

WESTERN EUROPE IN TRANSITION



The Palace of Versailles The French king Louis XIV had this huge royal residence built in the late 1600s. At the time, Western Europe was enjoying great wealth and prestige. France and other countries were competing for power, both in Europe and in overseas colonies.

Power What do you think other European monarchs thought about Versailles?

CHAPTER OUTLINE

- 1 The Renaissance and Reformation
- 2 Growth of Modern Nations
- 3 The Industrial Revolution
- 4 Europe in Two World Wars

Gargantua was a giant with a huge appetite. At one sitting, he could eat “a few dozen hams, smoked tongues of beef, caviar, sausages,” and more. He also had a huge appetite for learning and in his youth had studied the most difficult texts ever written.

As an adult, Gargantua was deeply impressed with the interest in learning he saw everywhere. He urged his son Pantagruel to get an education. “Most dear son,” he said,

“ I see such improvements [in education] that nowadays I should have trouble [keeping up with] schoolboys. ”

François Rabelais wrote *Gargantua and Pantagruel* in 1532. Through the two giants he created, Rabelais commented humorously on the changes taking place in France during the Renaissance.

The Renaissance lasted from about 1350 to 1600. *Renaissance* is a French word meaning “re-

birth." During the Renaissance, educated Europeans like Rabelais felt they were witnessing a rebirth of civilization after the Middle Ages.

CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE

The Renaissance brought great changes to Western Europe. Trade and commerce expanded. Science and technology flourished. Soon after, modern European nations emerged. As these nations industrialized, they came to dominate the world. Two world wars, however, caused Europe's power to decline.

As you read, look for these chapter themes:

▶ The Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment encouraged new attitudes toward learning, the individual, and government that would help shape the modern world.

▶ By the 1600s, strong monarchs had built the foundations of the modern nations of Europe.

▶ The Industrial Revolution had major effects on Western Europe, both at home and in the world.

▶ Two world wars had a devastating impact on Europe and helped end European domination of the world.

Literature Connections

In this chapter, you will encounter passages from the following works.

Gargantua and Pantagruel, François Rabelais

Hamlet, William Shakespeare

Lives of the Artists, Giorgio Vasari

Hard Times, Charles Dickens

Night, Elie Wiesel

For other suggestions, see Connections With Literature, pages 804–808.

1

THE RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION

FIND OUT

- What was the Renaissance spirit?
- What were the results of European exploration and expansion overseas?
- How did the Reformation change Europe?

Vocabulary joint-stock company, indulgence, predestination

“The natural desire of good men is knowledge,” noted Leonardo da Vinci. Desire for knowledge drove Leonardo to study everything. As a painter and sculptor, he studied the human body. As an architect, he studied mathematics and engineering. As an inventor, he drew plans for a flying machine, a submarine, and a rapid-firing cannon.

During the Renaissance, Leonardo and other gifted people opened new worlds. Renaissance men and women turned to the civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome for inspiration. They reexamined ancient texts and explored new fields of study. They combined secular, or nonreligious, concerns with Christian traditions. With its emphasis on knowledge and human reason and its faith in the ability of the individual, the Renaissance helped pave the way for the modern world.

Spirit of the Renaissance

The Renaissance began in the city-states of northern Italy and later spread to northern Europe and Spain. During the Crusades, the Italian city-states had built large fleets to transport people and goods to lands bordering the eastern Mediterranean. By the 1300s,

trade had made the city-states wealthy. A powerful middle class, made up of merchants and bankers, emerged. The new middle class had the time and money to seek education and support the work of artists.

Interest in the classics. The Renaissance was sparked by a renewed interest in the classics, or the learning of ancient Greece and Rome. Renaissance scholars studied the classics to learn more about the world. By reading ancient texts, they rediscovered knowledge that had been lost or forgotten during the Middle Ages.

New views of the world. During the Renaissance, Europeans began to change the way they thought about themselves and the world. As in the Middle Ages, many people had strong religious views. Scholars studied not only the classics, but also the works of early Christian writers.

At the same time, people took a greater interest in secular affairs. Some Renaissance writers focused on such practical concerns as how to behave. Niccolò Machiavelli (mahk ee uh VEHL ee) wrote *The Prince*, a handbook for rulers. He advised rulers to use whatever means were necessary to achieve their goals. "It is much safer to be feared than to be loved, if one must choose," Machiavelli explained.


