harmony, order, and obedience and believed that if five basic relationships were sound, all of society would be, too:

- Emperor/subject - the emperor has the responsibility to take care of his subjects, and subjects must obey the emperor
- Father/son - the father takes care of the son, and the son obeys the father
- Older brother/younger brother - the older brother takes care of the younger brother, who in turn obeys him
- Husband/wife - the husband takes care of the wife, who in turn obeys him
- Friend/friend - The only relationship that does not assume inequality should be characterized by mutual care and obedience
- Confucius also defined the "superior man" - one who exhibits ren (kindness), li (sense of propriety), and Xiao (filial piety, or loyalty to the family).

Confucianism accepted and endorsed inequality as an important part of an ordered society. It confirmed the power of the emperor, but held him responsible for his people, and it reinforced the patriarchal family structure that was already in place in China. Because Confucianism focused on social order and political organization, it is generally seen as a philosophy rather than a religion. Religions are more likely to emphasize spiritual topics, not society and politics.



## **DAOISM**

The founder of Daoism is believed to have been Laozi, a spiritualist who probably lived in the 4th century BCE. The religion centers on the Dao (sometimes referred to as the "Way" or "Path"), the original force of the cosmos that is an eternal and unchanging principle that governs all the workings of the world. The Dao is passive - not active, good nor bad - but it just is. It cannot be changed, so humans must learn to live with it. According to Daoism, human strivings have brought the world to chaos because they resist the Dao. A chief characteristic is wuwei, or a disengagement from the affairs of the world, including government. The less government, the better. Live simply, in harmony with nature. Daoism encourages introspection, development of inner contentment, and no ambition to change the Dao.

Both Confucianism and Daoism encourage self knowledge and acceptance of the ways things are. However, Confucianism is activist and extroverted, and Daoism is reflective and introspective. The same individual may believe in the importance of both belief systems, unlike many people in western societies who think that a person may only adhere to one belief system or another.

## **LEGALISM**

The third belief system that arose from the Warring States Period is legalism, and it stands in stark contrast to the other beliefs. It had no concern with ethics, morality, or propriety, and cared nothing about human nature, or governing principles of the world. Instead it emphasized the importance of rule of law, or the imperative for laws to govern, not men. According to legalism, laws should be administered objectively, and punishments for offenders should be harsh and swift. Legalism was the philosophy of Shi Huangdi, the first emperor, whose Qin Dynasty rescued China from chaos. However, when he died, the Han emperors that followed deserted legalism and established Confucianism as the dominant philosophy.

## **JUDAISM**

As noted earlier, Judaism was the first clearly monotheistic religion. At the heart of the religion was a belief in a Covenant, or agreement, between God and the Jewish people, that God would provide for them as long as they obeyed him. The Ten Commandments set down rules for relationships among human beings, as well as human relationships to God. Because they were specially chosen by God, Jews came to see themselves as separate from others and did not seek to convert others to the religion. As a result, Judaism has remained a relatively small religion. However, its influence on other larger religions, including Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam is vast, and so it remains as a very significant "root religion."

Zoroastrianism is an early monotheistic religion that almost certainly influenced and was influenced by Judaism, and it is very difficult to know which one may have emerged first. Both religions thrived in the Middle East, and adherents of both apparently had contact with one another. Zoroastrianism was the major religion of Persia, a great land-based empire that was long at war with Ancient Greece and eventually conquered by Alexander the Great. The religion's founder was Zoroaster or Zarathushtra, who saw the world immersed in a great struggle between good and evil, a concept that certainly influenced other monotheistic religions.

## **CHRISTIANITY**

Christianity grew directly out of Judaism, with its founder Jesus of Nazareth born and raised as a Jew in the area just east of the Mediterranean Sea. During his lifetime, the area was controlled by Rome as a province in the empire. Christianity originated partly from a long-standing Jewish belief in the coming of a Messiah, or a leader who would restore the Jewish kingdom to its former glory days. Jesus' followers saw him as the Messiah who would cleanse the Jewish religion of its rigid and haughty priests and assure life after death to all that followed Christian precepts. In this way, its appeal to ordinary people may be compared to that of Buddhism, as it struggled to emerge from the Hindu caste system. Christianity's broad appeal of the masses, as well as deliberate conversion efforts by its early apostles, meant that the religion grew steadily and eventually became the religion with the most followers in the modern world.

Jesus was a prophet and teacher whose followers came to believe that he was the son of God. He advocated a moral code based on love, charity, and humility. His disciples predicted a final judgment day when God would reward the righteous with immortality and condemn sinners to eternal hell. Jesus was arrested and executed by Roman officials because he aroused suspicions among Jewish leaders, and he was seen by many as a dangerous rebel rouser. After his death, his apostles spread the faith. Especially important was Paul, a Jew who was familiar with Greco-Roman culture. He explained Christian principles in ways that Greeks and Romans understood, and he established churches all over the eastern end of the Mediterranean, and even as far away as Rome.

Christianity grew steadily in the Roman Empire, but not without clashes with Roman authorities. Eventually in the 4th century CE, the Emperor Constantine was converted to Christianity and established a new capital in the eastern city of Byzantium, which he renamed Constantinople. As a result, the religion grew west and north from Rome, and also east from Constantinople, greatly extending its reach.

By the end of the classical era, these major belief systems had expanded to many areas of the world, and with the fall of empires in the late classical era, came to be major forces in shaping world history. One major religion - Islam - remained to be established in the 7th century as part of the next great period that extended from 600 to 1450 CE.

## UNIT II: 600 - 1450 C.E.

### QUESTIONS OF PERIODIZATION

Change over time occurs for many reasons, but three phenomena that tend to cause it are:

- Mass migrations - Whenever a significant number of people leave one area and migrate to another, change occurs for both the land that they left as well as their destination
- Imperial conquests - If an empire (or later a country) deliberately conquers territory outside its borders, significant changes tend to follow for both the attackers and the attacked.
- Cross-cultural trade and exchange - Widespread contact among various areas of the world brings not only new goods but new ideas and customs to all areas involved.

### Some major events and developments that characterized this era were:

- Older belief systems, such as Christianity, Hinduism, Confucianism, and Buddhism, came to become more important than political organizations in defining many areas of the world. Large religions covered huge areas of land, even though localized smaller religions remained in place.
- Two nomadic groups - the Bedouins and the Mongols - had a huge impact on the course of history during this era.
- A new religion - Islam - began in the 7th century and spread rapidly throughout the Middle East, Northern Africa, Europe, and Southeast Asia.
- Whereas Europe was not a major civilization area before 600 CE, by 1450 it was connected to major trade routes, and some of its kingdoms were beginning to assert world power.
- Major empires developed in both South America (the Inca) and Mesoamerica (the Maya and Aztec.)
- China grew to have hegemony over many other areas of Asia and became one of the largest and most prosperous empires of the time.
- Long distance trade continued to develop along previous routes, but the amount and complexity of trade and contact increased significantly.

This unit will investigate these major shifts and continuities by addressing several broad topics:

- The Islamic World - Islam began in the Arabian peninsula in the 7th century CE, impacting political and economic structures, and shaping the development of arts, sciences and technology.
- Interregional networks and contacts - Shifts in and expansion of trade and cultural exchange increase the power of China, connected Europe to other areas, and helped to spread the major religions. The Mongols first disrupted, then promoted, long-distance trade throughout Asia, Africa, and Europe.
- China's internal and external expansion - During the Tang and Song Dynasties, China experienced an economic revolution and expanded its influence on surrounding areas. This era also saw China taken over by a powerful nomadic group (the Mongols), and then returned to Han Chinese under the Ming Dynasty.
- Developments in Europe - European kingdoms grew from nomadic tribes that invaded the Roman Empire in the 5th century C.E. During this era, feudalism developed, and Christianity divided in two - the Catholic Church in the west and the Eastern Orthodox Church in the east. In both cases, the Church grew to have a great deal of political and economic power.
- Social, cultural, economic patterns in the Amerindian world - Major civilizations emerged, building on the base of smaller, less powerful groups from the previous era. The Maya, Aztec, and Inca all came to control large amounts of territory and many other native groups.
- Demographic and environmental changes - Urbanization continued, and major cities emerged in many parts of the world. Nomadic migrations during the era included the Aztecs, Mongols, Turks, Vikings, and Arabs. Long distance trade promoted the spread of disease, including the plague pandemics in the early fourteenth century.

### THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

Religious zeal certainly played an important role in the rapid spread of Islam during the 7th and 8th centuries C.E. However, several other factors help to explain the phenomenon:

- Well-disciplined armies - For the most part the Muslim commanders were able, war tactics were effective, and the armies were efficiently organized.

- Weakness of the Byzantine and Persian Empires - As the Islamic armies spread north, they were aided by the weakness of the empires they sought to conquer. Both the Byzantine and Persian Empires were weaker than they had been in previous times, and many of their subjects were willing to convert to the new religion.
- Treatment of conquered peoples - The Qur'an forbid forced conversions, so conquered people were allowed to retain their own religions. Muslims considered Christians and Jews to be superior to polytheistic people, not only because they were monotheistic, but also because they too adhered to a written religious code. As a result, Muslims called Christians and Jews "people of the book." Many conquered people chose to convert to Islam, not only because of its appeal, but because as Muslims they did not have to pay a poll tax.

### **THE SUNNI-SHI'A SPLIT**

The Arab tribes had fought with one another for centuries before the advent of Islam, and the religion failed to prevent serious splits from occurring in the caliphate. The two main groups were:

- Sunni - In the interest of peace, most Muslims accepted the Umayyads' rule, believing that the caliph should continue to be selected by the leaders of the Muslim community. This group called themselves the Sunni, meaning "the followers of Muhammad's example."
- Shi'a - This group thought that the caliph should be a relative of the Prophet, and so they rejected the Umayyads' authority. "Shi'a" means "the party of Ali," and they sought revenge for Ali's death.

Even though the caliphate continued for many years, the split contributed to its decline as a political system. The caliphate combined political and religious authority into one huge empire, but it eventually split into many political parts. The areas that it conquered remained united by religion, but the tendency to fall apart politically has been a major feature of Muslim lands. Many other splits followed, including the formation of the Sufi, who reacted to the luxurious lives of the later caliphs by pursuing a life of poverty and devotion to a spiritual path. They shared many characteristics of other ascetics, such as Buddhist and Christian monks, with their emphasis on meditation and chanting.

### **THE CHANGING STATUS OF WOMEN**

The patriarchal system characterized most early civilizations, and Arabia was no exception. However, women enjoyed rights not always given in other lands, such as inheriting property, divorcing husbands, and engaging in business ventures (like Muhammad's first wife, Khadijah.) The Qur'an emphasized equality of all people before Allah, and it outlawed female infanticide, and provided that dowries go directly to brides. However, for the most part, Islam reinforced male dominance. The Qur'an and the shari'a recognized descent through the male line, and strictly controlled the social and sexual lives of women to ensure the legitimacy of heirs. The Qur'an allowed men to follow Muhammad's example to take up to four wives, and women could have only one husband.

Muslims also adopted the long-standing custom of veiling women. Upper class women in Mesopotamia wore veils as early as the 13th century BCE, and the practice had spread to Persia and the eastern Mediterranean long before Muhammad lived. When Muslims conquered these lands, the custom remained intact, as well as the practice of women venturing outside the house only in the company of servants or chaperones.

### **ARTS, SCIENCES, AND TECHNOLOGIES**

Because Islam was always a missionary religion, learned officials known as ulama ("people with religious knowledge") and qadis ("judges") helped to bridge cultural differences and spread Islamic values throughout the dar al-Islam, as Islamic lands came to be known. Formal educational institutions were established to help in this mission. By the 10th century CE, higher education schools known as madrasas had appeared, and by the 12th century they were well established. These institutions, often supported by the wealthy, attracted scholars from all over, and so we see a flowering of arts, sciences, and new technologies in Islamic areas in the 12th through 15th centuries.

Islamic states in northern India also adapted mathematics from the people they conquered, using their Hindi numerals, which Europeans later called "Arabic numerals." The number system included a symbol for zero, a very important concept for basic calculations and multiplication. Muslims are generally credited with the development of mathematical thought, particularly algebra. Muslims also were interested in Greek philosophy, science, and medical

writings. Some were especially involved in reconciling Plato's thoughts with the teachings of Islam. The greatest historian and geographer of the 14th century was Ibn Khaldun, a Moroccan who wrote a comprehensive history of the world. Another Islamic scholar, Nasir al-Din, studied and improved upon the cosmological model of Ptolemy, an ancient Greek astronomer. Nasir al-Din's model was almost certainly used by Nicholas Copernicus, a Polish monk and astronomer who is usually credited with developing the heliocentric model for the solar system.

### **INTERREGIONAL NETWORKS AND CONTACTS**

Contacts among societies in the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent, and Asia increased significantly between 600 and 1450 CE, and Africa and Europe became much more important links in the long-distance trade networks. Both the Indian Ocean Trade and the Silk Road were disrupted by major migrations during this period, but both recovered and eventually thrived. Europeans were first brought into the trade loop through cities like Venice and Genoa on the Mediterranean, and the Trans-Saharan trade became more vigorous as major civilizations developed south of the Saharan.

Two major sea-trading routes - those of the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean - linked the newly created Muslim Empire together, and Arabic sailors came to dominate the trade. Muslims also were active in the Silk Road trade to India and China. To encourage the flow of trade, Muslim money changers set up banks throughout the caliphate so that merchants could easily trade with those at far distances. Cities along the trade routes became cosmopolitan mixtures of many religions and customs.

### **AFRICAN SOCIETIES AND EMPIRES**

Beginning around 640, Islam spread into the northern part of the continent, bringing with it the unifying forces of religious practices and law, the shari'a. As Islam spread, many African rulers converted to the new religion, and centralized states began to form. The primary agents of trade, the Berbers of the Sahara, became Muslims, although they retained their identities and tribal loyalties. As a result, Islam mixed with native cultures to create a synthesis that took different forms in different places in northern Africa. This gradual, nonviolent spread of Islam was very conducive to trade, especially since people south of the Sahara had gold.

Between 600 and 1450 CE, two major empires emerged in West Africa, just south of the Sahara Desert:

- Ghana - By the 700s, a farming people called the Soninke had formed an empire that they called Ghana ("war chief") that was growing rich from taxing the goods that traders carried through their territory. Their most important asset was gold from the Niger River area that they traded for salt from the Sahara. The Arab and Berber traders also carried cloth, weapons, and manufactured goods from ports on the Mediterranean. Ghana's king had exclusive rights to the gold, and so controlled its supply to keep the price high. The king also commanded an impressive army, and so the empire thrived. Like the Africans along the Mediterranean, Ghana's rulers and elites converted to Islam, but most others retained their native religions.
- Mali - During the 11th century, the Almoravids, a Muslim group from northern Africa, conquered Ghana. By the 13th century, a new empire, called Mali, dominated West Africa. The empire began with Mande-speaking people south of Ghana, but it grew to be larger, more powerful, and richer than Ghana had been. Mali too based its wealth on gold. New deposits were found east of the Niger River, and African gold became a basic commodity in long distance trade. Mali's first great leader was Sundiata, whose life inspired an epic poem -The Legend of Sundiata - that was passed down from one generation to the next. He defeated kingdoms around Mali, and also proved to be an effective administrator. Perhaps even more famous was Mansu Musa, a 14th century ruler. He is best known for giving away so much gold as he traveled from Mali to Mecca for the hajj that he set off a major round of inflation, seriously affecting economies all along the long-distance trade routes. Mali's capital city, Timbuktu, became a world center of trade, education and sophistication.
- The Swahili city-states - The people who lived in trade cities along the eastern coast of Africa provided a very important link for long-distance trade. The cities were not united politically, but they were well developed, with a great deal of cultural diversity and sophisticated architecture. The people were known collectively as the Swahili, based on the language that they spoke - a combination of Bantu and Arabic. Most were Muslims, and the sailors were renowned for their ability to maneuver their small boats through the Indian Ocean to India and other areas of the Middle East via the Red Sea and back again.

## **THE CHRISTIAN CRUSADES (LATE 11TH THROUGH 13TH CENTURIES C.E.)**

Pope Urban II called for the Christian Crusades in 1095 with the urgent message that knights from western Europe must defend the Christian Middle East, especially the Holy Lands of the eastern Mediterranean, from Turkish Muslim invasions. The Eastern Orthodox Byzantine emperor called on Urban for help when Muslims were right outside Constantinople. What resulted over the next two centuries was not the recovery of the Middle East for Christianity, but many other unintended outcomes. By the late 13th century, the Crusades ended, with no permanent gains made for Christians. Indeed, Constantinople eventually was destined to be taken by Muslims in 1453 and renamed Istanbul.

Instead of bringing the victory that the knights sought, the Crusades had the ultimate consequence of bringing Europeans squarely into the major world trade circuits. The societies of the Middle East were much richer than European kingdoms were, and the knights encountered much more sophisticated cultures there. They brought home all kinds of trading goods from many parts of the world and stimulated a demand in Europe for foreign products, such as silk, spices, and gold. Two Italian cities - Venice and Genoa - took advantage of their geographic location to arrange for water transportation for knights across the Mediterranean to the Holy Lands. On the return voyages, they carried goods back to European markets, and both cities became quite wealthy from the trade. This wealth eventually became the basis for great cultural change in Europe, and by 1450, European kingdoms were poised for the eventual control of long-distance trade that they eventually gained during the 1450-1750 era.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MONGOLS**

The Mongol invasions and conquests of the 13th century are arguably among the most influential set of events in world history. This nomadic group from Central Asia swept south and east, just as the Huns had done several centuries before. They conquered China, India, the Middle East, and the budding kingdom of Russia. If not for the fateful death of the Great Khan Ögödei, they might well have conquered Europe as well. As it is, the Mongols established and ruled the largest empire ever assembled in all of world history. Although their attacks at first disrupted the major trade routes, their rule eventually brought the Pax Mongolica, or a peace often compared to the Pax Romana established in ancient times across the Roman Empire.

## **THE RISE OF THE MONGOLS**

The Mongols originated in the Central Asian steppes, or dry grasslands. Around 1200 CE, a Mongol khan (clan leader) named Temüjin unified the clans under his leadership. His acceptance of the title Genghis Khan, or "universal leader" tells us something of his ambitions for his empire. Over the next 21 years, he led the Mongols in conquering much of Asia. Although he didn't conquer China in his lifetime, he cleared the way for its eventual defeat by Mongol forces. His sons and grandsons continued the conquests until the empire eventually reached its impressive size. Genghis Khan is usually seen as one of the most talented military leaders in world history. He organized his warriors by the Chinese model into armies of 10,000, which were grouped into 1,000 man brigades, 100-man companies, and 10-man platoons. He ensured that all generals were either kinsmen or trusted friends, and they remained amazingly loyal to him. He used surprise tactics, like fake retreats and false leads, and developed sophisticated catapults and gunpowder charges.

