Western Europe Extends Its Influence

Paris is well worth a Mass.
——Henry of Navarre, King of France (ruled 1589–1610)

The year 1453 is a useful starting date for the early modern period in European history. That year, the Turks conquered Constantinople and the Ottoman Empire became a major power. The mid-1400s saw the end of a wave of plagues, the conclusion of the Hundred Years’ War between France and England, and the invention of the Gutenberg printing press followed by an increase in literacy. The Italian Renaissance was well underway. The artist and inventor Leonardo da Vinci, painter of the Last Supper and Mona Lisa, was born in 1452, while fellow artist Michelangelo, painter of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome and sculptor of the David, was born in 1475. After the slow political and economic development of the Middle Ages, several countries in Europe were becoming powerful, wealthy nations. They were beginning to launch overseas explorations and establish colonies around the world.

Christianity, a dominant force in Western Europe, would split into many factions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The quotation above was attributed to French king Henry IV, often known as Henry of Navarre, after he converted to Catholicism for the sake of solidifying his power. His action demonstrates the willingness of monarchs to think like the Politiques, moderates who approached ruling with practicality rather than theology. Henry IV’s rule saw increasing emphasis on national sovereignty, which became more and more absolute in France until reaching a high point with Louis XIV (ruled 1643–1715). Henry IV also sanctioned religious toleration of the Huguenots, French Calvinists. The forms of government that developed in this period varied from the absolutism of France to parliamentary government in England.

Many important developments of the period 1450–1750 involved European expansion overseas. Two of these will be covered in Chapter 16: new maritime empires in the Americas and the establishment of the Columbian Exchange.

Protestant Reformation

The Roman Catholic Church faced many challenges in the European shift from feudalism to nationalism. International in organization and influence, and boasting a large bureaucracy of its own, the Church was also noted
for corruption. Efforts to curb corruption resulted in numerous Church councils and reform movements, such as the Cluniac Reforms (950–1130). However, efforts at reform were unsuccessful.

Theological disagreements began to surface as well. John Wycliffe and the Lollards in England in the late fourteenth century argued that priests were unnecessary for salvation. Wycliffe was vilified for translating parts of the Bible into the English vernacular to make it available to the mass of believers, who neither read or understood Latin. The Hussites, followers of Jan Hus in Bohemia, were declared heretics for beliefs similar to Wycliffe’s. Jan Hus himself was burned at the stake. Huldrych Zwingli in Geneva campaigned for a religion that would follow the exact teachings of the scriptures. He was opposed, for example, to such ideas as celibacy of the clergy because the rule was imposed long after the scriptures were written.

The power of the Church suffered during the so-called Babylonian Captivity (1309–1378), when the papacy was located in France rather than in Rome. The “Captivity” gave French rulers greater influence over the Church, even the ability to decide who should be pope. Newly centralizing rulers who coveted Church lands and authority began confiscating wealthy Catholic monasteries and sometimes established their own churches. In the eyes of believers, the Church suffered further when it failed to stop the Black Death. (Test Prep: Write a paragraph connecting the Reformation with the problems of the medieval Church. See pages 224–225.)

Lutheranism Martin Luther, a monk in Wittenberg, a German city in the Holy Roman Empire, concluded that several Church practices violated Biblical teachings. He objected to the sale of indulgences, which granted a person absolution from the punishments for sin, and to simony, the selling of church offices. According to legend, Luther defiantly challenged the Church by nailing his charges, the 95 Theses, to a church door. More likely, he probably posted a note calling for a meeting to discuss his cautiously written questions.

The Church reacted harshly: it, and the local political ruler, needed the money these practices generated. Luther refused to back down. In January 1521, Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther. Several German political leaders saw an opportunity to free themselves from the power of the pope. They sided with Luther. Soon, what had begun as a minor academic debate became a major split in the Roman Catholic Church and the Holy Roman Empire. Luther, who never intended to start his own church, found himself and his followers branded as Lutherans, and part of a larger group of protesters known as Protestants.

Luther was not a political or social revolutionary. (When German peasants rebelled, he did not support them.) But his theological ideas had social impact on the clergy, as well as on women. Luther taught that women could have direct access to God just as men could. He believed that women had significant roles in the family, particularly teaching their children to read the Bible. However, Protestants generally did not organize convents. As a result, Protestant women did not have the opportunity to become leaders in a vital institution the way Roman Catholic women did.
Calvinism The French theologian John Calvin broke with the Church around 1530. In 1536, he authored The Institutes of Christian Religion and helped reform the religious community in Geneva, Switzerland. The elect, those predestined to go to heaven, ran the community, which was based around plain living, simple church buildings, and governance by the elders of the church. Calvin’s followers in France were called Huguenots. Other offshoots of Calvinism included the Reformed Church of Scotland, led by John Knox, and the Puritans in England and later in Boston, who wanted to purify the Church of England of Catholic remnants. Historian and sociologist Max Weber pointed out that an important socio-economic impact of Calvinism is contained in the phrase “Protestant work ethic.” Calvinists were encouraged to work hard and reinvest their profits; prosperity ostensibly showed their position among the elect.

