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THE EUROPEAN TRANSFORMATION

THE RENAISSANCE

During the late Middle Ages, merchants and bankers in Italy had prospered, and many Italian trade centers such as Florence, Milan, and Venice grew into commercial city-states (Italy would not be a unified country for hundreds of years). The ruling merchant families competed with one another, each trying to make their city more powerful and glorious than the others. One way they did this was by patronizing the arts, so by the 1300's, the Italian city-states were filling up with state-sponsored artwork. At the same time, the rediscovery of many classical authors and the similarity of Italian city states to the urban societies of ancient Greece and Rome, led to a renewed interest in classical thought—not necessarily as a way of making sense of Christianity, but for its own sake. In the mid-1300's, scholars such as Petrarch and Boccaccio began to search monasteries for long-forgotten copies of classical manuscripts. The tastemakers of Italy, who had been steeped in the penitent otherworldliness of the high Middle Ages, found the this-worldly tone of classical authors tremendously exciting, and they soon began to emulate it.

Such interest in human life in this world came to be called **humanism**. The humanist attitude, supported by generous patronage of the arts, resulted in a tremendous outpouring of creativity that came to be called the **Renaissance**, or *rebirth*. The Renaissance lasted from the mid-1300's to about 1600, by which time it had spread to northern Europe. Renaissance humanism would be at the root of several revolutionary ways of thinking—including modern scientific thinking, liberalism, and nationalism—which would transform Europe, and then the world.¹ The scholars of the Renaissance were the first to use the term “Middle Ages”. They felt they were living in a time of transformation away from the medieval world, and they were right. The Renaissance would be a transition between the Middle Ages and modern times.

¹We will examine these movements later. For now, I should note that the meaning of terms like humanism or liberalism change over time. Today, humanism generally means *secular humanism*, a naturalistic, progressivist philosophy that emphasizes reason over faith. It shares the emphasis on human life in this world with Renaissance humanism, but Renaissance humanists, especially in the north, were often quite religious.

Artists of the Renaissance regained an interest in realistically depicting the world around them, and they made great strides in their ability to do so. The Florentine artist Giotto, who worked in the early 1300's, was a pioneer in this respect, painting religious scenes with far greater realism than earlier medieval painters. Donatello and Brunelleschi, also from Florence, went to Rome to study the sculpture and architecture of the Romans. Donatello returned and created a supple, youthful statue of David standing over the head of Goliath. Not only was the sensual tone of the work revolutionary, but it was the first freestanding sculpture of a human figure made in Europe since classical times. Donatello's fellow traveler, Brunelleschi, figured out how to build domed buildings like those of the Romans, and astounded his contemporaries by putting a dome on the new cathedral of Florence. Quite the polymath, Brunelleschi also worked out mathematical rules for showing perspective accurately on flat surfaces. The new paintings also astonished people of the time. One seemed to look *into* them, not just *at* them. Later artists like Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael perfected the Renaissance style, producing works that achieved such renown that they needn't be discussed here. In the north, painters such as Jan Van Eyck and Peter Bruegel also created works of great realism, though they were less influenced by classical styles.

Renaissance literature broke with the medieval past as well, often in self-conscious ways. Johannes Gutenberg's invention of the printing press in 1455 allowed books to be produced far more quickly and cheaply than before. This exposed a much wider audience to new literature and ideas, some of which were rather revolutionary). Petrarch, one of the scholars who rediscovered lost classics in monasteries, also invented the sonnet, and wrote beautifully in classical Latin as well as contemporary Italian. Many Renaissance writers were fixtures at the courts of the wealthy ruling families. They wrote treatises on the self-cultivation of courtiers, as in Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, or effective rulers, as in Machiavelli's notoriously cynical *The Prince*. To the north, Francois Rabelais and Miguel de Cervantes wrote works of fiction that brilliantly poked fun at medieval mindsets. In England, Shakespeare was equally brilliant at exploring human experience, bringing the English language to new heights in the process.

Some Northern writers were more concerned with Christianity than other Renaissance writers. Erasmus went back to the earliest Christian writers to get a sense of Christianity's original tone. His *In Praise of Folly* satirized the rigidity and pomp of contemporary church

leaders. Erasmus' English friend Thomas More pointed out that the unfairness and inequality of his times were at odds with basic Christian values. His *Utopia* describes an ideal society where everyone is equal and united by a concern for the common good. A man of firm convictions, More tangled with Henry VIII. He lost, of course, and was beheaded. Such collisions between new ideas and the forces of tradition and authority would only grow more frequent in years to come.

IBERIAN EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION

During the 1300's and early 1400's, the Italian city states controlled trade in the eastern Mediterranean, which meant they controlled the flow of goods from the east into Europe. Chief among these goods were spices such as pepper, cloves, and cinnamon, which were highly valued because they masked the taste of spoiled meat. Seeing how the spice trade was making the Italian city-states rich, Spain and Portugal (which were evolving into strong monarchies) wanted a piece of it. Under Prince Henry the Navigator, Portugal embarked on a well-funded research program seeking to perfect the art of voyaging in the turbulent Atlantic Ocean. Such voyaging required heavily-built ships, with decks and multiple masts. These Portuguese ships were quite maneuverable, but strong enough to withstand the recoil of cannons mounted along their sides. Soon Portuguese sailors began exploring the west coast of Africa, searching for the source of the gold and ivory that made its way north across the Sahara. They set up trading stations along what came to be called the Gold Coast, and then began exploring the coasts farther to the south, with the hope of finding a southern passage that would take them to India, the Southeast Asian islands (the "East Indies"), and China. Bartholomeu Dias found the Cape of Good Hope—the southern tip of Africa—in 1488. Ten years later Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape and sailed on to India, proving the existence of the southern passage.

Meanwhile, most of Spain had been united when Ferdinand of Aragon married Isabella of Castile in 1469. The ruling couple were zealous crusaders. They revived the Inquisition against suspected heretics, and gave Jews and Muslims an ultimatum—convert to Christianity or leave Spain. By 1492, Grenada, the last Muslim kingdom in Spain, had been conquered. The same year, a Genoese sailor named Christopher Columbus convinced Isabella that he could reach the east by sailing west, around the world. Columbus had made the same proposal to the

Portuguese, but they knew that the world was much larger than Columbus thought, and decided that the journey was too long to be feasible. The Spanish were not so well-informed, so Columbus set out with three ships across the Atlantic. A little over two months later, just as their supplies were running out, they came upon some small islands in the Caribbean. Thinking he had reached the East Indies, Columbus called the natives “Indians”. Columbus explored Cuba and Hispaniola in later voyages, but he died convinced that he had discovered islands off the coast of East Asia. Later explorers, especially Amerigo Vespucci, (for whom the Americas were named) realized that the islands Columbus found were satellites of previously unknown continents, and they began speaking of a New World, and calling the Caribbean islands the “West Indies”.

Spain and Portugal soon began to quarrel over the lands they had encountered. With the pope mediating, the two nations signed the Treaty of Tordesillas, which designated a line dividing their territories, running north and south just east of the West Indies. Spain claimed the lands west of the line, while Portugal claimed the lands to the east (the inhabitants of the regions claimed were not, of course, consulted). In 1500, a Portuguese ship bound for Africa was blown off course, and found a part of South America that extended east of the line of demarcation. And so Brazil was founded. The treaty mostly focused Portuguese efforts eastward, though, toward the coasts of Africa, South Asia, and the East Indies. Establishing their headquarters at Goa, in western India, the Portuguese used their superior firepower to seize strategic sites at the entrances to the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, as well as the Malaccas; the gateway to the Spice Islands. They had outflanked the Italians, and soon displaced them as the main European connection with the east. The only problem was that they had few goods that people in the east wanted. This inspired them to supplement their income by charging fees for the “protection” of less well-armed Asian ships, and occasionally by outright piracy. But for all their military superiority at sea, the Portuguese were regarded by the large Asian empires as little more than rapacious maritime barbarians. They were not seen as a serious threat—for the time being.

It was different for the less sophisticated societies of the New World. There, the impact of Europeans was cataclysmic. Diseases like influenza, smallpox, and measles moved ahead of the Europeans in devastating waves, wiping out up to 90 % of the population in some areas. Many of the Europeans in the New World, mostly Spaniards at first, were scarcely less ruthless than their diseases. Hearing of the wealthy Aztec empire, Hernando Cortez set out in 1518 to

conquer it. The Aztec ruler suspected Cortez of being the mythical Quetzalcoatl, returning from the east to dethrone him. Understandably, he was not quite sure what to do. His indecisiveness, and the resentment of his subjects against brutal Aztec rule, allowed Cortez to conquer the empire with only 600 men. To the south, Francisco Pizarro was able to conquer the larger Inca Empire. The riches of the two empires were exactly what the conquistadors had been hoping for, and soon others began exploring in search of more gold.

By the mid-1500's, the Spanish realized that there were no more wealthy empires to conquer, and they set about organizing their new dominion into a productive colony. Missions were set up, and the natives were converted, often by force, to Christianity. Native Americans were put to work in mines and plantations, but harsh treatment and disease decimated them. Missionaries did succeed in petitioning the Spanish court to protect the natives to some extent, and full-blown enslavement of Native Americans was outlawed. Of course, African slaves, with greater resistance to Old World diseases, were soon imported to take their place. As time went on, European, Native American, and African peoples intermarried to produce the distinct ethnic mix that characterizes much of Latin America today.

The expeditions and conquests of the Spanish and Portuguese would have worldwide consequences, for better and for worse. New maritime technologies had opened up the oceans, connecting societies around the world much more closely than before. The most significant new contact, of course, was between the Old and New Worlds. Crops from the New World, such as tobacco, corn, potatoes, and tomatoes, revolutionized agriculture in the Old World, while Old World crops like wheat, barley, and rice; as well as animals like cows, horses, chickens, and pigs, eventually did the same in the other direction. So much silver flowed into Europe from the New World that markets across the world were both energized and disrupted. The expeditions increased knowledge of the world's far-flung regions, and the discovery of lands and peoples never mentioned in the Bible did much to open European minds to new possibilities.