The Mongols were finally stopped in Eurasia by the death of Ögödei, the son of Genghis Khan, who had become the Great Khan centered in Mongolia when his father died. At his death, all leaders from the empire went to the Mongol capital to select a replacement, and by the time this was accomplished, the invasion of Europe had lost its momentum. The Mongols were also contained in Islamic lands by the Mamluk armies of Egypt, who had been enslaved by the Abbasid Caliphate. These forces matched the Mongols in horsemanship and military skills, and defeated them in battle in 1260 before the Mongols could reach the Dardanelle strait. The Mongol leader Hulagu decided not the press for further expansion.

## **THE MONGOL ORGANIZATION**

The Mongol invasions disrupted all major trade routes, but Genghis Khan's sons and grandsons organized the vast empire in such a way that the routes soon recovered. They formed four Khanates, or political organizations each ruled by a different relative, with the ruler of the original empire in Central Asia designated as the "Great Khan," or the one that followed in the steps of Genghis. Once the Mongols defeated an area, generally by brutal tactics, they were generally content to extract tribute (payments) from them, and often allowed conquered people to keep many of their customs. The Mongol khans were spread great distances apart, and they soon lost contact with one

another. Most of them adopted many customs, even the religions, of the people they ruled. For example, the Il-khan that conquered the last caliphate in the Middle East eventually converted to Islam and was a great admirer of the sophisticated culture and advanced technologies of his subjects. So the Mongol Empire eventually split apart, and the Mongols themselves became assimilated into the cultures that they had "conquered."

## **TWO TRAVELLERS**

Much of our knowledge of the world in the 13th and 14th century comes from two travelers, Ibn Battuta and Marco Polo, who widened knowledge of other cultures through their writings about their journeys.

- Marco Polo - In the late 13th century, Marco Polo left his home in Venice, and eventually traveled for many years in China. He was accompanied by his father and uncle, who were merchants anxious to stimulate trade between Venice along the trade routes east. Polo met the Chinese ruler Kublai Khan (Genghis Khan's grandson), who was interested in his travel stories and convinced him to stay as an envoy to represent him in different parts of China. He served the khan for 17 years before returning home, where he was captured by Genoans at war with Venice. While in prison, he entertained his cellmates with stories about China. One prisoner compiled the stories into a book that became wildly popular in Europe, even though many did not believe that Polo's stories were true. Europeans could not believe that the fabulous places that Polo described could ever exist.
- Ibn Battuta - This famous traveler and prolific writer of the 14th century spent many years of his life visiting many places within Islamic Empires. He was a Moroccan legal scholar who left his home for the first time to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. After his hajj was completed, he traveled through Mesopotamia and Persia, then sailed down the Red Sea and down the east African coast as far south as Kilwa. He later traveled to India, the Black Sea, Spain, Mali, and the great trading cities of Central Asia. He wrote about all of the places he traveled and compiled a detailed journal that has given historians a great deal of information about those places and their customs during the 14th century. A devout Muslim who generally expected fine hospitality, Ibn Battuta seldom kept his opinions to himself, and he commented freely on his approval or disapproval of the things that he saw.

Although few people traveled as much as Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta did, the large empires of the Mongols and other nomadic peoples provided a political foundation for the extensive cross-cultural interaction of the era.

## **CHINA'S HEGEMONY**

Hegemony occurs when a civilization extends its political, economic, social, and cultural influence over others. For example, we may refer to the hegemony of the United States in the early 21st century, or the conflicting hegemony of the United States and Russia during the Cold War Era. In the time period between 600 and 1450 CE, it was impossible for one empire to dominate the entire globe, largely because distance and communication were so difficult. Both the Islamic caliphates and the Mongol Empire fell at least partly because their land space was too large to control effectively. So the best any empire could do was to establish regional hegemony. During this time period, China was the richest and most powerful of all, and extended its reach over most of Asia.

## **THE "GOLDEN ERA" OF THE TANG AND SONG**

During the period after the fall of the Han Dynasty in the 3rd century C.E., China went into a time of chaos, following the established pattern of dynastic cycles. During the short-lived Sui Dynasty (589-618 C.E.), China began to restore centralized imperial rule. A great accomplishment was the building of the Grand Canal, one of the world's largest waterworks projects before the modern era. The canal was a series of manmade waterways that connected the major rivers and made it possible for China to increase the amount and variety of internal trade. When completed it was almost 1240 miles long, with roads running parallel to the canal on either side.

## **ECONOMIC REVOLUTIONS OF THE TANG AND SONG DYNASTIES**

Even though the Song military weakness eventually led to the dynasty's demise, it is notable for economic revolutions that led to Chinese hegemony during the era. China's economic growth in turn had implications for many other societies through the trade that it generated along the long-distance routes. The changes actually began during the Tang Dynasty and became even more significant during Song rule. Some characteristics of these economic revolutions are:

- Increasing agricultural production - Before this era, Chinese agriculture had been based on the production of wheat and barley raised in the north. The Tang conquest of southern China and Vietnam added a whole new capability for agriculture & the cultivation of rice. In Vietnam they made use of a new strain of fast-ripening rice that allowed the production of two crops per year. Agricultural techniques improved as well, with the use of the heavy iron plow in the north and water buffaloes in the south. The Tang also organized extensive irrigation systems, so that agricultural production was able to move outward from the rivers.
- Increasing population - China's population about 600 C.E. was about 45 million, but by 1200 (the Song Dynasty) it had risen to about 115 million. This growth occurred partly because of the agricultural revolution, but also because distribution of food improved with better transportation systems, such as the Grand Canal and the network of roads throughout the empire.
- Urbanization - The agricultural revolution also meant that established cities grew and new ones were created. With its population of perhaps 2,000,000, the Tang capital of Xi'an was probably the largest city in the world. The Song capital of Hangzhou was smaller, with about 1,000,000 residents, but it too was a cosmopolitan city with large markets, public theatres, restaurants, and craft shops. Many other Chinese cities had populations of more than 100,000. Because rice production was so successful and Silk Road and Indian Ocean trade was vigorous, other farmers could concentrate on specialty fruits and vegetables that were for sale in urban markets.
- Technological innovations - During Tang times craftsmen discovered techniques for producing porcelain that was lighter, thinner, more useful, and much more beautiful. Chinese porcelain was highly valued and traded to many other areas of the world, and came to be known broadly as chinaware. The Chinese also developed superior methods for producing iron and steel, and between the 9th and 12th centuries, iron production increased tenfold. The Tang and Song are best known for the new technologies they invented, such as gunpowder, movable type printing, and seafaring aids, such as the magnetic compass. Gunpowder was first used in bamboo flame throwers, and by the 11th century inventors had constructed crude bombs.
- Financial inventions - Because trade was so strong and copper became scarce, Chinese merchants developed paper money as an alternative to coins. Letters of credit called "flying cash" allowed merchants to deposit money in one location and have it available in another. The Chinese also used checks which allowed drawing funds deposited with bankers.

### **NEO-CONFUCIANISM**

The conflict between Buddhism and Confucianism during the late Tang Dynasty eased under the Songs, partly because of the development of Neo-Confucianism. Classical Confucians were concerned with practical issues of politics and morality, and their main goal was an ordered social and political structure. Neo-Confucians also became familiar with Buddhist beliefs, such as the nature of the soul and the individual's spiritual relationships. They came to refer to *li*, a concept that defined a spiritual presence similar to the universal spirit of both Hinduism and Buddhism. This new form of Confucianism was an important development because it reconciled Confucianism with Buddhism, and because it influenced philosophical thought in China, Korea, Vietnam, and Japan in all subsequent eras.

### **PATRIARCHAL SOCIAL STRUCTURES**

As wealth and agricultural productivity increase, the patriarchal social structure of Chinese society also tightened. With family fortunes to preserve, elites insured the purity of their lines by further confining women to the home. The custom of foot binding became very popular among these families. Foot binding involved tightly wrapping young girls' feet so that natural growth was seriously impaired. The result was a tiny malformed foot with the toes curled under and the bones breaking in the process. The women generally could not walk except with canes. Peasants and middle class women did not bind their feet because it was impractical, but for elite women, the practice - like wearing veils in Islamic lands - indicated their subservience to their male guardians.

### **KOREA AND JAPAN**

During the 7th century Tang armies conquered much of Korea, resulting in the Korean Silla Dynasty's king recognizing the Tang emperor as his overlord. Tang forces withdrew from the peninsula, and even though Korea paid tribute to China, the Silla rulers were allowed to have a great deal of autonomy. Significantly, though, the tributary relationship developed in a great deal of Chinese influence diffusing to Korea.



On the other hand, Chinese armies never invaded Japan, and even Kublai Khan's great forces could not overcome the treacherous straits that lie between Korea and Japan. The straits had isolated Japan since its beginnings, and its many islands and mountainous terrain led to separations among people who lived there. As a result, small states dominated by aristocratic clans developed, with agricultural communities developing wherever they were possible. Some Chinese influence, such as Confucianism, Buddhism, and Chinese writing characters diffused to Japan, but it remained unique in many ways. Two examples are:

- Shintoism - This native religion venerated ancestors, but also had a host of nature spirits and deities. Confucianism and Buddhism did not replace Shintoism, and it remained as an important religion in Japan.
- Separation of imperial power from real political power - Even though a Japanese emperor did emerge to rule the various clans, he served as a ceremonial figurehead and symbol of authority. The family that really ran things from 794 to 1188 were the Fujiwaras - who had military might that allowed them to manipulate the emperor. An important divergence from Chinese influence occurred during the late 11th century when the Minamoto clan seized power and installed their leader as the shogun, a military leader who ruled in place of the emperor.

The Japanese developed a system of feudalism, a political and economic system less developed than those of centralized empires, but more powerful than a purely local government. Feudalism was accompanied by a set of political values that emphasized mutual ties, obligations, and loyalties. The Japanese elites - who came to be known as daimyos - found military talent in the samurai, professional warriors who swore loyalty to them. Samurai's lived by a warrior's code - the bushido - that required them to commit suicide (seppuku) by disembowelment if they failed their masters.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPE (500-1450 C.E.)

The era from about 500 to 1000 C.E. is sometimes referred to as the "Dark Ages" in European history, partly because many aspects of the Roman civilization were lost, such as written language, advanced architectural and building techniques, complex government, and access to long-distance trade. For the most part, these early people of Europe could not read or write, and lived much as their nomadic ancestors had. In their isolation, they slowly cleared the forested areas for farming, but their greatest need was for protection. Dangers lay not only from animals in the forests, but also from other people that had settled in nearby areas. However, the need for protection grew to be most important when the Vikings from Scandinavia invaded many areas of Europe in the 8th and 9th centuries, followed by the Magyars, who came from the east in the late 9th century. In response, Europeans established feudalism, with many features similar to Japanese feudalism, but also with many differences.

European feudal institutions revolved around political and military relationships.. The feudal political order developed into a complicated network of lord-vassal relationships, with lords having overlords, and overlords owing allegiance to kings. On these foundations early kingdoms, such as England and France, were built, but in other areas, such as modern-day Germany, the feudal organization remained highly decentralized.

### COMPARATIVE FEUDALISM - JAPAN AND EUROPE

	JAPAN	EUROPE
<b>Similarities</b>	System was grounded in political values that embraced all participants.	
	The idea of mutual ties and obligations was strong, with rituals and institutions that expressed them.	
	Feudalism was highly militaristic, with values such as physical courage, personal or family alliances, loyalty, ritualized combat, and contempt for non-warriors.	
<b>Differences</b>	Feudalistic ties relied on group and individual loyalties.	Feudalistic ties were sealed by negotiated contracts, with explicit assurances of the advantages of the arrangement.
	Legacy was a group consciousness in which collective decision-making teams were eventually linked to the state.	Legacy was the reliance on parliamentary institutions in which participants could discuss and defend legal interests against the central monarch.

## **THE DIVISION OF CHRISTENDOM**

The Roman Empire was divided into two parts during the 4th century C.E. when imperial power shifted eastward from Rome to Byzantium. The emperor Constantine moved to the new center, and renamed the city Constantinople. As Christianity spread, it developed religious centers in both Rome and Constantinople, and as the two areas grew more politically independent, Christian practices and beliefs also split in different directions. Even though the church remained officially tied for many years after Rome fell in 476, in effect two different churches developed: the Eastern Orthodox Church in the east and the Roman Catholic Church in the west. The schism became official in 1054, when the Roman Pope and the Patriarch in Constantinople agreed that their religious differences could not be reconciled.

## **THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE**

While the west was falling to the Germanic invasions in the 4th and 5th centuries C.E., the eastern empire remained intact, partly because it withstood fewer attacks. This Byzantine Empire survived for almost a millennium after the western empire collapsed. For a time, it was a powerful Christian Empire, but it came under pressure from Islamic Turkish people by the 11th century, and finally fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453.

## **THE CHURCH IN THE WEST**

While political and economic decentralization characterized western Europe between 500 and 1000 C.E., the Catholic Church emerged as a unifying institution with great religious, political, and economic power. The time period is sometimes referred to as the "Age of Faith" because the church was so central to life in Europe.

The Catholic Church established its influence in several ways:

- Development of a church hierarchy - The Pope in Rome came to be the head of the church, with cardinals that reported to him. Under the cardinals were archbishops, who governed bishops that were spread all over Europe. Individual priests lived in villages and towns and were supervised by the bishops.
- Establishment of wandering ministries - Not only did the church have priests attached to almost every village, but it also had wandering priests who represented its influence. Two orders were the Franciscans, known for their vows of poverty and ability to relate to peasants, and the Dominicans, a more scholarly order who ministered more to educational needs.
- The establishment of monasteries- Monasteries also spread all over Europe. These retreats from civilization were inhabited by monks who devoted their lives to study, worship, and hard work. Convents for nuns also were established, and both monasteries and convents served many vital functions:
  - 1) Refuge for those in trouble - The monasteries and convents were seen as safe havens that represented the protection that the church offered to people.
  - 2) Communication to the central church hierarchy - Abbots headed monasteries, and they served as another means of keeping church officials in touch with what was going on.
  - 3) Centers of scholarship, education, and libraries - Monks very often were the only people in Europe that could read and write, and they spent large amounts of time copying ancient manuscripts that otherwise might have been lost in the various invasions. Some monasteries eventually formed the first European universities that began their library collections with books the monks had copied.

## **THE LATE MIDDLE AGES - 1000- 1450 C.E.**

Starting around 1000, Europe showed signs of revitalizing, largely because of the results of the Christian Crusades that put Europeans in touch with more sophisticated cultures to the east through the long-distance trade routes. Before about 1300 Europe was populated by serfs, or peasants tied to lands owned by nobility, living in rural areas relatively isolated from others. No large cities existed yet, like the metropolises in China, the Middle East, and northern Africa. Many demographic changes took place that radically altered life in Europe:

- The Agricultural Revolution - Largely through contacts with others, Europeans learned and adapted agricultural techniques and inventions that greatly increased their crop production. They perfected the three-field system, in which they rotated crops, allowing a field to remain fallow every third year. They also used iron plows much better suited to the heavy soils of northern and western Europe. Watermills, horses, and horse harnesses (all in use in other areas of the world) contributed to farming efficiency.

- Population increases - With the increase in crop production came population growth, with more hands available to expand agriculture.
- Revival of trade - This revival started in Venice and Genoa, Italian cities that profited from trade during the Crusades. However, the growing population sparked demand for more products so that trade intensified town to town, and a new trade area in present-day northern France, Belgium, and the Netherlands.
- Growth of towns/new towns - The growing trade, crop production, and population stimulated villages to become towns, and the towns became centers for craftsmen, merchants, and specialized laborers.
- Commercial Revolution - Once European towns connected to the long-distance trade routes, they learned to use financial innovations developed elsewhere, like banks and bills of exchange
- Guilds - Craftsmen formed guilds, or trade associations for their particular craft. These organizations came to be quite powerful, passing laws, levying taxes, and challenging powerful merchants. The guilds set standards for goods, regulated labor, and supervised apprentices as they learned the trade.

### **EARLY RUSSIA**

The Russians adopted the Eastern Orthodox religion, and established the Russian Orthodox Church. The princes of Kiev established firm control over the church, and they made use of the Byzantine legal codes put together by Justinian. Russia, like the rest of Europe, was built on feudalistic ties, and over time the Kievan princes became less powerful than those that ruled Muscovy (Moscow), a province northeast of Kiev. When the Mongols invaded in the 13th century, the Muscovites cast their lot with the inevitable victors, serving the Mongols as collectors of tribute. The Mongols bestowed many favors, and Moscow grew in influence. Once Mongol power weakened, the princes saw their opportunity to rebel, and they seized the territory, calling their leader the "tsar," a derivative of the word "Caesar."

### **THE AMERINDIAN WORLD**

Prior to 1492, the western and eastern hemispheres had very little contact with one another. Even though Christopher Columbus was certainly not the first to go from one hemisphere to the other, his voyage does represent the beginning of sustained contacts, a trend that was a major turning point in world history. However, during the period between 600 and 1450 C.E., large empires emerged in the Americas, just as they did in Europe, Africa, and Asia. One group - the Maya - adapted to the jungles of Central America and the Yucatan Peninsula. The two largest organized relatively late in the era: the Aztecs of Mesoamerica, and the Inca of South America.

### **DEMOGRAPHIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES**

The era from 600 to 1450 C.E. was a time when civilization spread geographically, covering many more parts of the world than previously. However, it was also a time of great migrations of people that had wide impacts on the people in settled areas. Arabs, Vikings, Turks, and Mongols, all moved from one part of the globe to another, instigating change wherever they went.

