The Transformation of the West Focus Questions

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<td><strong>Describe the major changes in Western Europe in this era</strong></td>
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| **Compare the Italian Renaissance and the Northern Renaissance** | **Italian Renaissance** - The Renaissance challenged medieval intellectual values. It altered the political landscape and encouraged a more commercialized economy. The stress on renaissance humanism paved the way for new developments in philosophy and greater challenges to the status quo. In the end, the Renaissance encouraged innovation, which becomes the hallmark of European history from this point on.

**Northern Renaissance** - Protestant Reformation – Martin Luther grew weary of the church’s methods of raising money (indulgences) and later criticized many of the tenets of the Catholic religion. Luther’s original purpose in posting the 95 Theses was to invite discussion not to separate from the church; the church’s response however propelled Luther to give voice to many other concerns such as arguments against monasticism, questioning the authority of the pope and demands for the translation of the bible into the vernacular. Luther gained widespread support as his movement was seen as a way for German Princes to rebel against the Holy Roman Emperor without openly rebelling. Once Lutheranism was firmly established, it led to other religious breakthroughs (Anglican, Calvinism, Anabaptists, etc.)

The catholic response is known as the Catholic Reformation. Leading Catholics assembled at the Council of Trent (which met 4 times over a period of 20 years.) Catholic dogma was reaffirmed and protestant ideas were refuted. A new religious order, the Jesuits, were established and became a major force in the missionary push in later years. |
| **Describe the Protestant churches that were established because of the Reformation. Define nature of religious warfare** | Protestant churches that can trace their roots to the Reformation include Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Anglicans. Calvinists and the Anabaptists reforms also started during this era. Protestant and Catholic disputes led to a series of religious wars during the 16th and 17th Centuries. In France, Calvinists and Catholics disputed until the edict of Nantes in 1598 gave Protestants tolerance. The Thirty Years War pitted German and Swedish Protestants against the Holy Roman Emperor and Spain. German power and prosperity did not recover for a century. The peace settlement allowed rulers and cities to choose their official religion. During the 17th Century religion was an important issue in English Civil Strife; most Protestants, but not Catholics, gained toleration. The wars also affected the European power balance and political structure. |
| **Appraise whether the religious differences between Europeans resemble the arguments between different groups of believers in the other major world religions** | These disputes resemble arguments involving other major world religions; for example the differences between Hindus and Buddhists, and the split between Sunni’s and Shi’a Muslims. |
| **Generalize the causes and results of the commercial revolution** | The Commercial Revolution is the term that refers to the changes in European economic structure at this time – new goods, wider markets, availability of new money, greater commercialization.

- Import of gold and silver – leading to inflation: Spanish colonies in America introduce large amounts of precious metals
- New Wealth- generated by wider markets, colonies help increase demand for goods
- Inflation – increase in prices due to abundance of silver & gold, and increased demand that
- outweighed production abilities
- Regional Monopolies are formed – a means of managing the new colonial holdings with little risk, but great gain for the mother countries. |
**Define the scientific revolution and describe some of its major discoveries**

Scientific Revolution was a shifting of thought. With religion already called into question, great thinkers took to the skies to challenge long-held beliefs and redefine the natural order.

- **Copernicus** – theorized the sun was in the center of the Universe (Heliocentric), On Revolutions of Heavenly Spheres, afraid of heresy, refused to publish work until shortly before death
- **Tycho Brahe** – astronomer, patron of the King of Bohemia, collected 20 years’ worth of observations that would later be used to prove Copernicus’ theory.
- **Johannes Kepler** – Brahe’s assistant, mathematical genius who used the observations of Brahe to prove Copernicus’ heliocentric theory. Established 3 laws of motion, determined that the universe revolves on ellipses (ovals) rather than perfect circles.
- **Andreas Vesalius** – disproved Galen (ancient Greek whose ideas were still the leading medical ideas centuries after his death), On the Fabric of the Human Body, used dissection to create anatomy drawings and studies, discovered true location of the heart and stomach
- **Galileo Galilei** – improved the telescope, advocated experimentation, pushed the heliocentric cause (Starry Messenger and Dialogue of Two Chief Systems), observed the uneven surface of the moon, was condemned for heresy, his trial and subsequent recantation marks the break between religion and science
- **John Harvey** – blood circulation, verifies that the heart pumps the blood
- **Francis Bacon** – outspoken advocate for scientific method, empiricism
- **Rene Descartes** – question everything, I think therefore I am, skeptical review
- **Isaac Newton** – Principia, calculus, gravity, 3 laws of motion

**Identify the elements of absolute monarchy. Trace the development of absolute monarchies**

The feudal balance between monarchs and nobles came undone in the 17th century. Monarchs gained new powers in warfare and tax collection. France became the West’s most important nation. Its rulers centralized authority and formed a professional bureaucracy and military. The system was called absolute monarchy; Louis XIV was its outstanding example. His nobles, kept busy with social functions at court, could not interfere in state affairs. Similar policies occurred in Spain, Prussia, and Austria-Hungary.

**Define the enlightenment Describe its influence on the scientific revolution**

The Enlightenment applied scientific methods to study of human society establishing that rational laws describe social as well as physical behavior. Enlightenment thought produced a basic set of principles concerning human affairs – that humans are naturally good, reason was the key to truth, intolerant or blind religion was wrong. If people were free, progress was likely. A few Enlightenment thinkers argued for more specific goals such as economic equality as well as women’s rights.

- **Locke** – natural rights of man (life liberty property) if government does not protect these rights it can be overthrown.
- **Montesquieu** – separation of powers, checks and balances
- **Rousseau** – general will, social contract in which the people of a society will band together to create a government
- **Voltaire** – freedom of speech, freedom of religion
- **Beccaria** – trial by jury, no cruel and unusual punishment
- **Adam Smith** – Invisible hand, capitalism

Enlightenment encouraged everyone in society to begin open dialogues. Helped propel the revolutionary spirit that would characterize Europe for the next 2 centuries.