AP® FOCUS

The following information provides a “cheat sheet” for you to use when teaching this chapter.

The developments explored in this chapter provide teachers and students with many opportunities to refine compare-and-contrast skills, hone the use of various categories of analysis, and sharpen the ability to analyze political movements with complex elements and long- and short-term causes. The instructional focus should be on these opportunities as opposed to an in-depth examination of the course of the Second World War. The chapter’s topics— fascism, Nazism, World War II, Stalinism—are of great interest to many students, who are likely to have strong feelings and opinions about them, and perhaps some prior knowledge. Students should be encouraged to shift from emotional responses to sophisticated and nuanced analysis. Most will be very engaged in the various historical, intellectual, and moral dilemmas that emerge in the study of these topics.

ANNOTATED CHAPTER OUTLINE

The following annotated chapter outline will help you review the major topics covered in this chapter.

I. Authoritarian States

 A. Conservative Authoritarianism and Radical Totalitarian Dictatorships

 1. The traditional form of antidemocratic government in European history was conservative authoritarianism; the leaders of such governments relied on obedient bureaucracies in their efforts to control society.

 2. These older authoritarian governments had neither the ability nor the desire to control many aspects of their subjects’ lives; as long as people did not try to change the system, they typically were allowed considerable personal independence.

 3. After the First World War, new kinds of radical dictatorship that went much further than conservative authoritarianism emerged in the Soviet Union, Germany, and Italy.

 4. Communist and Fascist parties also became well established in all major European nations.

 5. Some scholars use the term totalitarianism to describe these radical dictatorships, which made unprecedented “total claims” on the beliefs and behavior of their citizens and used violent political repression and intense propaganda to gain complete power.

 6. In addition, the state tried to dominate the economic, social, intellectual, and cultural aspects of people’s lives.

 7. Totalitarianism owed much to the experience of total war in 1914–1918, when state governments limited individual liberties and intervened in the economy in order to achieve the supreme objective of victory.

 8. Communist and Fascist dictatorships built one-party political systems and rejected parliamentary government and liberal values, believing that liberal individualism undermined equality and unity.

 9. A charismatic leader typically dominated the totalitarian state—Stalin in the Soviet Union, Mussolini in Italy, Hitler in Germany—and used force and terror to intimidate and destroy political opponents, while pursuing policies of expansion to exploit other lands.

 10. They censored the mass media, instituted propaganda campaigns to advance their goals, and engaged in massive projects of state-controlled social engineering dedicated to replacing individualism with a unified “people” capable of exercising the collective will.

 B. Communism and Fascism

 1. Communism and fascism clearly shared a desire to revolutionize state and society, yet some scholars, arguing that the differences between the two systems are more important than the similarities, have moved beyond the totalitarian model.

 2. Following Marx, Soviet Communists strove to create an international brotherhood of workers in which economic exploitation would disappear and society would be based on radical social equality.

 3. In pursuit of this social leveling, the Stalinist state used brute force to destroy the upper and middle classes, nationalize private property, push rapid industrialization, and collectivize agriculture.

 4. For leaders such as Mussolini and Hitler who embraced fascism, the nation was the highest embodiment of the people, and the powerful leader was supposedly the materialization of the people’s collective will.

 5. Fascist governments intervened in the economy, but unlike Communist regimes, they did not try to level out class differences or nationalize private property.

 6. In the ideal Fascist state, all social classes would work together to build a harmonious national community.

 7. Communists and Fascists also differed over the question of race: Communists sought to build a new world around the destruction of class differences, while Fascists typically endeavored to build a new national community grounded in racial homogeneity.

 8. Adopting the doctrine of eugenics, a pseudoscience based on the idea that the selective breeding of human beings could improve the general characteristics of a national population, the Nazis believed that the German nation had to be “purified” of people they deemed “unfit.”

 9. Eugenics was popular throughout the Western world in the 1920s and 1930s, but Fascists, especially the Nazis, pushed these ideas to the extreme.

 10. Such ideas ultimately led to the Holocaust, the attempt to purge Germany and Europe of all Jews and other undesirable groups by mass killing during World War II.

 11. Though the Soviets sometimes persecuted specific ethnic groups, they justified these attacks using ideologies of class rather than race.

 12. Perhaps because they both championed the revolutionary overthrow of existing society, Communists and Fascists were sworn and deadly enemies.

 13. Neither Hitler nor Stalin ever achieved the total control that each sought, nor did they rule alone; they had the help of large state bureaucracies and the cooperation of large numbers of ordinary people.

 14. Questions about the ways in which their dictatorial regimes generated popular consensus lead toward what Primo Levi called the “gray zone” of moral compromise which defined everyday life in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.

II. Stalin’s Soviet Union

 A. From Lenin to Stalin

 1. By spring 1921 Lenin and the Bolsheviks had won the Russian civil war, but they ruled a shattered and devastated land.

 2. In the face of economic disintegration, riots by peasants and workers, and open rebellion, Lenin changed course and replaced War Communism with the New Economic Policy (NEP), which re-established limited economic freedom in an attempt to rebuild agriculture and industry.

 3. The NEP was a political and economic success, a necessary but temporary compromise with the Soviet Union’s overwhelming peasant majority that allowed peasant producers to sell their surpluses in free markets.

 4. The NEP brought rapid economic recovery, and by 1926 industrial output surpassed, and agricultural output almost equaled, prewar levels.

 5. In 1924, as the economy recovered and the government partially relaxed its censorship and repression, Lenin died and an intense struggle for power began in the inner circles of the Communist Party.

 6. The principal contenders to replace Lenin were Joseph Stalin, a good organizer but a poor speaker and writer, and Leon Trotsky, a great and inspiring leader who had planned the 1917 Bolshevik takeover and then created the Red Army.

 7. Even though Trotsky appeared to have all the advantages, Stalin triumphed because he was more effective at using his position as general secretary of the party’s Central Committee to win friends and allies with jobs and promises.

 8. Stalin also won because he was better able to relate Marxist teaching to Soviet realities in the 1920s, developing a theory of “socialism in one country” that was more appealing to the majority of party members than Trotsky’s doctrine of “permanent revolution.”

 9. Stalin’s willingness to break with the NEP and “build socialism” at home appealed to young party militants, who detested the capitalist-appearing NEP.

 10. The Communists had inherited the vast multiethnic territories of the former Russian empire, and Lenin had initially argued that these ethnic groups should have the right to self-determination.

 11. Reflecting this concept, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) was organized in 1922 as a federation of four Soviet republics.

 12. In contrast to Lenin, Stalin argued for more centralized Russian control of these ethnic regions and granted the non-Russian republics some cultural independence but no real political autonomy, thus establishing a far-flung Communist empire.

 13. Stalin achieved supreme power between 1922 and 1927 when he crushed all of his rivals, including Trotsky, and all who might challenge his ascendancy.

 14. His final triumph came in December 1927, when the party congress condemned all “deviation from the general party line”; Stalin and his followers were then ready to launch the revolution from above, radically changing the lives of millions of ordinary Russians.

 B. The Five-Year Plans

 1. The party congress of 1927 ratified Stalin’s consolidation of power, marking the end of the NEP and beginning of the era of socialist five-year plans.