- Arabs - The most significant effect of the Arab movement from the Arabian Peninsula was the spread of Islam. Arabs invaded, settled, and eventually ruled, the Middle East, northern Africa, and southern Europe. Although the political structure of the caliphate did not survive, Islam held the areas together culturally as it mixed with native customs and religions. Despite the political disunity and the splits between Sunni and Shi'a, the Islamic World emerged as an entire cultural area during this era.
- Vikings - The Vikings swept into many parts of Europe - from Normandy, to Mediterranean areas to Russia - during the 8th and 9th centuries, looting and destroying communities, churches, and monasteries. Some settled and intermarried with natives, forming new groups such as the Normans and the Rus (Russians). However, a very important consequence of their invasions was the development of feudalism in Europe. The attacks convinced Europeans that protection was vital, and so they organized into a network of lords and vassals, that eventually built kingdoms with great armies ready to fight.
- Turks - The Turkish people were originally Indo-Europeans who migrated into the Middle East during various times of the era. The Seljuk Turks invaded the Byzantine Empire, sparking another great migration from Europe to the Middle East - the Crusaders. Seljuk Turks were indirectly responsible, then, for Europe's growing interest and involvement in long-distance trade. By the end of the era the Ottoman Turks were on the rise. They captured Constantinople and many other parts of Europe, and they gained control of trade on the Mediterranean. Turks even invaded India, forming the Delhi Sultanate, and introduced Islam to India with such force that the consequences reverberated through the rest of Indian history.

- **Mongols** - The Mongol conquests have been depicted as assaults by savage and barbarian people who brought nothing but death and destruction to the areas they attacked. Whereas no one can deny the brutality of the Mongols, their conquests had a much more varied impact on world history than has been acknowledged by many historians in the past. At the peak of their power, the Pax Mongolica meant that once-hostile people lived together in peace in areas where most religions were tolerated. From the Il-Khan in the Middle East to the Yuan Dynasty in China, Mongol rulers established order, and most importantly, provided the stage for intensified international contact. Protected by Mongol might, the trade routes carried new foods, inventions, and ideas from one civilization to the others, with nomadic people acting as intermediaries.
- **Bantu-speaking people** - Another important source of cultural diffusion during this era was the Bantu Migration, which took place in Africa. Bantu-speaking people originally lived in an area south of the Sahara, but probably because the desert was spreading southward they began to migrate to better land. They spread south and east into many parts of Africa, and their language became a basis for the formation of many later languages. The Bantu Migration is generally believed to be a major source for Africanity, or a set of cultural characteristics (including language) that are commonly shared on the continent. Examples include music, the use of masks, and scarification (permanent beauty etchings on the skin).

### **CULTURAL DIFFUSION AND THE 14TH CENTURY PLAGUES**

As Eurasians traveled over long distances, they not only exchanged goods and ideas, but they unwittingly helped disease to spread as well. Since people who have had no previous exposure to a disease react to it much more seriously than those that have, the consequences were profound. The bubonic plague erupted in epidemics throughout most of Asia, Europe, and north Africa. Even though it abated in subsequent centuries, it broke out sporadically from place to place well into the seventeenth century. The plague probably originated in southwestern China, where it had been incubating for centuries, but once long-distance trade began, it spread rapidly during the 14th century. The pathogen was spread by fleas that infested rats and eventually humans. Mongol military campaigns helped the plague spread throughout China, and merchants and travelers spread it to the west. By the 1340s it had spread to Black Sea ports and to Italian cities on the Mediterranean. From there, the plague spread rapidly throughout Europe as far as the British Isles.

Important results of the plague (other than individual death) are:

- **Decline in population** - In China decreasing population caused by the plague contributed to the decline of the Yuan Dynasty and lent support to the overthrow of Mongol control there. Europe's population dropped by about 25% during the 14th century. In Egypt population levels did not recover to pre-plague days probably until the 19th century.
- **Labor shortages** - The plague was no respecter of social class, and the affected areas lost craftsmen, artisans, merchants, religious officials, farmers, bureaucrats and rulers. In many areas farms fell into ruin, towns deteriorated, and trade almost came to a standstill. Labor shortages turned into social unrest, and rebellions popped up in many areas.

### **IMPORTANT ISSUES: 600-1450 C.E.**

During this era several major religions spread across large areas, creating cultural regions that unified based on their belief systems. As historians, we may speak of "Islamic lands" or "Christendom" or "Confucian Asia," and these terms are handy for comparisons. They may be used effectively to point out commonalities as well as differences. However, cultural areas are imperfect as units of analysis. Some problems include:

- **Imperfect boundaries between areas** - If you are comparing political units with definite boundaries, the geographic differences are clear. However, in using cultural labels, how do you categorize areas of mixed influence? For example, parts of the Middle East during this era had significant numbers of Muslims, Christians, and Jews, with a mixture of customs from all three religions. Southeast Asia, a crossroads area for trade, had virtually every religion imaginable.
- **Wide differences within the culture zones** - The areas are so broad that the categories often blur important cultural differences within. For example, Christendom's two parts were very different, and Christianity was interpreted in many ways. Muslims in Mali had only limited commonalities with Muslims in Central Asia.

## 1450 - 1750 C.E.

### QUESTIONS OF PERIODIZATION

This era includes only 300 years, but some profound and long-lasting changes occurred. Characteristics of the time between 1450 and 1750 include:

- 1) **The globe was encompassed** - For the first time, the western hemisphere came into continued contact with the eastern hemisphere. Technological innovations, strengthened political organization, and economic prosperity all contributed to this change that completely altered world trade patterns.
- 2) **Sea-based trade rose in proportion to land-based trade** - Technological advancements and willingness of political leaders to invest in it meant that sea-based trade became much more important. As a result, old land-based empires lost relative power to the new sea-based powers.
- 3) **European kingdoms emerged that gained world power** - The relative power and prosperity of Europe increased dramatically during this time in comparison to empires in the longer-established civilization areas. However, Europe did not entirely eclipse powerful empires in Southwest Asia, Africa, and East Asia.
- 4) **The relative power of nomadic groups declined** - Nomads continued to play an important role in trade and cultural diffusion, and they continued to threaten the borders of the large land-based empires. However, their power dwindled as travel and trade by water became more important.
- 5) **Labor systems were transformed** - The acquisition of colonies in North and South America led to major changes in labor systems. After many Amerindians died from disease transmitted by contact with Europeans, a vigorous slave trade from Africa began and continued throughout most of the era. Slave labor became very important all over the Americas. Other labor systems, such as the mita and encomienda in South America, were adapted from previous native traditions by the Spanish and Portuguese.
- 6) **"Gunpowder Empires" emerged in the Middle East and Asia** - Empires in older civilization areas gained new strength from new technologies in weaponry. Basing their new power on "gunpowder," they still suffered from the old issues that had plagued land-based empires for centuries: defense of borders, communication within the empire, and maintenance of an army adequate to defend the large territory. By the end of the era, many were less powerful than the new sea-based kingdoms of Europe.

### MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS - 1450-1750 C.E.

- **Changes in Trade, Technology, and Global Interactions** - The Atlantic Ocean trade eventually led to the crossing of the Pacific Ocean. New maritime technologies made these interactions possible, and global trade patterns changed dramatically.
- **Major Maritime and Gunpowder Empires** - Major maritime powers include Portugal, Spain, France, and England, and major Gunpowder Empires were the Ottoman, Ming and Qing China, the Mughal, Russia, Tokugawa, Songhay (Songhai), and Benin.
- **Slave systems and slave trade** - This was the big era for slave systems and slave trade, with the new European colonies in the Americas relying on slavery very heavily. The slave trade was an important link in the Atlantic Ocean trade.
- **Demographic and environmental changes** - The new trade patterns greatly altered habitats for plants and animals and resulted in changes in human diet and activities as well. Major migrations across the Atlantic Ocean also altered demographic patterns profoundly.
- **Cultural and intellectual development** - This era also was shaped by the European Renaissance, Protestant Reformation, and Enlightenment. Neo-Confucianism grew in influence in China, and new art forms developed in the Mughal Empire in India.

### CHANGES IN TRADE, TECHNOLOGY, AND GLOBAL INTERACTIONS

The two areas that worked most actively to rebuild trade were China and Europe.

### MING CHINA AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD

When the Ming drove the Mongols out, they were intent on restoring the glory of Han China, and they turned first to restoring China's internal trade and political administration. Even though the Ming emperors were wary of foreigners, China had too long prospered from trade to give it up completely, and foreigners eagerly sought silk, porcelain and manufactured goods, in exchange for spices, cotton fabrics, gems, and pearls.

In order to restore Chinese hegemony in Asia, Emperor Yongle sponsored seven naval expeditions commanded by Admiral Zheng He, whose voyages took place between 1405 and 1433. For each journey he launched a fleet of vessels like the world had never seen before. The Chinese junks were huge with nine masts, by far the largest ships ever launched up until that point in history. The main purposes of the voyage were twofold: to convince other civilizations that China had indeed regained their power and to reinstitute tribute from people that no longer gave it. The latter did not bring any income to China, mainly because the cost of the voyages and gifts was more than any revenue they stimulated.

Zheng He's voyages were halted in the 1430s when Emperor Yongle died. Confucian bureaucrats, who had little desire to increase China's interactions with other civilizations, gained control of the court and the new emperor, and refused to continue to finance the voyages. According to the new court, the money was needed to better protect the empire from its age-old problem: nomadic invasions from the west. The voyages and the Ming reaction to them provide good evidence for the pattern that was setting in: the impulse to trade and contact others v. the tendency to turn inward for fear of the negative effects on the Han Chinese.

## **EUROPEAN EXPLORATIONS**

Across the globe, as the mid-15th century approached, kingdoms in another area were ready to venture to the open seas with motivations very different from those of the Chinese:

- Profit from commercial operations - Geographically, Europe was on the outskirts of the established trade routes. The impractical nature of overland travel for Europeans was confirmed by the fact that the first European trade cities - Venice and Genoa - made their fortunes by sea travel. And so the Europeans set out to make their fortunes via water transportation.
- Spread of Christianity - True to its roots, Christianity had remained over the centuries a missionary religion. The Catholic Church took this responsibility seriously, and as a result, Europe was overwhelmingly Catholic by 1450. Once they began traveling to other lands, they aggressively promoted the spread of the Christian faith, so that their missionary motives were often as strong as their desire for profits.

## **PORTUGUESE EXPLORATION**

Portugal was the first European kingdom to explore other lands seriously. For most of the 16th century, the Portuguese dominated the Indian Ocean trade. How did they capture this old sea route that had been shared by Arabs, Persians, Indians, and Southeast Asians? The most important single answer is technological: they had superior weapons. Their ships were armed with cannons that they used so skillfully that their relatively small ships could overpower almost any other type of vessel. The Portuguese were intent on converting all that they met to Christianity, although they often did more harm than good, infuriating the natives by burning down mosques and/or forcing conversions.

## **EARLY SPANISH EXPEDITIONS - THE CONQUEST OF THE AMERICAS**

What Diaz, da Gama, Columbus, and other early European explorers did do was unwittingly start an entirely new era of world trade and cross-cultural exchange. Europeans conquered and claimed the territories and greatly increased their prosperity and power, and Christianity spread to a whole new hemisphere. Portugal and Spain even presumed to divide the world in two by seeking the Pope's blessing on the Treaty of Tordesillas, which drew a line through north and south through the Atlantic, giving Portugal the lands east and Spain the lands west. Portugal actually lost in the long run because the lands that they "received" were already claimed by empires that did not recognize the Portuguese claims.

During the 16th century the Portuguese slowly faded as a power while Spain claimed and kept more and more land in the western hemisphere. In 1519 a Spanish expedition led by Hernan Cortes marched to the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan and defeated the great empire with only a few hundred soldiers. How? Two weapons helped a great deal - guns and disease. Gunpowder technology revolutionized the world during the 1450-1750 era, and the Amerindian Empires were among its first victims. Disease also made a big difference. Shortly after the Spanish arrived in Tenochtitlan, a smallpox epidemic broke out in the city that killed or incapacitated the Aztec army. A few years later Francisco Pizarro attacked and defeated the Inca. With the fall of those two empires the Spanish gained virtual control of Mesoamerica and South America, with the exception of Brazil, which fell on the Portuguese side of the line set by the Treaty of Tordesillas.

## **THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH IN NORTH AMERICA**

The French and English did not arrive in the Americas until the 17th century, but when they did, they claimed much of North America in areas that the Spanish did not go. The French explored and settled the St. Lawrence River area through Canada, as well as the Mississippi River valley south all the way to its mouth in the Gulf of Mexico. The English settled along the eastern seacoast in North America. Although the three great powers were destined to eventually clash over land claims, most conflicts did not occur until the 18th century. Virtually all explorers sought sea routes to Asia that they hoped would be shorter than the circuit that Magellan took. The English differed from most others in that they allowed great trading companies to control their colonization. These companies encouraged people to settle in the New World, so that the English colonies became quite heavily populated by the end of the 17th century.

## **THE GREAT CIRCUIT AND THE COLUMBIAN EXCHANGE**

The trade routes that appeared during this era in the Atlantic Ocean were collectively known as the Great Circuit. The routes connected four continents: North America, South America, Europe, and Africa, and they linked directly to the old water trade routes established in previous eras. The Atlantic routes were generally circular and complex, with most ships making several stops along the way on at least two of the continents, but sometimes more. These huge circuits represent the most significant change in long-distance trade since its earliest days.

The cross-cultural exchange that developed along the Great Circuit is known as the Columbian Exchange, giving credit to the man that unwittingly started the whole thing. The Columbian Exchange included a huge number of products that changed diets and work habits around the world. Generally, the goods traded according to this pattern:

- Europe to the Americas - horses, cows, pigs, wheat, barley, sugar cane, melons, grapes
- Africa (includes Asian products) to the Americas - bananas, coconut palms, coffee, sugar cane, goats, chickens
- The Americas to Europe and Africa - corn, potatoes, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, squash, beans, pineapples, peppers, tobacco, chocolate

As a result of the new trade routes, the variety in many people's diet increased and resulted in better nutrition and health. Disease also was transferred with the most devastating effects on the Amerindian populations. They had no immunities to diseases that people of the eastern hemisphere had built up resistance to, such as measles, diphtheria, typhus, influenza, malaria, and yellow fever. Estimates vary, but all historians agree that the devastation cannot be overstated. Generally only one major disease that originated in the Americas traveled the other direction - syphilis.

## **MAJOR EMPIRES: 1450-1750**

### **CENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNMENT**

During this era between 1450 and 1750 some of the old feudal kings amassed enough power to allow their kingdoms to sponsor the expensive sea voyages necessary for colonization in the New World. Three powerful countries that emerged were Spain, England, and France. In all three cases these monarchs curbed the power of the nobility and built strong centralized regimes. The new monarchs came up with new means of financing their ambitions, such as imposing new taxes, fines, and fees, and amassing large armies too powerful for individual nobles to match.

### **Spanish Imperial Attempts**

Spain's newfound wealth in the 16th and 17th century was based largely on trade, and the vital link that their American colonies played in world circuits. A good example is provided by the famous Manila Galleons that for 250 years traveled back and forth across the Pacific Ocean between Manila in the Philippines and Acapulco on the west coast of Mexico. The galleons were vast and well armed, and they took Asian luxury goods to Mexico, and returned with their hulls full of gold and silver. Most of the precious metals made their way into China, an inducement that convinced the Ming emperors to keep trade with outsiders alive. Meanwhile, some of the Asian silks and porcelain stayed in Mexico for use by the Spanish viceroys and other elites, but most of the goods went overland by Mexico to ships that carried them to Spain and other European markets. The Spanish rulers almost turned this wealth into domination of Europe, but not quite.

## **Absolutism v. Constitutionalism**

Most of the newly powerful European states, including Spain and France, developed into absolute monarchies, or governments in which the king held all power. Absolutism was reinforced by the belief in divine right, or the god-given authority to rule. According to divine right theory, kings were not gods but served as "God's lieutenants upon earth." In these countries, no one else had the right to share policymaking powers with the king, not even the nobility.

Other countries followed the French model, although generally less successfully. Rulers in Austria, Prussia, and Russia built huge palaces and sought to increase central control. Both Prussia and Russia had developed into formidable powers by 1750.

Elsewhere, in England and the Netherlands, a different government model was developing. Neither had a written constitution, but they both allowed limitations to be placed on the ruler's power. In England the nobility demanded and received the right to counsel with the king before he imposed new taxes, starting with William the Conqueror in the 11th century. The limitations were famously encapsulated in the Magna Carta of 1215, a document that listed the rights of nobility. From this right to counsel developed a "parliament" (literally a place to talk things over) that came to blows with King Charles I in the 1640s in the English Civil War. Parliament won this war, and even though the institution of the monarchy was eventually retained, it marks the turning point of power toward a limited, or "constitutional" government. In both England and the Netherlands, wealthy merchants were allowed to participate in government, partly because their continuing prosperity was vital to the states.

Whether they developed into absolute or constitutional monarchies, centralization of government in Europe was a vital step in building state power from the medieval feudalism. Without it, colonization, and eventually the building of vast, worldwide empires, would have been impossible.

## **CHANGES IN SOCIAL AND GENDER STRUCTURES**

With the growth of trade, European towns grew, and by 1700 Europe had large cities. Paris and London both had over 500,000 people, Amsterdam had about 200,000, and twenty other cities had populations over 60,000. Life in these cities was vastly different than before, and their existence affected people who lived elsewhere, in villages and towns. Some of the changes are:

- The rise of the bourgeoisie - Whereas the social structure in medieval Europe was split into two classes (nobility and serfs), increasing trade and business created a new class that the French called the bourgeoisie, meaning "town dwellers." Over time the bourgeoisie came to have more wealth than the nobles, since they often formed mutually beneficial alliances with monarchs anxious to increase state revenues.
- Growth in the gap between the rich and the poor - By the late 16th century, the rising wealth of the bourgeoisie created a growing gap between the rich and the poor. The poor were not only the rural peasants, but they also lived in cities as craftsmen, peddlers, and beggars.
- Changes in marriage arrangements - Most marriages in the rest of the world were still arranged by families, but the custom of young men and women choosing their own spouses started in early modern Europe. This change was partly due to separations between generations that occurred when younger people moved to towns, but also to the growing trend toward later marriages. Craftworkers and the poor had to delay marriages while they served as apprentices or built their dowries, and bourgeois men delayed marriage in order to finish their educations. The need for education was growing because of the demands for business success. For example, participation in long-distance trade often meant learning new languages and/or acquiring legal expertise. Since people were older when they married, they tended to be more independent from their parents.

## **COLONIAL MODELS**

The governments that European nations set up in their colonies in the New World reflected their own governments back home. Both Spain and Portugal, who followed the absolutist model, set up expensive, controlling bureaucracies that they tried to rule directly. In contrast, the English principle of the limited monarchy allowed some independence for colonial governments. The English also had less interest in converting natives to Christianity than they did in building prosperous, money-generating colonies. The French were unable to establish few colonial governments with wide controls.