Achievements of the Renaissance

The Renaissance spirit also reflected a new confidence in the ability of individuals to shape their own lives. That confidence led Renaissance artists and writers to stress the importance of individual achievement. Their work stimulated a creative spirit that revolutionized the arts and the world of learning in Western Europe.

Art. Renaissance artists turned to classical models. They studied Greek statues and Roman buildings. Their own works reflected the realism and grace of the ancient styles. Renaissance artists experimented with new kinds of paints and painting techniques. They developed perspective, a method of painting that makes objects or scenes appear three-dimensional.

Some of the world's best-known artists, including Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, worked in Italy during the Renaissance. The masterpieces created by Renaissance artists have influenced painting and sculpture to the present day.

Literature. Writers in Italy, France, Spain, and England expressed the spirit of the age. They wrote on a range of religious and secular subjects.

The Italian writer Petrarch (PEE trahrk) experimented with the sonnet, which is a 14-line poem. His devotion to Laura, whose real identity is unknown, led him to write splendid love poems. Those works influenced many later poets. ( See Connections With Literature, page 807, "Laura," "The White Doe," and "Spring.")

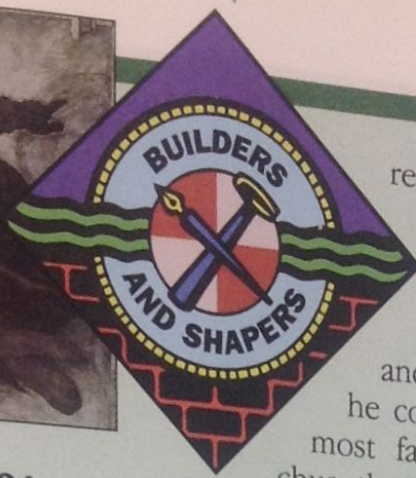
In Spain, Miguel de Cervantes (suh VAN tee) wrote *Don Quixote*, which has remained a best-seller for almost 400 years. The novel gently mocks the ideals of medieval knights.

England's great poet and playwright, William Shakespeare, explored themes such as love, jealousy, ambition, and greed. In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare's title character expresses a typically Renaissance view of the individual:

“ What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension [understanding] how like a god! ”

Hamlet and Shakespeare's other plays are still performed throughout the world today.

The printing press. During the Renaissance, Europeans applied new technologies to produce many useful inventions. Among the most important inventions was the printing press. The Chinese were the first people to invent printing. Muslim traders may have spread this technology to Europe. By the 1400s, Europeans were experimenting with new methods of printing. Johann Gutenberg of Germany developed a printing press that used movable type. In about 1455, this press was used to produce the first Bible printed by



Michelangelo: Renaissance Ideal

Michelangelo was furious. For three years, he had worked on plans for a magnificent tomb for Pope Julius II. He planned to sculpt 40 large figures to surround the giant two-story tomb. Suddenly, the pope ordered him to stop work on the tomb and paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel instead.

The job was awesome. The high ceiling arched across an enormous room. Michelangelo protested that he was a sculptor, not a painter. But the pope was a powerful, persuasive man. Reluctantly, Michelangelo went to work.

For four years he labored, covering the ceiling with dramatic scenes from the Bible. Each day, for hours at a time, he lay on his back atop a high scaffold, his nose just inches from the ceiling. In the end, he produced a masterpiece that many people regard as one of the most influential works in European art. On the ceiling, huge and forceful figures play out the drama of the Creation.

Michelangelo was 37 years old when he completed the Sistine Chapel. Born in Flo-

rence, Italy, he had already won attention for his drawings and carvings by the time he was 16 years old. As a young man, Michelangelo studied anatomy and ancient Roman statues so that he could create realistic figures. His most famous sculptures include Bacchus, the Roman god of wine, and figures from the Bible such as David and Moses.

A proud and arrogant man, Michelangelo was dedicated to art. His friend and biographer Giorgio Vasari describes the artist's work habits:

“ He slept very little, frequently rising in the night because he could not sleep, and resuming his labors with the chisel. For these occasions he had made himself a cap of pasteboard, in the center of which he placed a candle, which thus gave him light without encumbering his hands. ”

Toward the end of his long life, Michelangelo turned to other pursuits. A brilliant architect, he designed a massive dome for St. Peter's Church in Rome. He was also a gifted poet. With his great talents and diverse accomplishments, Michelangelo represented the Renaissance ideal.