 2. The first five-year plan had staggering economic objectives: in just five years, total industrial output was to increase by 250 percent, agricultural production was slated to increase by 150 percent, and one-fifth of the peasants were to give up their private plots and join collective farms.

 3. A deep commitment to socialism and the tenuousness of the economic recovery were primary reasons for Stalin’s “second revolution.”

 4. Stalin also pressed for rapid economic development in the belief that it would allow the U.S.S.R. to catch up with the West and, thus, overcome traditional Russian “backwardness.”

 5. In 1929 Stalin ordered the collectivization of agriculture—the forced consolidation of individual peasant farms into large, state-controlled enterprises, partly to keep peasants from embracing conservative capitalism and posing a threat to the regime and partly to generate the enormous sums needed for all-out industrialization.

 6. The increasingly repressive measures instituted by the state focused on the kulaks, the class of well-off peasants who had benefited the most from the NEP and who Stalin claimed were a great enemy of progress.

 7. Forced collectivization led to disaster, as large numbers of peasants slaughtered their animals and burned their crops rather than turn them over to state commissars.

 8. The output of grain barely increased over the first five-year plan, and collectivized agriculture was unable to make any substantial financial contribution to Soviet industrial development.

 9. Collectivization in the Ukraine was more rapid and violent and snowballed into an assault on Ukrainians in general, who had sought independence after the First World War, resulting in a man-made famine in 1932 and 1933 that claimed between 3 and 3.5 million lives.

 10. Collectivization was a cruel but real victory for Stalinist ideologues; though millions died, by the end of 1938,
93 percent of peasant households had been herded onto collective farms, effectively neutralizing them as a political threat.

 11. Peasants’ resistance did compel the state to grant peasants the right to cultivate tiny family plots, which provided them with much of their food; in 1938 those plots produced 22 percent of all Soviet agricultural produce on only 4 percent of all cultivated land.

 12. Rapid industrialization mandated by the five-year plans was much more successful—despite bottlenecks and shortages of basic goods, Soviet industry produced about four times as much in 1937 as it had in 1928.

 13. Because the Soviet state needed heavy machinery to build the future, an industrial labor force was created almost overnight, as peasant men and women began working in the huge steel mills built across the country.

 14. Rapid industrial growth produced urban development: more than 25 million people, mostly peasants, migrated to cities during the 1930s.

 15. Workers often lived in deplorable conditions in hastily built industrial cities, yet they also experienced some benefits of upward mobility.

 16. The great industrialization drive of 1928 to 1937 was an awe-inspiring achievement, purchased at enormous sacrifice on the part of ordinary Soviet citizens.

 C. Life and Culture in Soviet Society

 1. Daily life was difficult in Stalin’s Soviet Union, with the lack of housing a particularly serious problem.

 2. Because consumption was reduced to pay for investment, there was little improvement in the average standard of living; collectivized peasants experienced greater hardships.

 3. Life was hard but by no means hopeless in an atmosphere of idealism and ideology that had real appeal for many Communists and ordinary citizens, who saw themselves heroically building the world’s first socialist society.

 4. On a more practical level, Soviet workers received important social benefits, such as old-age pensions, free medical services, free education, and day-care centers for children.

 5. Rapid industrialization also offered possibilities for personal advancement; to acquire the necessary skilled workers, engineers, and managers, the Stalinist state broke with the egalitarian policies of the 1920s and provided high salaries and special privileges to its growing technical and managerial elite.

 6. Following the Russian Revolution of 1917, women gained complete equality of rights; divorce and abortion were made easily available in the 1920s, and women were urged to work outside the home.

 7. After Stalin came to power, the government revoked many laws supporting women’s emancipation in order to strengthen the traditional family and build up the state’s population.

 8. The Soviet government also opened higher education to women, with the result that medicine practically became a woman’s profession.

 9. Yet, Soviet society demanded great sacrifices from women, including the necessity of working outside the home, low wages, and limits on their advancement; an increase in the number of broken families also created physical and emotional strains for women.

 10. Peasant women continued to work on farms, and millions of women labored in factories and in heavy construction.

 11. Culture was thoroughly politicized for propaganda and indoctrination purposes, as Stalin ordered intellectuals to become “engineers of human minds” and instructed them to exalt the lives of ordinary workers and glorify Russian nationalism.

 12. Stalin’s presence was everywhere, and even though the government persecuted those who practiced religion, Stalin became the high priest of Marxism-Leninism.

 D. Stalinist Terror and the Great Purges

 1. In the mid-1930s, the great offensive to build socialism and a new society culminated in ruthless police terror and a massive purging of the Communist Party.

 2. When Stalin’s number-two man, Sergei Kirov, was mysteriously killed in 1934, Stalin blamed it on “Fascist agents” within the Communist Party and used the incident to purge the party of supposed traitors and solidify his own control.

 3. The resulting state-sponsored repression culminated in the “great purge” of 1936–1938, a series of public show trials in which false evidence, often gathered using torture, was used to incriminate party administrators and Red Army leaders.

 4. During this period, at least 6 million people, including faithful party members, union officials, managers, intellectuals, army officers, and countless ordinary citizens, were accused of counter-revolutionary activities and arrested; probably 1 to 2 million of them were executed or never returned from prisons and forced-labor camps.

 5. Stalin’s mass purges remain baffling, though some scholars have argued that the terror was a defining characteristic of the totalitarian state, which must always fight real or imaginary enemies.

 6. A long-standing interpretation, confirmed by recent archival research, concludes that Stalin and his allies, fearful of active resistance, used the harshest measures against their real or imagined enemies and that many in the population, bombarded with ideology and political slogans, responded energetically to Stalin’s directives.

 7. The purges seriously weakened the Soviet Union in economic, intellectual, and military terms, although Stalin and the party leadership enlisted 1.5 million new Party members to replace the purge victims.

 8. Despite its terrible human costs, the great purges brought substantial practical rewards to this new generation of committed Communists.

III. Mussolini and Fascism in Italy

 A. The Seizure of Power

 1. Benito Mussolini (1883–1945) and his supporters were the first to call themselves “Fascists”—revolutionaries determined to create a new totalitarian state based on extreme nationalism and militarism.

 2. In the early twentieth century, Italy was a constitutional monarchy with civil rights and a parliament elected by universal male suffrage and appeared to be moving toward democracy.

 3. However, the papacy, many devout Catholics, conservatives, and landowners remained strongly opposed to liberal institutions, and relations between church and state were often tense.

 4. Much of the Italian population was poor, and class differences were extreme, leading to the development of a powerful revolutionary socialist movement.

 5. The war worsened the political situation; workers and peasants who had been promised social and land reform to win their support for the war felt cheated when the government did not deliver after the war ended.

 6. Soaring postwar unemployment and inflation created mass hardship and energized Italy’s revolutionary socialist movement.

 7. Radical workers and peasants began occupying factories and seizing land in 1920, actions that mobilized the property-owning classes.

 8. The pope had lifted his ban on Catholic participation in Italian politics, and a strong Catholic party quickly emerged.

 9. Into these crosscurrents of unrest and fear stepped Mussolini, who began his political career before World War I as a Socialist Party leader, but after being wounded, he returned home and began organizing bitter war veterans like himself into a band of Fascists (from the Italian word for “a union of forces”).