At the time, of course, the European expansion caused far more suffering than benefit. The population of the Americas was devastated by disease and domination, while Africa was devastated by the slave trade. The great societies of Asia were not terribly shaken up by European contact. Not at first. As time went on, however, European expansion, technological advance, and economic growth all fed on each other and accelerated. European peoples grew more and more powerful relative to other societies, and more European nations began to

participate in expansionist ventures. The Muslim and Chinese societies, still more sophisticated in most ways than Europe in the 1500's, would one day be shocked to find that they had been overtaken.

THE REFORMATION AND ITS AFTERMATH

By the 1400's, the Catholic Church had lost a great deal of authority since its preeminence in the high Middle Ages. France, England, and Spain had become powerful, unified nations ruled by strong monarchs. The Holy Roman Emperors, on the other hand, had never recovered from Henry IV's struggle with the papacy, and they ruled only nominally over a confederation of near-independent states. Since 1273, the imperial title had been held mainly by members of the house of Habsburg. In the late 1400's and early 1500's, the Habsburg family greatly increased its power through a series of cleverly chosen marriages. The Low Countries (what are now Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Belgium), were acquired in this way, as was Spain and all its possessions. Charles V of the House of Habsburg thus became king of Spain and all its New World possessions, the ruler of the Low Countries, *and* Holy Roman Emperor. But Charles had problems as large as his domain. He was struggling with France over a still-fragmented Italy; the Ottoman Turks had invaded Hungary and were threatening Austria; and he still had little control over the German nobility. In addition to all these problems, there was Martin Luther.

Martin Luther was a professor of theology in the German state of Saxony. He had come to believe that salvation depended only on faith in God, not on the sacraments (communion, confession, etc), which the church claimed to be necessary. Luther also believed that one should rely only on the Bible as a guide for living, not on the elaborate traditions that had grown up around it to become official doctrine. Luther was outraged by the Church's fund-raising through the sale of *indulgences*, slips of paper that were said to cancel sins, and thus lessen time spent in purgatory. In 1517, Luther nailed a list of 95 theses—statements he was willing to defend in public debate—to the door of the local church. His theses denounced the sale of indulgences and claimed that only faith and the direct study of the Bible could assure salvation. Many Germans, including members of the nobility, were persuaded by Luther's arguments. The church denounced them as heretical, and Charles V, who had been crowned by the Pope, was on the side

of the church. At the meeting of the Imperial Diet in 1521 (the Diet of Worms), Luther stood by his beliefs. Charles responded by revoking Luther's protection under Imperial Law, which basically meant it was only a matter of time before Luther would be assassinated.

Fortunately for Luther, the ruler of Saxony whisked him away to a remote castle, where he hid out and began translating the Bible into German. Luther depended on such support from the German nobility, for his life as well as the success of his reforms. So, when German peasants revolted against their overlords, claiming that Luther's arguments supported their cause, Luther urged the nobility to put down the revolt as ruthlessly as necessary. The nobles, in turn, had a great deal to gain by following Luther, because his followers advocated taking away church lands and property. In 1555, a few years after Luther's death, Charles V was forced by the nobility to sign the Peace of Augsburg, which gave the rulers of German states the right to choose whether their realms would follow Lutheran principles. Luther had not really meant to split the church into two branches, but he had done just that. Those who protested Catholic doctrine came to be known as *Protestants*, and the movement Luther had begun came to be known as the *Protestant Reformation*.

Lutheranism soon became established in northern Germany and Scandinavia. Other Protestant movements soon surfaced as well. Protestant reform movements in Switzerland, under Huldreich Zwingli, caused civil wars that raged until each region agreed to choose its own religion. After Zwingli was killed in battle, John Calvin took over the leadership of the Swiss movement. His brand of Protestantism, called **Calvinism**, emphasized the idea of predestined salvation. Calvin reasoned that if God is omniscient and all powerful, then he has already determined who will reach heaven and who will not. One might think this would have spawned a sense of resignation, but under Calvin it did just the opposite. People came to believe that those bound for heaven—the *elect*—would be distinguished by success and righteousness in this life, and Calvinists began to work hard to try to demonstrate that they were among the elect.

In England, Protestantism emerged in a rather less principled way than on the continent. Henry VIII had begun to blame his wife, Catherine of Aragon, for his lack of a male heir. He asked the pope to annul the marriage, but the pope refused. Not one to take no for an answer, Henry simply broke with the church, thus creating the Church of England (also known as the Anglican Church). Henry married 5 more times, often ending marriages by beheading his wives. He did have one son, who died young after ruling for only 6 years. His daughter, Mary, then

became queen, and tried to restore England to Catholicism. When Mary died in 1558, her half-sister Elizabeth I became queen. Elizabeth was a Protestant, and during her long and effective reign the Church of England took firm root.

Catholicism itself was reformed in the wake of the Protestant Reformation, in what came to be called the Counter-Reformation. At the Council of Trent, church leaders disclaimed Protestant ideas, declared that the Bible was not in fact the only source of truth, and re-affirmed the authority of church leaders and the church hierarchy. This declaration of principles, along with calls for reform, served to rejuvenate the Catholic Church. So did the foundation of the Society of Jesus; the Jesuits. The Jesuit order was based on selflessness, asceticism, and military-style discipline, and it was extremely effective in countering Protestantism, as well as spreading Catholicism to new lands. Less constructive was the revival of the Inquisition, under which many Protestants were tortured and executed. Of course, Protestants were also killing many Catholics. In fact, killing in the name of religion was about to become even more common than usual.

Charles V left the throne and entered a monastery in 1558. His brother Ferdinand became Holy Roman Emperor, while his son, Phillip II of Spain, took control of Spain and its possessions. Phillip was an intense man who worked constantly to manage his vast territory, and to combat the spread of Protestantism (he was married for a while to Mary I, the Catholic Queen of England). Spain was by far the greatest power in Europe throughout Phillip's reign. Nonetheless, the Netherlands successfully revolted against Spanish control, with the help of England. The famous Spanish Armada was launched to punish England, but it was devastated by storms and the English navy. This was not as devastating to Spanish power as is commonly believed (inflation dealt far greater blows), but Spain's power did decline after Phillip's death, while English and Dutch power increased.

In the Holy Roman Empire (ruled by the other side of the Habsburg family) the emperor Ferdinand II was successfully expanding his powers and checking the spread of Protestantism. In 1618, when Protestant nobles in Bohemia (in the modern Czech Republic) revolted, Ferdinand used the revolt as an excuse to try to consolidate his rule over the empire. So began the devastating Thirty Years War. Bohemia was soon subdued by imperial armies, which lived by plundering the lands they entered, making the war the most destructive in memory. When Ferdinand attempted to expand his control further, he was opposed by Denmark and Sweden

(both Protestant countries). France joined in a little later, and Ferdinand's armies were overpowered. When the war ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, the empire had been devastated by long years of war.

With the Habsburg lands weakened across Europe, other nations were on the rise. The English and Dutch, pioneers in representative government and capitalism, were about to become major colonial powers. But these would not be the major players in Europe itself in the coming era. Throughout the reformation era, the trend toward increasingly powerful monarchies had continued until many monarchs on the continent held near-total power over their lands and peoples (a situation known as **absolutism**). This trend reached its peak in France, which would be the most influential kingdom in the coming era.

EURASIA AFTER THE MONGOLS

EAST ASIA

JAPAN: THE TURBULENT ASHIKAGA PERIOD

In Japan, the Kamakura Shogunate had repelled two Mongol attacks in the late 1200's, but the effort left it greatly weakened. In 1336, after years of unrest, the Kamakura was replaced by the Ashikaga Shogunate. The Ashikaga shoguns, however, soon lost control of the great lords, or *daimyo*. These ruled their regions more or less independently by the 1460's, by which time Japan had become a violent land of competing warlords employing private samurai armies. Even the peasants and monks were well-armed. Strangely, as the daimyo battled each other over the next century, and the more powerful ones gained control over the less powerful ones, they encouraged trade, city life, and technology. Portuguese traders and missionaries, along with powerful European guns, were welcomed by the daimyo as they sought to get the upper hand over each other. In the late 1500's, Oda Nobunaga and his assistant and successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, used those guns to good effect in gaining control over the other daimyo. Hideyoshi disarmed the populace, put the samurai armies under central control, and tied peasants to the land, establishing a sort of centralized feudal system. This system was maintained by Tokugawa

Ieyasu, who rose to power after Hideyoshi's death in 1598 and established the Tokugawa Shogunate, which would rule Japan until 1867.

MING CHINA AND CHOSON KOREA: FROM RECOVERY TO WITHDRAWAL

Kublai Khan died in 1294, and his Yuan Dynasty began to decline soon after. In 1352, a Buddhist monk named Hung-wu deposed the last Mongol emperor and started the Ming Dynasty, which would last until 1644. Under Hung-Wu and his successor, Yung-lo, China returned to pre-Mongol traditions such as the examination system, and embarked on an ambitious reconstruction of law, government, and the economy. Beginning in Yung-lo's reign, a series of state-sponsored naval expeditions, led by the eunuch Cheng Ho, explored the coasts of India, the Persian Gulf, and even East Africa (this expedition returned to China with a giraffe). These voyages, much better equipped than the Spanish and Portuguese voyages a few decades later, were abruptly cancelled in 1433. This was a reflection of a new mood among Ming emperors, who were trying to lock China into its ancient ways, deliberately avoiding new influences from inside or out. China began to look backward and inward, shutting itself off from the outside world just before Europeans began to explore it. That they did so is understandable. They were recovering from Mongol rule, the most severe in a long history of outside invasions. The Mongols were still a threat in the north, as were Japanese pirates off the coasts. Ming China was a state under siege, so it is not surprising that they adopted a siege mentality. Still, had the voyages and other dynamic ventures of the early Ming continued, the world today would probably be less European, and more Chinese.