## COLONIAL POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STRUCTURES

	Political Structures	Social Structures
<b>Spain</b>	<p>Both the Spanish and the Portuguese kings appointed viceroys, or personal representatives, to rule in the king's name. Spain set up a Council of the Indies, whose members remained in Spain, as a supervisory office to pass laws. Advisory councils were then set up within each viceroyalty, which divided according to region. Difficulty in communication caused viceroys and councils to have a great deal of independence</p> <p>Large bureaucracies developed in urban areas, such as Mexico City</p>	<p>Almost complete subjugation of Amerindians, placed at bottom of social structure</p> <p>A hierarchical class system emerged. Peninsulares (Europeans born in Spain) had the highest status, and creoles (Europeans born in the Americas) were second. In the middle were mestizos (blend of European and Amerindian) and mulattoes (blend of European and African), and at the bottom were full blood natives and Africans.</p> <p>Slavery common, also used encomienda and mita labor systems.</p>
<b>England</b>	<p>No elaborate bureaucracy like Spanish/Portuguese. Individual colonies allowed to set up their own structures, with most of them setting up representative bodies like the British Parliament</p> <p>British government formed partnerships with trading companies, and was most interested in profits. Practice of "salutary neglect" until mid-18th century allowed colonies to run many of their own affairs.</p>	<p>Less successful at subjugating Amerindians, who were generally more friendly to the French</p> <p>Colonies were more diverse than the Spanish, with South Carolina's social structure the most hierarchical and Massachusetts the least</p> <p>Mixing of races (European, Amerindian, African) blurred social distinctions, but still had divisions.</p> <p>Slavery common, especially in the agricultural southern colonies</p>

### THE GUNPOWDER EMPIRES

The era between 1450 and 1750 saw the appearance of several land-based empires who built their power on the use of gunpowder: the Ottomans and the Safavids in Southwest Asia, the Mughals in India, the Ming and Qing in China, and the new Russian Empire. All had huge land armies armed with guns. These empires developed relatively independently from western influence, and to some extent they counterbalanced the growth of European power and colonization.

An important consequence of the appearance of the Gunpowder Empires was their conquest of most nomadic groups. Since the nomads had less access to guns, the empires were finally able to conquer and subjugate them.

### THE MUSLIM EMPIRES

In the previous era, the political power of Muslim lands had been crushed by Mongol invasions in the 13th century and those of Timur, a central Asian of Mongol descent, in the 14th century. Three new empires – the Ottoman, the Safavid, and the Mughal - rose between 1450 and 1750, and collectively they supported a new flowering of Islamic civilization. However, competition between them also led to important political divisions and military clashes. All three originated in the Turkic nomadic cultures of the central Asian steppe, and they all had absolute monarchs who modeled their courts on those of earlier Islamic dynasties.

Although each of the Muslim Empires had their own special problems, they faced some similar ones that eventually led to their decline.

- **Inadequate transportation and communication systems** - Although they had the necessary military technology to control their empires, transporting it to where it was needed was another issue. The larger they grew, the more difficult it was for the infrastructure to be adequate for the task.
- **Unruly warrior elites and inadequate bureaucracies** - The military leaders knew their importance to the state, and they often operated quite independently of the government. Even in the Ottoman Empire, where

the bureaucracy was the strongest, the sultan eventually lost control of the Janissaries, who rebelled against him when their constant demands went unfulfilled.

- **The rise of European rivals** - Ultimately, the Europeans benefited more from the gunpowder revolution than the Muslim Empires. European countries were smaller, both in population and land space, and so mobilization of their human and natural resources was easier. They were also in such strong competition with one another that the Europeans were spurred on to try new technologies and reforms.

## THE MING AND EARLY QING DYNASTIES IN CHINA

The Ming Emperors continued to rule China until the mid-1600s, but the dynasty was in decline for many years before that. Although its cultural brilliance and economic achievements continued until about 1600, China had some of the same problems that the Muslim empires had: borders difficult to guard, armies expensive to maintain, and transportation and communication issues. Some particular factors that weakened Ming China included:

- **Climatic change** - A broad change of climate swept from Europe to China during the 1600s, with the weather turning much colder. This change seriously affected agriculture and health, and also contributed to serious famine across China. These conditions led frustrated peasants to frequent rebellion.
- **Nomadic invasions** - The 1500s saw the reemergence of the Mongols as a regional power, this time with the help and support of Tibet. In gratitude, the Mongols bestowed the Tibetan leader with the title of dalai lama, or "universal teacher" of Tibetan Buddhism. The Japanese also attacked Korea, a Chinese tributary state, requiring Ming armies to defend the area.
- **Pirates** - As sea-based trade became more and more important, the number of pirates also increased in the Chinese seas, just as they did in the Americas. Pirates were both Chinese and Japanese, and they lay in wait for ships going in and out of Chinese ports.
- **Decline of the Silk Road** - After so many centuries, the famed Silk Road trade finally fell into decline during this era. New technologies and European control meant that more and more trade was conducted by water, and land-based trade decreased.
- **Inept rulers** - The last emperors lived in luxury in the Forbidden City, and had little to do with governing the empire. For example, the last emperor was so disengaged that he did not know that he was under attack until the enemy literally was climbing over the palace walls.

### The Early Qing Dynasty

The Ming Dynasty was finally overthrown in 1644 by the Manchus, a northern power that had previously helped Ming emperors fight the Mongols and Japanese. The Manchus turned on the Ming once they discovered how weak the empire was, and they called themselves the Qing ("pure") Empire because they saw themselves as restoring China to glory. However, the Manchu were seen by some as not being truly "Chinese" because they were northern people from the outside, just as the Mongols had been almost four centuries before.

The Qing Dynasty was to rule China until 1911, and in the years before 1750, the empire was very strong. The emperors ruled under many of the same precepts that China had always had, such as the mandate of heaven, which they saw as justification for their takeover. The Manchu did keep their ethnic identity, forbidding intermarriage between Manchus and Chinese. They also outlawed the Chinese from learning the Manchurian language, and they required Chinese men to shave their heads and grow long queues at the back of their heads as a sign of submission.

Despite the problems that China faced as a land-based Gunpowder Empire, the early Qing Dynasty - until the late 18th century - ruled over a "golden age" of Chinese civilization.

### Chinese Contact with Europeans

East-west contacts between China and Europe intensified during the early Qing Dynasty. One type of contact - Christian missionaries from the west - revived during the 16th century when the Jesuits first began arriving in China. The Jesuits dazzled their hosts with European science and technology. For example, they were able to use their math skills to correct Chinese calendars that up until then had miscalculated solar eclipses. The Jesuits did inspire trade demands as word about the riches and sophistication of Qing China got back to Europe. Chinese products - tea, porcelain, silk, wallpaper, and decorative items - became quite fashionable among the European elite. The Chinese reacted by opening the southern port of Canton to Europeans, but again, the Middle Kingdom was very wary of foreign contact, and so they closely supervised the trade.

## TOKUGAWA JAPAN

A "gunpowder empire" emerged in Japan, unusual in the sense that Japan was not land-based. The Japanese daimyos, or regional lords, had operated fairly independently from the shoguns before the early 17th century, when these military, feudalistic leaders were unified under one powerful family, the Tokugawa. The Tokugawa shoguns had less patience with Christian missionaries from the west than the Chinese did. Their aversion to Europeans was based partly on their observation of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines, a fate that they did not want to share. They also worried that Europeans might conspire with the daimyos to destroy Tokugawa control. In the 1630s the shogunate literally "closed Japan," by forbidding all Japanese from going abroad and expelling all Europeans from Japan. They carefully controlled trade with other Asians, and European traders could come no closer than nearby islands. These policies were strictly enforced as far as the shoguns were able to, although daimyos on far islands were difficult to control.

## THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

Russian tsar Peter the Great, who ruled Russia during the late 17th and early 18th centuries, cast his eyes in the other direction, toward Europe, for guidance in strengthening his growing empire. Russia's early days had been shaped by the Byzantine Empire, and when the Byzantine's power faded, so did that of the early Russian tsars. Before Peter's rule, Russians had had almost no contact with Europe, and their lack of access to warm water ports crippled their ability to participate in the Maritime Revolution. Peter's Russia was a vast, cold empire with almost no infrastructure: no navy, a limited army, very few decent roads, and few warm water ports.

Peter hoped to strengthen his country by westernizing it – he was convinced that the empire could only become powerful by imitating western successes, and he instituted a number of reforms that revolutionized it:

- **Military reform** - He built the army by offering better pay and also drafted peasants for service as professional soldiers. He also created a navy by importing western engineers and craftsmen to build ships and shipyards, and other experts to teach naval tactics to recruits. Of course, his Gunpowder Empire developed better weapons and military skills.
- **Building the infrastructure** - The army was useless without roads and communications, so Peter organized peasants to work on roads and do other service for the government.
- **Expansion of territory** - The navy was useless without warm water ports, and Peter gained Russian territory along the Baltic Sea by defeating the powerful Swedish military. He tried to capture access to the Black Sea, but he was soundly defeated by the Ottomans who controlled the area.
- **Reorganization of the bureaucracy** - In order to pay for his improvements, the government had to have the ability to effectively tax its citizens. The bureaucracy had been controlled by the boyars, but Peter replaced them with merit based employees by creating the Table of Ranks, eventually doing away with titles of nobility.
- **Relocation of the capital** - Peter moved his court from Moscow to a new location on the Baltic Sea, his "Window on the West" that he called St. Petersburg. The city was built from scratch out of a swampy area, where it had a great harbor for the navy. Its architecture was European, of course.

When Peter died, he left a transformed Russia, an empire that a later ruler, Catherine the Great, would further strengthen. But he also left behind a new dynamic in Russian society: the conflicting tendencies toward westernization mixed with the traditions of the Slavs to turn inward and preserve their own traditions.

## AFRICAN KINGDOMS

In 1450 Africa was a diverse continent with a blend of large civilizations, city-states, rural villages, and hunter and gatherer societies. Many people in the north, Sub-Saharan and eastern coastline areas were Muslim, but many native religions remained quite strong. The largest and most organized empire of Africa from the middle of the 15th century until the late 16th century was Songhay (Songhai) in northwest Africa in areas that had been controlled by the earlier Kingdom of Mali. Songhay was prosperous, its cities boasted beautiful public buildings, and Islam was strongly supported by the elite. But the Songhay did not have guns, and that was their downfall. In 1591 a Moroccan army opened their muskets on the Songhay forces, and they were defeated.

The 16th century also saw the destruction of most of the Swahili city-states. Vasco da Gama had noticed them when he passed through on his way to India, and within a few years the Portuguese had aimed their cannons at all the cities, and either captured them or burned them to the ground.

## **THE SLAVE TRADE AND SLAVE SYSTEMS**

It soon was clear how slavery could be readily adopted in the Americas. Like the overwhelming majority of pre-industrial societies, African kingdoms practiced slavery, and when Europeans offered to trade their goods for slaves, African traders accommodated them. As a general rule, African slave hunters would capture Africans, generally from other groups than their own, and transport them to trading posts along the coast for European ships to carry to the New World. However, despite the fact that slavery already existed in Africa, the Atlantic trade interacted with and transformed these earlier aspects of slavery.

## **THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE**

Before the Atlantic slave trade began, slavery took many forms in Africa, ranging from peasants trying to work off debts to those that were treated as "chattel," or property. The Atlantic trade emphasized the latter, and profits from the trade allowed slaveholders both in Africa and the Americas to intensify the level of exploitation of labor. African slaves were traded to two areas of the world: the Western Hemisphere and Islamic lands in the Middle East and India.

## **TRADE TO MUSLIM LANDS**

Fewer slaves crossed the Sahara than crossed the Atlantic, but the numbers were substantial. Whereas most slaves that went to the Americas were male, most of those destined for the Middle East and India were female. These women either became a part of a wealthy individual's harem, or collection of wives and concubines that filled his household. The wives were not slaves, and their children had higher status than those of the concubines. The African women were almost always granted the lower status as concubines. Other slaves in the Islamic lands were males who were often bought to fight in the large Gunpowder Empire armies.

## **TRADE TO THE AMERICAS**

The major reason that slave labor was practical in the Americas was that so many of the Amerindians who probably would have done the work had died. The economic challenge was to get workers to the New World in as cost effective way as possible. The Spanish and Portuguese expeditions were government ventures, but the success of the Atlantic economy during the 17th and 18th centuries was based on private enterprise. The economic system of mercantilism was developed most effectively by the British and the Dutch, with private companies under charter from the governments carrying out the trade. Mercantilism's main goal was to benefit the mother country by trading goods to accumulate precious metals, and thus enriching the country. The African slave trade was an important piece of mercantile trade. The Great Circuit trade went something like this:

- 1) The first leg from Europe carried hardware, guns, and Indian cotton to Africa
- 2) The second leg was the notorious Middle Passage that carried African slaves to the New World. Slaves were packed as tightly as possible in the ships, often under very inhumane conditions.
- 3) The last leg carried plantation goods from the colonies back to Europe

The theory was that on every leg the ships carried goods from a place where they were abundant to a place where they were scarce. The profits could be enormous, but shipwrecks, slave deaths, and piracy could turn profit into loss. A subset of the Great Circuit trade was the Triangular Trade that carried rum from New England to West Africa, slaves to the West Indies, and molasses and rum back to New England.

## **LABOR SYSTEMS IN THE AMERICAS**

The Spanish were most interested in finding gold and silver in the Americas, and so early on they began mining for it. In areas where no precious metals existed, they set up plantations to raise crops from bananas to sugar cane. They first tried these labor systems:

- Mita - The Inca had made extensive use of the mita system, a sort of labor tax to support elites and the elderly. Generally, an adult male had to spend 1/7 of his time working for the Inca, a few months at a time. When his obligation to the state was complete, he would return home until his service time came up again. The Spanish adopted this system, particularly for their silver mines in Bolivia and surrounding areas. The problem was that so many natives died, that the Spanish kept having to increase the time spent in the mines that it became impractical. Finally, the work in the mines was so grueling that no Indians were left to do the work.
- Encomienda - This system was used primarily for agricultural work. Natives in an area were placed under the authority of encomenderos, or Spanish bosses, who could extract labor and tribute according to the needs of the area. Again, this system only lasted during the 16th century because so many natives died.

In North America the English colonies had varying bases for their economies. In the north, farms were small and family run, and city-based trade was important. In the south the soil and climate were better suited for large farms, and so a plantation system developed. A labor system used both in North America and the Caribbean was indentured servitude, in which an employer would pay the passage of a person to the New World in return for several years of labor. After the debt was paid in years worked, the servant would be free. This system was limited in its usefulness, especially in the Caribbean where indentured servant eventually refused to go because of the harsh working conditions on the sugar plantations.

### **EARLY SLAVE SYSTEMS IN SOUTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Before 1650 most slaves were destined either for the sugar plantations in Brazil and mainland Spanish colonies, but during the second half of the 17th century, more and more went to the Caribbean. Sugar cane was not native to the areas, but once imported, it grew well and resulted in great profit. The strong demand for sugar in Europe was complemented by the trade with China for tea. Perhaps most stereotypically, the English teatime depended on a regular supply of these products. Sugar plantations required large investments of capital because the cane had to be processed within a few hours of when it was cut in order to extract the sugary syrup. So each plantation not only had vast fields of sugar cane, but also had a mill and processing plant. Many slaves were needed for the work, which was hot and grueling.

The demand was greater for male slaves than for females because of the nature of the work, so the sex ratio was such that family life was impossible for most. Disease among slaves was particularly problematic in the Caribbean and Brazil, with many dying from dysentery caused by contaminated water and malaria. As a result, slave populations in these areas did not experience a natural growth, and so had to be replaced by more through the slave trade.

### **EARLY SLAVE SYSTEMS IN NORTH AMERICA**

Sugar plantations were among the first to appear in North America as well, mainly in the warm, humid lowlands of present-day Louisiana. However, in the mid-1600s tobacco smoking became fashionable in England, and so tobacco plantations rose in the tidelands of Virginia. North American climates were generally healthier than those in the Caribbean, so slaves in North America did experience a natural increase, requiring fewer new slaves for trade. However, as plantations spread across the South, and eventually began raising other crops, such as cotton, the slave trade remained vigorous.

### **DEMOGRAPHIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES**

Demographic changes between 1450 and 1750 were significant. Some major population shifts included:

- A rise in the population of Europe - Europe's population had been decimated by the 14th century plague epidemic, so during the 15th and 16th centuries population levels were growing to match previous levels.
- A decrease in the population of the Americas - This trend may run counter to common knowledge, but it does reflect the decimation of Amerindian populations by their encounters with Europeans. For example, in the late 15th century North America had almost 4 million people, Mexico had more than 21 million, the Caribbean and Central America each had almost 6 million, and South America (Andes and Lowlands) had almost 30 million. By 1700 the entire western hemisphere had only 13 million, a decrease from 67 million or so in 1500.
- No overall population decrease occurred in Africa - Again, counter to common belief, the slave trade did not decimate the populations of Africa. By 1700 Africa had more than 60 million people, almost doubling their population in 1000. To be sure, some areas of Africa did reflect huge population losses, and logically those were places where the slave trade was most vigorous.
- Between 1000 and 1700 C.E., the populations of Asia - including the Middle East, Indian, and East Asia - more than doubled to a total of about 415 million. Clearly, overall world population grew, and the majority of people by the end of the time period still lived in the Middle East and Asia.

The **Columbian Exchange** almost certainly caused some environmental changes that help to explain the population trends listed above. For example, maize and cassava (a nutritious plant used in modern day in tapioca) were transported by Portuguese ships from Brazil to Angola in southwest Africa. Angolans cultivated the crops, which adapted very well to their land. Some historians believe that this exchange provided the base for the population increase that followed, despite the fact that many Angolans were captured and deported to the New

World as slaves. Likewise, the Andean potato eventually became the staple for poor people in Europe, sustaining population growth despite the number of people that began to migrate to the New World.

Major environmental changes occurred in the New World in two major ways:

- Soil exhaustion - Plantations in the Americas tended to rely on single crops, a process that depletes the soil of nutrients, and since land was plentiful, often the planters just moved on to clear more land. For example, in the Caribbean, instead of rotating sugar with other crops, planters found it more profitable to clear new lands when yields began to decline. Eventually, they moved on to other islands.
- Deforestation - The Spanish first cut down forests in the Caribbean to make pastures for the cattle they brought, and deforestation accelerated when more areas were cleared for plantations. In North America, shipbuilding in the northern English colonies took its toll of forests. Deforestation was also taking place in Europe during this period. Timber was needed for ships, buildings, wagons, barrels, and many other items. Wood shortages were made worse by the Little Ice Age that began in Europe during the 1590s. People burned wood to keep warm, and by the mid-17th century, forests were growing scarce and wood prices skyrocketed. This wood shortage encouraged the use of coal for fuel, and since England had coal in great supply, deforestation almost certainly helped their economy grow.