Anglicanism The last of the three major figures of the Reformation was the king of England Henry VIII (ruled 1509–1547). Henry wanted a male heir to succeed him. So after his wife gave birth to several daughters, Henry asked the pope’s permission to annul his first marriage so he could marry another woman, Anne Boleyn. But the pope, worried about the reaction of the very powerful emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Charles V, who was the nephew of Henry’s wife, refused. Henry, with the approval of the English Parliament, went his own way by setting himself up as head of the new Church of England, or Anglican Church, one that would be free of control by the pope in Rome. Two of Henry’s daughters, Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I, would later rule.

Counter-Reformation or Catholic Reformation

The Roman Catholic Church, all-powerful in Europe since the fall of Rome, did not sit quietly by and let the Reformation groups take over. Instead, it embarked on a vigorous Counter-Reformation to fight against the Protestant attacks. A three-pronged strategy yielded such gains for the Church that it remains the largest Christian denomination in the world:

- The Church increased the use of the Inquisition, which had been established in the late twelfth century to root out and punish nonbelievers. The Inquisition sometimes allowed the use of torture to achieve its ends.
- The Jesuits, or Society of Jesus, a religious order founded in 1540 by Ignatius of Loyola, undertook missionary activity in Europe and abroad.
- The Council of Trent (1545–1563) corrected some of the worst of the Church’s abuses and concentrated on reaffirming the rituals such as marriage and other sacraments improving the education of priests, and publishing the Index of Prohibited Books, writing that the Church considered dangerous to one’s faith if read.

The Counter-Reformation was successful in that Catholicism remained predominant in the areas of Western Europe near the Mediterranean Sea. Moreover, later colonies of the European powers often followed the lead of the home country in religion. Therefore, most of the people in the Spanish, Portuguese, and French colonies became Catholic.
Charles V abdicated as ruler of the Holy Roman Empire in 1555, discouraged by his inability to stop the spread of Lutheranism. He left Spain to his son Philip II and the Holy Roman Empire to his brother Ferdinand. Philip II took the Catholic crusade to the Netherlands and ruled its 17 provinces from 1556 to 1581. He later tried to conquer and convert England, but in 1588, English naval power, aided by bad weather, famously defeated his Spanish Armada.

**Wars of Religion**

Europe’s religious divisions led to frequent wars. In 1546 and 1547, the forces of Charles V fought the German Lutheran Schmalkaldic League. This conflict resulted in the 1555 Peace of Augsburg, which allowed each German state to choose whether its ruler, and therefore all of its churches and inhabitants, would be Catholic or Lutheran. People who rejected their ruler’s choice of religion could move to another state where their preferred religion was practiced.

**France** In France, Catholics and Huguenots fought for nearly half a century. Then, in 1593, King Henry IV, who had been raised as a Protestant, tried to unify the country by becoming a Catholic, reportedly saying that “Paris is well worth a Mass.” Five years later, in another step to bring peace, Henry issued the Edict of Nantes, which allowed the Huguenots to practice their faith. The edict provided religious toleration in France for the next 87 years.
Thirty Years’ War  The final great religious war between Catholics and Protestants in Europe was the *Thirty Years’ War* (1618–1648), which led to economic catastrophe for most of the continent. Much of the destruction was caused by troops, who were allowed to loot as part of their compensation. The war resulted in widespread famine, starvation, and disease. Particularly hard hit were the Netherlands, Bohemia, and the German and Italian states.

The war culminated in the *Peace of Westphalia*, which allowed each area of the Holy Roman Empire to select one of three religious options: Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, or Calvinism. After this settlement, France, Spain, and Italy were predominantly Catholic. Northern Europe was either Lutheran or Calvinist. England was Protestant with a state church. The religious map of Europe remained fairly stable after this period.

Allowing rulers of various areas of the Holy Roman Empire to choose a denomination had important political effects. It gave the countries and duchies much more autonomy than they had had previously. Consequently, the states of Prussia (now part of Germany) and Austria began to assert themselves, although they still formally belonged to the Holy Roman Empire. Prussia, after suffering tremendous destruction during the Thirty Years’ War, developed a strong military to protect itself. The Prussian military tradition would become a key factor in European politics into the twentieth century.

<table>
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<td>Christianity in Europe and Byzantine Empire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christianity in Europe</td>
<td>Roman Catholics and Protestants (1517 C.E.)</td>
<td>• Martin Luther • John Calvin • King Henry VIII</td>
<td>Disagreements over the role of faith, the role of the clergy and the pope, and how to interpret the Bible</td>
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During the religious turmoil in Europe and political turmoil in China in the seventeenth century, artists in both places (China, upper; Europe, lower) commonly portrayed scenes in nature.
Emergence of the Modern Nation
State Under New Monarchs

The new monarchies of the Renaissance developed in Europe as a result of the desire of certain leaders to centralize power by controlling taxes, the army, and many aspects of religion. The new monarchs included the Tudors in England, the Valois in France, and Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand in Spain. In each area, bureaucracies increased and the power of the middle class grew at the expense of lords and the churches. For example, the new monarchies moved to curb the private armies of the nobility.