 10. At first Mussolini’s program was a radical combination of nationalist and socialist demands, but when Mussolini saw that his verbal assaults on rival Socialists won him support from conservatives and the middle classes, he shifted gears in 1920 and became a sworn enemy of socialism.

 11. Mussolini and his private militia of Black Shirts grew increasingly violent, destroying Socialist Party newspapers, local headquarters, and union halls, while pushing Socialists out of city governments in northern Italy.

 12. Fascism soon became a mass movement, and in the midst of chaos largely created by the Black Shirts in 1922, Mussolini stepped forward as the savior of order and property to demand the resignation of the existing government.

 13. In October 1922 a band of armed Fascists marched on Rome to threaten the king, Victor Emmanuel III (r. 1900–1946), and force him to appoint Mussolini prime minister of Italy.

 14. Thus, after widespread violence and a threat of armed uprising, Mussolini seized power using the legal framework of the Italian constitution.

 B. The Regime in Action

 1. Mussolini became prime minister in 1922, and at first he moved cautiously to establish control, promising a “return to order” and consolidating his support among Italian elites.

 2. Then a change in electoral law allowed the Fascist Party and its allies to win an overwhelming majority in April 1924, and Mussolini charged forward, declaring his desire to “make the nation Fascist” and imposing a series of repressive measures.

 3. Freedom of the press was abolished, elections were fixed, and the government ruled by decree as Mussolini arrested his political opponents, disbanded all independent labor unions, and put dedicated Fascists in control of Italy’s schools.

 4. Mussolini trumpeted his famous slogan—“Everything in the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state”—and by the end of 1926, Italy was a one-party dictatorship headed by Mussolini.

 5. Mussolini’s Fascist Party drew support from broad sectors of the population, in large part because he compromised with the traditional elites that controlled the army, left big business to regulate itself, and chose not to enact land reform.

 6. In the Lateran Agreement of 1929, Mussolini recognized the Vatican as an independent state in return for the pope’s support of Mussolini’s government.

 7. Because he was forced to compromise with these conservative elites, Mussolini never established complete totalitarian control.

 8. The Fascist state engineered popular consent by staging massive rallies and sporting events, creating Fascist youth and women’s movements, and providing new welfare benefits.

 9. Mussolini’s government vehemently opposed liberal feminism and promoted traditional gender roles.

 10. Mussolini matched his aggressive rhetoric with military action: Italian armies invaded the African nation of Ethiopia in 1935, defeating the poorly armed Ethiopian army in a brutal colonial war that shocked international opinion and resulted in close ties between Italy and Nazi Germany.

 11. Deeply influenced by Hitler’s example, Mussolini’s government passed a series of anti-Jewish racial laws in 1938, but extreme anti-Semitic persecution did not occur in Italy until late in World War II, when Italy was under Nazi control.

IV. Hitler and Nazism in Germany

 A. The Roots of National Socialism

 1. National Socialism grew out of many complex developments, of which the most influential were extreme nationalism and racism—two ideas that captured the mind of Adolf Hitler (1889–1945), who dominated Nazism until the end of World War II.

 2. In his youth, Hitler moved to Vienna, where he was exposed to extreme Austro-German nationalists who believed Germans to be a superior people and the natural rulers of central Europe and who advocated the union of Austria and Germany and expulsion of “inferior” peoples.

 3. In Vienna Hitler developed an unshakable belief in the crudest distortions of Social Darwinism, the superiority of Germanic races, and inevitability of racial conflict, while his exposure to poor east European Jews contributed to his anti-Semitism prejudice.

 4. Rooted in centuries of Christian anti-Semitism, racist anti-Semitism became wildly popular on the far right wing of European politics and was given pseudoscientific legitimacy by nineteenth-century developments in biology and eugenics.

 5. Hitler served bravely as a dispatch carrier in World War I, but his world was shattered when Germany was defeated in 1918; convinced that Jews and Marxists had “stabbed Germany in the back,” he vowed to fight on.

 6. In late 1919 Hitler joined the German Workers’ Party, a tiny extremist group that denounced Jews, Marxists, and democrats and promised a uniquely German National Socialism that would abolish the injustices of capitalism and create a mighty “people’s community.”

 7. By 1921 Hitler had gained control of this small but growing party—renamed the Nazis—and became a master of mass propaganda and political showmanship.

 8. In late 1923, when the Weimar Republic seemed on the verge of collapse, Hitler organized an armed uprising in Munich—the so-called Beer Hall Putsch, a poorly planned coup that ended with Hitler’s arrest.

 B. Hitler’s Road to Power

 1. At his trial, Hitler gained enormous publicity by violently denouncing the Weimar Republic.

 2. Using his brief prison term to dictate his book *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), Hitler laid out his basic ideas on “racial purification” and the German race’s need for *Lebensraum* (“living space”).

 3. Hitler also championed the idea of the leader-dictator, or *Führer,* and portrayed a sweeping vision of war and conquest in which the German master race would colonize and ultimately replace the “subhuman” Slavs and Jews living in east and central Europe.

 4. In the years of relative prosperity and stability between 1924 and 1929, Hitler built up the Nazi Party by de-emphasizing anticapitalist sentiments and vowing to fight communism.

 5. The Nazis were a small splinter group in 1928, when they received only 2.6 percent of the vote in the general elections and only twelve seats in the Reichstag.

 6. The Great Depression of 1929 brought the ascent of National Socialism, as Hitler’s promises of economic and political salvation and calls for “national rebirth” attracted a broad spectrum of voters, including middle- and lower-class groups.

 7. Seized by panic as bankruptcies increased, unemployment soared, and the Communists made dramatic election gains, voters deserted the conservative and moderate parties for the Nazis, which became the largest party in the Reichstag after the election of 1932.

 8. Chancellor Heinrich Brüning’s conservative policies had intensified Germany’s economic collapse after 1930 and convinced many voters that the country’s republican leaders were stupid and corrupt, adding to Hitler’s appeal.

 9. The two left-wing parties, the Communists and the Social Democrats, who together outnumbered the Nazis in the Reichstag, failed to resolve their differences and mount an effective opposition to the Nazi takeover.

 10. Finally, Hitler excelled in the dirty backroom politics of the decaying Weimar Republic and cleverly gained the support of conservative politicians who thought that they could use Hitler to resolve the political crisis and clamp down on leftists.

 11. They accepted Hitler’s demand to be appointed chancellor in a coalition government, thinking that he could be used and controlled, and so Hitler was appointed chancellor by President Hindenburg on January 30, 1933.

 C. State and Society in Nazi Germany

 1. Hitler moved rapidly and skillfully to consolidate power and to establish an unshakable dictatorship that would pursue the Nazi program of race and space.

 2. When the Reichstag building was partly destroyed by fire during the election campaign of 1933, Hitler blamed the Communists and convinced Hindenburg to sign emergency acts that abolished freedom of speech and assembly and most personal liberties.

 3. When the Nazis won only 44 percent of the vote in the elections, Hitler outlawed the Communist Party, arrested its parliamentary representatives, and pushed through the so-called Enabling Act on March 23, 1933, which gave him dictatorial power for four years.