At first, the Ming emperors achieved their goal of a stable society firmly rooted in tried and true ways. The European merchants and missionaries, who were showing up in China in increasing numbers, were deeply impressed by the grandeur and order of the country. Learning flourished under Ming rule, and vast encyclopedias and authoritative textbooks were produced. Literature took on an earthy, boisterous tone, as in *Monkey*, a story of the adventures of a Buddhist monk and his monkey in India. The famous blue Ming vases date from this period, as does the Forbidden City, the palace complex of the imperial family. By the late 1500's, however, Ming China was declining. Mongols and pirates continued to threaten the borders, Chinese technology inevitably fell behind other societies, and inflation, partly brought on by

Spanish silver from the New World, weakened the economy. The government grew corrupt, and emperors became pawns of court ministers. The last Ming emperor hanged himself in 1644 as the country descended into chaos. Manchurian forces invaded from the north, and soon assumed control of China as the Qing, or Manchu, dynasty.

Korea's fate during this period was closely tied to that of China and Japan. Koryo rulers had been pawns of the Mongol Yuan dynasty until it was overthrown by the Ming. Soon after, rebels seized power from the old rulers, and the Choson, or Yi, Dynasty was established under Yi Song-gye. As in Ming China, the new Korean rulers set about reforming their nation, redistributing land and building up the economy. But, as in Ming China, the early dynamism did not last. In the 1400's the government grew more rigid and corrupt, and the common people, especially women, were oppressed greatly. Korean rulers had been paying tribute to Ming emperors, who offered them protection from a fragmented, but warlike, Japan. When the Ming dynasty grew weak, Hideyoshi led Japanese invasions of Korea. These failed, but they severely weakened Korea. The Manchu invaded in the 1630's, and forced the Choson kings to pay tribute. By the late 1600's, Korea had grown intensely isolationist (who can blame them?), and would become known as the "Hermit Kingdom".

ISLAMIC EMPIRES

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The old Islamic powers of the Middle East had mostly been destroyed by the Mongols in the mid-1200's. In Anatolia, the resulting power vacuum was soon filled by Turks led by Osman I. The empire they founded, named for Osman, was called the Ottoman Empire, and the dynasty Osman founded would rule the empire until World War I. By the late 1300's, the Ottomans had conquered most of Anatolia, as well as the southern Balkans; where the Byzantine Empire was in steep decline. The Serbs, who had recently won independence from the Byzantines, were conquered by the Ottomans at Kosovo in 1389. This defeat would become a symbol of Serbian bitterness against Balkan Muslims, a bitterness which would continue to the present day. The rise of the Ottomans was almost ended by Timur the Lame, or Tamerlane, who defeated their armies and killed the Ottoman sultan in the early 1400's. Timur died soon after, though, and the

Ottomans began expanding again. Under Mehmed II, they took Constantinople in 1453, ending the Byzantine Empire. The city was renamed Istanbul, and it became the Ottoman capital. In the early 1500's, under Selim I (the Grim), the Ottomans conquered the eastern Mediterranean, parts of Mesopotamia, and Egypt, and gained recognition as custodians of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. The empire reached its height under Selim's son Suleiman, whose armies took Hungary in 1526, and unsuccessfully besieged Vienna in 1529. Suleiman also expanded his empire against other Muslim states, and at the time of his death in 1566, the empire stretched from Hungary to the southern Red Sea, and from Tripoli to the Persian Gulf.

Suleiman, who was called "The Lawgiver" by his own people and "The Magnificent" by Europeans, was probably the most powerful ruler in the world at the time. In his enormous palace, he was tended by legions of servants, guards, and entertainers. One Ottoman institution which sparked the imagination of Europeans was the harem, which sometimes included hundreds of women. But harems were not the dens of sexuality that Europeans imagined. The word *harem* actually means a sacred area forbidden to outsiders. In traditional Islamic homes, this was where women spent much of their time. In the sultan's large harem, women were regimented into a hierarchy of rank, often headed by the sultan's mother. Most of the harem women were married to high-ranking officials, though several were selected to bear the sultan's children. Because of their closeness to the sultan, many harem women became quite powerful.

Suleiman and other sultans delegated authority over their far flung lands to military governors called *pashas*. There was a feudal aspect to Ottoman government, in that many military leaders were given control of lands in return for military service. As time went by, however, more decisions came to be made by a centralized bureaucracy, headed by a *vizir*, or chief minister. A major source of Ottoman power was the elite Janissary Corps, the sultan's standing army. Members of this force were taken from Christian parts of the empire as boys, converted to Islam, and trained in military arts. Unlike the Turkish fief-holders, who were mostly cavalry warriors, the Janissaries were trained to use guns. As guns grew more powerful, the importance of cavalry declined, and the importance of the Janissaries grew. Though they were called slaves, the Janissaries were actually one of the most powerful segments of society. Like the women of the harem, they would play a large role in Ottoman history.

After the death of Suleiman, the Ottoman Empire remained powerful, and even continued to expand, but it became more and more troubled. Silver from the New World caused inflation

and disrupted the economy. Various contingents, including pashas, fief-holders, officials, harem women, and janissaries, struggled for power. The Janissary ranks became inflated with men who were paid for doing nothing, while the fief-holding cavalry warriors gained hereditary control of their lands (which made them less motivated to serve the sultan well). Ottoman princes stopped fighting in the armies, as they had done in the early days, which also decreased loyalty to the sultan.

One rather brutal aspect of Ottoman society was that the sultan's sons often fought for the throne after his death. The winner would have his brothers (or half-brothers) executed. Once this was done, there would be no more struggles over succession, but the empire was thrown into chaos several times as potential heirs struggled with one another. Another problem was tax farming, where wealthy people would buy the right to tax a section of land, and then proceed to squeeze the peasants for all they were worth. All these problems had led to widespread rebellions and disruption by the early 1600's. Reformist grand viziers restored order for a while in the late 1600's, but the greatest days of the Ottoman Empire were past. A second siege of Vienna failed in 1683, after which the Austrians, Hungarians, and Poles began to drive the Ottomans out of their lands. Russia was a rising power in the north, while western Europeans were becoming more dominant in maritime trade and warfare. Still, Ottoman history was far from over.

THE SAFAVID EMPIRE

The Ottoman Empire, which was predominantly Sunni, had a formidable enemy in the Shi'ite Safavid Empire of Persia. Members of the Safavid family were the traditional heads of a religious order that had originally been Sunni/Sufi, but had converted to a militant Shi'ism. Under the charismatic spiritual and military leader Shah Ismail, followers of the Safavids conquered Persia and parts of Iraq in the first 10 years of the 1500's (beginning when Ismail was 14). His armies were finally defeated by the Ottomans in 1514, which ended the westward expansion of the Safavids, and forced them to move their capital eastward. The Safavid empire would be threatened from the west by the Ottomans, and from the north by the Uzbek tribes, for most of their history.

After Ismail's death, the Safavids turned to consolidating and maintaining control over their new lands. The empire reached its zenith under Shah Abbas, who ruled from 1588 to 1629. Like the Ottoman sultans, Abbas increased his power over the traditional cavalry warriors by developing gunpowder-based weapons and fighting techniques, as well as employing a standing army. Abbas joined forces with the British to oust the Portuguese from Persian ports. This allowed Persian silk to be exported to Europe by sea, avoiding the barrier of the Ottoman Empire. Silk and other exports were government monopolies, but the money gained in their trade was poured back into the building of roads, irrigation works, and public buildings, and for generous patronage of the arts. Under Abbas, Persia was a safe and prosperous realm, and a great crossroads of goods and ideas between Europe and east Asia. The arts—from literature, to carpet-making, to miniature painting, to architecture—had a luxuriant brightness reflecting a great love of life.

Safavid leaders after Abbas were not usually so able or conscientious, however. Wealth tended to drain toward the capital, especially the palace. Ottomans and Uzbeks continued to squeeze the empire. Shi'ite authorities were becoming increasingly powerful, and increasingly rigid and intolerant. Their persecution of Sunnis led to a revolt among Afghan tribes, one of which forced the Safavid ruler out of power in 1722. Safavids retained control in some scattered lands, but the unity of the empire was gone. Unified rule of the region was restored between 1736 and 1747 by Nadir Shah, and between 1750 and 1779 by Karim Khan, of the Kurdish Zand tribe. The Zands were defeated in 1794 by the Qajar tribe. From their capital at Tehran, the Qajars would rule until 1925.

MUGHAL INDIA

In India, the Islamic Delhi Sultanate had begun to unravel after Timur's invasion in 1398. Before long, it was just one of many states in a fragmented India. The descendants of Timur, meanwhile, had converted to Islam, and maintained a state in central Asia. Called Mughals (the Persian word for Mongol) they, like Timur, were more really Turkish than Mongol. The Mughals were driven from their territory by the Uzbeks, so, led by the flamboyant warrior-prince Babur, they set out to find a new territory to rule. First they conquered the area around Kabul, near the Khyber Pass, in 1504. Then, in 1526, they conquered the last of the Delhi

Sultans. Under Babur and his son Humayun, the Mughals conquered a great swath of land down the Ganges almost to its delta. Humayun was overthrown for a while by a people called Surs, but he had begun to re-conquer the area by his death in 1556. This re-conquest was completed by Mughal armies under Humayun's son Akbar, who then expanded the empire to the north, across the Ganges delta to the Bay of Bengal, and into western India and the central plateau called the Deccan.

Akbar was a broad-minded, effective ruler who ended many discriminatory practices against Hindus. He married Rajput princesses, incorporated Hindus into his government, abolished the ancient Muslim practice of imposing a tax on non-Muslims, and even forbade Muslims from killing cows, which were sacred to Hindus. Akbar hosted forums where leaders of many faiths would compare their religions, and he even tried to promulgate a new faith combining what he saw as the best of each. This never went far. Akbar's tolerance alienated many Muslims, but it pleased the Hindus, who constituted the vast majority in India. By Akbar's death in 1605, Mughal India was a cosmopolitan state which successfully blended Muslim and Hindu culture. It was the wealthiest state in the world.