By the end of the sixteenth century, this centralization coalesced into a system of government that led to absolute sovereignty in England and France. In England, the Stuart king James I (ruled 1603–1625) wrote The True Law of Free Monarchy, asserting that the monarch was free to make the laws—an assertion with which Parliament did not agree. In France, Henry IV (ruled 1589–1610) listened to his advisor Jean Bodin, who advocated the divine right of the monarchy, the claim that the right to rule was given to a king by God. These developments foreshadowed the developments of a national monarchy and the modern, centralized nation-state in these areas. Yet by the eighteenth century, Parliament predominated in England, and divine-right monarchy predominated in France until the French Revolution.

English Civil War and Evolution of Constitutionalism

The English Civil War, sometimes called the Puritan Revolution, broke out in 1642 between supporters of the Stuart monarchy and supporters of Parliament, many of whom were Puritans. The dispute was mainly over what powers Parliament should have in relation to those of the monarch. However, the roots of the conflict can be traced back to the Magna Carta (1215) and the foundation of the English Parliament in 1265. A more recent document, the Petition of Right (1628), restated the proposition that the monarch could not levy taxes without Parliament's consent, imprison persons without charge, or quarter soldiers in a private home without permission. Although Charles I signed the document, he proceeded to ignore it and did not call a meeting of Parliament for 11 years. By 1642, he was at war with Parliament, a war in which he would lose both his throne and his head.

Although Parliament and its leaders Oliver Cromwell and his son Richard Cromwell were in the ascendancy during much of the Civil War, in 1660 a compromise was reached to allow for the return of the monarchy. Charles II, who had been in exile in France, became the new Stuart king.

His son, James II, succeeded Charles in 1685, resulting in a complete break with Parliament once again. Many in England feared that James II was about to convert to Catholicism and force the country to follow suit. In 1688, a group of lords invited William and Mary, the Protestant monarchs of the Netherlands, to become joint rulers of England. As a result of this event,
known as the *Glorious Revolution*, James II fled the country. In 1689, William and Mary signed the *English Bill of Rights*, which assured individual civil liberties. For example, legal process was required before someone could be arrested and detained. The Bill of Rights also guaranteed protection against tyranny of the monarchy by requiring the agreement of Parliament on matters of taxation and raising an army. Although the *Toleration Act of 1689* granted freedom of worship to non-Anglicans, the law said that the English monarch had to be Anglican since he or she would be head of the Church of England.

Two philosophers explored the idea of a *social contract*, an agreement under which people gave up some of their rights in exchange for the benefits of living in a community under the protection of a government. In *The Leviathan* (1651) Thomas Hobbes feared weak government. He emphasized the need for a government that was strong enough to protect people from each other. In *Two Treatises of Government* (1690) John Locke feared excessive government. He emphasized the need for a government with enough restraints on it to protect people from tyranny. Locke argued that people had a right and even a duty to rebel against a government that exceeded its legitimate power.

**Absolutism Increases in France**

In contrast to developments in England, the French government became more absolute in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Building on the ideas advocated by Jean Bodin, advisor to Henry IV, Louis XIII (ruled 1610–1643) and his minister *Cardinal Richelieu* moved to even greater centralization of government and development of the system of *intendants*. These intendants were royal officials sent out to the provinces to execute the orders of the central government. The intendants themselves were sometimes called “tax farmers” because they oversaw the collection of various taxes in support of the royal government. During the reign of the “Sun King,” *Louis XIV* (ruled 1643–1715), the intendants helped to implement the financial system put into place by his finance minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Among other reforms, Colbert sought to make French manufactured goods more competitive by creating the *Five Great Farms*, an area free from internal taxes.

Louis XIV strongly espoused a theory of divine right and ruled as a virtual dictator. His aims were twofold, just as those of Richelieu had been: he wanted to hold absolute power and expand French borders. Therefore, the spacious and elegant palace at *Versailles* became a political instrument where he entertained the nobles and kept them from conducting business elsewhere, such as fomenting rebellion in their home provinces. Like Peter the Great’s city, Saint Petersburg, Louis XIV’s grand buildings at Versailles helped to highlight his power. The palace at Versailles, for example, could accommodate hundreds of guests in its apartments and gardens. During the rule of Louis XIV, some ten thousand employees worked in the palace or on the grounds. Louis declared that he was the state: “L’etat, c’est moi.” He combined in a very real sense both the lawmaking and the justice system in his own person—he was absolute. In
the long run, his and his successors’ refusal to share power with the nobility weakened the French government. (Test Prep: Create a table comparing Louis XIV and Peter the Great. See page 338.)

Desiring to expand the borders of France, Louis XIV reorganized his army to carry on a number of wars. For example, he gained the throne of Spain for the Bourbon family, thereby precipitating the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714). However, the Peace of Utrecht (1713) stipulated that the same person could not hold the thrones of France and Spain simultaneously. In paying for his wars, Louis XIV contributed to the economic problems of France—financial woes that contributed to the French Revolution of 1789. (Test Prep: Create a cause/effect chart linking the policies of Louis XIV to the French Revolution. See page 399.)