 4. The Nazis’ deceitful stress on legality, coupled with their divide-and-conquer techniques, disarmed the opposition until it was too late for effective resistance.

 5. Germany became a one-party Nazi state, as the new regime took over the government bureaucracy, installing Nazis in top positions, while at the same time creating a series of overlapping Nazi Party organizations responsible solely to Hitler.

 6. The resulting system of dual government was often disorganized and lacked the all-encompassing unity that its propagandists claimed, but Hitler used this fractured system to maintain dictatorial control.

 7. Once the Nazis were firmly in command, Hitler and the party began constructing a National Socialist society defined by national unity and racial exclusion.

 8. The Nazis’ first step was to eliminate political enemies; they arrested Communists, Social Democrats, and union leaders and placed them in concentration camps, while also outlawing strikes and abolishing independent labor unions.

 9. Hitler then purged the Nazi Party of its more extremist elements, including the leadership of the storm troopers (the SA), some of whom talked of a “second revolution.”

 10. On June 30, 1934, Hitler’s elite personal guard—the SS—arrested and executed about 100 SA leaders and political enemies; under the ruthless Heinrich Himmler (1900–1945), the SS took over the political police and the concentration camp system.

 11. The Nazis instituted a policy called “coordination” that forced existing institutions to conform to National Socialist ideology; life became violently anti-intellectual under a brutal dictatorship characterized by frightening dynamism and obedience to Hitler.

 12. Acting on their vision of racial purity, the Nazis began persecuting those they deemed incapable of contributing to the “master race,” targeting a number of supposedly undesirable groups that included Jews, Slavic peoples, Sinti and Roma (Gypsies,) homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and people considered handicapped.

 13. In the Nazi “racial state,” barbarism and race hatred were institutionalized with the force of science and law, as new university academies wrote studies that presented prejudice in the guise of enlightened science as a means of creating a strong national race.

 14. Nazi authorities denied outsiders welfare benefits and put them out of work; forced people with disabilities into special hospitals where they could be segregated from “healthy” Germans; and imprisoned homosexuals and “asocials” in concentration camps for “re-education.”

 15. A series of sterilization laws led to the forced sterilization of some four hundred thousand “undesirable” citizens.

 16. By the end of 1934, most Jewish professionals had been banned from their occupations, and in 1935 the infamous Nuremberg Laws classified as Jewish anyone having three or more Jewish grandparents, outlawed marriage and sexual relations between Jews and those defined as Germans, and deprived Jews of all rights of citizenship.

 17. For the vast majority of German citizens, the creation of a demonized outsider group may well have contributed to feelings of national unity and support for the Hitler regime.

 18. In late 1938 the assault on the Jews accelerated with a well-organized wave of violence, known as Kristallnacht (the Night of Broken Glass), in which Nazi gangs smashed windows, looted Jewish-owned shops, destroyed homes and synagogues, and killed dozens of Jews.

 19. As some 300,000 of Germany’s 500,000 Jews emigrated in order to escape persecution, some Germans privately opposed these outrages, but most went along or looked the other way.

 D. Popular Support for National Socialism

 1. The Nazi Party used a combination of coercion and reward to enlist popular support for the racial state.

 2. German citizens who were not Jews, Communists, or members of other targeted groups experienced new opportunities and clearly benefited from Nazi ideologies of race and space.

 3. Hitler had promised the masses economic recovery, and he delivered by launching a large public works program to help pull Germany out of the depression.

 4. By 1938 unemployment had fallen to 2 percent, the standard of living for the average worker had increased moderately, and business profits had risen sharply.

 5. Ordinary Germans benefited from the persecution of Jews: as Jews were forced out of their jobs, homes, and businesses, Germans stepped in to take their places in a process known as Aryanization.

 6. A wave of social and cultural innovation intended to construct the *Volksgemeinschaft*—a people’s community for racially pure Germans— featured mass organizations such as the Hitler Youth that spread Nazi ideology and enlisted volunteers for the Nazi cause.

 7. Mass rallies brought together thousands of participants, and reports on such events in the Nazi-controlled press brought the message home to millions more.

 8. Linking individuals’ desire for consumer goods to the collective ideology of the people’s community, the government touted an array of inexpensive and enticing people’s products such as the Volkswagen (the people’s car).

 9. Promising to “liberate women from women’s liberation,” Nazi ideologues championed a return to traditional family values by outlawing abortion, discouraging women from holding jobs or obtaining higher education, and glorifying domesticity and motherhood.

 10. Yet, the millions of women enrolled in Nazi mass organizations experienced a new sense of freedom and community.

 11. Few historians today believe that Hitler and the Nazis brought about a real social revolution; yet, Hitler’s rule promoted economic growth, and Nazi propagandists continually trumpeted the supposed accomplishments of the regime.

 12. The vision of a people’s community, national pride in recovery, and feelings of belonging created by racial exclusion led many Germans to support the regime, and Hitler remained popular with broad sections of the population well into the war.

 13. Not all Germans supported Hitler, however, and a number of German groups actively resisted him after 1933.

 14. Opponents’ lack of success was due to a failure to unify their efforts and to the regime’s relentless repression, arrest, and execution of political enemies.

 E. Aggression and Appeasement

 1. At first, Hitler carefully camouflaged the Nazis’ expansionist goals.

 2. Germany’s withdrawal from the League of Nations in October 1933, however, indicated that Gustav Stresemann’s policy of peaceful cooperation was dead.

 3. Then in March 1935, Hitler proclaimed that Germany would no longer abide by the disarmament clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, and he began to build up the German army.

 4. France and Great Britain protested strongly and warned against future aggressive actions, but any hope for a united front against Hitler quickly collapsed.

 5. Britain adopted a policy of appeasement, granting Hitler everything he could reasonably want (and more) in order to avoid war, a tack that was motivated in large part by the pacifism of a British population still horrified by the memory of the First World War.

 6. Many powerful conservatives in Britain also underestimated Hitler, believing that Soviet communism was the real danger and that Hitler could be used to stop it.

 7. In March 1936 Hitler marched his armies into the demilitarized Rhineland, violating the Treaties of Versailles and Locarno; Britain refused to act, and France could do little without British support.

 8. Emboldened, Hitler enlisted powerful allies, establishing the so-called Rome-Berlin Axis with Italy in 1936 and then including Japan in the alliance later that year.

 9. Germany and Italy intervened in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), where their military aid helped General Francisco Franco’s revolutionary Fascist movement defeat the democratically elected republican government.

 10. Moving forward with his plans to seize Austria and Czechoslovakia in his drive for living space in the east, Hitler initiated the Austrian Anschluss (annexation) in March 1938, as German armies moved in unopposed and Nazis took control of the government.

 11. When Hitler demanded that territories inhabited mostly by ethnic Germans in western Czechoslovakia—the Sudetenland—be ceded to Nazi Germany, appeasement triumphed again.

 12. In negotiations held in September 1938, British Prime Minister Arthur Neville Chamberlain and the French agreed with Hitler that Germany should immediately take over the Sudetenland.