### **CULTURAL AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENTS**

Trade stimulated by the Crusades had made several of the city-states wealthy, such as Venice, Genoa, and Florence. Wealthy families, such as the Medici in Florence, became patrons of the arts, encouraging and supporting such geniuses as Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. Some of the biggest supporters of Renaissance art and sculpture were the Catholic Popes, who commissioned work for the Vatican and St. Peter's cathedral in Rome. The era also saw a revival of interest in reading, writing, architecture, and philosophy. Without the patrons' wealth, the Italian Renaissance would have been impossible, but it almost certainly was stimulated by contact with the more sophisticated civilizations of the Middle East and south and east Asia.

The **Renaissance**, or "rebirth" was characterized by an attempt to revive the values of the classical civilizations of the Mediterranean, Greece and Rome. Although most of the major Renaissance figures did not actively defy the church, they put emphasis on other aspects of life than the religious. An important philosophical influence restored from ancient civilizations was humanism, which focused on the accomplishments, characteristics, and capabilities of humans, not of God. Humanism is reflected in Renaissance art, with newly skilled artists showing individual differences in faces and beautiful examples of human physiques. The Renaissance spread from Italy north, and by the 16th century had inspired new art styles in the Netherlands and Germany, as well as such literary geniuses as William Shakespeare in England. The importance of the European Renaissance goes far beyond art and literature because it encouraged people to think in different ways than they had before, a quality that Europeans would need as they ventured in science, technology, and eventually across the Atlantic to the Americas.

### **THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION**

The revival of interest in Greek and Roman influences also stimulated developments in math and science. The mathematical traditions that governed the conception of the universe were based in Greek mathematics that had been preserved and built upon by scientists in Muslim lands. Perhaps the greatest scientist of the era was Isaac Newton (1642-1727), an English mathematician whose genius shaped many modern fields of science. He formulated the set of mathematical laws for the force of gravity, made discoveries regarding the nature of light, and built on earlier Indian and Arab ideas for algebra. Newton did not challenge the authority of the Catholic Church, but he did prove that the Greeks and Romans were mistaken in some of their theories, and that fact encouraged others to question traditions that had not been challenged before.

### **THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION**

**The Catholic Church** had been a very important societal force in medieval Europe. Not only had people's lives revolved around religion, but the church had actively defined many other aspects of society, including politics, art, and science. During the era from 1450 to 1750 the church lost significant power in almost every way. Not only were scientists and literary writers beginning to challenge the church, but the Pope's political power was compromised as centralization of government gave more authority to kings. Starting in the early 16th century, the church's religious authority was seriously weakened by the Protestant Reformation, a movement led by Martin Luther, a German

priest who believed that the church was seriously flawed. Luther did what no priest had dared to do before: openly defy the authority of the church.

By the end of the 16th century, large parts of Europe, particularly in Germany and Britain, were no longer under the authority of the Catholic Church. The church responded with its own internal reformation, but the result was a Europe deeply divided between Protestants and Catholics, a dynamic that fed the already intense competition among European nations.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRINTING PRESS**

Johannes Gutenberg, a printer from Mainz Germany, contributed greatly to the rapid spread of Protestantism. Guttenberg did not invent moveable type or the printing press. Both the Chinese and Koreans had used them in earlier years, and they too had spread literacy in Asia by printing books and making them accessible to more people. In Europe the device appeared as a critical invention at a critical time in European history. Without it the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, the Protestant Reformation, and ultimately the Maritime Revolution would not have been possible.

### **THE EARLY EUROPEAN ENLIGHTENMENT**

During the 17th century, the Scientific Revolution began to be applied to social and political areas of life, a movement known as the Enlightenment. Enlightenment philosophers believed that human reason that discovered laws of science could also discover the laws that governed social and political behavior. The movement was also inspired by the Reformation, which had challenged and revised accepted religious thought, and by contact with political and social philosophies from other parts of the world.

### **CULTURAL AND INTELLECTUAL LIFE IN CHINA**

The Ming and early Qing emperors of this era continued to look to Chinese traditions to strengthen cultural and intellectual life. Neo-Confucianism, which had first emerged as a powerful philosophy during the Song era, was very strong, and numerous Confucian schools were founded by the emperors to reinforce its beliefs. The civil service exams were maintained, and other Chinese philosophy, literature and history were compiled during this time.

### **PATRONAGE IN THE ISLAMIC EMPIRES**

Just wealth in the Italian city-states prompted patronage of the arts, so it did in the Islamic Empires as well. The emperors competed to attract the best scholars, literary writers, artists, and architects to their courts. The Ottoman sultans built beautiful palaces and mosques, with the most famous religious complex built by Suleyman the Magnificent called Suleymaniye, a blend of Islamic and Byzantine architectural features. Perhaps the most famous monument in Islamic lands was the Taj Mahal, built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, who dedicated the white marble mosque and tomb to the memory of his wife. He planned to build a similar mausoleum out of black marble for himself, but he was deposed by his son and spent the rest of his life in prison, where he supposedly could see his wife's tomb through a small window with the help of a mirror.

By 1750 the world was a much different one than had existed in 1450. This era saw the rise of Europe, though scholars debate just how much power Europeans actually had in the world economy. They dominated the New World, which was connected by regular, sustained contact to the eastern hemisphere during this time. They also controlled much of the African slave trade, but it is important to note that no European had ventured far into the interior of the continent by 1750. Europeans had not set up significant colonies in Africa, except at the very southern tip, Capetown near the Cape of Good Hope. This situation would change dramatically during the following era.

Great empires continued to form in East Asia, the Middle East, and India, as the technological invention of gunpowder allowed them to conquer the nomadic groups that had challenged their authority for centuries. However, land-based empires clearly lost power in proportion to sea-faring powers, as world trade routes connected the western hemisphere to the east. These increased contacts were to have important consequences for people all over the world in the period from 1750-1914.

## 1750-1914

### QUESTIONS OF PERIODIZATION

Very important characteristics that distinguish 1750-1914 from previous eras in world history include:

- **European dominance of long-distance trade** - Whether by "unequal treaties" or colonization, sea-based trade gave European countries control of all major trade circuits in the world.
- **"Have" and "have not" countries created by Industrialization** - The Industrial Revolution gave huge economic and political advantages to countries where it occurs over countries that remained primarily agricultural.
- **Inequalities among regions increase due to imperialism** - Industrialized countries set out to form overseas empires, sometimes through colonization and other times by economic and/or political domination.
- **Political revolutions inspired by democracy and desire for independence** - These revolutions continue to the present, but "seed" revolutions that put new democratic forms of government in place occurred during this era. The "nation" emerged as a new type of political organization.

### CHANGES IN GLOBAL COMMERCE, COMMUNICATIONS, AND TECHNOLOGY

During the 1450-1750 era Europeans had set up colonies in the Americas so that for the first time in world history the western and eastern hemispheres were in constant contact with one another. However, after 1750 the pace of trade picked up dramatically, fed by a series of economic and technological transformations collectively known as the Industrial Revolution.

### THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Remember that to be called a Marker Event in world history a development should qualify in three ways:

- It must cross national or cultural borders, affecting many civilizations.
- Later changes or developments in history must be at least partially traced to this event or series of events.
- It must have impact in other areas. For example, if it is a technological change, it must impact some other major areas, like government, belief systems, social classes, or the economy.

The Industrial Revolution brought about such sweeping changes that it virtually transformed the world, even areas in which industrialization did not occur. The concept seems simple: invent and perfect machinery to help make human labor more efficient - but that's part of its importance. The change was so basic that it could not help but affect all areas of people's lives in every part of the globe.

The Industrial Revolution began in England in the late 18th century, and spread during the 19th century to Belgium, Germany, Northern France, the United States, and Japan. Almost all areas of the world felt the effects of the Industrial Revolution because it divided the world into "have" and "have not" countries, with many of the latter being controlled by the former. England's lead in the Industrial Revolution translated into economic prowess and political power that allowed colonization of other lands, eventually building a worldwide British Empire.

### WHY BRITAIN?

Economic growth in Britain was fueled by a number of factors:

- **An Agricultural Revolution** - Beginning in the early 1700s, wealthy landowners began to enlarge their farms through enclosure, or fencing or hedging large blocks of land for experiments with new techniques of farming. Farmers pushed out of their jobs by enclosure either became tenant farmers or they moved to cities. Better nutrition boosted England's population, creating the first necessary component for the Industrial Revolution: labor.
- **A technological revolution** - England also was the first to experience a technological revolution, a series of inventions built on the principles of mass production, mechanization, and interchangeable parts.
- **Natural resources** - Britain had large and accessible supplies of coal and iron - two of the most important raw materials used to produce the goods for the early Industrial Revolution. Also available was water power to fuel the new machines, harbors for its merchant ships, and rivers for inland transportation.
- **Economic strength** - During the previous era, Britain had already built many of the economic practices and structures necessary for economic expansion, as well as a middle class (the bourgeoisie) that had experience with trading and manufacturing goods. Banks were well established, and they provided loans for businessmen to invest in new machinery and expand their operations.



- Political stability - Britain's political development during this period was fairly stable, with no major internal upheavals occurring. Although Britain took part in many wars during the 1700s, none of them took place on British soil, and its citizens did not seriously question the government's authority.

## **NEW INVENTIONS**

The earliest transformation of the Industrial Revolution was Britain's textile industry. In 1750 Britain already exported wool, linen, and cotton cloth, and the profits of cloth merchants were boosted by speeding up the process by which spinners and weavers made cloth. Wealthy textile merchants set up the machines in factories, and had the workers come to these places to do their work. At first the factories were set up near rivers and streams for water power, but other inventions later made this unnecessary. Before the late 1700s Britain's demand for cotton was met by India, but they increasingly came to depend on the American south, where plantation production was speeded by Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin, a machine that efficiently separated the cotton fiber from the seed. By 1810 southern plantations used slave labor to produce 85 million pounds of cotton, up from 1.5 million in 1790.

## **TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS**

Once the textile industry began its exponential growth, transportation of raw materials to factories and manufactured goods to customers had to be worked out. New inventions in transportation spurred the Industrial Revolution further. A key invention was the steam engine that was perfected by James Watt in the late 1790s. Perhaps the most revolutionary use of steam energy was the railroad engine, which drove English industry after 1820. Railroads revolutionized life in Britain in several ways:

- 1) Railroads gave manufacturers a cheap way to transport materials and finished products.
- 2) The railroad boom created hundreds of thousands of new jobs for both railroad workers and miners.
- 3) The railroad industry spawned new industries and inventions and increased the productivity of others.
- 4) Railroads transported people, allowing them to work in cities far away from their homes and travel to resort areas for leisure.

## **THE SPREAD OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION**

The Industrial Revolution occurred only in Britain for about 50 years, but it eventually spread to other countries in Europe, the United States, Russia, and Japan. British entrepreneurs and government officials forbade the export of machinery, manufacturing techniques, and skilled workers to other countries but the technologies spread by luring British experts with lucrative offers, and even smuggling secrets into other countries. By the mid-19th century industrialization had spread to France, Germany, Belgium, and the United States.

- After German political unification in 1871, the new empire rivaled England in terms of industrial production.
- Industrialization began in the United States by the 1820s, delayed until the country had enough laborers and money to invest in business. Both came from Europe, where overpopulation and political revolutions sent immigrants to the United States to seek their fortunes. The United States had abundant natural resources -- land, water, coal and iron ore -- and after the great wave of immigration from Europe and Asia in the late 19th century &ndash; it also had the labor.
- During the late 1800s, industrialization spread to Russia and Japan, in both cases by government initiatives. By 1900 Japan was the most industrialized land in Asia, and was set to become a 20th century power.

## **CHANGES IN PATTERNS OF WORLD TRADE**

Industrialization greatly increased the economic, military, and political strength of the societies that embraced it. By and large, the countries that benefited from industrialization were the ones that had the necessary components of land, labor and capital, and often government support. However, even though many other countries tried to industrialize, few had much success. An international division of labor resulted: people in industrialized countries produced manufactured products, and people in less industrialized countries produced the raw materials necessary for that production. In many cases this division of labor led to colonization of the non-industrialized areas. As industrialization increased, more iron and coal were needed, as well as other fibers for the textile industry, and the British Empire grew rapidly in order to meet these demands.

Many countries in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, south Asia, and southeast Asia became highly dependent on one cash crop - such as sugar, cotton, and rubber - giving them the nickname of "Banana Republics." Such economies were very vulnerable to any change in the international market. Foreign investors owned and controlled the plantations that produced these crops, and most of the profits went to them. Very little of the profits actually improved the living conditions for people that lived in those areas, and since they had little money to spend, a market economy could not develop.

### **THE END OF THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE AND SLAVERY**

From the beginning, as the Atlantic slave trade enriched some Africans and many Europeans, it became a topic of fierce debate in Europe, Africa, and the Americas in the late 18th century. The American and French revolutions stimulated these discussions, since both emphasized liberty, equality, and justice, topics that fed a strong abolitionist movement. Despite the importance of the abolitionist movement, economic forces also contributed to the end of slavery and the slave trade. Plantations and the slave labor that supported them remained in place as long as they were profitable. In the Caribbean, a revolution, led by Toussaint L'Ouverture resulted in the liberation of slaves in Haiti and the creation of the first black free state in the Americas. However, the revolution was so violent that it sparked fear among plantation owners and colonial governments throughout the Caribbean. In the late 18th century, a rapid increase in Caribbean sugar production led to declining prices, and yet prices for slaves remained high and even increased.

Investors discovered that wage labor in factories was cheaper than slave labor on plantations because the owners were not responsible for food and shelter. Entrepreneurs began to see Africa as a place to get raw materials for industry, not just slaves.

### **IMMIGRATION TO THE AMERICAS**

By the mid 19th century European migrants began crossing the Atlantic to fill the factories in the eastern United States. Increasing rents and indebtedness drove farmers from Ireland, Scotland, Germany and Scandinavia to North America, settling in the Ohio and Mississippi River Valleys in search of land. The potato famine forced many Irish peasants to make the journey, and political revolutions caused many Germans to flee the wrath of the government when their causes failed. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, most immigrants to North America were from southern and eastern Europe, fleeing famine, poverty, and discrimination in their countries of origin.

While migrants to the United States came to fill jobs in the developing industrial society, those who went to Latin America mostly worked on agricultural plantations. About 4 million Italians came to Argentina in the 1880s and 1890s, and others went to Brazil, where the government paid the voyage over for Italian migrants who came to work on coffee plantations after slavery was abolished. Others came from Asia, with more than 15,000 indentured laborers from China working in sugarcane fields in Cuba during the 19th century. Chinese and Japanese laborers came to Peru where they worked on cotton plantations, in mines, and on railroad lines.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

Industrialization offered new opportunities to people with important skills, such as carpentry, metallurgy, and machine operations. Some enterprising people became engineers or opened their own businesses, but for the vast majority of those who left their farming roots to find their fortunes in the cities, life was full of disappointments. Most industrial jobs were boring, repetitive, and poorly paid. Workdays were long with few breaks, and workers performed one simple task over and over with little sense of accomplishment. Unlike even the poorest farmer or craftsman, factory workers had no control over tools, jobs, or working hours. Factory workers could do very little about their predicament until the latter part of the period, when labor unions formed and helped to provoke the moral conscience of some middle class people.

### **CHANGES IN SOCIAL CLASSES**

A major social change brought about by the Industrial Revolution was the development of a relatively large middle class, or "bourgeoisie" in industrialized countries. With the advent of industrialization, wealth was increasingly based on money and success in business enterprises, although the status of inherited titles of nobility based on land ownership remained in place. Members generally had comfortable lifestyles, and many were concerned with respectability, or the demonstration that they were of a higher social class than factory workers were. They valued the hard work, ambition, and individual responsibility that had led to their own success, and many believed that the

lower classes only had themselves to blame for their failures. This attitude generally extended not to just the urban poor, but to people who still farmed in rural areas.

Social class distinctions were reinforced by Social Darwinism, a philosophy by Englishman Herbert Spencer. He argued that human society operates by a system of natural selection, whereby individuals and ways of life automatically gravitate to their proper station. According to Social Darwinists, poverty was a "natural condition" for inferior individuals.

### **NEW POLITICAL IDEAS AND MOVEMENTS**

In 1750 only England and the Netherlands had constitutional monarchies, governments that limited the powers of the king or ruler. All the other kingdoms of Europe, as well as the Muslim Empires and China, practiced absolutism. Absolutist rulers benefited from the tendency for governments to centralize between 1450 and 1750 because it extended the power they had over their subjects. Most of the rulers reinforced their powers by claiming special authority for the supernatural, whether it be the mandate of heaven as practiced in China, or divine right as European kings declared. Between 1750 and 1914, absolute rulers almost everywhere lost power, and the rule of law became a much more important political principle.

One of the most important political concepts to arise from the era was the "nation-state," a union often characterized by a common language, shared historical experiences and institutions, and similar cultural traditions, including religion at both the elite and popular levels. As a result, political loyalties were no longer so determined by one's attitudes toward a particular king or noble but by a more abstract attachment to a "nation."

### **FORCES FOR POLITICAL CHANGE**

As the Industrial Revolution began in England, the economic changes were accompanied by demands for political changes that spread to many other areas of the world by the end of the 19th century. Two important forces behind the change were:

- The influence of the Enlightenment - The 1700s are sometimes referred to as the "Age of Enlightenment," because philosophical and political ideas were begun to seriously question the assumptions of absolute governments. The Enlightenment began in Europe, and was a part of the changes associated with the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, and the Protestant Reformation, all taking place between 1450 and 1750. The Enlightenment invited people to use their "reason" using the same humanistic approach of Renaissance times. People can figure things out, and they can come up with better governments and societies. In the 1600s John Locke wrote that a ruler's authority is based on the will of the people. He also spoke of a social contract that gave subjects the right to overthrow the ruler if he ruled badly. French philosophes, such as Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau spread the new ideas to France, where they began uproar in a land that epitomized absolutism.
- New wealth of the bourgeoisie - Ongoing commercialization of the economy meant that the middle class grew in size and wealth, but not necessarily in political power. These self-made men questioned the idea that aristocrats alone should hold the highest political offices. Most could read and write, and found Enlightenment philosophy appealing in its questioning of absolute power. They sought political power to match the economic power that they had gained.