Akbar's governance set the stage for a golden age in the arts during the first half of the 1600's. Mughal painting flourished under Akbar's successor Jahangir. Architecture reached its height under Shah Jahan, who had the great Taj Mahal constructed as a tomb for his wife, Mumtaz (who died giving birth to their fifteenth child). For all its cultural accomplishments, Mughal India began to show signs of strain during this time. Shah Jahan was able to conquer most of the Deccan plateau, but he lost the northwestern part of the empire to the Safavids. Military campaigns and great building projects such as the Taj Mahal put a strain on the economy, which was borne mostly by increased taxation on the peasants.

Tolerance of Hindus declined during the early 1600's, and during the long reign of Aurangzeb, from 1659 to 1707, Akbar's liberal policies were reversed. Aurangzeb destroyed Hindu temples, expelled Hindus from his government, and re-imposed the head tax on non-Muslims. This fostered rebelliousness among the Rajputs, as well as the formidable Hindu Marathas to the south. The Sikhs, a religious group that had emerged in the late 1400's and early 1500's under the guru Nanak, responded to persecution by organizing into a potent military force, led by their tenth and last guru, Gobind Singh. But Aurangzeb was a powerful ruler, and he suppressed these threats, and even expanded the empire through relentless campaigning.

After his death however, the Rajputs and Sikhs started gain independence, while the Marathas expanded into central India. By 1739, the Mughals were powerless to prevent the sack of Delhi by Nadir Shah. Nadir Shaw's successor, Ahmad Khan, carved out a state in Afghanistan, establishing a dynasty that would last until the 20th century. By the mid-1700's the Mughals were in a steep decline, while the Marathas and Afghans were expanding. Also expanding, however, were the forces of the British East India Company.

RUSSIA

Russia was under the control of the Mongol Khanate of the Golden Horde from 1240 to 1480. This kept Russia isolated and backward while the Renaissance and the age of exploration were transforming Western Europe. Russia and Western Europe would continue to develop in very different directions for centuries. The Mongols had demolished Kiev, the old capital of Russia, in 1240. During the period of Mongol rule, the fortress town of Moscow grew into a powerful city. The Grand Princes in Moscow showed an exceptional ability to get along with the Mongols, and, beginning with Ivan I (nicknamed "Moneybags"), were granted the right to collect taxes on their behalf. As Ivan's nickname suggests, he kept some of the tax money for himself, and used it to expand Moscow's power. He also convinced the head of the Russian Orthodox Church to move to Moscow, greatly boosting the city's prestige. Mongol power declined steadily in the late 1300's and early 1400's. In 1480, Ivan III refused to pay tribute to the Mongols. When they marched on Moscow, Ivan's armies attacked and drove them back. The Mongols were no longer a threat to Russia.

Constantinople, the "Second Rome" and the former center of the Orthodox Church, had fallen to the Ottomans not long before, in 1453. Ivan invoked the memory of the Roman and Byzantine Empires by declaring that Moscow would be the "Third Rome". He married the niece of the last Byzantine emperor, and adopted the title of Czar (Russian for "Caesar"). Ivan then opened diplomatic relations with Western Europe, imported Italian architects and engineers to modernize Moscow, and set about trying to centralize his control over the Russian realm, making himself emperor in fact as well as title.

Truly centralized control was ruthlessly gained by Ivan III's grandson, Ivan IV "the Terrible". Ivan IV was opposed in his quest to gain absolute control over Russia by the *boyars*,

or Russian nobles. He responded with a reign of terror, sending out black-clad riders to arrest, torture, or kill dissidents. The thousands of noble families killed or driven from their lands were replaced with *service gentry*—members of the army and government loyal to Ivan. To maintain the productivity of service gentry lands, Ivan reduced the peasants to serfdom, just as the institution was declining in Western Europe. Later Tsars would further erode the status of Russian serfs until they were slaves in all but name. Ivan's ghastly measures did prove effective, and by his death Russia was a powerful, expanding state. His forces conquered Mongol lands to the south, and crossed the Ural Mountains into Siberia, thus beginning the great Russian expansion across northern Asia.

Ivan had killed his son and heir in a fit of rage. When he died in 1584, another son, Fedor, came to the throne. Fedor was not capable of ruling, and his brother-in-law, Boris Godunov, became the de facto ruler of Russia. Ivan's other son, Dmitriy, died mysteriously in 1591, and Fedor died in 1598, leaving no heir. Boris was elected Tsar, but crop failures were making the Russian populace unruly, and plots against him began. Bizarrely, a former monk claimed to that he was Dmitriy, and that he had never died. This "False Dmitriy" then fled to Poland, and returned with an invading Polish army, joined by hordes of discontented Russians. This began the Time of Troubles in Russian history, which lasted from 1604 to 1613. During this time, Russia was crippled by Polish invasions and by civil wars, while various factions struggled for the throne, including a second "False Dmitriy"! Finally, the Russians united against the Poles and drove them away. In 1613, a council called the *zemskii sobor* elected Michael Romanov czar. The Romanovs would remain in power until the revolution of 1917.

OLD AUTHORITY AND NEW IDEAS IN THE WESTERN WORLD

COMPETING STYLES OF GOVERNMENT IN EUROPE

CONTINENTAL ABSOLUTISM

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SUN KING

As in most of Europe, wars of religion had gripped France in the late 1500's. These were finally calmed when Henry IV, a French Protestant, or *Huguenot*, converted to Catholicism and then issued the Edict of Nantes, which gave Protestants protection from persecution. Henry was the first of the Bourbon line of kings. When he was assassinated, his son, Louis XIII, became king. The real power in France, however, was Louis' advisor, Cardinal Richelieu, who centralized power in France by promoting trade and disarming the nobility. Despite the fact that he was a Catholic cardinal, Richelieu entered the Thirty Years Wars on the side of the Protestants to keep the Habsburgs from becoming too powerful. It was a good move. France emerged from the war as the greatest power in Europe.

Upon Louis XIII's death in 1643, his son, Louis XIV, took the throne at the age of four. Others ruled in his name until he was 23, when he announced that he would take control. He wasn't kidding. Louis XIV would rule with near-absolute authority until his death in 1715. As king, Louis believed that he had the divine right, granted by God, to rule as the embodiment of France. He liked to call himself the "Sun King"—the radiant center of gravity in France. With the help of his minister of finance, Jean Baptiste Colbert, Louis increased his country's wealth, and enlarged the portion of that wealth that flowed into the royal coffers. A large part of these funds went into the construction of the vast palace at Versailles. Here, Louis lived in unprecedented splendor, waited on hand and foot by nobles whom he had invited to live at the palace (where he could keep his eye on them). True to the Sun King's image, the court at Versailles dazzled the rest of Europe. The French language and French manners became fashionable throughout the continent, and other monarchs eagerly imitated Louis's style of rule.

Versailles was expensive, but not nearly as expensive as the many wars that France fought to expand its borders and increase its power. These wars were fought by a new kind of army. Instead of the old assemblies of smaller armies led by nobles, these were huge standing armies made up mostly of peasants armed with rifles and bayonets. Such armies made France a formidable military force, but not an irresistible one. When Louis's grandson inherited the throne of Spain, most of the rest of Europe banded together to prevent France and Spain from uniting. The resulting War of the Spanish Succession left Louis defeated, unpopular, and deeply in debt at the time of his death in 1715.

His successor, Louis XV, continued to spend extravagantly on a sumptuous court and foreign campaigns. But Louis XV was a weak, pleasure seeking man, not the strong ruler that

his predecessor had been. The nobles who populated Versailles under the Sun King had been frivolous and decadent, but this had served to keep them preoccupied while Louis XIV and his ministers took care of business. Louis XV simply joined the rest of their court in their pastimes. Debts were piling up, the food supply was not keeping up with population growth, and the burden of taxation was falling on the middle and lower classes. The French social system was obviously in trouble, and the French ruling class, which came to be called the Old Regime, was apathetic. “After us” the saying went, “the Deluge”. The deluge was indeed on its way.

In the meantime, the other rulers of Europe tried to achieve the opulent power of the Sun King. In the fragmented lands of the Holy Roman Empire, such ambitious rulers were extremely numerous. The Peace of Westphalia had divided the empire into over 300 small states, each able to raise armies, declare war, and decide between Catholicism and Protestantism. The strongest state to emerge was Prussia, along the Baltic Sea in what is now Germany and Poland. Prussia was ruled by the Protestant Hohenzollern family, who turned their land into a tightly run, militaristic state with the best trained army in Europe. As for the Habsburg’s, while their imperial title had become almost entirely nominal, they still ruled vast family holdings that included Austria, Bohemia, and parts of Hungary (recently won from the Ottoman Empire). These lands were ethnically and religiously diverse, though, and therefore hard to hold together. When the emperor died in 1740, leaving his daughter Maria Theresa as queen of Austria, Frederick William II (the Great) of Prussia seized part of her kingdom. Maria Theresa was successful in rallying her diverse subjects to defend Austria, but the conflict grew into a general war—the War of the Austrian Succession—which involved most of the states of Europe and was fought in colonies across the world. This war was followed a decade later by the Seven Years war, also fought worldwide between many European nations. Europe had become a land of ambitious great powers with conflicting interests.

These wars were not nearly as destructive as the Thirty Years War had been, because they were fought by professional armies, which carried their own provisions instead of pillaging the countryside. This reflected a sort of code of conduct that had grown up between the rulers of Europe. Diplomats tried to maintain a *balance of power*, so that one state could not completely dominate the others. When war did break out, it was a much more focused, calculated affair than the vicious struggles of the Reformation era. The common people who made up the rank

and file in the new state armies still died, of course. They were pawns in a great game that the leaders of Europe considered quite civilized.

ART OF THE AGE: MANNERISM, BAROQUE, AND ROCOCO

As European society was transformed by religious turmoil and the rise of absolute monarchs, the arts were transformed as well. Artists had begun to react to the classical formality of the Renaissance by the early 1500's. One such reaction was an art style known as *mannerism*, which replaced formal harmonies with dramatic, dissonant compositions. Mannerism ranged from the sumptuous and erotic, as in the finely wrought sculpture of Benvenuto Cellini, to the darkly religious, as in the paintings of Tintoretto and El Greco.