 13. Sold out by the Western Powers, Czechoslovakia gave in, but Chamberlain’s “peace for our time” was short-lived.

 14. In March 1939 Hitler’s armies invaded and occupied the rest of Czechoslovakia—home to ethnic Czechs and Slovaks—electrifying Western public opinion and rousing a suddenly militant Chamberlain, who declared that Britain and France would fight if Hitler attacked Poland.

 15. Hitler did not take these warnings seriously and in August 1939 signed a nonaggression pact with Stalin that not only pledged neutrality if the other became involved in war but also divided Poland, the Baltic nations, Finland, and a part of Romania into German and Soviet spheres of influence.

 16. On September 1, 1939, German armies and warplanes smashed into Poland from three sides; two days later, Britain and France declared war on Germany.

V. The Second World War

 A. German Victories in Europe

 1. Using planes, tanks, and trucks in the first example of a blitzkrieg, or “lightning war,” Hitler’s armies crushed Poland in four weeks.

 2. The Soviet Union quickly took the eastern half of Poland and the independent Baltic states of Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia.

 3. In spring 1940 the Nazi lightning war struck again, as German motorized columns occupied Denmark, Norway, and Holland before breaking into France through southern Belgium and splitting the Franco-British forces there.

 4. The British withdrew their troops, and soon after, France was taken by the Nazis.

 5. By July 1940 Hitler ruled practically all of continental Europe: Italy was an ally; Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria joined the Axis powers; and the Soviet Union, Spain, and Sweden were friendly neutrals.

 6. Germany’s assault on Britain, whose leader was Winston Churchill (1874–1965), began with attempts to gain control of the air; in the Battle of Britain, which began in July 1940, up to a thousand German planes a day attacked British airfields and key factories.

 7. Losses were heavy on both sides, but British aircraft factories increased production and the heavily bombed people of London defiantly dug in; by October Britain was beating Germany three to one in the air war, and the Battle of Britain was over.

 8. In June 1941 Hitler allowed his lifetime obsession of creating a vast eastern European empire ruled by the master race to dictate policy, as German armies attacked the Soviet Union along a vast front, breaking the nonaggression pact with Stalin.

 9. By October most of Ukraine had been conquered, Leningrad was practically surrounded, and Moscow was besieged, but the Soviet Union did not collapse, and the invaders were stopped by a severe winter.

 B. Europe Under Nazi Occupation

 1. Hitler’s New Order was based firmly on the Nazis’ guiding principle of racial imperialism, and occupied peoples were subject to harsh policies dedicated to ethnic cleansing and the plunder of resources for the Nazi war effort.

 2. Within the New Order, the so-called Nordic peoples—who the Germans believed were related to the “Aryan master race”—received preferential treatment, but they were subject to Nazi-established puppet governments.

 3. Germany divided France into two parts: the German army occupied the north, and the southeast remained nominally independent under the aging Marshal Henri-Philippe Pétain, who formed the Vichy regime, which adopted many aspects of National Socialist ideology.

 4. To enrich Germany and support the war effort, occupied nations were forced to pay for the costs of the war and for the occupation itself.

 5. Nazi administrators stole goods and money from local Jews and set currency exchanges at favorable rates, while soldiers were encouraged to steal and to purchase goods at cheap exchange rates and send them home; thus, a flood of plunder reached Germany and helped to maintain high living standards and preserve morale.

 6. Nazi victory also placed national Jewish populations across Europe under German control, thus easing the mass murder of Europe’s Jews.

 7. From the start, the Nazi leadership had cast the war in the east as a war of annihilation, and now they set out to build a vast colonial empire where Jews would be exterminated; Poles, Ukrainians, and Russians would be enslaved and forced to die out; and ethnic German peasants would resettle the abandoned lands.

 8. With the help of military commanders, German policemen, and bureaucrats in the occupied territories, Nazi administrators and elite SS corps implemented a program of destruction and annihilation to create this “mass settlement space.”

 9. Across the east, the Nazi armies destroyed cities and factories, stole crops and farm animals, and subjected conquered peoples to forced starvation and mass murder.

 10. In response to such atrocities, small but determined underground resistance groups fought back, presenting a real challenge to the Nazi New Order by committing sabotage and passing intelligence about German operations to the Allies.

 11. The Nazi army and the SS tortured captured resistance members and executed hostages in reprisal for attacks, but Nazi occupiers were never able to eradicate popular resistance to their rule.

 C. The Holocaust

 1. The ultimate abomination of Nazi racism was the condemnation of all European Jews and of other peoples considered racially inferior to extreme racial persecution and then annihilation in the Holocaust.

 2. Between 1938 and 1940, as Germany began the war, some 70,000 people with physical or mental disabilities, whom the Nazis deemed as “unworthy lives” who might “pollute” the German race, were murdered in cold blood.

 3. The German victory over Poland in 1939 brought under Nazi control some 3 million Jews, who were forced to move into urban districts termed “ghettos,” where they lived in highly crowded and unsanitary conditions without real work or adequate sustenance; over 500,000 people died as a result of these conditions.

 4. In 1941 military death squads known as Special Task Forces (*Einsatzgruppen*) followed the advancing German armies into eastern Europe, systematically moving from town to town shooting Jews and other target populations.

 5. The victims of these mobile killing units—some 2 million civilians—were often forced to dig their own graves in local woods or fields before they were shot down.

 6. In late 1941 Hitler and the Nazi leadership ordered the SS to implement the “final solution of the Jewish question,” which meant the mass murder of all Jews in Europe.

 7. The Germans established an extensive network of concentration camps, industrial complexes, and railroad transport lines to imprison and murder Jews and other so-called undesirables and to exploit their labor before they died.

 8. The surviving residents of the ghettos were loaded onto trains and taken to camps such as Auschwitz-Birkenau, where over 1 million people—the vast majority of them Jews—were murdered in gas chambers; Jews in Germany and occupied western and central Europe followed.

 9. By 1945 the Nazis had killed about 6 million Jews and some 5 million other Europeans, including millions of ethnic Poles and Russian POWs; the murderous attack on European Jews was the ultimate monstrosity of Nazi racism and racial imperialism.

 10. Some historians lay the guilt for this terrible crime on Hitler and Nazi leaders, arguing that ordinary Germans had little knowledge of the camps or were forced to participate; others conclude that far more Germans knew about and were at best indifferent to the fate of “racial inferiors.”

 11. Some historians believe that widely shared anti-Semitism led “ordinary Germans” to become Hitler’s “willing executioners,” while others argue that heightened peer pressure, the desire to advance in the ranks, and brutalizing wartime violence turned average Germans into reluctant killers.

 12. The conditioning of Nazi racist propaganda clearly played a role, preparing numerous Germans to join the SS ideologues and perpetrate ever-greater crimes, from mistreatment to arrest to mass murder.

 D. Japanese Empire and the War in the Pacific

 1. In response to political divisions and economic crisis, a Fascist government—one that was highly nationalistic and militaristic and deeply committed to imperial expansion—had taken control of Japan in the 1930s.

 2. In speeches, schools, and newspapers, Japanese ultranationalists eagerly voiced the extremist anti-Western views that had risen in the 1920s and 1930s, glorifying the warrior virtues of honor and sacrifice and proclaiming that Japan would liberate East Asia from Western colonialists.