### **THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

Ironically, the first revolution inspired by the new political thought that originated in England began in the North American colonies and was directed at England. It began when American colonists resisted Britain's attempt to impose new taxes and trade controls on the colonies after the French and Indian War ended in 1763. Many also resented Britain's attempts to control the movement west. "Taxation without representation" turned British political theory on its ear, but it became a major theme as the rebellion spread from Massachusetts throughout the rest of the colonies. Colonial leaders set up a new government and issued the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The British sent forces to put the rebellion down, but the fighting continued for several years until the newly created United States eventually won. The United States Constitution that followed was based on enlightenment principles, with three branches of government that check and balance one another. Although initially only a few had the right to vote and slavery was not abolished, the government became a model for revolutions to come.

## THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

A very different situation existed in France. No established nobility existed in the United States, so when independence was achieved, the new nation had no old social and political structure to throw off. In contrast, the Revolution in France was a civil war, a rising against the *Ancien Regime*, or the old kingdom that had risen over centuries. The king, of course, had absolute power, but the nobility and clergy had many privileges that no one else had. Social classes were divided into three estates: first was the clergy, second the nobility, and the Third Estate was everyone else. Part of the problem was that the growing class of the bourgeoisie had no political privileges. They read Enlightenment philosophes, they saw what happened in the American Revolution, and they resented paying all the taxes. Many saw the old political and social structure as out of date and the nobles as silly and vain, undeserving of the privileges they had.

Many problems converged to create the Revolution: the nobles' refusal to pay taxes, bourgeoisie resentment of the king, Louis XVI's incompetence, and a series of bad harvests for the peasants. The bourgeoisie seized control of the proceedings and declared the creation of the National Assembly, a legislative body that still exists in France today. They wrote the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, modeled after the American Declaration of Independence, and they set about to write a Constitution for France.

The years after the revolution began were turbulent ones that saw the king beheaded and the government taken over by the Jacobins, a radical group that sought equality through executing those that disagreed with the government. The Reign of Terror lasted for about two years, with thousands of people guillotined and thousands more fleeing the country. The Jacobin leaders themselves were eventually guillotined; the country teetered for several years in disarray, and finally was swept up by Napoleon Bonaparte as he claimed French glory in battle. Democracy did not come easily in France.

## CONSERVATIVE REACTION TO REVOLUTION

Napoleon Bonaparte seized the French Government at a time when no one else could control it. He promised stability and conquest, and by 1812 the French Empire dominated Europe to the borders of Russia. Finally, an alliance of European countries led by Britain defeated Napoleon in 1815 at Waterloo in modern day Belgium. Although Napoleon was defeated and exiled, other countries were horrified by what had happened in France: a revolution, the beheading of a king, a terrorizing egalitarian government, and finally a demagogue who attacked all of Europe. To conservative Europe, France was a problem that had to be contained before their ideas and actions spread to the rest of the continent.

The allies that had defeated Napoleon met at Vienna in 1815 to reach a peace settlement that would make further revolutions impossible. The **Congress of Vienna** reached an agreement based on restoring the *balance of power* in Europe, or the principle that no one country should ever dominate the others. Rather, the power should be balanced among all the major countries.

## REVOLUTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA

From North America and France, revolutionary enthusiasm spread throughout the Caribbean and Spanish and Portuguese America. In contrast to the leaders of the War for Independence for the United States, most of the early revolutions in Latin America began with subordinated Amerindians and blacks. Only in the French colony of Saint Domingue (Haiti) did slaves carry out a successful insurrection.

The rebellion in 1791 led to several years of civil war in Haiti, even though French abolished slavery in 1793. When Napoleon came to power, he sent an army to tame the forces led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, a former slave. However, Napoleon's army was decimated by guerrilla fighters and yellow fever, and even though Toussaint died in a French jail, Haiti declared its independence in 1804.

Other revolutions in Latin America were led by political and social elites, although some of them had important populist elements.

- Mexico - Father Miguel Hidalgo led Mexico's rebellion that eventually led to independence in 1821. He was a Catholic priest who sympathized with the plight of the Amerindian peasants and was executed for leading a rebellion against the colonial government. The Creole elite then took up the drive for independence that was won under the leadership of Agustin de Iturbide, a conservative military commander. However, Father Hidalgo's cause greatly influenced Mexico's political atmosphere, as his populist ideas were taken up by others who led the people in revolt against the Creoles. Two famous populist leaders were Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa, who like Father Hidalgo were executed by the government. Mexico was not to work out this tension between elite and peasants until well into the 20th century.

All in all, constitutional experiments in North America were more successful than those in South America. Though South Americans gained independence from colonial governments during the 19th century, their governments remained authoritarian and no effective legislatures were created to share the power with political leaders. Why this difference?

COMPARATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERIMENTS: NORTH AMERICA AND SOUTH AMERICA	
NORTH AMERICA	SOUTH AMERICA
Mother country had parliamentary government, so colonial governments had a constitutional model	Mother country governed by absolute monarch; colonial governments had authoritarian model
Colonies had previous experience with popular politics; had their own governments that often operated independently from British control	Colonies had no experience with popular politics; colonial governments led by authoritarian Creoles
Military leaders were popular and sometimes became Presidents (Washington, Jackson), but they did not try to take over the government as military leaders; constitutional principle that military would be subordinate to the government	Had difficulty subduing the power of military leaders; set in place the tradition of military juntas taking over governments
American Revolution occurred in the 1770s; vulnerable new nation emerged at an economically advantageous time, when the world economy was expanding	Latin American Revolutions occurred during the early 1800s, a time when the world economy was contracting, a less advantageous time for new nations

### IDEOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF REVOLUTIONS

The Enlightenment philosophy that inspired revolutions in the United States, France, and Latin America brought about lasting changes in western political ideology, with some people reacting against the chaos that revolutions brought, and others inspired by the values of democracy, liberty, equality, and justice. Three contrasting ideologies may be seen by the early 1800s:

- **Conservatism** - People who supported this philosophy at first advocated return to absolute monarchy, but came to accept constitutional monarchy by the mid-1800s. Generally, conservatives disapproved of the revolutions of the era, particularly the French Revolution with all the violence and chaos that it brought.
- **Liberalism** - Liberals supported a republican democracy, or a government with an elected legislature who represented the people in political decision-making. These representatives were generally from the elite, but were selected (usually by vote) from a popular base of citizens. Emphasis was generally on liberty or freedom from oppression, rather than on equality.
- **Radicalism** - Radicals advocated drastic changes in government and emphasized equality more than liberty. Their philosophies varied, but they were most concerned with narrowing the gap between elites and the general population. The Jacobins during the French Revolution, and Marxism that appeared in the mid 19th century were variations of this ideological family.

### REFORM MOVEMENTS

The political values supported by revolutions were embraced by some who saw them as applying to all people, including women and former slaves. Values of liberty, equality, and democracy had profound implications for change within societies that had always accepted hierarchical social classes and gender roles. Reform movements sprouted up as different people put different interpretations on what these new political and social values actually meant.

#### Women's Rights

Advocates of women's rights were particularly active in Britain, France, and North America. Since gender roles did not change in the immediate aftermath of revolution, social reformers pressed for women's rights in North America and Europe. Americans like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony in the United States decided to concentrate their efforts on suffrage, or the right to vote.

#### The Limits of the Abolitionist Movement

Although slavery was abolished in Europe and North America by the late 19th century, blacks did not realize equality within the time period. Blacks all over the Americas tended to have the least desirable jobs, limited educational opportunities, and lower social status than whites.

## **Conservative Reactions to Reform**

During the late 1800s two systems of related political thought emerged among conservatives to justify inequalities:

- **Scientific racism** - This idea system became popular among conservative thinkers in industrialized societies. It used scientific reasoning and evidence to prove its premise that blacks are physiologically and mentally inferior to whites. Scientific racism, then, justified the inferior positions that blacks had in the society and the economy.
- **Social Darwinism** - This philosophy justified not racial differences, but differences between the rich and the poor. It used Darwin's theory of natural selection (living things that are better adapted to the environment survive, others don't) to explain why some get rich and others remain poor. In the competition for favored positions and bigger shares of wealth, the strong, intelligent, and motivated naturally defeat the weak, less intelligent, and the lazy. So, people who get to the top deserve it, as do the people who remain at the bottom

## **Marxism**

Another reaction to the revolution in political thought was Marxism, The father of communism is generally acknowledged to be Karl Marx, who saw capitalism -- or the free market -- as an economic system that exploited workers and increased the gap between the rich and the poor. He believed that conditions in capitalist countries would eventually become so bad that workers would join together in a Revolution of the Proletariat (workers), and overcome the bourgeoisie, or owners of factories and other means of production. Marx envisioned a new world after the revolution, one in which social class would disappear because ownership of private property would be banned. According to Marx, communism encourages equality and cooperation, and without property to encourage greed and strife, governments would be unnecessary. His theories took root in Europe, but never became the philosophy behind European governments, but it eventually took new forms in early 20th century Russia and China.

## **NATIONALISM**

The era 1750 to 1914 saw the creation of a new type of political organization - the nation - that survived even if the rulers failed. Whereas nations' political boundaries were still often decided by military victory, the political entity was much broader than control by one person or family. Nations were built on nationalism - the feeling of identity within a common group of people. Of course, these feelings were not new in the history of the world. However, the force of common identity became a basic building block for nations, political forms that still dominate world politics today. Nationalism could be based on common geographical locations, language, religion, or customs, but it is much more complex than that. The main idea is that people see themselves as "Americans" or "Italians" or "Japanese," despite the fact that significant cultural variations may exist within the nation.

## **NEW EUROPEAN NATIONS**

A major political development inspired by growing nationalism was the consolidation of small states into two important new nations:

- **Italy**
- **Germany**

These new nations altered the balance of power in Europe, causing established nations like Britain and France concern that their own power was in danger. Nationalism, then, was spurred on by a renewal of deep-rooted competition that European nations carried to the ends of the earth. They competed with one another through trade, industrial production, and colonization, setting up worldwide empires to bolster their attempts to outdo all the others.

## **EURASIAN EMPIRES**

The Russian and Ottoman Empires - two land-based powers in Eurasia - suffered the disadvantages of being neighbors to the rising nations in Europe. Russia had its wins and losses during the era yet managed to retain its power, but the Ottomans were in steep decline during most of the period and on the brink of destruction by 1914.

## **THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE**

The Russian Empire turned its attention to the west under the late 17th and early 18th century rule of Peter the Great. Russia in the mid-19th century was a huge, diverse realm that was very difficult to rule from a central location, even with the power granted to an absolute tsar. Its economy remained agriculturally based, with most people as serfs bound to the land that they cultivated.

Russia got into trouble with powerful England and France, when its formidable army attacked the Ottoman Empire to seize access to warm water ports around the Black Sea. Fearful of an upset in European balance of power, England and France supported the Ottomans in defeating Russian troops in the Crimean War (1853-1856). This

defeat clearly showed Russian weakness, and it led Tsar Alexander II to attempt reform by emphasizing industrialization, creating elected district assemblies called zemstvos, and emancipating the serfs. Russia's instability became apparent when Alexander II was assassinated by one of the many revolutionary groups that were growing rapidly within the country. Some of these revolutionary groups were Marxist, and their influence would eventually take over the country in 1917. However, Russia continued on under absolute rule until then, with an intense state-run industrialization program that did modernize Russia by the end of the 19th century.

### **THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE - "THE SICK MAN OF EUROPE"**

The Ottoman Empire reached its peak during the 16th and 17th centuries when they won many of their encounters with European kingdoms, although their attack of Europe was stopped with their unsuccessful siege of Vienna. By the early 1800s the Ottoman Empire had many internal problems, including these:

- Economic problems - the government had problems getting enough revenue to keep the army and government functioning.
- Problems with the Janissaries - The Janissaries originally were Christian boys from the Balkans that had been recruited by the Ottomans to fight in their armies. By the early 1800s, the Janissaries were well established as military and political leaders. They often operated separately from the weakening sultan's court and gained a reputation for brutality and corruption.
- Revolts in the Balkans and Greece - At their heart, these revolts were evidence of nationalism -- Balkan and Greek people who had loyalties to their ethnic identities, not the Ottoman Empire.

The decline of Ottoman power and prosperity had a strong impact on a group of urban and well-educated young men who protested European domination of the empire's political, economic, and cultural life. Inspired by the European nationalist movements, they began to call themselves the Young Turks, and they pushed for a Turkish national state.

### **IMPERIALISM**

Empire building is an old theme in world history. Motivations have been similar - to obtain natural resources, to subdue enemies, to accrue wealth, to win power and glory - but until the rise of the west, most empires have expanded to territories next to their borders. With the combination of sea power, centralized governments, and industrialized economies, European nations set out to build empires all over the world -- driven by the need to provide raw materials for their industrial capacity, and the types of goods exchanged were determined by that need.

### **TYPES OF IMPERIALISM**

In the late 19th century Japan and the United States joined the European nations as an imperialist power. Types of imperialism in the 1800s included:

- Colonial imperialism - This form of imperialism is virtual complete takeover of an area, with domination in all areas: economic, political, and socio-cultural. The subjugated area existed to benefit the imperialist power, and had almost no independence of action. In this era, almost all of Africa and southern and southeast Asia were colonized.
- Economic imperialism - This form of imperialism allowed the area to operate as its own nation, but the imperialist nation almost completely controlled its trade and other business. For example, it may impose regulations that forbid trade with other nations, or imperialist companies may own or have exclusive rights to its natural resources. During this era, China and most of Latin America were subjected to economic imperialism.
- Political imperialism - Although a country may have had its own government with natives in top political positions, it operated as the imperialist country told it to. The government was sometimes a relatively permanent "puppet government," as happened in late Qing China, and other times the control was temporary, as occurred in the Dominican Republic when the United States ran its government until it got out of debt.
- Socio-cultural imperialism - The dominating country deliberately tried to change customs, religions and languages in some of the countries. A good example was British India, where English was taught in schools, Indian soldiers dressed British-style, and western trading rules were set up. Generally, the imperialist countries assumed their cultures to be superior, and often times they saw themselves as bringing about improvements in the society.

## **IMPERIALISM IN AFRICA**

Between 1450 and 1750 Europeans traded with Africa, but they set up very few colonies. By 1850, only a few colonies existed along African coastlines, such as Algeria (French), the Cape Colony (Great Britain,) and Angola (Portugal). In the latter half of the 19th century, dramatic changes occurred, as Europeans began to explore Africa's interior, and by 1914, virtually the entire continent was colonized by one or the other of the competing European countries. The Berlin Conference of 1884-5, in an effort to avoid war, allowed European diplomats to draw lines on maps and carve Africa into colonies. The result was a transformation of political and economic Africa, with virtually all parts of the continent colonized by 1900.

## **IMPERIALISM IN INDIA**

### **The British "Raj" - 1818-1857**

India was under "company" rule for almost forty years, but they were not actually a British colony during that time because the British East India Company was still private, even though the British government supported it. However, the company administered governmental affairs and initiated social reform that reflected British values. The contradictory roles they played eventually erupted in the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857. The Sepoys were Indian Muslims and Hindus who served the British as soldiers in the army that defended the subcontinent. The rebellion took the British by surprise, but they found out that the Indian fury could be traced to a new training technique that the soldiers refused to follow. It required them to put a bullet shell in their mouths that had been greased in either pork or beef fat, with the pork fat being highly offensive to the Muslims and the beef to the Hindu. The British changed the practice, but it was too late because nationalism had reached India, too, and a movement for a country based on Indian identity was beginning. The leaders of the movement would have to wait about 90 years, though, to fulfill their dreams.

### **British Rule - 1857-1947**

The Sepoy Rebellion showed the British government how serious the problems in India were, and they reacted by removing the British East India Company from control and declaring India a British colony. British officials poured into India to keep control of its valuable raw materials for industry and trade, particularly cotton and poppies for opium. They expanded production, built factories in India, and constructed huge railroad and irrigation, and telegraph systems.

### **Rising Indian Nationalism**

With growing industrialization and British controlled trade, a middle class of Indian officials and managers began to rise during the late 1800s. By and large, the British did not allow Indians to own companies or to hold top government positions, but they did provide education for people to fill middle level and professional jobs. Some Indians went to England for higher education, where they absorbed western political values of liberty, equality, and justice, and they began to apply those values to their own situations. The Indian National Congress was formed in 1885, with the goals of promoting political unity and appointing more Indians into higher positions in the British Civil Service. The Congress was controlled by Hindus, and in 1906 another nationalist group was established for Muslims called the All-India Muslim League. Despite tensions between them, by 1914 both groups were demanding Indian independence from the British.

## **IMPERIALISM IN CHINA**

Problems of the Qing Dynasty began to mount during the early 19th century. As the Chinese dynastic cycle was clearly going into decline, Europeans sensed the problems, and began to push for trading rights that China had been reluctant to grant in earlier times.

### **The Opium Wars (1839-1842)**

Trade was very much supervised by Chinese under the cohong system, with specially licensed Chinese firms operating under government set prices. Trade with Europeans was also restricted by the fact that Europeans had very little that the Chinese wanted to buy, even though the reverse was far from true. So the British East India Company, using Turkish and Persian expertise) grew opium in India and shipped it to China. As a result, trade boomed, especially once the Chinese developed addictions to the drug. The weak Qing government failed to act, even after some Chinese officials began to support the trade by accepting bribes. The Opium Wars began after the Qing refused to listen to British protests of the trade ban. Although the British did not take over the government, they forced the Qing to sign a treaty allowing the trade.

### **The Unequal Treaties**

The Treaty of Nanjing, signed by the Chinese after the Opium Wars, was oriented toward trade. The Chinese agreed to allow the trade of opium and open other ports to exclusive trade with Britain. Beyond that, it gave the British control of Hong Kong (near Guangzhou), and it released Korea, Vietnam, and Burma from Chinese control.



This was the first of many unequal treaties signed by Asians with European nations, and they eventually led to "spheres of influence." By the early 20th century, virtually all of China was split into these areas, and the Qing government was virtually powerless.

### **The Taiping Rebellion - 1850-1864**

The Qing Dynasty was significantly weakened by the Taiping Rebellion, a revolt led by Hong Xiuquan. Hong was an unusual leader, believing that he was the younger brother of Jesus, and advocating abolition of private property and equality for women. The Chinese government finally ended the civil war, with a great deal of help from the Europeans, but the cost to the country was about 20-30 million killed in this 14-year struggle.