1. What challenges did Michelangelo face in painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel?
2. **Applying Information** How did Michelangelo's life and work illustrate the spirit of the Renaissance?

Age of Exploration

With a boldness and curiosity that reflected the Renaissance spirit, explorers risked great hardship to expand European knowledge of the world. Their voyages dramatically changed Europe's position in the world. The Age of Exploration lasted from the 1400s to



Spanish Caravels Europeans sailed thousands of miles to distant lands in these small but sturdy vessels. Spain used caravels to bring back treasure of gold and silver from the Americas. This new wealth made Spain the world's richest nation in the 1500s.

Technology What technological advances helped bring about the Age of Exploration?

the 1700s. During that time, Europe became the center of a new worldwide trading system.

Motives. Various motives lay behind overseas exploration. Portugal, Spain, France, and England searched for an ocean route to the rich spice trade of Asia. They wanted to bypass the Mediterranean routes that were controlled by the Muslims and the Italian city-states. Desire for gold and silver led Europeans to conquer the Americas. Europeans also wanted to spread Christianity to other lands.

Impact of technology. By the mid-1400s, advances in learning and technology were making long ocean voyages possible. Renaissance mapmakers began to produce more accurate maps. With the astrolabe, an instrument perfected by the Arabs, sailors could use the stars to calculate their latitude at sea. Europeans improved on the magnetic compass, a device that helped sailors determine their location.

From the Arabs, Europeans learned about the lateen sail, which allowed ships to sail against the wind. At the same time, Europeans used new shipbuilding techniques to produce the large, seaworthy ships needed for ocean voyages.

Voyages. During the Age of Exploration, Europeans charted new routes across the

world's oceans. The Portuguese led the way. In 1488, Bartholomeu Dias rounded the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa. Nearly 10 years later, Vasco da Gama sailed around Africa and on to India. That voyage led the way for Portugal to build a rich trading empire in Asia.

In 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed west across the Atlantic Ocean in search of a new route to Asia. His voyage opened the way for Spain to colonize the Americas. Later, other explorers searched for a water passage through the Americas to Asia. Ferdinand Magellan pioneered a route around the southern tip of South America and across the Pacific.

Effects of Expansion

The voyages of exploration had worldwide impact. Europeans helped to spread foods, animals, and ideas from one continent to another. Today, we call this the Columbian Exchange. Unknowingly, Europeans also introduced diseases such as smallpox to the New World. These diseases, which took a terrible toll on Native Americans, were an unintended part of the Columbian Exchange.

Colonies. European nations established colonies in the Americas and set up trading

outposts in Asia. Spain and Portugal divided South America between them. Spain, France, the Netherlands, and England set up colonies in North America. These distant lands supplied Europeans with precious metals, foods, timber, and furs.

Warfare increased as European nations competed for land and power. Overseas expansion also created a legacy of resentment toward Europeans among peoples whom they ruled.

Economic impact. Overseas expansion changed the economy of Europe. Trade and commerce grew as entrepreneurs sent trading ships around the world. As trade increased, European harbor cities grew in importance.

Europeans developed new ways of doing business. They set up **joint-stock companies**, private trading companies that sold shares of stock to investors. Through these companies, business people could raise the capital needed for costly ventures such as trading voyages. Entrepreneurs also set up banks and insurance companies. These activities gave Europeans experience that would help them dominate world trade and finance for several centuries.

Overseas empires helped European nations increase their power. By the 1600s, European rulers had adopted the economic philosophy of mercantilism. (See Chapter 21.) They sought to strengthen their nations' economies by regulating trade with their colonies. The colonies supplied the parent country with raw materials. At the same time, the parent country expanded its industries to produce manufactured goods for its colonies.

The Protestant Reformation

During the Renaissance, many scholars and members of the clergy became concerned about the worldliness of the Roman Catholic Church. They criticized the vast sums of money that popes used to build splendid palaces and wage wars. Reformers called on the Church to return to the simple faith of early Christian times. They urged the pope and the clergy to reform corrupt practices.

Luther. Martin Luther, a German priest, was especially disturbed by the practice of selling indulgences. An **indulgence** was a pardon of sins. It was supposed to reduce the punishment a sinner suffered after death. By the early 1500s, the Church was selling indulgences as a means of raising money. In 1517, Luther nailed a list of questions, known as the 95 theses, to the door of the Wittenberg castle church. In the 95 theses, Luther condemned the sale of indulgences.