 3. In 1931 Japanese armies invaded and occupied Manchuria, a vast territory bordering northeastern China, and in 1937 Japan brutally invaded China itself.

 4. In 1940 the Japanese entered into a formal alliance with Italy and Germany, and in the summer of 1941 the Japanese occupied southern portions of the French colony of Indochina.

 5. Under the slogan “Asia for Asians,” propagandists maintained that Japanese expansion would liberate Asians from hated Western imperialists.

 6. The goal of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was a sham, however, as Japanese military occupiers exploited local peoples for Japan’s wartime needs and exhibited great cruelty toward civilian populations.

 7. Japanese expansion in the Pacific evoked a sharp response from U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt, and Japan’s leaders came to believe that war with the United States was inevitable.

 8. In a surprise attack on the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands on December 7, 1941, the Japanese sank or crippled every American battleship.

 9. Pearl Harbor brought the Americans into the war in a spirit of anger and revenge.

 10. As the Americans mobilized for war, Japanese armies overran more European and American colonies in Southeast Asia, and by May 1942 Japan controlled a vast empire and was threatening Australia.

 11. Yet the Americans pushed back in a series of hard-fought naval battles, and in July 1943 they opened a successful island-hopping campaign with their Australian allies that slowly forced Japan out of its conquered territories.

 12. The war in the Pacific was extremely brutal, with atrocities committed on both sides, and the fighting intensified as the United States moved toward Japan.

 E. The “Hinge of Fate”

 1. While the Nazis and the Japanese built their savage empires, Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union joined together in a military pact that Churchill termed the Grand Alliance, though their pact was a matter of chance more than choice.

 2. In an atmosphere of mutual distrust, Stalin repeatedly urged Britain and the United States to open a second front in France to relieve pressure on Soviet forces, but Churchill and Roosevelt refused until the summer of 1944.

 3. The Grand Alliance did agree on a policy of “Europe first”: only after Hitler was defeated would the Allies mount an all-out attack on Japan.

 4. A mutual commitment to forcing the unconditional surrender of Germany and Japan cemented the Grand Alliance and denied Hitler any hope of dividing his foes, but it also meant that Soviet and Anglo-American forces would almost certainly have to invade and occupy all of Germany and that Japan would fight to the bitter end.

 5. The military resources of the Grand Alliance were awesome: the United States harnessed its vast industrial base, Great Britain became an impregnable floating fortress, and Stalin drew heavily on the Soviet Union’s great military strength and the heroic resolve of the Soviet people.

 6. The combined might of the Allies forced back Nazi armies on all fronts.

 7. In May 1942 British forces halted the Axis penetration of North Africa by decisively defeating combined German and Italian armies at the Battle of El Alamein, which Winston Churchill called the “hinge of fate” that cemented Allied victory.

 8. After driving the Axis power out of North Africa, U.S. and British forces invaded Sicily in the summer of 1943 and then mainland Italy; Mussolini was overthrown by a coup d’état, and the new Italian government publicly accepted unconditional surrender.

 9. Facing stiff German resistance, the Allies battled their way up the Italian peninsula, and though the Germans still held northern Italy, they were clearly on the defensive.

 10. The spring of 1943 brought crucial Allied victories at sea and in the air, as new antisubmarine technologies allowed hundreds of ships to bring much-needed troops and supplies from the United States to Britain.

 11. With almost unchallenged air superiority, the United States and Britain mounted massive bombing raids on German cities to maim industrial production and break civilian morale.

 12. Great Britain and the United States made critical advances in the western theater, but the German forces suffered worse defeats at the hands of the Red Army on the eastern front.

 13. The German campaign of 1942 against the Soviet Union turned disastrous when, at the Battle of Stalingrad in November 1942, the Soviets surrounded and systematically destroyed the entire German Sixth Army.

 14. Hitler, who had refused to allow a retreat, suffered a catastrophic defeat, and for the first time, German public opinion turned decisively against the war.

 F. Allied Victory

 1. The balance of power was now clearly in Allied hands, yet Germany stepped up its efforts, tripling its war production between early 1942 and July 1944 despite heavy Anglo-American bombing.

 2. German resistance against Hitler failed to halt the fighting, and an unsuccessful attempt by army leaders to assassinate Hitler in July 1944 only brought increased repression by the fanatic Nazis who had taken over the government.

 3. Closely disciplined by the regime, frightened by the prospect of unconditional surrender, and terrorized by Nazi propaganda that portrayed the advancing Russian armies as rapacious Slavic beasts, the Germans fought on with suicidal resolve.

 4. On June 6, 1944, American and British forces under General Dwight Eisenhower landed on the beaches of Normandy, France, in history’s greatest naval invasion.

 5. Eisenhower moved forward cautiously on a broad front, and not until March 1945 did American troops cross the Rhine and enter Germany.

 6. By spring of 1945, the Allies had finally pushed the Germans out of the Italian peninsula, and in April 1945 Mussolini was captured by Communist partisans and executed.

 7. By August 1944 the Soviets reached the outskirts of Warsaw, where the Polish underground Home Army had staged the Warsaw Uprising in an attempt to take the city from the Germans on their own and establish independence from the Soviet Union; the Red Army refused to enter the city, however, and the Germans destroyed the Polish insurgents.

 8. Over the next six months, the Soviets moved southward into Romania, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, crossing into Germany in January 1945 and meeting up with American forces on the Elbe River on April 26.

 9. As Soviet forces fought their way into Berlin, Hitler committed suicide, and on May 8 the remaining German commanders capitulated.

 10. In the Pacific, Japanese troops continued to fight with enormous courage and determination in spite of repeated U.S. victories through the summer of 1945.

 11. Because American commanders believed the conquest of Japan might cost a million American casualties and claim 10 to 20 million Japanese lives, U.S. leaders made the decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945.

 12. The mass bombing of cities and civilians, one of the terrible new practices of World War II, ended in a final nightmare, and on August 14, 1945, the Japanese announced their surrender.

 13. The Second World War, which had claimed the lives of more than 50 million soldiers and civilians, was over.

enormously rich through overseas trade, as had Genoa and Milan.

 3. Important advances in shipbuilding enabled those cities’ ships to sail all year long at accelerated speeds and carry ever more merchandise.

 4. Florence, another commercial leader, situated on the Arno River in a favorable location on the main road northward from Rome that made it a commercial hub, had grown wealthy through international trade.

 5. Florentine merchants loaned and invested money, and they acquired control of papal banking toward the end of the thirteenth century.

 6. The profits from loans, investments, and money exchanges that poured back to Florence contributed to the city’s economic vitality and allowed banking families to control the city’s politics and culture.

 7. Despite several crises that hit Florence in the fourteenth century—England’s repudiation of its debts, the loss of life from the Black Death, and labor unrest— the basic Florentine economic structure remained stable.

 8. Wealth allowed many people in Florence and other thriving Italian cities greater material pleasures, a more comfortable life, and the leisure time to appreciate and patronize the arts.

 9. The rich, who commissioned public and private buildings and hired artists to decorate their homes and churches, came to see life more as an opportunity to be enjoyed than as a painful pilgrimage to the City of God.