Scientific Revolution

While the Renaissance was gradually ending in southern Europe around 1600, in the north scientific thinking was on the upsurge. For example, in 1620 English scientist and philosopher Francis Bacon developed an early scientific method called empiricism, which insisted upon the collection of data to back up a hypothesis. Science was helped by the correspondence of leading scholars with one another, even during the religious wars, and by the establishment of a Royal Academy of Science in France and England. Sir Isaac Newton, combining Galileo’s laws of terrestrial motion and Johannes Kepler’s laws of planetary motion, published a work on gravitational force called Principia (1687). The ideas in Principia impacted science and mathematics and helped lead to a new vision of the world. Many intellectuals thought that science showed that the world was ordered and rational and that natural laws applied to the rational and orderly progress of governments and society. This thinking is a key to the period of the Enlightenment.

The Enlightenment Leaving aside the old theological debates of Scholasticism, which concerned the relationship of faith to reason, the new debates turned on how best to apply reason to discover natural law and thus make infinite progress. Writers outside the scientific community, such as the philosophes, philosophers who popularized some Enlightenment ideals, worked to apply the principles to government and society. For example, the French writers Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau praised religious toleration and the English form of representative government; Denis Diderot edited a vast series of articles on science, the arts, and philosophy called the Encyclopédie. In America, such a philosophe was Benjamin Franklin, a writer and thinker who also dabbled in science. (To learn more about the Enlightenment period, see Chapter 21, “The Enlightenment, Nationalism, and Revolutions.”)

Mercantilism, Early Capitalism, and Adam Smith

In the seventeenth century, Europeans generally measured the wealth of a country in how much gold and silver it had accumulated. Hence, countries set
policies designed to sell as many goods as they could to other countries—in order to maximize the amount of gold and silver coming into the country—and to buy as few as possible from other countries—to minimize the flow of precious metals out of the country. This theory, known as mercantilism, called for heavy government involvement in the economy.

The accumulation of capital, material wealth available to produce more wealth, in Western Europe grew as entrepreneurs entered long-distance markets. Some merchant families became bankers, including the Medici of Florence, Sforzas of Milan, and Fuggers of Augsburg. Some entrepreneurs, partly to escape guild regulations, took cloth to rural households for local women to make into garments, beginning the practice of “putting-out,” also known as cottage industry. Capital changed hands from entrepreneurs to laborers, putting laborers in a better position to become consumers. Despite restrictions by the Church, lending money at high rates of interest became commonplace. Actual wealth increased, too, as gold and silver were brought in from the Western Hemisphere.

Into this economic milieu of the eighteenth century stepped Adam Smith. Influenced by the new Enlightenment thinking and belonging to a group of economists called physiocrats, Adam Smith turned against mercantilism. In The Wealth of Nations (1776), Smith challenged the mercantilist belief that a nation’s wealth should be measured by its accumulation of amount of gold and

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**SPAIN’S GOLD AND SILVER IMPORTS FROM THE AMERICAS, 1503-1660**

![Bar chart showing the import of gold and silver from the Americas to Spain from 1503 to 1660.](chart)

silver. Hence, the extensive government regulations to promote exports and
discourage imports were misguided. Smith argued that freer trade and greater
trust in the laws of supply and demand would make everyone wealthier. He
believed that allowing people to follow their self-interest, with some limits,
would enable the market to regulate itself as if guided by an “invisible hand.”

**Commercial Revolution** The Commercial Revolution that developed
in the early modern period saw the transformation of commerce from local,
small-scale trading mostly based on barter to large-scale international trade
using gold and silver. The high rate of inflation, or general rise in prices,
at this time is called the *Price Revolution*. The Commercial Revolution
affected all regions of the world and resulted from four key factors: the
development of European overseas colonies; the opening of new ocean trade
routes; population growth; and inflation, caused partly by the pressure of the
increasing population and partly by the increased amount of gold and silver
that was mined and put in circulation.

Aiding the rise of this extended global economy was the formation of joint-
stock companies, owned by investors who bought stock or shares in them. People
invested capital in such companies and shared both the profits and the risks of
exploration and trading ventures. Offering *limited liability*, the principle that an
investor was not responsible for a company’s debts or other liabilities beyond
the amount of an investment, made investing safer. The developing European
middle class had capital to invest from successful businesses in their home
countries. They also had money with which to purchase imported luxuries.
The Dutch, English, and French all developed joint-stock companies in the
seventeenth century, including the British *East India Company* in 1600 and
the Dutch East India Company in 1602. In Spain and Portugal, however, the
government did most of the investing itself through grants to certain explorers.

**European Expansion Around the Globe**

Demographic pressures pushed Europeans into exploration and trade. As the
population grew, not all workers in Europe could find work or even food. Not all
sons of the wealthy could own land because *primogeniture laws* gave all of each
estate to the eldest son. In the early seventeenth century, religious minorities
searched for a place to settle where people were tolerant of their dissent. All of
these groups, as well as those just longing for adventure and glory, were eager
to settle in new areas, resulting in a global shift in demographics.