Printing presses quickly spread copies of the 95 theses, and Luther soon found himself at the center of a fierce religious debate. He argued that people could not achieve salvation through good works, as the Church taught, but only through God's mercy. Further, he claimed that the Bible and an individual's conscience outweighed the authority of the Church. Luther also rejected many Church

Martin Luther Preaching After Luther had harshly criticized the Church, an order went out for his arrest. A German prince protected the reformer by sheltering him in his castle. There, Luther began translating the Bible from Latin into German. **Diversity** How did Luther's teachings differ from those of the Roman Catholic Church?



ceremonies, as well as the authority of the pope. Luther's teachings sparked the Protestant Reformation, a movement that divided the Christian Church in Europe.

Other reformers. Protestant ideas spread rapidly, and many Protestant sects sprang up. In Geneva, Switzerland, John Calvin organized a new church that emphasized **predestination**, the belief that God had decided in advance whether an individual would be saved or condemned. Calvinism swept across northern Europe.

In England, King Henry VIII broke away from the Catholic Church when the pope refused to annul, or cancel, his marriage. He declared himself the head of the Church of England. Although Henry held on to many Catholic beliefs, the Church of England did adopt some Protestant practices.

Effects. The Catholic Church eventually responded to the Protestant challenge with its own internal reforms. During the mid-1500s, it ended many abuses that the reformers had criticized. Slowly, the Church regained some of the prestige and authority it had lost.

For the next 100 years, Protestants and Catholics waged bitter wars against each other. Most of the fighting took place in Germany, but civil wars also raged in France, England, Scotland, and Ireland. The wars of religion weakened some nations and led to the growth of others. The Netherlands, for example, emerged as a powerful Protestant nation.

SECTION 1 REVIEW

- 1. Identify:** (a) Leonardo da Vinci, (b) Niccolò Machiavelli, (c) Miguel de Cervantes, (d) William Shakespeare, (e) Johann Gutenberg, (f) Martin Luther, (g) 95 theses, (h) John Calvin, (i) Henry VIII.
- 2. Define:** (a) joint-stock company, (b) indulgence, (c) predestination.
- 3.** (a) Why did the Renaissance begin in northern Italy? (b) Describe three ideas that were an expression of the Renaissance spirit.

- 4.** List two causes and two results of Europe's overseas expansion.
- 5.** (a) Why did reformers criticize the Catholic Church? (b) Describe two results of the Protestant Reformation.
- 6. Understanding Causes and Effects** What role did technology play in the Age of Exploration and the Reformation?
- 7. Writing Across Cultures** We use the term "Renaissance person" to describe someone who has a wide range of knowledge or skills. Identify an American public figure whom you would consider to be a Renaissance person. Write a paragraph defending your choice.

2

GROWTH OF MODERN NATIONS

FIND OUT

How did absolute monarchs increase their power?

Why did England become a limited monarchy?

What ideas did Enlightenment thinkers support?

How did the French Revolution and Napoleon change Europe?

Vocabulary absolute monarch, divine right, limited monarchy, scientific method

“L’état, c’est moi” (“I am the state”), declared Louis XIV, the king of France. Louis was making no idle boast. From his splendid palace at Versailles, he controlled the lives of all the French people. By the late 1600s, Louis and other strong monarchs were building the foundations for the nations of modern Europe.

Age of Absolute Monarchs

During the Early Middle Ages, monarchs had little control over their lands. Instead, powerful feudal lords exercised control over large areas.

During the Late Middle Ages, ambitious rulers worked to increase royal authority. They brought feudal lords under their control and struggled to reduce the influence of the Church. As towns grew, monarchs found ways to control trade and win the support of the growing middle class. In each country, the ruler organized a royal treasury to collect money as well as courts to administer justice. ✪ Monarchs built strong armies and enlarged their territories.

Absolute monarchs. From the 1500s to the 1700s, rulers in Spain, France, and elsewhere gained enormous power. They became **absolute monarchs**, or rulers who have complete authority in government and over the lives of the people they govern. (📖 See Connections With Literature, page 807, “The Prince.”)

Europe’s absolute monarchs believed that they ruled by **divine right**. According to this theory, a ruler’s authority came from God. In support of divine right, the French bishop Jacques Bossuet (bah SWAY) wrote:

“Royal authority is absolute. The prince owes an explanation to no one for what he orders. God has chosen the prince to rule over other men. Without this absolute authority, the king could neither do good nor [prevent] evil.”