 B. Communes and Republics of Northern Italy

 1. The northern Italian cities were communes, sworn associations of free men who began to seek political and economic independence from local nobles in the twelfth century.

 2. The merchant guilds that formed the communes built and maintained the city walls, regulated trade, collected taxes, and kept civil order.

 3. Local nobles frequently moved into the cities, marrying the daughters of rich commercial families and starting their own businesses, often with money gained through their wives’ dowries.

 4. This merger of the northern Italian nobility and the commercial elite created a powerful oligarchy, yet rivalries among these families often made Italian communes politically unstable.

 5. The common people (the *popolo*) were disenfranchised and heavily taxed, and they bitterly resented their exclusion from power.

 6. Throughout most of the thirteenth century, in city after city, the popolo used armed force to take over the city governments and establish republican governments, in which political power theoretically resides in the people and is exercised by their chosen representatives.

 7. Because the popolo could not establish civil order within their cities, merchant oligarchies reasserted their power and sometimes brought in powerful military leaders called *condottieri* to establish order.

 8. Many cities in Italy became *signori*, in which one man ruled and handed down the right to rule to his son.

 9. These oligarchic regimes maintained a façade of communal government, but the judicial, executive, and legislative functions of government were restricted to a small class of wealthy merchants.

 10. The signori and merchant oligarchs of many cities transformed their households into courts and displayed their wealth and power by becoming patrons of the arts; they hired architects to build private palaces and public city halls, artists to fill them with paintings and sculptures, and musicians and composers to fill them with music.

 11. Ceremonies connected with visiting rulers, family births, baptisms, marriages, and funerals offered occasions for magnificent pageantry and elaborate ritual.

 12. Rulers of nation-states later copied and adapted all these aspects of Italian courts.

 C. City-States and the Balance of Power

 1. Renaissance Italians had a passionate attachment to their individual city-states, which hindered the development of a single unified state.

 2. In the fifteenth century, Venice, Milan, Florence, the Papal States, and the kingdom of Naples dominated the Italian peninsula, controlling the smaller city-states.

 3. Venice, which ranked as an international power, was a republic in name, but an oligarchy of merchant-aristocrats actually ran the city.

 4. Milan was also called a republic, but the condottieri-turned-signori of the Sforza family ruled harshly and dominated Milan and several smaller cities in the north from 1447 to 1535.

 5. In Florence the form of government was republican, but in reality the great Medici banking family held power almost continually for three centuries beginning in 1434.

 6. Most Renaissance popes were members of powerful Italian families, selected for their political skills, not their piety.

 7. South of the Papal States, the kingdom of Naples was under the control of the king of Aragon.

 8. Whenever one Italian state appeared to gain a predominant position within the peninsula, other states combined against it to establish a balance of power.

 9. One of the great political achievements of the Italian Renaissance was the establishment of permanent embassies with resident ambassadors in capitals where political relations and commercial ties needed continual monitoring.

 10. When Florence and Naples entered into an agreement to acquire Milanese territories at the end of the fifteenth century, Milan called on France for support, and the French king Charles VIII (r. 1483–1498) invaded Italy in 1494.

 11. Florentines interpreted the French invasion as the fulfillment of a prophecy by the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498), who had predicted that God would punish Italy for its moral vice and corrupt leadership, and they expelled the Medici dynasty.

 12. Savonarola became the leader of a new Florentine republic; he reorganized the government, convincing it to pass laws against same-sex relations, adultery, and drunkenness, and staged “bonfires of the vanities.”

 13. For a time Savonarola was wildly popular, but eventually people tired of his moral denunciations; after he was excommunicated by the pope, tortured, and burned at the stake, the Medici returned to rule Florence.

 14. The French invasion inaugurated a new period in European power politics in which Italy became the focus of international ambitions and the battleground of foreign armies, particularly those of France and the Holy Roman Empire in a series of conflicts called the Habsburg-Valois wars.

 15. The Italian cities suffered from continual warfare, especially in the sack of Rome in 1527 by emperor Charles V.

 16. The failure of the city-states to consolidate, or at least to establish a common foreign policy, led to centuries of subjection by outside invaders.

II. Intellectual Change

 A. Humanism

 1. Art historian Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574) was the first to use the word “Renaissance” in print, but he was not the first to feel that something was being reborn.

 2. The Florentine poet and scholar Francesco Petrarch (1304–1374) traveled Europe searching for classical Latin manuscripts because he felt the writers of ancient Rome had reached a level of perfection that had not since been duplicated; Petrarch believed that writers of his day should follow these ancient models and ignore the period between his own time and that of Rome, which he termed the “dark ages.”

 3. Petrarch believed that the recovery of classical texts would bring about a new golden age of intellectual achievement, an idea that many others came to share.

 4. He proposed a new kind of education in which young men would study the works of ancient Roman authors, using them as models of how to write clearly, argue effectively, and speak persuasively.

 5. The study of Latin classics became known as the *studia humanitates*, usually translated as the “liberal arts”; those who advocated it were known as humanists and their program as humanism.

 6. Humanism, the main intellectual component of the Renaissance, contained an implicit philosophy: human nature and achievements were worthy of contemplation.

 7. Humanists admired the works of the Roman author and statesman Cicero (106–43 b.c.e.), including his use of language, literary style, and political ideas.

 8. Many humanists saw Julius Caesar’s transformation of Rome as the beginning of a long period of decline, including Leonardo Bruni (1374–1444), who closely linked the decline of the Latin language after Cicero’s death to the decline of the Roman Republic.

 9. Bruni was the first to divide history into three eras—ancient, medieval, and modern—though another humanist historian actually invented the term “Middle Ages.”

 10. In the fifteenth century, Florentine humanists became increasingly interested in Greek philosophy, especially the ideas of Plato.

 11. Under the patronage of Cosimo de’ Medici (1389–1464), the scholar Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) translated Plato’s dialogues into Latin, attempting to synthesize Christian and Platonic teachings.

 12. Plato’s emphasis on the spiritual and eternal over the material and transient—the Platonic ideal—fit well with Christian teachings about the immortality of the soul.

 13. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494), Ficino’s most brilliant student, believed that both Christian and classical texts taught that the universe was a hierarchy of beings from God down through spiritual beings to material beings, with humanity as the crucial link possessing both material and spiritual natures.

 14. Renaissance thinkers believed man’s divinely bestowed nature meant that there were no limits to individual achievement, especially for those with the admirable quality of *virtù*, the ability to shape the world around them according to their will.

 15. Bruni and other historians included biographies of individuals with virtù, including artists, in their histories of cities and nations that described the ways in which these people affected the course of history.

 16. In one such work, *The Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, Vasari even included himself among the models of excellence and perfection.

 17. Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472) similarly described his personal qualities and many accomplishments in his autobiography.

 18. Following Plato’s ideas, humanist authors speculated about perfect examples of things; Alberti wrote about the ideal country house, and Thomas More described the perfect society.

 B. Education

 1. Humanists thought that studying the classics would provide essential skills for future diplomats, lawyers, politicians, military leaders, businessmen, writers, and artists and would provide a much broader and more practical type of training than that offered at universities.

 2. Humanists taught that a life active in the world should be the aim of all educated individuals and that education was not only for private or religious purposes but also for the public good.