Europe was never totally isolated from East and South Asia. The Indian
Ocean trade routes had long brought silk, spices, and tea to the Mediterranean
by way of the Red Sea. Islamic traders had long known land routes from
China to the cities of Baghdad and Constantinople and from there to Rome.
In the sixteenth century, however, more and more Europeans became active
in the Indian Ocean, with hopes of finding gold and new converts as their
twin motives. This often competed with Middle Eastern traders from Oman
and other kingdoms in the *Omani-European rivalry*. Christopher Columbus’s
search for a new route to India was a way to avoid this competition. European traders would soon act as middlemen in the worldwide trade of sugar, tobacco, rum, and slaves across the Atlantic, while continuing to import silk, spices, and rhubarb from China and Southeast Asia. Spain, Portugal, Great Britain, France, and Holland established *maritime empires*, ones based on sea travel. Interestingly enough, the European traders in southeast Asia found themselves dealing with women. The markets, as well as money changing services, were traditionally handled by women.

New technology aided European seafarers in their explorations. Compasses developed by the Chinese replaced astrolabes. *Cartography*, or mapmaking, and knowledge of wind patterns also improved navigation. Ships moved more adroitly, aided by a new type of rudder, another idea imported from China. Newton’s discovery of gravitation increased knowledge of the tides. The long-term result of combining navigational techniques invented in Europe with those from other areas of the world was a rapid expansion of exploration and global trade. About the only part of the Afro-Eurasia world not affected by the rapid increase in global trade was Polynesia, as it was far removed from trading routes.

The introduction of gunpowder, another Chinese invention, aided Europeans in their conquests abroad. Soon enough, however, sea pirates also used the new technology, particularly the Dutch pirates known as Sea Beggars.

**Portuguese in Africa and India** The small nation of Portugal, bounded as it was on the east by the Spanish kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, could expand only overseas. Its visionary ruler, *Prince Henry the Navigator* (1394–1460), became the first in a series of European royalty to sponsor seafaring expeditions, searching for an all-water route to the east as well as for African gold. Importation of slaves by sea began in this period, replacing the overland trans-Saharan slave route of earlier centuries. *Bartholomew Diaz* sailed around the southern tip of Africa, the Cape of Good Hope, in 1488. This was far enough into waters his crew did not know. Diaz feared a mutiny if he continued pushing eastward, so he returned home. *Vasco Da Gama* sailed farther east, landing in India in 1498, where he claimed territory as part of Portugal’s empire. The Portuguese ports in India were a key step in expanding Portugal’s trade in the Indian Ocean and with points farther east.

Early in the sixteenth century, the ruthless Portuguese admiral Afonso de Albuquerque won a short but bloody battle with Arab traders and set up a factory at Malaka in present-day Indonesia. He had previously served as governor of Portuguese India (1509–1515), sending strings of Indian ears home to Portugal as evidence of his conquests.

In the early sixteenth century, the Portuguese also travelled to Japan to trade, followed by Christian missionaries in 1549. They formed large Catholic settlements until the 1600s, when Japanese rulers outlawed Catholicism and expelled the missionaries.
Spanish in the Philippines  Portuguese explorers such as Vasco da Gama were the first Western Europeans to reach the Indian Ocean by sea by going around the southern tip of Africa. Spanish ships, however, became the first to circumnavigate the globe when the government sponsored the voyage of Ferdinand Magellan. He died on the voyage in the Philippine Islands in 1522, but one of the ships in his fleet made it all around the world, proving definitively that the earth was round and could be circumnavigated. Spain annexed the Philippines in 1521 when Magellan’s fleet arrived there. The Spanish returned in 1565 with strong forces and started a long campaign to conquer the Filipinos, who put up fierce resistance. Manila became a Spanish commercial center in the area, attracting Chinese merchants and others. Spain held on to the Philippines until the Spanish-American War in 1898. Because of the Portuguese and Spanish occupations, many Filipinos became Christians.

Dutch in Indonesia  The Dutch arrived in India in 1595 and in Indonesia in 1619, using maps obtained from Portuguese sailors who had been there previously. The Dutch were soon competing with the British and French in the Indian Ocean region. Although the Dutch West India Company did not hold on to its North American colony after being forced out of New Amsterdam by the English in 1667, the Dutch East India Company was more successful in Asia. Both companies were dissolved in the 1790s.

France vs. England  France and England continued to vie for dominance in North America. As English settlers moved into former Dutch territory in upper New York, the English began to form ties with the powerful Iroquois, who had been in conflict with the French over trade issues for decades. The English hoped that the Iroquois could frustrate French trade interests. Over time, the Iroquois began to realize that the English posed more of a threat than the French. In a shift of alliances, The Iroquois and French signed a peace treaty known as the Great Peace of Montreal in 1701. This alliance would lead in time to the hostilities of 1756–1763 known in North America as the French and Indian War and in Europe as the Seven Years’ War.

Trading Post Empires  British trading posts in India were typical of the way European nations operated in the era of European exploration in foreign countries. Taking advantage of the differences between Muslims and Hindus in India and having limited forces that prevented penetration much beyond the coastal areas at first, the British East India Company’s strategy was to build a fort, maintain soldiers, coin money, and enter into treaties with local Indian powers. All of this activity fell under the company’s charters from the British government. At first, these trading posts were established on India’s two coasts and solely focused on turning a profit. Then, with the help of European-trained Indian private forces called sepoys, the East India Company moved inland, spreading its influence. Later, officials of the company became embroiled in local Indian politics. Ultimately, Britain intervened in India politically and militarily to such an extent that it eventually controlled much of the subcontinent.
Indian products flowing through the trading posts were spices, cotton, tea, indigo dye, and saltpeter. As commercial treaties were concluded with the local authorities, the factors, or governors, for the British East India Company trained Indians as helpers. Travel back and forth to Britain could take up to two years, so the British traders were very isolated. Nevertheless, great fortunes could be made.