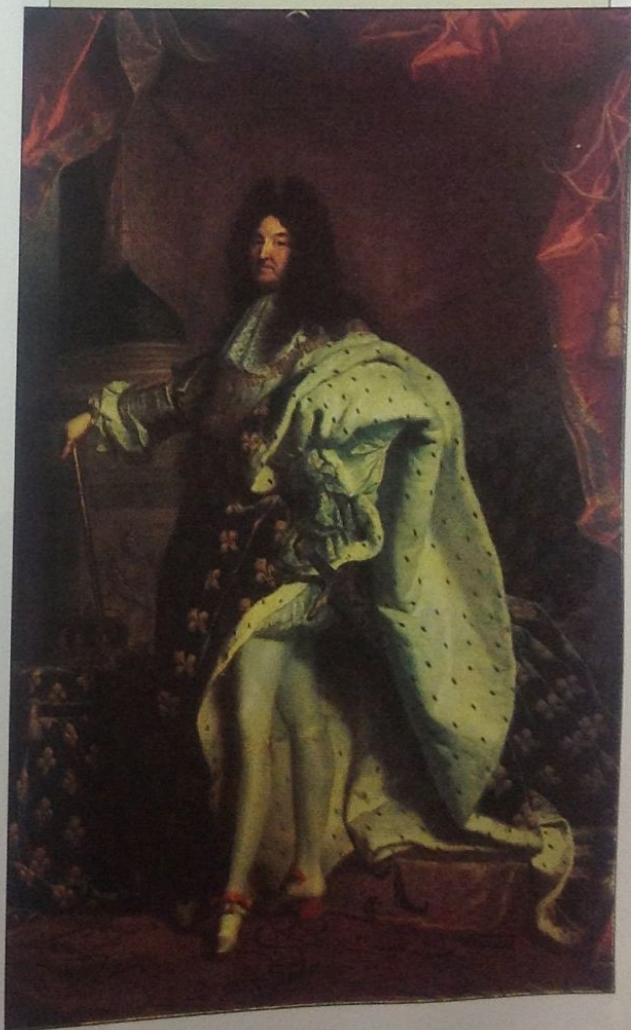
The Sun King. Perhaps the best example of Europe’s absolute rulers was Louis XIV of France. During his long reign from 1643 to 1715, Louis XIV made himself the center of a powerful state. Louis’s symbol was the sun. It suggested that just as the Earth depended on the sun for survival, so, too, did the people of France depend on their king for their well-being.

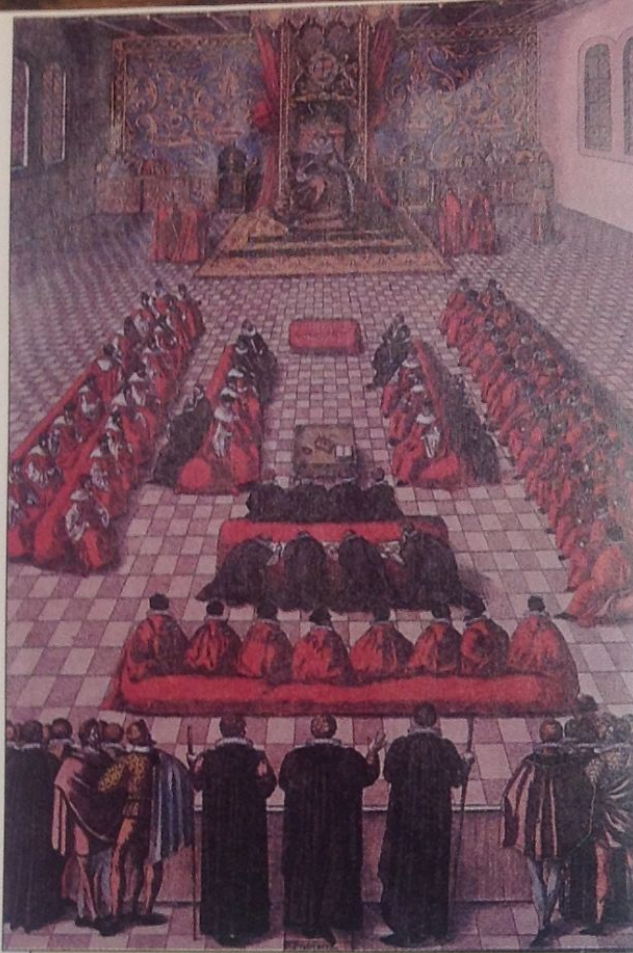
Louis XIV continued the efforts of earlier French kings to impose royal authority over

local rulers. He reorganized the army so that it was loyal to him rather than to individual nobles. In a series of wars, he expanded French borders in the north, south, and east.