The dramatic nature of Mannerism was a reaction to Renaissance restraint and a reflection of the turbulence and emotion of the Counter-Reformation. Another dramatic style with similar roots was the Baroque, which would be far more influential than mannerism. The Baroque style embraced complexity, drama, and power. Originating in Rome in the late 1500's, the style soon spread north, partly because it was well suited to the calculated grandeur of absolutist courts like that of Louis XIV. One hallmark of the Baroque was that several media would be combined in a unified whole. Sculpture, painting, architecture, and landscape design were combined to dramatic effect in Baroque buildings such as St. Peter's Basilica and the Palace of Versailles. In both buildings, cleverly painted walls and ceilings appeared to give way to other realms, making them seem even larger than they really were. Painters such as Caravaggio and Rubens portrayed muscular men and voluptuous women, often striking melodramatic, almost contorted poses. At the same time, Dutch painters such as Frans Hals, Judith Leyster, Jan Vermeer, and Rembrandt van Rijn were developing a more subtle style that brilliantly captured human moods, often with images of ordinary people instead of aristocrats and biblical or mythological figures. The Baroque style was also to be heard in music, which grew more complex and dramatic. Composers such as Bach, Vivaldi, and Handel created some of the great masterpieces of classical music during the era. The Baroque penchant for combining multiple art forms was realized in the birth of opera, which combined the musical, visual, and theatrical arts.

In the early 1700's, the Baroque style gave way to a similarly ornate, but much lighter and more delicate style called Rococo, which was closely associated with the increasingly frivolous aristocracy, as exemplified by the court of Louis XV. Rococo architecture and interior design was both ornate and lighthearted, almost lacy. Rococo paintings often featured aristocratic couples flirting playfully in carefully manicured gardens. Some Rococo artists simply embraced the frivolity of their patrons, while others gently satirized it, suggesting that the lifestyles it depicted would prove fleeting.

RUSSIA: EXPANSION AND MODERNIZATION

In 1697, Peter, the young czar of Russia, traveled to Western Europe with a group of Russian diplomats. Peter wanted to learn about western ways in order to modernize Russia. He often disguised himself, and even took a job as a ship's carpenter. At 6 feet 8 inches tall, however, Peter was difficult to disguise, and recognized all the time. When a revolt of palace guards forced him to return to Moscow, he crushed it ruthlessly, and then set about centralizing his power as an absolute monarch. Peter took control of the Orthodox Church, replaced elected government officials with appointed ones, and forced the nobility to serve in the army and government. He even forced Russian nobles to adopt western styles of dress. Men had to shave their beards or pay a fine, and women had to appear in public in the latest French fashions. Peter imported western experts to modernize Russia's industries, government, and army. His armies waged war against the Turks and the Swedes to expand Russian territory. Peter wanted a good seaport, so he simply ordered a new city built on a swampy part of Baltic coastline taken from Sweden. St. Petersburg, built with forced labor that claimed the lives of thousands of peasants, would become the new Russian capital.

LIMITED CENTRAL POWER IN ENGLAND

While other governments were evolving into absolute monarchies, England was evolving in the other direction. Henry VIII and Elizabeth I had been extremely powerful monarchs, but ever since the Magna Carta, English monarchs had been obliged to respect the law and the will of Parliament. Monarchs had the right to assemble or dissolve parliaments, but only parliament

could approve new taxes. Elizabeth had stayed single and childless, and when she died in 1603, James I, of the ruling Stuart family of Scotland, came to the throne. James, and his son Charles I, fervently believed in the divine right of kings to rule absolutely, and consequently could not get along with Parliament. Parliament, particularly the House of Commons, was sympathetic to *Puritans* (so called because they sought to “purify” the Anglican Church of any traces of Catholicism). James and Charles both persecuted Puritans (causing many to leave for North America). This and other actions angered Parliament.

In 1640, Charles was forced to call Parliament (which had not met for 11 years) to approve taxes for a war against Scotland. Once assembled, Parliament immediately began denouncing Charles and his rule. Charles responded by attempting to arrest some of its members. This sparked a civil war between supporters of Parliament, many of whom were middle-class and Puritan, and supporters of the king, who tended to be Anglican and aristocratic. Under the Puritan general Oliver Cromwell, the armies of Parliament prevailed in 1649. Charles was beheaded, and England was declared a republic.

Cromwell dissolved Parliament in 1658, and began ruling as a military dictator, using the army to enforce rigid Puritan laws. This proved unpopular, and after Cromwell’s death Parliament asked the exiled son of Charles I to take the throne as Charles II. Parliament remained strong, however, and continued to win concessions from Charles. Charles’ brother, James II, became king in 1685. James was a Catholic who angered Parliament by appointing Catholics to government offices. In 1688, Parliament invited James’ Protestant sister Mary, and her husband, William of Orange (the governor of the Netherlands), to invade England and take the throne. James fled, and William and Mary came to power in what came to be called the Glorious Revolution.

William and Mary were in fact quite limited in their powers, having signed a Bill of Rights, which made Parliament more powerful than English monarchs. The Glorious Revolution had made England a limited constitutional monarchy. In 1707, Scotland was joined with England, creating the United Kingdom of Great Britain. During the 1700's, the parliamentary system in the UK evolved toward its present form, where a prime minister and cabinet are chosen from the majority party. The British people were gaining many of the rights that would one day become staples of constitutional governments, including the right to a trial by jury and the right *not* to be held without trial or cause. Of course, Great Britain was still far from the

relatively tolerant democracies of later times. It was not a democracy at all. Only Protestants had freedom of religion, and only a few male landowners had the right to vote.

EUROPE'S EXPANDING SPHERE

THE COMMERCIAL REVOLUTION AND MERCANTILISM

Western Europe had made a spectacular comeback since the cataclysmic plagues and economic decline of the 1300's. One aspect of this recovery was Europe's growing influence in the rest of the world. But the economic recovery had actually begun before the voyages of the late 1400's. The early Renaissance had seen the renewal of trade, the growth of an increasingly wealthy merchant class, and the emergence of new economic patterns and practices. Early insurance policies, for example, helped make risky trading voyages feasible. Entrepreneurs also reduced their risks by forming investment partnerships, and by diversifying their investments. Industries such as cloth weaving spread to homes in the countryside, thus bypassing the urban guilds and their regulations. With merchants and even monarchs in constant need of capital, bankers became extremely wealthy. The voyages of exploration launched by Portugal and Spain had poured gold and silver into Europe, and then into the rest of the world economy. All these changes amounted to a complete transformation and acceleration of the European economy, which historians call the Commercial Revolution.

The search for precious metals had been one of the driving forces of the voyages of exploration. Gold and silver were among the only things that societies of the east really wanted in exchange for their goods, so those metals had been draining out of Europe for centuries before the discovery of the New World. The precious metals found there, especially the huge stocks of silver, changed all that. Suddenly Spain and Portugal had plenty of gold and silver. In fact, they literally had more than enough, because the metals lost their value as their supply increased. European leaders slowly realized that a state needed to produce and trade valuable goods, not just pile up precious metals. This translated into a widespread economic theory called **mercantilism**, which emerged in the 1600's. Mercantilists still believed that a nation's wealth was determined by its stores of gold and silver, that there was a fixed amount of wealth in the world, and that one nation's gain was always another's loss. This caused them to seek a

favorable *balance of trade* with other nations, so that more precious metals flowed in than out. The way to do this, they thought, was for the state to keep close control over all economic activity; keeping tariffs high and striving to add value to raw materials by turning them into finished products. Colonies fit into the mercantilist system because they served as sources of raw materials as well as markets for finished products. Most of Europe's rulers followed mercantilist policies from the early 1600's to the late 1700's.

CHANGING COLONIAL POWERS: DUTCH, FRENCH AND ENGLISH EXPANSION

In 1568, the Protestant Netherlands revolted against Habsburg Spain. This was the origin of the Dutch Republic, which would be a pioneer in more flexible political and commercial systems, as well as a rising imperial power. Spain did not formally recognize Dutch independence until 1648, at the end of the Thirty Years War, but by this time the Dutch had become more powerful than their nominal masters. Amsterdam had emerged as the leading financial center of Europe, and Dutch ships were winning control of the oceans from the Spanish and Portuguese. The Dutch East India Company, formed in 1602, was one of the first *joint-stock companies*. These raised capital by selling shares that would become more valuable if the company prospered. Such companies had the advantage of being able to raise money quickly, and of spreading risk among many shareholders. Modern corporations are based on the same principles. The early joint-stock companies, however, were given exclusive rights by their home states to trade in a certain part of the world. They also had the right to make war, and the Dutch East India Company did so quite effectively. They soon won control of most of the East Indies from Portugal, and established a colony in what is now South Africa. The Dutch West India Company, founded in 1621, gained control of the slave trade from Portugal and took control of most of the Caribbean from the Spanish. They also conquered Brazil and set up colonies in eastern North America, but soon lost control of these areas. After 1650, Dutch power declined in the face of wars with the other rising colonial powers—England and France.

Both England and France had been exploring long before the Dutch decline. Each had explored northeastern North America in the late 1400's and early 1500's, but neither tried to establish settlements until the 1600's. The French colony of Quebec was founded in 1608, and used as a base for trading with natives for furs. By the late 1600's, France had set up fur-trading

posts around the Great Lakes, and followed the Mississippi river to the Gulf of Mexico, claiming the entire watershed as a part of New France. England began to colonize the Atlantic coast with the establishment of Jamestown in 1607. Soon English colonies spread along the coast. New Netherland was annexed to become New York. Both France and England acquired islands in the Caribbean. England took over a large part of the slave trade, bringing Africans to work on the huge plantations of the New World. Both countries also established bases in India. Inevitably, the two countries came into conflict. This led to a series of wars that left England in possession of many French territories (not that these territories rightfully belonged to either country). In the Seven Years War, for example, England won French territories in the Caribbean, India, and what is now Canada.