Thomas "Diamond" Pitt provides one example of how some were able to advance themselves in the new global economy. At age 21, Pitt travelled to India and operated on his own, illegally, since the British East India Company claimed a monopoly on trade in that area. By 1702, Pitt was so wealthy and successful at trade that the company hired him. While in India, he purchased a diamond that later became worth more than £135,000 after he had it cut in Amsterdam and sold to the regent of France. Pitt, the grandfather of William Pitt, the Earl of Chatham and the man for whom the city of Pittsburgh is named, used his wealth from a post in India to help his family rise to social prominence.

By establishing trading posts in Indian cities, the tiny nation of Britain paved the way for globalization. Each post became a node, an intersection of multiple points serving as a trade center for goods from many parts of the world.

Comparing Northwestern European Empires

The Netherlands, France, and England emerged as strong empires in the seventeenth century. They responded to similar challenges in distinct ways.

Commerce and Economics The Dutch were long the commercial middlemen of Europe, having set up and maintained trade routes to Latin America, North America, South Africa, and Indonesia. Dutch ships were faster and lighter than those of their rivals for most of the seventeenth century, giving them an early trade advantages. The Dutch East India Company was also highly successful as a joint-stock company. It made enormous profits in the Spice Islands and Southeast Asia.

Pioneers in finance, the Dutch had a stock exchange as early as 1602, and by 1609 the Bank of Amsterdam traded currency internationally. These developments placed the Dutch at the center of financial dealings in Europe. Their standard of living was the highest in Europe as such goods as diamonds, linen, pottery, and tulip bulbs passed through the hands of Dutch traders.

France and England were not so fortunate. Early in the eighteenth century, both countries fell victim to speculative financial schemes. Known as financial bubbles, the schemes were based on the sale of shares to investors who were promised a certain return on their investment. After a frenzy of buying that drove up the price of shares, the bubble burst and investors lost huge amounts of money, sending many into bankruptcy and inflicting damage to the economy at the same time.

In Britain, the crisis was called the South Sea Bubble, after the company that issued the shares. The British financial system was robust enough to absorb the
shock of the crash and to avoid long-term economic impact. The same was not true with the Mississippi Bubble, the bubble in France. The French financial system could not absorb the losses and the country found itself unable to get credit from Europe's major banking families. The result was an ever-growing French national debt, which eventually contributed to the French Revolution.

**Absolutist Control vs. Constitutionalism** The Dutch and the British operated under constitutional liberties that they assumed to be right and natural and which became the basis of constitutional law. While the British government was centralized, it was not absolutist. The Glorious Revolution assured that the central government operated with the approval of Parliament, providing a check against the absolute power of the monarch. In a similar way, the Dutch provinces maintained autonomy, even after they banded together to form the central government known as the Dutch Republic in the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia. The French, on the other hand, were firmly under the absolutist control of Louis XIV and his successors, who continued to maintain the Sun King's policies, although less successfully.

**Social Order** In the Netherlands and Britain, the nobility held power and took an active part in the government. The Dutch landowners provided the stable support for local provincial government and in England large landowners controlled Parliament, although they had to contend with radical religious sects and the middle class, two growing segments of the social order.

In France, on the other hand, the nobles were often ignored by the absolutist monarchs. The Estates General in France did not meet during the period 1615–1789. France suffered socially from the inability of the growing Third Estate, comprised of the vast majority of France's population, to gain representation in the government. The members of this Third Estate remained legally subordinate to the clergy and nobles.

**Growing Acceptance of Jews** Jews began to have a larger role in these countries starting in the seventeenth century. In previous centuries, they had been expelled from England (1290), France (1394), Spain (1492), and Portugal (1497), as well as various independent kingdoms and cities in northern and central Europe. The expulsion from Spain, by Ferdinand and Isabella, was particularly significant because so many Jews lived there. Many resettled in around the Mediterranean Sea, in northern Africa or the Middle East. Since the Hebrew word for Spain is Sepharad, Jews who trace their heritage back to Spain became known as Sephardic Jews. In contrast, Jews from central and eastern Europe became known as Ashkenazi Jews. Ashkenazi was once used by Jewish scholars to refer to Germany.