Economic policies. To pay for his magnificent court and the many wars he waged, Louis depended on his skillful finance minister, Jean Colbert (kohl BEHR). Colbert, a mercantilist, promoted trade and commerce so that he could tax the wealth they produced. To improve transportation and trade, Colbert

Louis XIV This painting of the proud, powerful monarch shows him dressed in royal velvet and ermine. Louis XIV enforced his authority by making nobles live at Versailles. There, they could not plot rebellions. Instead, they competed for such privileges as handing the king his gloves each morning. **Political System** How did absolute monarchs justify their power?





Queen Elizabeth Meets With Parliament

Elizabeth I, one of England's greatest monarchs, ruled the nation from 1558 to 1603. She was able to win Parliament's approval of her actions because of her strong will and the fierce loyalty of her subjects.

Political System What two factors helped England become a limited monarchy?

encouraged the building of roads and canals. He also improved the nation's system of tax collection.

Despite Colbert's efforts to raise money, the king's wars and court expenses drained the treasury. As a result, France was heavily in debt by the time Louis died. Convinced of their divine right to rule, however, Louis's successors refused to make desperately needed reforms. Their failure to act prepared the way for the French Revolution.

A Limited Monarchy in England

In England, monarchs tried but failed to win the same powers that Louis enjoyed in France. A government in which a monarch does not have absolute power is called a

limited monarchy. Traditions dating back hundreds of years had set a number of limits on English rulers.

Magna Carta. In 1215, English nobles forced King John to sign the Magna Carta, or Great Charter. It guaranteed the nobles certain rights. For example, the king had to consult them before creating new taxes. The Magna Carta also stated that nobles accused of crimes had the right to a trial by their peers, or equals. Most important, the Magna Carta established the idea that the king had to respect the law.

Parliament. A second limit on royal power was Parliament, an assembly made up of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Over the centuries, Parliament won certain powers, such as the right to approve new tax laws. By controlling finances, Parliament could exercise some control over the monarch.

Clashes between king and Parliament. During the early 1600s, Charles I claimed divine right to rule. When Parliament refused to recognize his authority, he tried to rule without its approval. In 1628, though, financial problems forced Charles to call Parliament into session. Parliament refused to act on his demands for money until he signed the Petition of Right. The petition asserted Parliament's authority over taxation. Once Charles got the funds he needed, however, he dismissed Parliament and ignored the Petition of Right. The king increasingly ruled on his own.

Finally, Charles's clashes with Parliament led to a civil war. The king's followers, called Cavaliers, fought Parliament's forces, called Roundheads. Many Roundheads were Puritans, or Protestants who wanted to see the Church of England "purified" of Catholic practices. Oliver Cromwell, a strong-minded Puritan, led Parliament's forces to victory. In 1649, Charles I was tried and executed. For the next nine years, until his death in 1658, Cromwell ruled England as a strict Puritan state.

In 1660, Parliament invited Charles II, the son of the executed king, to take the throne. Charles realized, however, that he owed his position to Parliament and not to divine right.

English Bill of Rights. In 1689, Parliament placed additional limits on royal power. It required King William and Queen Mary to sign the Bill of Rights, which made Parliament stronger than the monarch. The English Bill of Rights protected certain rights of individuals, such as the right to trial by jury for anyone accused of a crime.

During the 1700s, political parties began to play an important role in government. A cabinet system evolved. The cabinet was made up of a prime minister and the monarch's chief advisers, chosen from members of the party that held the most seats in Parliament. With these changes, the British government gradually took the form it has today.

The Scientific Revolution

During the 1500s and 1600s, new technology and new methods of research led to an explosion of knowledge that became known as the Scientific Revolution. The Scientific Revolution changed the way Europeans viewed the world and also laid the foundations of modern science.

During the Middle Ages, European scholars accepted the teachings of the ancient Greek philosophers and the Church. Renaissance scholars developed a new approach to scientific study that became known as the **scientific method**. It was a step-by-step approach that emphasized experimentation and

observation. Even more significant, however, the scientific method relied on mathematics, rather than ancient principles, to test results and prove theories. It was mainly through their advances in mathematics that Renaissance thinkers revolutionized science.