THE SLAVE TRADE

Most of the raw materials that flowed from the New World to Europe—enriching the colonial powers and setting the stage for further European expansion—were produced with the forced labor of African slaves. New World slavery, and the transatlantic slave trade, are among the most ghastly periods in world history. Of course, slavery had existed long before the discovery of the New World. People on every continent had been enslaving others, usually prisoners of war, for millennia. In Africa, there had long been an internal slave trade, as Africans enslaved each other; and an eastern slave trade, which brought slaves to Muslim areas. The transatlantic slave trade, then, simply expanded and intensified an old, awful practice.

The very first Portuguese explorers of the African coast had captured people as slaves, sending them to Europe as well as to sugar plantations on islands in the Mediterranean and in the Atlantic. Africans began to be imported to the New World when great plantations were established there. Native Americans had been devastated by Old World diseases, so they could not be exploited sufficiently to work the plantations. Africans, on the other hand, had some exposure to Eurasian diseases, as well as tropical diseases, so they did better in the tropics than Europeans or Native Americans. So, from the 1500's to the 1800's, about 10 million Africans were kidnaped and shipped to the Americas. Most of them went to Brazil and the Caribbean, where sugar production was greatest, though many went to North America and to the Spanish Empire. Control of the slave trade mirrored the general pattern of colonial dominance, passing

from the Portuguese, to the Dutch, to the French and English (as well as the Americans). Of all the slaves shipped to the Americas, 60 % were shipped during the 1700's, and another 20 % during the first half of the 1800's, after most European countries had outlawed slavery.

Within Africa, the slave trade was controlled to a large extent by Africans. Europeans were too susceptible to African diseases to penetrate far into the interior, and most slaves were first captured by other Africans. Some African kingdoms, such as Dahomey and Oyo, grew wealthy and powerful based on the slave trade. Most of Africa, however, was thrown into turmoil as the slave trade tore societies apart. Young, healthy Africans were kidnaped by African raiding parties, and brought to the coast, where they were kept in fortresses while slavers haggled over prices. Then they were packed shoulder to shoulder below the decks of slave ships. The average mortality rate for the transatlantic voyage was over 12 %. Those who survived faced a lifetime of hard labor and cruelty in the New World.

There were always some whites who regarded slavery with horror. The belief in basic human rights, which grew in Europe during the 1700's, helped spread such feelings. At the same time, New World plantations were growing less profitable, and more money was being invested in manufacturing in Europe. The economic pressure for slavery was declining, as the moral pressure against it was rising. Great Britain outlawed the slave trade in 1807. The United States prohibited the importation of slaves the same year, but did not free existing slaves, or their children. During the early 1800's, most Latin American colonies won their independence, and many abolished slavery. However, slavery continued, and even expanded, in the United States, Brazil, and in parts of the Caribbean. It took a civil war to end slavery in the United States in the 1860's. Brazil was the last New World country to abolish slavery, in 1888. The social scars of slavery remain to this day.

INTELLECTUAL REVOLUTIONS

THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION

When Louis XIV referred to himself as the “Sun King”, he meant that he was the most brilliant, central thing in his kingdom, like the sun in its solar system. But he would not have used this metaphor 100 years earlier. The idea that the sun was the center of the solar system

had only become widely accepted rather recently. Galileo had been forced to recant such ideas in 1633, but by 1700 Newton was one of the most honored citizens in England. By then, the amazing potential of science had been widely recognized. Nature had been found to follow precise, universal laws, and those laws had been discovered by human thought, observation, and reason... not faith. People had a newfound confidence that they could learn the rules of the world, if they only put their minds to it. They decided that the human mind, and human society as well, were perfectible, and they set about trying to perfect both. This movement soon came to be called the *Age of Reason*, or, more commonly, but somewhat less accurately, the *Enlightenment*. The Enlightenment, strangely enough, coincided with the peak of European absolutism, and many thinkers of the time promoted the idea of “enlightened absolutism”. But Enlightenment ideas and absolute monarchy would prove to be fundamentally incompatible, and by the end of the 1700's, intellectual revolutions had become political revolutions. Ideas inspired by the Copernican revolution would put an end to the absolutist style of government that the Sun King had exemplified.

This brings us back to the revolutions in astronomy and physics described in Chapter , which began with the publication of Copernicus’ theory in 1543, and culminated in Newton’s *Principia* in 1687. We don’t need to rehash these here. Instead, let’s look at some revolutionary discoveries that were being made in the other sciences. The same year Copernicus’ book was published, Andreas Vesalius published a new book on human anatomy, which was based on actual dissection of corpses, and corrected errors made by Galen and Avicenna. William Harvey described the basic working of the circulatory system in 1628. The foundations of modern chemistry were laid when Robert Boyle distinguished elements and compounds. Some of the most important discoveries of all time were made by Robert Hooke, who used a microscope to observe plant cells, and Anton van Leeuwenhoek, who was the first to see microorganisms, or “animalcules”, as he called them. Scientific societies like the Royal Society of London and the Academy of Sciences in France were founded in the late 1600's. In the mid-1700's, Linnaeus had pioneered the classification of living things. By the end of that century, Lavoisier had formulated the law of conservation of matter, and oxygen and hydrogen had been identified as elements.

SCIENCE AND THE BIRTH OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY

Most of the great discoveries of early science were made by hands-on types who made observations and conducted experiments. But early science was also influenced greatly by more abstract, theoretical minds. One of these was Francis Bacon. Bacon emphasized the fallibility of human perception and thinking, which, he pointed out, were subject to various biases (which he called *idols*). Such idols, according to Bacon, were the cause of all the superstition and dogma of medieval times. However, Bacon believed that humans are capable of discovering accurate knowledge about the world, by using observation, inductive reasoning, and hypothesis formation. Bacon was a theoretician, not a scientist, and the methods he suggested were not adopted in any specific way. However, he was one of the first thinkers since classical times to advocate observation over tradition, and his ideas helped popularize the scientific method. He was also the first of the British **empiricists**, philosophers who maintained that true knowledge comes from experience, not from innate ideas.

Those who believed that true knowledge can come from innate ideas came to be called **rationalists**. The first of the rationalists was the French philosopher Rene Descartes, who is justly called the founder of modern philosophy. Descartes was a brilliant mathematician who invented analytical geometry; the use of algebraic expressions to describe positions in space. This would provide the foundation for Newton's great discoveries a few decades later. Descartes was also a great philosopher. In his quest to establish what is really true, he began by doubting everything (or at least claiming to), and then accepting whatever survived his doubt. Descartes went so far as to imagine that the world he sensed did not really exist, but was an illusion created by an "evil genius" bent on deceiving him. What, he asked, could he really know for sure in such an extreme state of affairs? For one thing, he decided, he could not be deceived about the fact that he was experiencing *something*, whether illusory or not. This meant that he himself must exist. This led him to make his famous, and oft-misunderstood proclamation that "I think, therefore I am".

Based on the apparently solid, undoubtable fact of his own existence, Descartes proceeded by deduction to "prove" the existence of God (as well as the physical world). He also drew a clear distinction between mind and matter. He saw matter as being subject to exact, mechanistic laws of science. Mind, however, he saw as a link with the divine. Descartes was a devout Catholic, and this was his way of reconciling science and religion—by assigning them to

separate realms. Descartes was a rationalist in that he believed in the mind's access to innate, undeniably true ideas. Since these were available without induction, and provided axioms for *deduction*, Descartes appreciated deduction much more than induction. His deductive, rationalistic approach would be emulated by Spinoza and Leibniz, who also tried to construct logically perfect, universal philosophies based on innate ideas.

Another important philosopher of the time was Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes embraced the new mechanistic worldview wholeheartedly, and argued that reality was nothing more than matter in motion (though he did believe in God). The most famous and influential of Hobbes' ideas, however, concerned politics. Hobbes was dismayed by the chaos of the English Civil War, which led him to conclude that human beings were basically selfish creatures looking out for themselves. Hobbes famously claimed that, in a primitive "state of nature", human lives were "poor, nasty, brutish, and short". To overcome such nastiness, Hobbes declared, people had formed a *social contract*, and placed control of government in the hands of a powerful sovereign, capable of keeping order. Hobbes, then, supported the absolutism of the day, but justified it with the idea of a social contract reflecting the public will, not with the idea of divine right. His ideas about the state of nature, social contracts, and the will of the governed would be adopted by later philosophers, who would use them to support very different conclusions.

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

BEGINNINGS: LOCKE, BRITISH EMPIRICISM, AND EARLY LIBERALISM

What the heirs of Bacon, Descartes, and Hobbes (and Copernicus, Galileo and Newton) had in common was a basic confidence in the power of reason—whether inductive or deductive—over faith and tradition. By the late 1600's, this confidence had become a full-blown social movement, and the Enlightenment was underway. The Enlightenment began in England with the publication of three books. One was Newton's *Principia*, published in 1687. The others were *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, and *Second Treatise on Civil Government*, both published in 1690 by John Locke. In the first, Locke, the quintessential empiricist, argued that all knowledge comes from experience, and that the mind is a "blank slate" at birth. The blank slate idea would provide a basis for a widespread belief that humans

were born equal, and then shaped by their environment (though Locke himself may not have believed this). The blank slate idea meant that, if the right environment could be provided, people would grow up to be intelligent and moral.

The question of finding the right environment called for a theory of politics and society, which Locke's second book provided. Locke was a friend of William and Mary, and his *Second Treatise* was a justification of the Glorious Revolution of 1689. In it, Locke argued that people had basic rights to life, liberty, and private property. Following Hobbes, Locke argued that governments had arisen because of an unspoken "social contract" between citizens, in which citizens agreed to abide by rules in order to preserve their basic rights. Contrary to Hobbes, however, Locke claimed that if a government, or a ruler, did not respect the social contract, or basic rights, then the people had the right to revolt, and install a new government that did. But Locke was no radical. He was perfectly in line with the rulers of England after the Glorious Revolution. He believed in limited, constitutional monarchies, and that only property owners should vote. Locke's stance basically defined the earliest version of political liberalism, with its emphasis on basic rights of life, liberty, and property. What is considered liberal depends on the times, so today Locke does not seem especially liberal. Still, his ideas would provide the rationale for future revolutions and the new governments they would establish.