Under the influence of the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment, old prejudices against Jews declined somewhat, and they began to move and settle more freely in Europe. They became particularly important in the banking and commercial sectors of the economy. The Netherlands was especially tolerant of religious dissent and the Jewish minority faced less discrimination there than in most of Europe. Many Jews hoped, and had reason to believe, that the centuries of discrimination they had confronted were over.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Trends</th>
<th>Holland and Britain</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transoceanic trade flourished.</td>
<td>• The government instituted costly and inefficient tax policies.</td>
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<td>• The government established overseas empires through East and West India companies.</td>
<td>• Government established overseas empires.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Amsterdam emerged as Europe's financial center by 1609.</td>
<td>• King Louis XIV set up tax-free areas, the Five Great Farms.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The government suppressed guilds in order to encourage national and international markets.</td>
<td>• The government signed trading agreements with Ottoman Empire after 1535.</td>
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</table>

| Power Dynamics | | |
|----------------||---|
|                 | • The growing belief in natural rights limited the power of the monarchy. | • Absolutist French monarchs feared the power of their Hapsburg neighbors: the Holy Roman Empire and Spain. |
|                 | • The landed gentry was powerful. | • *Parlements*, 13 traditional law courts overseen by nobility, could veto legislation. |
|                 | • The power of merchants increased. | • The full Estates-General did not meet between 1615 and 1789. |
|                 | • The English Bill of Rights (1689) increased the power of Parliament and expanded the right of free speech. | • Intendants carried out functions of government. |

| Class System, Role of Nobility | | |
|-------------------------------||---|
| • Religious toleration increased. | • Ambitious bourgeoisie could rise socially by purchasing titles of nobility attached to land. People could also increase their status by being appointed to government positions. |
| • Social mobility increased as feudal systems declined. | • The law established three estates: the clergy, the nobility, and everyone else. |
| • The Dutch commercial class, burghers, often had more wealth than nobles. | • The clergy were influential through annual financial grants to the monarchy. |
| • In the English Parliament, the House of Commons allowed some middle class representation, generally from country gentry or lesser nobility. The House of Lords was dominated by clergy and royal nobility. | |
Historians differ in assessing the progress made in women’s rights during the early modern period of European history. The upheaval of the Protestant Reformation led to changes in how women lived their lives.

**The Catholic Heritage** Traditionally, the Roman Catholic Church did not advocate equal roles for women and men. Leaders from the pope to the village priest were all men. Adding to the dismal prospects for women were the accusations of women’s susceptibility to witchcraft. For example, the Dominican monk Heinrich Kramer, author of the widely used manual for witch hunters, *Malleus Maleficarum*, asked the rhetorical question, “Why is it that women are chiefly addicted to evil superstitions?” However, strong female rulers who were Catholic were an undeniable reality. For example, Isabella of Castile ruled Spain (1479–1504) and Catherine de Medici was the regent of France (1559–1589).

**Views of Protestant Leaders** Protestant leaders shared in the traditional views of gender roles. Martin Luther, in his 1532 work *Table Talk*, stated that “no good ever came out of female domination. God created Adam master and lord of all living creatures, but Eve spoiled all.” Moreover, John Calvin, in his *Sermon #11*, admonished women “to be discreet, chaste, tarriers at home, good, subject to their husbands.”

**Setbacks Under Protestantism** In some ways, the Reformation undercut what status women did have. In *A History of the Modern World*, first published in 1950, R. R. Palmer pointed out that the Roman Catholic Church had provided positions of leadership for women in convents and had inspired respect for women based on the position of the Virgin Mary in the Church.

**Increased Opportunities from the Reformation** Others have argued that Protestantism increased everyday opportunities for women. Protestants placed more emphasis on reading scripture and eagerly obtained copies of the Bible that development of printing had made more plentiful. As a result of these trends, mothers had a more important social role because they could teach children to read the Bible.

**Mixed Results** Recent textbooks have noted both positive and negative changes for women in early modern Europe. For example, *The Earth and Its Peoples* (Richard W. Bulliet et al.) concluded that the period had “ambiguous implications for women.” Women had lower status, but “recent research has brought to light the existence of a number of successful women who were painters, musicians, and writers. Indeed, the spread of learning, the stress on religious reading, and the growth of business likely meant that Europe led the world in female literacy.”
### KEY TERMS BY THEME

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<td>Louis XIV (the “Sun King”)</td>
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<td>East India Company</td>
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<td>Anglican Church</td>
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<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>Omani-European rivalry</th>
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<td>John Locke</td>
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<td>social contract</td>
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**WESTERN EUROPE EXTENDS ITS INFLUENCE**
Questions 1.1 to 1.3 refer to the passage below.

“Whereas our most dear and loving Cousin, George, Earl of Cumberland, and our well-beloved subjects, Sir John Hart, of London, and others [following is a list of 214 other names] have of our certain knowledge been petitioners unto us, for our Royal assent and license to be granted unto them, that they, at their own adventures, costs, and charges, as well for the honor of this our realm of England, as for the increase of our navigation, and advancement of trade of merchandize, within our said realms and the dominions of the same, might adventure and set forth one or more voyages, with convenient number of ships and pinnaces [small boats], by way of traffic and merchandize to the East Indies, in the countries and parts of Asia and Africa and to as many of the islands, ports and cities, towns and places, thereabouts, as where trade and traffic may by all likelihood be discovered, established or had; divers[e] of which countries, and many of the islands, cities and ports, thereof, have long since been discovered by others of our subjects, albeit not frequented in trade of merchandize. . . .

[You shall] henceforth be, and shall be one body corporate and politic, in deed and in name, by the name of the Governor and Company of Merchants of London, trading into the East Indies.”

Queen Elizabeth, Charter for the East India Company, 1600

1.1 Which phrase in this passage reflects the most important motivation for the English monarchs to sponsor expeditions to the Indian Ocean?