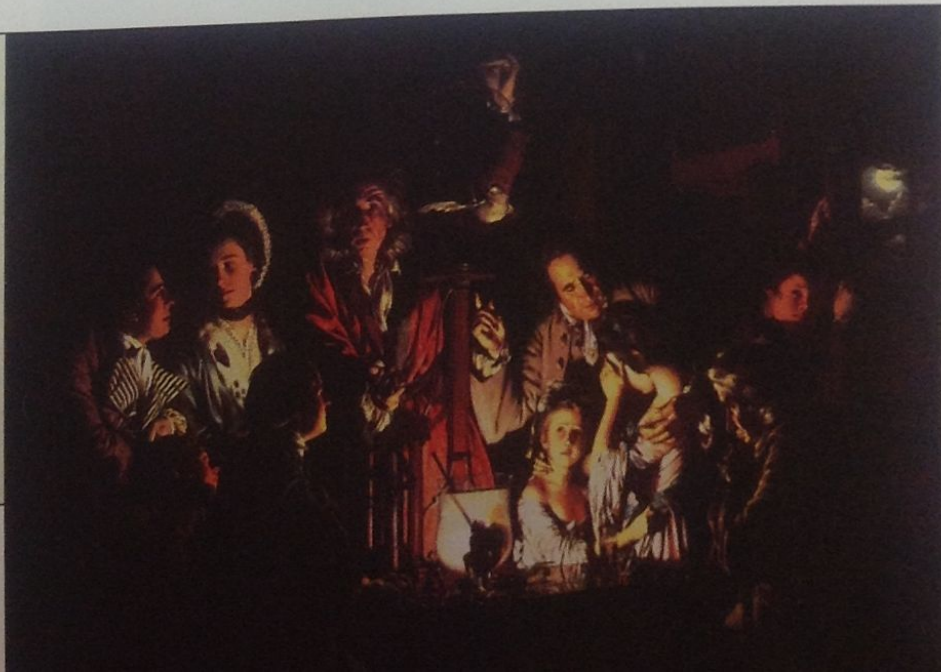
Advances in astronomy. In 1543, a Polish mathematician and astronomer, Nicolaus Copernicus (koh PUR nih kuhs), challenged traditional teachings about the universe. Many ancient Greeks thought that the Earth stood at the center of the universe and all the heavenly bodies revolved around it. The Church accepted this view because it placed humans at the center of the universe. Copernicus used mathematics to show that the Earth revolved around the sun. Although many scholars and religious leaders rejected Copernicus's ideas at the time, these ideas were eventually proved correct.

In Italy, Galileo Galilei perfected the telescope. After observing the sky, he declared that the planets moved around the sun. The universe that he described was very different from the one the ancient Greeks described. Galileo's observations challenged the teachings of the Catholic Church, and Church officials put him on trial. Threatened with death if he refused to admit his errors publicly, Galileo stated that his ideas were wrong.

In England, Isaac Newton proved what Galileo had observed. He invented calculus, a new mathematical method. Using calculus, Newton showed how the sun's gravity keeps

A Scientific Experiment

During the Scientific Revolution, Europeans took a new look at how and why things worked. In this painting, *An Experiment With An Air Pump*, a scientist tries out a new device. **Technology** What aspects of the scientific method does this painting illustrate?



the planets within their orbits. Newton helped develop a new view of the universe as a huge, well-regulated machine that worked according to natural laws. His discoveries formed the basis of much of modern science.

Medicine. During the 1500s and 1600s, scientists made advances in medicine that challenged the ideas of traditional authorities. Physicians made accurate drawings of the human body, developed new ways of treating wounds, and studied the circulation of the blood. Their discoveries slowly set the stage for the medical breakthroughs of the 1800s.

The Enlightenment

With its emphasis on natural laws, the Scientific Revolution influenced philosophers. They felt confident that they could discover natural laws that governed human behavior, just as Newton and Copernicus had discovered laws that governed physical objects.

During the 1700s, European philosophers thought that people should use reason to free themselves from ignorance and superstition. They believed that people who were “enlightened” by reason could perfect themselves and society. As a result, this period is often called the Enlightenment. Ideas discussed during the Enlightenment became the basis for today’s democratic governments.