After Locke, British empiricism took directions that surely would have surprised him. George Berkeley, an Irish bishop of the Anglican Church, claimed that if all that we can ever know is what we perceive, we can never know that there is a world out there independent of our perceptions. In fact, Berkeley denied that things had a reality other than our perception of them. "To be" he claimed, "is to be perceived". So, what is real are ideas, not matter. This philosophy, called *idealism*, is the opposite of materialism. Berkeley asserted that aspects of the world that people are not currently perceiving nevertheless still exist, because God constantly perceives everything.

David Hume started out with the notion that all knowledge comes from the senses, but he drew radically different conclusions from the idea than Berkeley had. Hume set out to examine the human mind in order to decide what we can know with certainty, and he concluded: not much. He believed that knowledge consisted of sense impressions and concepts constructed out of these impressions. Many cherished human ideas, Hume believed, were simply bundles of impressions that did not necessarily reflect reality. The idea of self, he believed, was simply a

tangle of impressions about ones own person—there is no unchanging essence or soul that defines individuals. He also applied his skeptical mind to morality, and concluded that reason alone could never fully establish what is right and what is wrong. Somewhere, emotions and preferences must enter the equation. While he was at it, he pointed out what became known as the naturalistic fallacy—the fallacy of thinking that things *should* be a certain way because they *are* that way, or as Hume put it, the confusion of “is” with “ought”. Many of Hume’s contemporaries found him scandalous. In fact, Hume was a rather kindly man who did not seek controversy for its own sake. He simply wanted to puncture the unfounded assumptions of traditional philosophy, and he did so quite effectively. After Hume, the Enlightenment faith in reason was badly shaken, especially among philosophers, who would have to be more careful in the future.

ON THE CONTINENT:

PHILOSOPHES AND “ENLIGHTENED ABSOLUTISM”

In the early 1700's, the Enlightenment spread from England and the Netherlands to France. There, people of the educated classes began to attend *salons* (often held at the homes of wealthy women) where they would discuss the latest ideas. A group of intellectuals known as *philosophes* emerged out of this scene. The philosophes argued for sweeping social changes. Instead of directly criticizing France’s Old Regime (which would not have been tolerated), they satirized it with humorous plays, stories, and essays. One philosophe, the Baron de Montesquieu, was among the first to argue for a separation of powers to provide checks and balances in government. Another, Diderot, edited a vast encyclopedia, which summarized an enormous portion of the knowledge of the day, while sharply criticizing superstition, slavery, and tyranny. The greatest of the philosophes was Voltaire, who crusaded for freedom of expression, rational thought, and humanitarian reforms by brilliantly poking fun at existing institutions.

One paradox of the Enlightenment was that its ideas became fashionable among the upper classes in absolutist countries. Even some absolute rulers adopted enlightenment principles to some degree. Frederick the Great of Prussia, Joseph II of Austria, and Catherine the Great of Russia all corresponded with the French philosophes, and claimed to rule in an

enlightened manner. They did put some Enlightenment ideas into practice. Frederick improved schools and expanded intellectual freedom. Joseph II abolished serfdom and extended religious toleration to Jews and Protestants. But Enlightenment principles and absolutist reality were fundamentally at odds. The “enlightened rulers” talked a great deal about the new ideas, but only implemented them when it was to their advantage. Political realities were shaped by power more than reason. Frederick, for example, maintained serfdom, and invaded and took any land he thought he could keep.

The greatest gulf between theory and reality was in Russia. Peter the Great had died without specifying a successor, and various members of the Romanov family had been struggling for the throne ever since. A series of rulers came and went until 1762, when Czar Peter III was overthrown and killed by friends of his wife, a German princess named Catherine. Catherine “the Great” would rule Russia for 34 years. Like Peter, her predecessor in “greatness”, Catherine was intent on modernizing Russia. She imported western intellectuals, artists, and technicians, and made it fashionable to imitate western trends, including Enlightenment ideas. Catherine was a brilliant and charismatic ruler, and Russia did grow much more powerful under her watch. Her talk of freedom and social reform, however, was just talk. The status of nobles rose during her reign, while the status of serfs continued to fall. Catherine was also committed to expanding Russia’s boundaries whenever possible. Beginning in 1772, Russia, Austria, and Prussia took pieces of the once powerful kingdom of Poland. After two more bites in 1793 and 1795, Poland had been entirely devoured.

THE ART OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

Western art has tended to fluctuate between two styles—the restrained, formal style characteristic of much Greek and Roman art, and a more emotional, unstructured style, as in some Hellenistic art, Baroque art, and later Romantic art. Oftentimes, the two exist simultaneously. For example, during the reign of Louis XIV, when the Baroque was the dominant art style, literature took a classical form in the works of dramatists such as Jean Racine and Jean-Baptiste Moliere. Some French painters also used a classical style. This style found fertile ground during the late Enlightenment, and became known as Neo-Classicism. The quintessential Neoclassical painter was Jacques-Louis David, who painted intensely formal

scenes of Greek and Roman subjects. David's work also dealt with the French revolution, of which he was an enthusiastic supporter. Neoclassicism dominated architecture in the late 1700's as well, as buildings imitated the clean lines of classical buildings. This style was influential in North America in the years around the American revolution. A good example is Monticello, the home Thomas Jefferson designed for himself. In music, as the harpsichord was abandoned in favor of the newly invented piano as the Baroque style gave way to the Classical style. Brilliant composers such as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Joseph Haydn of Austria, and Ludwig van Beethoven of Germany, wrote elegant but deeply moving works, still regarded as masterpieces. Beethoven's later work, in the early 1800's, became more intensely emotional, reflecting the widespread shift from classicism to Romanticism in European art.

DIVERGING STRANDS

As the Enlightenment progressed, it split into numerous ideological branches. One source of division, as always, was religion. Deeply impressed by Newton's mechanistic laws of nature, some began to see God as a "Divine Clockmaker" who had created the universe and then stepped back to let it run. Called *Deists*, they denied literal interpretations of biblical miracles, as well as the divinity of Christ. Others took mechanism a step further, arguing for absolute determinism and materialism, and denying the existence of God. In response to such ideas, a more traditional religious movement grew up which emphasized a very emotional, personal relationship with God. The Moravian, Methodist, Quaker, and Baptist churches emerged or were revitalized during this time. The movement was especially strong in the North American colonies, where it came to be called the Great Awakening. While this more traditionalist movement rejected many of the more rationalistic, anti-religious elements of the Enlightenment, it accepted the movement toward humanitarianism. Its members became some of the leading proponents of prison reform, universal education, alleviation of poverty, and the abolition of slavery. Unfortunately, only a few on either side of the religious divide were supporters of women's rights.

Another direction late Enlightenment thought took was toward a kind of romantic radicalism. The chief spokesperson for this point of view was Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau was a passionate, brilliant, and troubled man, who fell in with, and then fell out with,

the philosophes of Paris. Rousseau believed that early in human history, people had been solitary beings who were naturally good and happy. Like Hobbes, Rousseau looked back to a “state of nature”, but unlike Hobbes, he decided that people had been “noble savages”. They had been corrupted, he believed, by society and its restrictions; and especially by the possession of private property, which had set people in competition with each other.

Rousseau didn't advocate a return to the natural state, however. Instead, he advocated a society which fostered a return to the freedom and happiness of that time, preferably a simple, agrarian society. Rousseau was in direct opposition to Hobbes in his belief in the natural goodness of people, and in direct opposition to Locke in his contempt for private property. He shared with both, however, the notion of a social contract. For Rousseau, a government was only legitimate if it followed the “General Will” of the people, by which Rousseau meant a sort of mass consciousness that encompassed and went beyond the desires of individuals. Rousseau was in many ways a transitional figure. He was an important participant in the Enlightenment, yet his emphasis on an original, sublime state of nature, and on feeling over reason, was an early expression of the Romantic Movement, which would emerge clearly in the 1800's.

Another transitional figure was Immanuel Kant, a professor of philosophy in Konigsberg, in East Prussia. Kant's thought represented a synthesis of rationalism and empiricism, and thus a culmination of the Enlightenment debate over the scope of human reason. Kant was an admirer of the optimistic rationalism of Leibniz as well as the insights of Newtonian science. He was also a deeply ethical and religious man. Reading Hume, however, had “awakened” him from his “dogmatic slumbers” as he put it. Kant wanted to reconcile several threads of thought, but he knew he would have to address Hume's skepticism. He set out to “critique” human reason in his two most important books: *Critique of Pure Reason*, and *Critique of Practical Reason*. In the first, regarded by many philosophers as the greatest works of philosophy ever (though also one of the most tedious) Kant tried to assess what the human mind could really know. He decided that the empiricists and the rationalists were both partly right. Knowledge does come through sense perception, but in order to *make sense* of those perceptions, we have to apply pre-existing, or *a priori*, categories of the mind, which include many of the things Hume questioned, such as material substance, causality, and an enduring sense of self.

Kant was an idealist in that he admitted that we could only know things as they appear to us, not as they are in themselves. However, he still believed that it is reasonable to assume that

things do exist in themselves. This brings us to the *Critique of Practical Reason*. In it, Kant argued that it makes sense to believe certain things—such as free will, the need for morals, and the existence of God—even if we can't prove them absolutely, because doing so is necessary for leading a sane, moral life. Such practical reason, Kant believed, leads to a *categorical imperative*, or universal maxim, of morality—to act according to those principles which could usefully be made universal laws of human behavior.

With Kant and Rousseau, the Enlightenment was coming to an end. Rousseau was moving away from cold reason toward a more emotional, romantic outlook. Kant had settled some of the debates of the past two centuries (at least, as much as philosophical debates are ever settled), and opened up new lines of thought. Building on Rousseau and Kant, philosophers of the 1800's would move in very different directions than those of the Enlightenment. The 1800's would also differ sharply from the Enlightenment in ways that went far beyond academic philosophy. The intellectual revolutions which had transformed the worldviews of an educated elite were giving way to tremendous political and economic revolutions which would change the very fabric of society, in Europe and then around the world.