Although it is difficult to see the Taiping Rebellion as nationalism, its leader's ideas were similar in many ways to the radical political movements in the west. Chinese nationalism was more apparent in the **1900 Boxer Rebellion**, in which a group called the Boxers led an army against the Qing with the express purpose of recovering "China for the Chinese." The group fed on their efforts to rid the country of European interests, and even though the rebellion was unsuccessful, the Boxers laid the foundations for the 1911 Chinese Revolution that finally ended the Qing Dynasty.

## **NEW IMPERIALIST NATIONS**

### **The United States**

As industrialization enriched and empowered the United States in the late 19th century, the country also began to experiment with imperialism. It began with the purchase of Alaska from Russia, and followed with a coup of the native government in Hawaii, a plot sponsored by American planters and growers in the Hawaiian Islands. Both Alaska and Hawaii became territories, and although many questioned the wisdom of the Alaska purchase, the Hawaii takeover clearly had an economic motive.

After a quarrel over Cuban independence, the United States defeated Spain in the Spanish American War in 1898, a fairly easy task since Spain was long past the peak of her colonial power. The peace treaty gave the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and the Pacific island of Guam to the United States as protectorates, as well as considerable economic control of Cuba. To keep their new empire intact, President Theodore Roosevelt advocated the building of a powerful American navy, and the United States sponsored the building of the Panama Canal to allow the new Great White Fleet access to both east and west coasts of the country.

### **Japan**

The Meiji Restoration took advantage of the fact that their geography made them less strategically important than the Chinese, so that the Europeans and Americans tended to leave them alone. They were left to their own devices - to create a remarkable state that built the foundations for Japan as a world power.

The Meiji (meaning "enlightened rule") claimed to have ended centuries of shogun-dominated governments that made the emperor totally powerless. They mystified and revered the position of the emperor, who became a very important symbol for Japanese unity. However, the new state did not give the emperor any real power, either. Japanese nationalism was built on the mysticism of the emperor, anxiety over the foreign threat, and an amazing transformation of Japan's military, economy, and government. The country was ruled by oligarchs, a small group of leaders who together directed the state. They borrowed heavily from the west to industrialize their country and to build a centralized, strong military. They gradually but systematically dissolved the daimyo and samurai classes, and they placed a great deal of emphasis on building a strong education system.

***The era from 1750-1914 was clearly one of growing European power and domination of the globe. Industrialization created unprecedented wealth, and new western political ideas spawned strong, centralized states that directed empires around the world. However, the new political ideas encouraged nationalism, which on the one hand strengthened the industrialized countries, but on the other hand caused the people that they dominated to resent their control. The potential for worldwide power and riches also intensified the conflict and competition that had long existed among European states. In 1914 these conflicts came to the surface and erupted into a Great War that ushered in the new, very different era of the 20th century.***

## 1914-PRESENT

**QUESTIONS OF PERIODIZATION** - Major characteristics that distinguish the time period 1914 - present include:

- **Redefinition and repositioning of the west** - During the 20th century, the term "west" came to have a new meaning. In the early part of the century, the west was centered in Europe. Although the United States and Australia were considered to be western nations, they were more or less off-spins from the European colonial powers. After World War II the western center moved to the United States, and by the end of the century, the phrase "western dominance" was a clear reference to U.S. power. Even so, power centers in other parts of the world challenged the west: Japan in the 1930s and 40s, and the Soviet Union during the Cold War era. The United States emerged as the dominant world power after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, but significant checks on that power appear to be emerging in the early 21st century. Birth control has meant that the west currently has a smaller percentage of the world's population than even before, a fact that adds to the question of whether or not the west will continue to dominate the world.
- **Increase in international contacts** - International trade and communication burgeoned during the 20th century, creating the phenomenon of globalization. Technological advancements were central to the swift, gigantic changes. Technological connections allowed the spread of culture and science to occur much more quickly than ever before. The century also saw the development of international organizations, starting with the League of Nations in 1918, and continuing with the United Nations, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization. Migrations from Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean headed toward the leading industrial centers from the 1920s, leading many people to question whether or not regional identities were being lost.
- **The democratic transition** - Very few countries had the same type of government in 2000 that they had in 1914. Monarchies all over the world were replaced by democratic governments or authoritarian regimes, and by the late 20th century, many authoritarian regimes were being replaced by democracies. Western democratic governments were often used as models, not only for newly independent countries, but for former powerhouses, such as the Soviet Union.
- **Changes in belief systems** - For most of world history, organized religions in all parts of the globe have been important influences on almost every other area of life, including government, family life, and culture. Many scholars see a 20th century trend away from religion toward a new reliance on non-religious philosophies such as liberalism, nationalism, and communism. Furthermore, by century's end, people in western nations, as well as some in the east, appeared to be relying less on religious explanations for social and natural phenomena than on new and rapidly developing scientific explanations. However,
- **Questioning of systems of inequality** - Although people had challenged social inequalities for many years before 1914, widespread reforms characterize the 20th century. Industrialized countries had abolished slavery in the 19th century, but major civil rights movements for racial and ethnic minorities shook the social systems around the globe in such countries as the United States, South Africa, and India. Women's rights movements also have their roots in the 19th century, but only in the 20th century did women in industrialized countries win the right to vote. Likewise, people in lands conquered by imperialist powers in earlier eras challenged international inequities, although they were far from successful in their goals for equality by the end of the 20th century.

## WAR AND DIPLOMACY

20th century wars were unique in that they increasingly encompassed more and more of the globe. World War I began as a European conflict that spread into other regions, but World War II and the Cold War intensified international conflict to reach almost all parts of the globe. A series of international organizations formed in reaction to the wars, and provided a diplomatic alternative to world crises.

**WORLD WAR I** - World War I is an important marker event in modern history because it ushers in a new era in which the global framework changed dramatically. It also marks the collapse of European hegemony that had been solidly in place during the 1750-1914 era.

## CAUSES

The onset of war in 1914 resulted from years of tensions among European nations:

**1) Nationalism** - nationalism set the stage for World War I in two ways:

- National rivalries - The unification of Germany threatened to topple the balance of power that had existed in Europe since the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1815. The competition took many forms: industrialization, a naval race, arms build-ups, and colonial disputes over territories.
- Nationalist aspirations - Inherent in nationalism is self-determination, the right to form states based on ethnicity, language, and/or political ideals. This part of nationalism is apparent in the unification of Germany and Italy, and in the separation of Belgium from the Netherlands. However, in eastern Europe, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire resisted nationalist demands. Both empires confronted the nationalist aspirations of Slavic people -- Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Most menacing of all were the Serbs, who were encouraged by Russia's support and promotion of Pan-Slavism, a movement to unite all Slavic people.

**2) Entangling Alliances** - As countries and empires built their arms, they looked to one another for support and protection. The two major alliances were the Triple Entente (Russia, England, and France) vs. the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy). The allies generally had a common hatred for one or more of the countries on the other side.

### **SPARK FOR THE WAR**

The assassination of Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, set in motion a series of events in which one country after the other declared war on another. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, who had an alliance with Russia. Russia declared war on Austria-Hungary, requiring Germany to declare war on Russia. And so the domino effect continued so that by August a local conflict had become a general European war.

### **NATURE OF THE WAR**

World War I is often defined by the optimism that countries had going into the war in contrast to the horror, shock, and slaughter that traumatized them by the time the war ended in 1918. The balance of power struck in 1815 had been strong enough to delay conflict so that no one alive in 1914 could remember the devastation of war, and almost every nation glorified the excitement of war. The two sides settled into the Allied Powers - England, France, Russia, and Italy (who switched sides at the last minute) - and the Central Powers - Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire.

The net effect of the war was the slaughter of a huge portion of a generation of young men, primarily from Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, England, and France. Arguably, Europe never fully recovered from the loss.

### **THE VERSAILLES TREATY**

The "Great War" is a marker event in world history because it is the first in a series of events that led to declining European power and ascending power for the United States and Japan. However, the Versailles Treaty at the end of the war is almost as important event as the war itself because it changed the nature of international relations and set the stage for World War II.

Although 27 nations gathered at Versailles Palace in France in 1919 to shape a treaty, men from three nations dominated the proceedings: David Lloyd George from Britain, Georges Clemenceau from France, and Woodrow Wilson from the United States. Russia, who had pulled out of the war in 1917, was not represented. Woodrow Wilson came to the meetings with his plan, called the Fourteen Points, which was grounded in two important principles:

- Self determination - the need to redraw the map of Europe and the old Ottoman Empire along the lines of self determination, allowing groups based on nationalism to determine their own governments.
- The need for an international peace organization - a worldwide organization charged with keeping the peace and avoiding another war like the one that had just occurred.

Britain and France came to Versailles with different motivations. After all, their countries had suffered a great deal more from the war than the United States had. Revenge and control of Germany - who was a more immediate threat to them than to the United States - were more important to them.

The treaty that resulted was a compromise among the three countries. The many provisions include these important ones:

- Germany lost land along all borders, including Alsace-Lorraine and the Polish Corridor
- German military forces were severely restricted and a demilitarized zone was created along lands bordering France and Belgium.
- Germany had to pay very high reparations for war to specific Allied Powers.
- An international organization called the League of Nations was created.

- Germany's overseas possessions were placed under the control of the League, remaining as mandates until they were ready for independence.
- The map of Eastern Europe was redrawn along ethnic lines, recreating the country of Poland, and creating Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Austria, and Hungary. Austria-Hungary as a political empire was destroyed.
- Although the Ottoman Empire was dismantled as well, the resulting pieces were designated as mandates, not independent countries.

The treaty was a fiasco that satisfied almost no one and infuriated many. The Turks and Arabs of the former Ottoman Empire, as well as people of Germany's colonies, couldn't understand why eastern European countries were created as independent countries and they weren't. What's more the British occupied many areas of the Middle East, and did not leave once the treaty was signed. The League of Nations excluded Germany and Russia from membership, and the United States Senate failed to ratify the treaty and never joined the League. As a result, the international peace organization had very limited authority from the beginning. However, the most immediate reaction came from Germany, who saw the treaty as unfairly blaming them for the war and punishing them so severely that they could not recover. Their discontent provided fertile grounds for the rise of a demagogue that of course happened in due time.

**THE ROOTS OF WORLD WAR II** - World War II is often described as Chapter 2 of the War that started in 1914. Only 20 years of peace lie in between the end of World War I and the beginning of World War II, and in many ways the hostilities never ceased.

### **THE RISE OF JAPAN**

Japan broke the post-war peace in 1931 by invading traditionally Chinese Manchuria, clearly reflecting their intention to expand their empire at the expense of China. This invasion angered the international community, and many nations reacted by enacting economic sanctions, but Japan was undeterred. From there, China itself was threatened, even after the League of Nations condemned Japanese actions. In 1937, they began a full-scale invasion of China, and rapidly began to control more and more of the mainland.

### **EXPANSIONISM IN EUROPE**

#### **Post-war Struggles in Germany**

After World War I ended, Germany established a republican form of government under the leadership of General Hindenberg, a hero from the war. However, the government had countless obstacles in reestablishing order and stability. War debts were crushing, vital resources in the west had been claimed by France, and inflation became rampant as the country tried to rebuild itself after the devastation of the war. When the Great Depression spread throughout Europe in 1929-30, weakened Germany was the most vulnerable to its punch.

In their desperation, Germans were open to new political solutions, including those advocated by communism. On the other end of the political spectrum, Adolf Hitler, an Austrian artist who had fought in World War I, attracted attention as the leader of the German Socialist Workers Party. In a series of clever political moves, he established his party in the Reichstag, and eventually convinced Hindenberg to appoint him as chancellor. After Hindenberg died, he and his "Nazi" party came to dominate German politics with promises to restore German prosperity. That they did, but by blatantly breaking the provisions of the Versailles Treaty. He rebuilt the army, seized the resource-rich Rhineland from France, and played upon the loss of German pride suffered by the humiliations of the Versailles Treaty. His Nazi state was authoritarian and militaristic, and like Japan and Italy, also incredibly expansionistic.

#### **German Expansion**

Under Hitler, Germany began claiming territory around but outside its borders established by the Versailles Treaty. The claims were backed by military force, and at first they were only the lands that Germany believed had been unfairly taken from them by the Versailles Treaty. But eventually Hitler's forces attacked the Sudetenland, a part of Czechoslovakia with many German people, but also home to Czechs and other Slavs. Finally, with this action, Hitler experienced some reaction from the old Allied Powers.

#### **The Munich Agreement and the Start of the War**

Under the leadership of Britain's Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, the Allies reached an agreement with Hitler, infamously known as **appeasement**, or giving Hitler the land he had already seized in exchange for his promise to not take any more. Chamberlain promised the British people upon his return home that he had achieved "peace in our time," but the war began the very next year when Hitler broke his promise by attacking Poland. England and France were still war-weary from World War I, but they reluctantly declared war on Germany.

## **THE NATURE OF THE WAR**

The nations of the world aligned themselves with the Allied Powers (originally led by Britain and France, later joined by Russia and the United States) and the Axis Powers (led by Germany, Italy, and Japan.) Even though the causes of World War II were rooted in unsettled business from World I, the nature of the war was far different from any previous conflict in world history. Some distinct characteristics of World War II are:

- Worldwide participation
- Fighting in "theatres" or "arenas" - Whereas in most previous wars, including World War I, "fronts" where opposite sides clashed were identifiable, changing war technology and military techniques meant that the war was fought in two large arenas: Europe (including North Africa) and the Pacific Ocean.
- Technology - Major war technologies contributed to changes in the nature of warfare. Although airplanes and tanks had been used to some extent in World War I, they came to dominate World War II. Other technologies, such as radar and more accurate and powerful weaponry, helped submarines and warships to target the enemy. The most unique and deadly technology - the atom bomb - was introduced at the end of the war.
- Widespread killing of civilians - Whereas civilian casualties were not unique to World War II, the war is characterized by deliberate targeting of non-military people. Because the bombings sought to destroy the industrial infrastructure, they focused on urban areas where many people lived. In some cases the bombs were intended to torment populations so that the enemy would surrender. The German Nazis deliberately killed Jews and many other groups of people that they considered to be inferior to them, and of course, the atom bomb killed all those in its path, regardless of their military or civilian status.

## **THE HOLOCAUST**

Genocide (ethnic based mass killings) characterized World War II. For example, the Japanese tortured and killed as many as 300,000 Chinese citizens in Nanking after the city had fallen. The bombings of Hiroshima killed 78,000 Japanese, and Nagasaki killed tens of thousands more. The largest slaughter resulted from Hitler's decision to eliminate Jews in Germany and eastern Europe resulting in 6 million deaths in concentration camps that specialized in efficient methods of extermination. The Holocaust was an unprecedented modern genocide that also targeted gypsies and political dissidents. The "final solution" to the "Jewish problem" included death by gassing, electrocution, phenol injections, flamethrowers, and machine guns. Others died in concentration camps from starvation and medical experiments.

## **POST-WORLD WAR II INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Instead of being settled by one sweeping peace treaty, World War II ended with many negotiations and meetings. An important result of Allied discussions was the formation of the United Nations, only one of many international organizations that formed in the decades that followed World War II.

- The United Nations - Like the League, the United Nations' main purpose was to negotiate disputes among nations, but it also has addressed world issues, such as trade, women's conditions, child labor, hunger, and environmental protection.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization - NATO was formed in 1949 as a defensive alliance among the U.S., Canada, and western European nations. In response, the Soviet Union formed the Warsaw Pact, including eastern European nations. The formation of these two international organizations was a reflection of changing politics and a new type of warfare called the Cold War that was to last until 1991.

**THE COLD WAR** - The Cold War describes the decades-long period after World War II that centered around tensions between the two most powerful countries that emerged from the war: the United States and the Soviet Union. The era marks the replacement of European hegemony with two competing power centers. The globe during this time was divided into three parts: the United States and its allies, the Soviet Union and its allies, and a "Third World," of unaligned, generally less developed countries that both "superpowers" competed to influence.

## **THE ROOTS OF THE COLD WAR**

The World War II alliance between the Soviet Union on the one hand, and the United States and Britain on the other, was based primarily on a mutual enemy: Germany. The lack of trust between the two "sides" was apparent even before the war was officially over. The United States and the Soviet Union reacted by seizing control of lands that they occupied in Asia, with the northern half of Korea controlled by the Soviets, and the southern half by the

United States. The U.S. maintained its occupation of Japan, China regained most of its former territory, and the old colonial powers maintained control in Southeast Asia.

In Europe, the Soviet Union pushed its boundaries westward, and the nations of eastern Europe (with the exceptions of Greece and Yugoslavia) fell under Soviet domination. Since the countries of western Europe were seriously weakened by the war, they depended on the United States to help them maintain their democracies. The United States sent aid to them with the Marshall Plan, a program of loans to help them rebuild their infrastructures. The Soviets saw this as a vehicle for American economic domination, and in the words of Winston Churchill, an "Iron Curtain" descended across Europe, dividing east from west.

### **THE ARMS RACE**

The competition between the United States and the Soviet Union extended to almost all areas, including a race to develop space technology and attempts to gain support from Third World countries. However, the deadliest competition came as both countries built their nuclear arsenals.

The Cold War was at its height during the 1950s and 1960s, with people around the globe fearing the worst - the outbreak of a third world war - but this time with nuclear weapons that would almost certainly destroy the world. During the 1970s, both countries saw the need to compromise, and a series of negotiations led to arms reductions. Tensions eased further during the late 1980s, partly because the Soviet Union was on the verge of economic collapse.

### **NEW PATTERNS OF NATIONALISM**

Nationalism was as important a force during the 20th century as it had been in the previous era. People under the control of imperialist nations continued to strive for their own identities, and new, independent nations popped up in Africa, the Indian subcontinent, and southeast Asia. Nationalist movements also were a major cause of the late 20th century breakup of the Soviet Union, again changing the balance of world power in the post-Cold War era.

### **NATIONALISM IN AFRICA**

By the early 20th century Europeans had colonized most of the African continent. Christian missionaries set up schools that educated a new native elite, who learned not only skills and literacy but western political ideas as well. They couldn't help but notice the contrast between the democratic ideals they were being taught in class and the reality of discrimination that they saw around them. This observation sparked nationalist movements in many places.

### **DECOLONIZATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

One by one native leaders negotiated treaties with their imperialist masters, so that by the late 1960s, the African continent was composed primarily of independent nations. A Pan-African movement was started by Kwame Nkrumah, who in 1957 became the prime minister of Ghana, and Jomo Kenyatta, a leader of Kenya, but the focus of nationalism was on independence for the individual colonies.