Natural rights. In the late 1600s, an English philosopher, John Locke, set out some basic ideas of the Enlightenment in his *Two Treatises on Government*. Locke regarded government as a contract between the ruler and the ruled. He believed that people everywhere had certain natural rights, including the right to life, liberty, and property. The government had a duty to protect those rights. If a ruler failed to do so, the people had the right to rebel. According to Locke, rulers should stay in power only as long as they had the consent of those they governed.

Toleration. Locke’s ideas influenced many French thinkers, including Voltaire. A witty writer, Voltaire published pamphlets and essays that poked fun at France’s backwardness compared with the advances being made in Britain. He urged religious toleration, as well

as freedom of speech and of the press. “I do not agree with a word you say,” Voltaire is supposed to have stated, “but I will defend to the death your right to say it.”

Separation of powers. In *The Spirit of Laws*, the baron de Montesquieu (MAHN tuhs kyoo) discussed various forms of government. He argued that the best government was one based on the principle of separation of powers among three branches—the legislative, executive, and judiciary. If each branch had its own powers and responsibilities, Montesquieu said, then no branch could dominate any of the others.

Equality. Another French philosopher, Jean Jacques Rousseau (roo soh), supported the revolutionary idea that all people are born equal. He opposed titles of rank and nobility. Government, he believed, belonged to the people and should represent the general will of the majority.

Impact of the Enlightenment. During the 1700s, Enlightenment ideas spread across Europe and the Atlantic to the Americas. Through books and newspapers, in coffeehouses, and at informal gatherings, people heard the call for reform. Some of Europe’s rulers even supported Enlightenment ideas. In some nations, these “enlightened monarchs” ended serfdom and allowed religious freedom.

The American Revolution

Enlightenment ideas fueled a desire for freedom in Britain’s 13 American colonies. In 1776, the colonists issued a Declaration of Independence. It echoed Locke’s ideas in asserting people’s natural rights to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” After winning their freedom, Americans wrote the Constitution of the United States. The Constitution set up a government based on Montesquieu’s ideas about the separation of powers. Soon afterward, Americans added the Bill of Rights. These 10 amendments to the Constitution guarantee Americans a variety of basic civil liberties.

The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights became symbols of freedom to people around the

world. In their own struggles for freedom, they hoped to achieve similar rights.

The French Revolution

The American Revolution and the Enlightenment helped trigger a revolution in France. By the late 1700s, France had piled up a huge national debt. A corrupt government, a weak monarch, and an outdated social and economic system added to the nation's problems.

The French people were divided by law into three estates, or classes: clergy, nobles, and commoners. The people who belonged to the first two estates paid no direct taxes. The tax burden fell on the Third Estate, which was made up of the middle and working classes. Although they paid heavy taxes, members of the Third Estate had little say in the decisions of government.

An economic crisis brought France to the edge of bankruptcy. In 1789, Louis XVI sought help from the Estates General, an assembly of the three estates that had not met for 175 years. Members of the Third Estate, along with reform-minded nobles and clergy, took the first step toward revolution when they organized the National Assembly to write a constitution for France.

Early reforms. The French Revolution passed through several stages. During the

first stage, the National Assembly drew up a constitution that swept away the old feudal order and ended the many privileges of the nobles. The reformers also adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Man. It stated that all men were equal and had certain rights, such as freedom of speech, the press, and religion. The National Assembly abolished the privileges of the Catholic Church and placed the Church under government control. Under the constitution of 1791, France became a limited monarchy.

The French Republic. The revolution entered a more radical phase in 1792. By then, France was at war with Austria and Prussia. Fearing that the idea of revolution might spread, Austria and Prussia were determined to turn back the tide of revolution and restore the French king's power. During this radical phase, the revolutionaries tried and executed Louis XVI and declared France a republic.

The revolutionary government set up a Committee of Public Safety, headed by Maximilien Robespierre (ROHBS pyehr). Robespierre unleashed a brutal campaign to drive back foreign invaders and suppress uprisings at home. During Robespierre's Reign of Terror, which began in 1793, thousands of French men, women, and children were condemned to death on the guillotine. At the same time, France's armies battled against

Attack on the Royal Palace

Palace When the French Revolution began, King Louis XVI seemed to accept changes that limited the monarchy. However, when he tried to escape from France, the people turned against him. After Parisians attacked his palace in 1792, Louis XVI was tried for treason and executed.

Change How did the French monarchy change between 1715 and 1792?