GOING ON THE DEFENSIVE IN THE REST OF THE WORLD

AFRICA: INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS, EXTERNAL IMPACT

In Africa, state-organized societies were becoming common just as Europeans began exploring the coasts. European contact had a great impact on Africa from the start, but until the late 1800's, not a *direct* impact in the sense of military invasion (except in some coastal areas, and in South Africa). Many African kingdoms were relatively powerful, and many Europeans were very susceptible to African diseases. While the slave trade caused internal disruption, and was a drain on population, the introduction of New World crops such as corn and manioc encouraged population growth. Yams, bananas, and sorghum went the other way, from Africa to the New World. Until the 1800's, African history was influenced by Europe without being dominated by it.

The west African region just below the Sahara remained a major cultural center. Around 1500, the empire of Mali fell to the rising empire of Songhai, which became the largest of the

West African trading kingdoms under the powerful kings Sunni Ali and Askia Muhammed. Like Mali and Ghana, Songhai flourished by controlling the trade routes north across the Sahara. The empire lasted until 1591, when it fell to a ragtag army from Morocco. The armies of Songhai were large and well trained, but they were armed with spears and bows. The Moroccans had guns.

Ghana, Mali, and Songhai were the largest of the West African states, but others existed as well. To the east was the kingdom of Kanem-Bornu, which traded ivory and slaves to the Mediterranean coasts. One of the things Kanem-Bornu received in return was horses for its cavalry based armies, which they used to extract tribute from other peoples. Kanem-Bornu was one of the longest lived states in history; ruled by a single family from the 800's to the 1800's. Kanem-Bornu became an extensive empire in the late 1500's under Idris Aloma, who gained power by using guns imported from the Ottoman Empire. In between Kanem-Bornu and the larger western states were the Hausa city states, which emerged among cattle herding peoples. These were tributaries of Songhai early on, but came to be major players in the trans-Saharan trade in the 1600's and 1700's. That trade, however, had by that time declined as trading shifted to the west coast. As a part of an Islamic revival that began in the 1700's, the Fulani people conquered the Hausa states, and reorganized them into the strongly Islamic Hausa-Fulani empire.

In most of the trading states at the southern border of the Sahara, the ruling classes were Muslim. This was not true in the tropical forests to the south, where states such as Benin, Ife, and Oyo emerged. Cattle could not live in this tsetse fly ridden region, so people lived by clearing forests and growing yams and cassava, and by fishing. These societies were the chief sources of ivory and kola nuts for the large states to the north. They developed unique art forms, and today their gorgeous cast-bronze figures are considered some of the finest African artworks. This area was a major center of the slave trade, in which Benin, Oyo, and the new states of Dahomey and Asante participated. To the south was the kingdom of Kongo, a large state which was eventually devastated by Portuguese slave traders. The Portuguese also ruined many of the Swahili trading states by their disruption of the Indian Ocean trade. In the late 1600's, the Portuguese were ousted by Omani Arabs, who set up a powerful trading state on the island of Zanzibar.

In 1652, the Dutch established Cape Town, a small settlement at the southwest tip of Africa, to provide supply food and shelter for ships passing around the cape. The first people they encountered were Khoisan peoples—Khoikhoi pastoralists (with whom they traded beads, iron, and copper for cattle) and San hunter-gatherers. Slaves were imported from other parts of Africa, and then from Southeast Asia. Soon the colonists (mostly Dutch, but also some French and Germans) started farms in the countryside around Cape Town. When they reached drier areas, they switched to semi-nomadic pastoralism. These fiercely independent people became known as Boers (Dutch for “farmer”). The language they developed, based on Dutch, with loan words from French, German, African languages, and Southeast Asian languages, is called Afrikaans. Later, Boers began to call themselves Afrikaaners. Inevitably, the Boers came into conflict with native peoples as they expanded into their territory. The Khoikhoi and San were killed, driven into marginal areas, or enslaved. In the late 1700's, the Boers encountered the Xhosa people, descendants of the migrating Bantu peoples who had reached southwest Africa around 300 CE. The Xhosa were not as easily defeated as the Khoisan peoples, but they could not stand up to Boer guns. The Boers and Xhosa fought a series of wars over the next century, as the Boers expanded steadily into Xhosa territory.

THE MIDDLE EAST: OTTOMAN DECLINE

By the 1700's, the Ottoman Empire had big problems. Regional governors were growing more independent of central control, the janissary corps was becoming bloated, and European countries were growing more powerful at Ottoman expense. Hungary was lost to the Austrian Empire in 1699, and Austria won the right to oversee Catholics within the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans realized that they needed to modernize to keep up with the European powers. During the Tulip Period of the early 1700's, under Ahmed III and his grand vizir, Ibrahim Pasha, Ottomans began to emulate European arts and fashions, especially those of Old Regime France. The Tulip Period was a time of luxury and artistic experimentation among aristocrats, in the midst of depression and turmoil in the empire at large. After a rebellion ended the rule of Ahmed III, the Ottomans devoted more attention to more practical European pursuits, such as science, technology, and military arts. European military advisors were brought in to modernize the army, but most reform was blocked by the Janissaries. Meanwhile, the Russians won lands

to the north of the Black Sea, as well as the right to oversee Orthodox Christians living in Ottoman lands. The North African provinces were almost fully independent, and in Arabia an Islamic revivalist Wahhabi movement actually gained control of Mecca for a while. In 1798, Napoleon easily invaded Egypt. It was becoming obvious that reform and modernization were long overdue.

THE BRITISH IN INDIA

The British East India company was established in 1600, and granted the right to trade in India by the Mughal emperor Jahangir. Soon the company had established trading forts at Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta. As the Mughal Empire declined, these trading forts raised armies of native soldiers (called *sepoys*) and began to take part in the struggle for power. At first, they were just one of many competing interests. Others included the Portuguese and French as well as a galaxy of rival Indian principalities and factions. By the mid-1700's, the East India Company had broken French power in India and defeated the Mughal governor of Bengal and assumed direct control over that province. Then they began expanding into the rest of India. By the mid-1800's, the East India Company controlled most of the sub-continent, either directly or by pulling the strings of puppet princes. Many Indians resented the rule of the East India Company, and many in the British Parliament wanted to take over control of India from the company. In 1857, a revolution among sepoy troops sparked a widespread Indian uprising. By 1858, the uprising had been suppressed, and the British government took over control of India from the East India Company.

JAPAN'S TOKUGAWA SHOGUNATE

After the turmoil of the late Ashikaga period, Japan was brought under unified rule by Oda Nabunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu; who established the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1603. These rulers created a system of centralized feudalism. Many daimyo kept their traditional lands, but their actions were strictly limited by the shogun. They were forced to spend every other year at the capital, Edo (present day Tokyo), and to leave their families there year round, basically as hostages to the shogun. The imperial family remained in Kyoto, with an

entirely ceremonial role. The Tokugawa shoguns, not unreasonably, feared the destabilizing effects of foreign influence, especially European ideas and technologies. In the 1630's, Japan closed itself off from the outside world. Japanese people were forbidden to travel abroad, while the only foreign traders allowed were the Chinese and Dutch in the southern port of Nagasaki. After participating in a revolt in 1637, thousands of Japanese Christians were killed, many by crucifixion, while Christian missionaries were expelled.

As repressive and rigid as it was, the Tokugawa Shogunate was spectacularly successful, bringing peace and prosperity to Japan for 200 years. The population and the economy grew rapidly, as did Japanese cities. Some of this economic growth was driven by conspicuous consumption among the daimyo and samurai classes. These traditional warriors had little to do during their stays in Edo, and many passed the time with extravagant entertainment. They spent lavishly on fine clothing and artwork, and patronized special entertainment districts, where they watched lurid kabuki plays, brawled, and dallied with prostitutes of both sexes. By the mid-1700's, many samurai had gone deeply into debt. Peasants were taxed more heavily to cover these debts, and soon revolts became common. The merchant class, traditionally regarded as social parasites, prospered by selling to and financing the samurai. Soon merchants were much wealthier than the traditional nobles, and growing more powerful. As the Tokugawa regime grew corrupt, an opposition movement arose which claimed that the shoguns had stolen their power from the rightful ruler of Japan, the emperor. This led to a resurgence of Shintoism, with an emphasis on imperial divinity.

MANCHU CHINA

The Manchu people, who invaded from Manchuria and set up the Qing Dynasty in 1644, were much more respectful of traditional Chinese culture than the Mongols had been, and they retained the Neo-Confucian scholar-bureaucracy of the past. Under the first Manchu emperors China was wealthy, well-governed, and the most populous state in the world. Tibet, Turkestan, and Mongolia were annexed, in aggressive territorial campaigns, while Korea and parts of Southeast Asia were forced to pay tribute. Success, however, had its own problems. The Chinese population expanded from 100 million at the start of the Manchu dynasty to 300 million by 1800. Agricultural production was growing fast, but not *that* fast, and food shortages were

causing peasant revolts by the late 1700's. At the same time, China was growing increasingly conservative and self-satisfied. Scholarship and the arts were lavishly supported, but mostly confined to compilations of old ideas and imitation of old forms. Really creative work, such as the great novel *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, was produced by an intellectual underground, and was looked down upon as unrefined.

At first, the Chinese were interested in western technologies, which they mostly encountered through Jesuit missionaries. These missionaries had converted many Chinese to Christianity by being very flexible in incorporating Chinese traditions. Ancestor veneration was allowed, and the traditional Chinese term "Heaven" was translated as "God". In the early 1700's, however, the Pope declared that Chinese Christians must conform more closely to Catholic doctrine. This enraged the emperor and discredited the Jesuits. Afterward, all European ideas and technologies were regarded with suspicion. In 1757, all European trade was confined to the port of Guangzhou (Canton). Chinese attitudes toward foreigners were illustrated by an imperial response to a British envoy who requested expanded trade and regular diplomatic relations. The emperor Ch'ien-lung considered all foreign diplomats to be tribute bearers, and wrote to George III that he had "taken note of your respectful spirit of submission" but responded that there is "no need to import any product manufactured by outside barbarians in exchange for our own goods". In just a few decades, such self-assurance would come to an abrupt end.