Independence led to many new problems for African nations. Many border disputes occurred, since colonial boundaries often did not follow ethnic lines. The borders of some countries, such as Nigeria and Zaire, encompassed several different ethnic groups that struggled with one another for control of the country. Race conflict became particularly severe in the temperate southern part of the continent, where Europeans clashed with natives for political and economic power. South Africa was left with apartheid, an attempt by European minorities to keep natives in subservient, and very separate, roles in society. The African National Congress, formed in South Africa in 1912, led a bloody struggle against apartheid, which eventually led to success when Nelson Mandela became the first native president of South Africa in 1994.

### **NATIONALISM IN INDIA**

The movement was fractured from the beginning, largely because the diversity of people on the Indian subcontinent made a united independence movement difficult. Tensions were particularly high between Hindus and Muslims. Muslims constituted only about a quarter of the entire Indian population, but they formed a majority in the northwest and in eastern Bengal.

During World War I Indians supported Britain enthusiastically, hoping that they would be rewarded for their loyalty. However, Britain stalled on independence, and political tensions mounted. For the next twenty years, Indians and British clashed often and violently, and the colony threatened to descend into chaos. The downward spiral was halted by Mohandas K. Gandhi. Gandhi denounced violence and popular uprisings and preached the virtues of ahimsa (nonviolence) and satyagraha (the search for truth.) He demonstrated his identification with the poor by wearing simple homespun clothing and practicing fasting. He was also a brilliant political tactician, and he had a

knack for attracting public attention. His most famous gesture was the Walk to the Sea or Salt March, where he gathered salt as a symbol of Indian industry, an action forbidden by the British government. Such non-violent persistence landed him in jail repeatedly, but his leadership gave Indians the moral high-ground over the British, who eventually agreed to independence in 1947.

The independence agreement was complicated: violent riots between Hindus and Muslims broke out, so that the British negotiated with the two organizations to partition India into two states. Most of the subcontinent remained under secular rule dominated by Hindus, but the new Muslim state of Pakistan was formed in the northwest and northeast. Independence celebrations were marred by violence between Muslims and Hindus. The partition led to massive movements of Indians from one area to the other, and Gandhi himself was assassinated by a Hindu who was upset because the partition meant that he had to leave his home. Religious conflict continued to plague the subcontinent for the rest of the 20th century.

### **NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

As in Africa, the French provided the most resistance to decolonization in southeast Asia. Throughout the area, independence leaders were also drawn to communism, and French Indochina was no exception. The Communist leader Ho Chi Minh led his supporters against the French, capturing the colonial stronghold of Dienbienphu in 1954. Ho Chi Minh's government took over in the north, and a noncommunist nationalist government ruled in the south, which eventually came to be heavily supported by the United States. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the United States waged an unsuccessful war with North Vietnam that eventually ended in the reunification of the country under communist rule in 1975.

### **NATIONALISM IN LATIN AMERICA**

Nationalism in Latin America took the form of internal conflict, since almost all the nations had achieved independence during the 19th century. However, most were still ruled by an authoritarian elite. During the 20th century, many nations experienced populist uprisings that challenged the elite and set in motion an unstable relationship between democracy and militarism. Some teetered back and forth between democratically elected leaders and military generals who established power through force. Coups d'etat became common, and political legitimacy and economic viability became serious issues.

- Mexico - At the beginning of the century, Mexico was ruled by Porfirio Diaz, a military general who enriched a small group of elites by allowing them to control agriculture and welcoming businessmen from the United States to control industry. The Revolution of 1910 began not with the exploited poor, but with elites that Diaz did not favor, almost all of them military generals. As early as 1911 the revolutionary fervor had spread to peasants, who were led by regional strongmen, such as Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa. Despite the creation of a democratic-based Constitution in 1917, the revolution raged on, with every President assassinated during his term of office until Lazaro Cardenas took over in 1934. Finally, the country stabilized under an umbrella political party (PRI), which tightly controlled Mexican politics until the 1990s, when some signs of democracy began to appear.
- The Cuban Revolution and its aftermath - Revolutions against dictators were often inspired by communism, especially after the Cuban Revolution led by Fidel Castro in 1959. Military leaders of Brazil led a conservative reaction by staging a coup of the democratically elected government in 1964. There the "Brazilian Solution" was characterized by dictatorship, violent repression, and government promotion of industrialization. A similar pattern occurred in Chile in 1974 where the socialist president Salvador Allende was overthrown in a military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet. Socialist Sandinistas led a rebellion against the dictator of Nicaragua in 1979, where their communist affiliations led them to disfavor with the conservative United States government led by Ronald Reagan. The Reagan administration supported Contras (counterrevolutionaries) who unsuccessfully challenged the Sandinistas. By the 1990s, most Latin American nations had loosened the control by the military, and democratic elections appeared to be gaining ground. However, they continued to be economically and militarily dominated by the United States.

### **MAJOR GLOBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS THE GREAT DEPRESSION**

The stock markets in the United States had boomed during the late 1920s, but the optimism of investors that drove the markets upward far outstripped the strength of the economy. When the bubble burst in October 1929, the New York Stock Exchange tumbled, losing half of its value within days. Millions of investors lost money, as did the banks and brokers who had lent them money. New York banks called in their loans to Germany and Austria who in turn could no longer pay war reparations to France and Great Britain. The series of events led to a domino effect of

crashing markets in Europe and other industrialized countries, ushering in the deepest and most widespread depression in history. Companies laid off thousands of workers, farm prices fell, and unemployment rates soared. The catastrophe caused many to rethink the free-enterprise system, and increased the appeal of alternate political and economic philosophies, such as communism and fascism.

### **TWENTIETH CENTURY TECHNOLOGY**

The new inventions sparked by the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century continued to develop during the 20th century. When applied to industry, many of the World War II technologies increased productivity, reduced labor requirements, and improved the flow of information. After both world wars, pent-up demand for consumer goods spawned new inventions for peacetime economies. Improvements in existing technologies kept economies healthy during the 1950s and 60s, especially as European countries began to recover from the war.

### **THE COMPUTER AGE**

One of the most important new technologies of the 20th century was the computer. The internet rapidly developed and expanded during the 1990s, and its ability to connect computers to one another and access information transformed communications by the early 21st century.

### **MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS**

With improved transportation and communications, these corporations became truly international in the late 20th century with their multinational ownership and management. International trade agreements and open markets reinforced the trend. Many of the companies were American (General Motors, Exxon, Microsoft) or Japanese (Honda, Sony), but by 2000 many other multinational corporations were headquartered in countries with smaller economies.

One result of the growth of transnational corporations was the increasing difficulty that national government had in regulating them. Often the companies simply repositioned their plants and labor force by moving their bases to countries with fewer regulations and cheaper labor. As a result, the worst cases of labor and environmental abuses tended to occur in poor nations.

### **THE PACIFIC RIM**

Another important development of the late 20th century was the increasing economic strength of many countries and cities along the "Pacific Rim," such as Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.

Japan experienced a faster rate of economic growth in the 1970s and 1980s than did any other major developed economy. In contrast to the American model of free enterprise, giant Japanese business conglomerates known as *keiretsu* have close relationships with government. The government supports business interests in industry, commerce, construction, automobiles, semiconductors, and banking through tariff and import regulations. By 1990 Japan enjoyed a trade surplus with the rest of the world that caused many observers to believe that Japan would soon pass the United States as the world's strongest economy. However, by 2000 the Japanese economy was slowed by overvalued stocks and housing, speculation, and corruption.

South Korea, as one of the Asian Tigers (along with Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore), followed the model of close cooperation between government and industry. Through a combination of inexpensive labor, strong technical education, and large capital reserves, South Korea experienced a "compressed modernity" that transformed the country into a major industrial and consumer economy that, despite a recession in 1997, continued into the early 21st century.

In China after Mao Zedong's death in 1976, Deng Xiaoping emerged as the new communist leader. He advocated a socialist market economic, a practical blend of socialism and capitalism, to solve China's economic woes. By century's end, China's economy had expanded rapidly, and by the early 21st century, China was granted membership in the World Trade Organization, and was rapidly become one of the most important trading nations in the world.

### **IDEOLOGIES AND REVOLUTIONS**

Many of the conflicts of the 20th century, including World War II and the Cold War, represent important ideological clashes between industrialized democracies and industrialized totalitarian powers. Two important ideologies that greatly influenced the century were communism and fascism.

- Communism - Karl Marx's communist theory was revolutionized during the early 20th century in Russia by Vladimir Lenin. Lenin advocated democratic centralism. He and a small group of leaders became a "vanguard of the revolution," leading in the name of the people, but concentrating control in the hands of a



few. Even though his version of communism emphasized equality and the destruction of class distinctions, the highly centralized control translated into totalitarian power. In China, Mao Zedong's communism stressed the importance of agriculture and the peasants, but he also exercised totalitarian power after his takeover of the country in 1949.

- Fascism - As communism became more popular in Europe, especially as capitalism faltered with the Great Depression, fascism developed as an alternative doctrine to countries in economic distress. Fascism, an authoritarian political movement that sought to subordinate individuals to the service of the state, first developed under Benito Mussolini in Italy. Mussolini advocated an extreme nationalism that claimed to regain the power and glory of the ancient Roman Empire. Fascism spread to other countries, including Germany, where Adolf Hitler fashioned it into Nazism.

Whereas fascism played an important role in World War II, communism sparked numerous revolutions, including those in Russia and China.

## **COMMUNISM IN RUSSIA**

Under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin, Russia withdrew from the WW I and was named the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. After a four-year civil war, Lenin established his control over the country, and the U.S.S.R. became the first communist regime of the 20th century.

### **STALINISM**

When Lenin died in 1924, his position as General Secretary of the Communist Party was eventually claimed by Joseph Stalin. Stalin emphasized internal development, and set in place Five-Year Plans that set industrial goals designed to strengthen the power of the Soviet Union. Stalin did not focus on producing consumer goods. Instead his plans increased the output of electricity and heavy industry, such as iron, steel, coal, and machinery. Agriculture was collectivized, a process that abolished small private farms and forced farmers to work on large government-controlled farms that produced food to support industry.

Stalinism was characterized not only by industrialization and collectivization, but by brutal, centralized control of government that held little resemblance to Marxist doctrine. Despite his purges of untold millions of people, Stalin did lead the Soviet Union to industrialize faster than any country had ever done.

### **POST-STALIN ECONOMIC CRISES**

Russia emerged from World War II as a superpower, largely as a result of Stalin's focus on industrial strength. However, economic development was uneven. The USSR produced a great army, developed a sophisticated missile program, and participated in a "race to space" with the United States. Much money was spent on maintaining control over satellite states, but the consumer failed to grow. By the mid-1980s, the country was on the verge of economic collapse, although the severity of its problems was largely unknown to outsiders. Mikhail Gorbachev attempted to revive the country through a 3-pronged program:

- Perestroika - Economic reforms attempted to infuse some capitalism into the system, reduce the size of the army, stimulate under-producing factories, and stabilize the monetary system.
- Glasnost - Loosely translated as "openness", glasnost attempted to loosen censorship restrictions and allow nationalist minorities to address their concerns to the government.
- Democratization - Gorbachev's plan allowed some choice of candidates for the national congress, a body that in turn selected a president.

The Gorbachev reforms backfired after a conservative coup attempt in 1991. Although the coup failed, and Gorbachev retained his position as president, the crisis resulted in unrest that quickly brought an end to the U.S.S.R. as the republics one by one declared their independence. By the year's end, Gorbachev had no job because he had no country, and Russia - the largest of the republics - emerged under the leadership of Boris Yeltsin. The 1990s saw a weakened Russia struggling to establish a democracy and regain some of its former power.

## **COMMUNISM IN CHINA**

### **CHINA UNDER MAO**

Maoism always differed the Soviet-style communism, partly because Mao believed in the importance of keeping an agricultural-based economy. He broke with the Soviet Union in the late 1950s and instituted his Great Leap Forward to compensate for the loss of Soviet aid. This program emphasized both agricultural and industrial development, but the economy nose-dived. Mao responded with the Cultural Revolution in 1966 - a much more profound reform in that it encompassed political and social change, as well as economic. Mao was still unhappy with China's progress toward true egalitarianism, and his main goal was to purify the party and the country through radical transformation.

A primary goal of the Cultural Revolution was to remove all vestiges of the old China and its hierarchical bureaucracy and emphasis on inequality. Scholars were sent into the fields to work, universities and libraries were destroyed. Emphasis was put on elementary education - all people should be able to read and write - but any education that created inequality was targeted for destruction.

### **CHINA UNDER DENG XIAOPING**

When Mao died in 1976, the country was on the verge of collapse, traumatized by massive changes brought by the Cultural Revolution. His successor, Deng Xiaoping, encouraged a practical mix of socialism and capitalism called the socialist market economy, a tactic that brought better economic health to China. During the late 20th century, China became more and more capitalistic while still retaining centralized control by the government. Tensions between economic reform and the centralized communist political system erupted into popular disruptions, most famously at Tiananmen Square in Beijing in 1989. By the early 21st century, China remained the largest (and one of the only) communist-controlled country in the world, but had become increasingly prosperous with the government openly encouraging trade with capitalist countries.

### **GLOBALIZATION OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND CULTURE**

Globalization is an integration of social, technological, scientific, environmental, economic, and cultural activities of nations that has resulted from increasing international contacts. On the other hand, fragmentation is the tendency for people to base their loyalty on ethnicity, language, religion, or cultural identity. Although globalization and fragmentation appear to be opposite concepts, they both transcend political boundaries between individual countries. At the beginning of the 21st century it is possible to predict that new homogenizing forces will further reduce variations between individual cultures or that a new splintering among civilizations is taking place, with each region advocating its own self-interest.

### **FORCES FOR GLOBALIZATION**

The cross-cutting forces of the past century or so have increasingly homogenized cultures. Most civilizations find it very difficult to isolate themselves from the rest of the world since they are tied together in so many ways. Some factors that promote globalization include:

- Modern transportation and communication - People are able to go from one area of the world to another much more easily than at any previous time in history. Likewise, communication is faster and more reliable than ever before.
- Increasing international trade - many barriers to international trade were removed during the second half of the 20th century.
- Spread of "popular culture" - The popularity of Western fads and fashions, from clothes to television to sports, leads to cultural contact between ordinary people in everyday life. Although this phenomenon may be seen as the "westernization" of world culture, in recent years culture from other lands has influenced the west as well.
- Sharing of international science - Nationality is secondary to their mutual interests.
- International business - business leaders learn from other organizational forms and labor policies.

**FORCES FOR FRAGMENTATION** - Some factors that encourage fragmentation include:

- The decline of European power- A major factor that led to the mid-20th century de-colonization in Africa and Asia was the desire for cultural and political independence from European nations.
- The breakup of multicultural empires - During the 20th century, many multicultural empires broke apart, leaving their subject people to quarrel among themselves. When British India broke into two countries - India and Pakistan - old hostilities between Hindus and Muslims came to the surface. Likewise, when the Ottoman Empire broke up after World War I, Slavic and Muslim peoples fragmented so deeply that inter-cultural wars broke out in the Balkans many decades later.
- The end of the cold war - The end of the cold war gave many nations dependent on American or Soviet aid the opportunity to reassert themselves in new ways. For example, the Soviet breakup gave independence to many subject states that have fragmented into different countries. In the Middle East, leaders of the 1979 revolution in Iran committed themselves to ousting U.S. influence and reinvigorating Islamic traditions.

## **DEMOGRAPHIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES**

**MIGRATIONS** - Two distinct types of migrations characterized the 20th century:

- Rural to urban - The industrialized nations saw significant migrations from the farm to the city during the 19th century, and that patterns continued well into the 20th century. However, most migrants to cities made economic gains until the scale of the migration grew to such proportions that many cities have not been able to keep up with the demand for services. Nearly every poor nation today still faces the challenge of rapidly growing cities.
- Global migration - Whereas most countries of the 20th century experienced internal migration from rural to urban areas, another major migration occurred among countries, with people leaving the developing world to emigrate to industrialized nations. For example, illegal immigration across the border from Mexico to the United States has increased significantly. In Europe, migrations from Islamic countries were encouraged beginning in the 1960s when an expanding European economy needed new sources of labor. However, as the size of the immigrant populations grew and the economies slowed, right-wing anti-immigration political movements sprang up in reaction, especially in Germany and France.

## **POPULATION INCREASES**

Human reproductive and life expectancy patterns changed profoundly in the second half of the 20th century. By the late 1960s Europe and other industrial societies had made a demographic transition to lower fertility rates and reduced mortality. Lower birthrates occurred as more women went to work, couples married at later ages, and birth control methods became more effective. Death rates declined as well, as modern medicine and better health led to increased longevity. The number of births in the developed nations was just enough to replace the people that died, and populations began to stabilize. Many experts predicted that the same thing would occur in developing nations once their industrialization process was more advanced. However, as of the early 21st century, the demographic transition has not occurred in developing or less developed countries around the globe.

## **THE GROWTH OF DEVELOPING NATIONS**

Whether the transition will occur in the future is open to debate. However, some political leaders of developing nations have encouraged high birth rates, thinking that a larger population would increase political power. In other areas, cultural patterns enforce values that support large families. Whatever the reasons, at current rates, most of the population increases of the 21st century will almost certainly take place in developing nations. Areas of rapid population increase include most nations of Africa and Latin America. In Asia, the populations of India and China have continued to grow despite government efforts to reduce family size.

## **"GREEN" MOVEMENTS**

During the 1960s environmental activists began movements devoted to slowing the devastating consequences of population growth, industrialization, and the expansion of agriculture. These "green" movements raised public awareness of the world's shrinking rainforests and redwood trees, the elimination of animal species, and the pollution of water and air. Predictably, pressure on environments is greatest in developing countries, where population is increasing the most rapidly. By the early 21st century, environmental movements were most effective in industrialized nations, where they have formed interest groups and political parties to pressure governments to protect the environment. However, these movements have had less success in developing nations, where deforestation and pollution continue to be major problems.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF THE 20TH CENTURY**

***Since 1914 two world wars and a cold war have led to the decline of European power and the rise of the United States. Politically, more and more nations are experimenting with democratic governments, and authoritarian regimes appear to be on the decline. Social inequality has been challenged on many fronts, and gender, racial, and social class distinctions have been altered radically in at least some areas of the world. By the early 21st century, the forces of globalization clash with those that encourage fragmentation. Perhaps it is this dynamic that will shape our future. Will advances in global connections, trade, and communication lead to a more unified world, or will regional differences fragment the world in ways that will lead to division and conflict?***