(A) “at their own adventures”
(B) “for the honor of this our realm”
(C) “advancement of trade of merchandize”
(D) “have long since been discovered by others”

1.2 Which group would benefit most directly from the action described in this passage?

(A) shareholders in the company, because the company received a monopoly on English trade in Africa and Asia
(B) Francis Bacon and other scientists, because they could learn about India and China more easily
(C) Roman Catholics, because they could set up missions throughout the Indian Ocean
(D) the Portuguese, because they would have European allies in the Indian Ocean
1.3. Which person expressed ideas most clearly in conflict with the action taken by Queen Elizabeth in this passage?

(A) Adam Smith  
(B) Thomas Pitt  
(C) James I  
(D) Thomas Hobbes

Questions 2.1 to 2.2 refer to the passage below.

“When the Portuguese go from Macao, the most southern port city in China, to Japan, they carry much white silk, gold, perfume, and porcelain and they bring from Japan nothing but silver. They have a great ship that goes to Japan every year, and brings back more than 600,000 coins’ worth of Japanese silver. The Portuguese use this Japanese silver to their great advantage in China. The Portuguese bring from China gold, perfume, silk, copper, porcelain, and many other luxury goods.”

Ralph Fitch, a British merchant, in an account of his travels to the East Indies, 1599

2.1 Which conclusion about the Portuguese is best supported by the passage above?

(A) They manufactured luxury goods that they could sell in China.  
(B) They made great profits transporting goods between Asian countries.  
(C) They primarily wanted to accumulate silver.  
(D) They preferred to trade with China rather than Japan.

2.2. Which statement best describes the point of view of the source, Ralph Fitch?

(A) He was ridiculing the Portuguese for working so hard for so little profit.  
(B) He was embarrassed that the Portuguese were taking advantage of the Chinese and Japanese.  
(C) He was hoping to make profits just as the Portuguese were doing.  
(D) He was criticizing the Portuguese for being so focused on acquiring wealth.
Questions 3.1 and 3.3 refer to the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Thomas Hobbes</th>
<th>John Locke</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Best Form of Government</strong></td>
<td>Absolute monarchy</td>
<td>Representative democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Nature</strong></td>
<td>People naturally act only in their own self-interest, so only a very powerful government can maintain peace and security</td>
<td>People have natural freedom but give up some freedom to live in a civilized state. If the government infringes on natural rights, people have a right to rebel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of Laws</strong></td>
<td>• To impose order to prevent war and chaos</td>
<td>• To preserve natural rights to life, liberty, and property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To protect the people from themselves</td>
<td>• To protect the people from the government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Representation</strong></td>
<td>Governments should control but not necessarily represent the people</td>
<td>Government should be run by representatives of the people to prevent tyranny</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1 Which person most clearly expressed ideas that were consistent with Hobbes’s political philosophy?

(A) Louis XIV, who said, “L’etat, c’est moi,” or “The state, it is I.”
(B) William and Mary, who signed the English Bill of Rights.
(C) Oliver Cromwell, who led the English Parliamentary army
(D) Adam Smith, who wrote *The Wealth of Nations*

3.2 Which person most clearly expressed ideas that were consistent with Locke’s political philosophy?

(A) James I, who wrote *The True Law of Free Monarchy*
(B) Cardinal Richelieu, who developed the system of intendants
(C) Charles I, who refused to honor the Petition of Right
(D) Thomas Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration of Independence

3.3 Locke’s political philosophy is best demonstrated in a modern government in which citizens

(A) expect their government to take any necessary action to keep order
(B) have little chance to influence decisions by their government
(C) can keep or replace elected representatives in regular elections
(D) care little about politics, so they rarely participate in government
Question 1 refers to the passage below.

“The Chinese withdrawal from the Indian Ocean [in the early fifteenth century] actually facilitated the European entry. It cleared the way for the Portuguese to enter the region, where they faced only the eventual naval power of the Ottomans. . . . China’s abandonment of oceanic voyaging and Europe’s embrace of the seas marked different responses to a common problem that both civilizations shared—growing populations and land shortage. In the centuries that followed, China’s rice-base agriculture was able to expand production internally by more intensive use of the land, while the country’s territorial expansion was inland toward Central Asia. By contrast, Europe’s agriculture, based on wheat and livestock, expanded primarily by acquiring new lands in overseas possessions, which were gained as a consequence of a commitment to oceanic expansion.”

Robert W. Strayer, Ways of the World, 2009

1. Answer parts A and B.
   
   A. Identify and explain ONE similarity and ONE difference between China and Europe that explain their decisions on whether to explore or conquer lands around the Indian Ocean.

   B. Identify and explain ONE piece of evidence to show how the European legal system contributed to the role of Europeans in the Indian Ocean trade.

2. Answer parts A, B, and C.

   A. Identify and explain ONE aspect of the Scientific Revolution that would support the interpretation that it was more important than either the Renaissance or the Reformation.

   B. Identify and explain ONE aspect of the Renaissance that supports the interpretation that it was more important than the Scientific Revolution.

   C. Identify and explain ONE aspect of the Reformation that supports the interpretation that it was more important than the Scientific Revolution.