 3. Beginning in the early fifteenth century, humanists opened schools and academies in Italian cities and courts in which pupils learned Latin grammar and rhetoric, Roman history and political philosophy, and Greek literature and philosophy.

 4. Humanist schools were established in other Italian cities, as well as in Germany, France, and England; humanist education became the basis for education for well-to-do urban boys and men.

 5. Humanists disagreed about education for women, whose sphere was generally understood to be private and domestic.

 6. Humanist academies were not open to women, but a few women who became educated in the classics through tutors or self-study argued that reason was not limited to men and that learning was compatible with virtue for women as well as men.

 7. No book on education had broader influence than Baldassare Castiglione’s *The Courtier* (1528).

 8. According to Castiglione, the educated man should have a broad background in many academic subjects; his spiritual and physical as well as intellectual capabilities should be trained; and above all, he should speak and write eloquently.

 9. Castiglione also discussed the perfect court lady, who was to be well educated and able to paint, dance, and play a musical instrument and who should possess physical beauty, delicacy, affability, and modesty.

 10. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, *The Courtier* was translated into most European languages and widely read, influencing the social mores and patterns of conduct of elite groups in Renaissance and early modern Europe, as well as those aspiring to rise in the social hierarchy.

 C. Political Thought

 1. Humanists wrote biographies that described kings as just, wise, pious, learned, and kind; however, such ideal rulers were hard to find, so they looked to the classical past for models.

 2. Some argued that republicanism was the best form of government, while others used Plato’s model of the philosopher-king to argue that rule by an enlightened individual might be best.

 3. Both sides agreed, however, that educated men should be active in the political affairs of their city, a position historians have since termed “civic humanism.”

 4. The most famous civic humanist, and ultimately the best-known political theorist of this era, was Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527).

 5. In *The Prince* (1513), Machiavelli uses the examples of classical and contemporary rulers to argue that the function of a ruler (or any government) is to preserve order and security by using any means necessary, but not by doing anything that would turn the populace against him.

 6. Machiavelli’s primary contemporary example was Cesare Borgia (1475?–1507), who built up a state in central Italy by using new military equipment and tactics, hiring Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) as a military engineer, and murdering his political enemies.

 7. Borgia’s state ultimately collapsed, which Machiavelli ascribed to fate, rather than weakness.

 8. *The Prince* is often seen as the first modern guide to politics, though Machiavelli was denounced for writing it, and people later came to use the word “Machiavellian” to mean cunning and ruthless.

 9. In contrast to the medieval idea that governments should be judged on moral principles established by God, Machiavelli argued that governments should be judged by how well they provided security, order, and safety to their populace; he believed that a ruler’s moral code in maintaining these was not the same as a private individual’s.

 10. Most scholars regard Machiavelli as realistic or even cynical, but some suggest that he was being ironic or satirical, showing princely government in the worst possible light to contrast it with republicanism.

 D. Christian Humanism

 1. Northern humanists shared the ideas of Ficino and Pico about the wisdom of ancient texts, but they viewed humanist learning as a way to bring about reform of the church and deepen people’s spiritual lives.

 2. These Christian humanists thought that the best elements of classical and Christian cultures should be combined.

 3. The English humanist Thomas More (1478–1535) wrote the controversial dialogue *Utopia* (1516), which describes a community on an island where all children receive a good education, and adults divide their days between manual labor or business pursuits and intellectual activities.

 4. In More’s *Utopia*, poverty and hunger have been solved by a beneficent government, and although religious toleration and reason prevail, dissent and disagreement are not acceptable.

 5. More’s purposes in writing Utopia have been greatly debated: some view it as a revolutionary critique of More’s own hierarchical and violent society, some as a call for an even firmer hierarchy, and others as part of the humanist tradition of satire.

 6. The fame of Dutch humanist Desiderius Erasmus (1466?–1536) rested largely on scholarly editions and translations, as well as popular works.

 7. Erasmus’s long list of publications includes *The Praise of Folly* (1509), a satire poking fun at political, social, and religious institutions; and a new Latin translation of the New Testament alongside the first printed edition of the Greek text (1516).

 8. Two fundamental themes run through Erasmus’s work: first, education in the Bible and the classics is the key to reform and moral and intellectual improvement; second, renewal should be based on “the philosophy of Christ,” an emphasis on inner spirituality and personal morality, rather than on scholastic theology or outward observances.

 E. The Printed Word

 1. The ideas of Petrarch spread slowly from person to person by hand copying, while the ideas of Erasmus spread quickly through print.

 2. Printing with movable metal type developed in Germany in the 1440s as a combination of existing technologies.

 3. Johann Gutenberg and other metal-smiths made metal stamps—later called type—for every letter of the alphabet, which could then be covered with ink and used to mark the letters onto a surface.

 4. They also built racks that held the type in rows, which meant that the type could be rearranged for every page and used over and over.

 5. The ready availability of paper also enabled the printing revolution.

 6. By the fifteenth century, the increase in urban literacy, the development of primary schools, and the opening of more universities had created an expanding market for reading materials of all types.

 7. Other craftsmen made their own type and built their own presses, setting themselves up in business, and within a half century of the publication of Gutenberg’s Bible in 1456, between 8 and 20 million books were printed in Europe.

 8. Although the effects of the invention of movable-type printing were not felt overnight, movable type radically transformed the private and public lives of Europeans.

 9. Printers had connections to the world of politics, art, and scholarship that other craftsmen did not.

 10. Printing gave hundreds or even thousands of people identical books, so that they could more easily discuss the ideas contained in the books with one another in person or through letters.

 11. Printed materials allowed individuals to join causes and groups separated by geography and form a common identity, or group consciousness.

 12. Government and church leaders both used and worried about printing: they printed laws, declarations of war, battle accounts, and propaganda, but they also attempted to censor books and authors whose ideas they thought challenged their authority or were wrong.

 13. Officials prohibited certain books and authors and enforced this by confiscating books, arresting printers and booksellers, or destroying the presses of disobedient printers, although books printed secretly were smuggled all over Europe.

 14. Printing stimulated the literacy of laypeople and eventually came to have a deep effect on their private lives.

 15. Although most of the earliest books and pamphlets dealt with religious subjects, printers produced anything that would sell, including professional reference sets, historical romances, biographies, and how-to manuals, some of which contained woodcuts and engravings.

 16. Books and other printed materials were read aloud to illiterate listeners, bridging the gap between written and oral cultures.

III. Art and the Artist

 A. Patronage and Power

 1. No feature of the Renaissance evokes greater admiration than the dazzling creativity that emerged in painting, architecture, and sculpture of the 1400s and 1500s.

 2. Powerful urban groups often flaunted their wealth by commissioning works of art in early Renaissance Italy.

 3. In the later fifteenth century, wealthy merchants, bankers, popes, and rulers, rather than corporate groups, sponsored works of art as a means of glorifying themselves and their families.

 4. Patrons varied in their level of involvement as a work progressed; some simply ordered a specific subject or scene, while others closely oversaw the work of the artist or architect, making suggestions and demanding changes.

 5. Pope Julius II (pontificate 1503–1513) commissioned the Florentine Michelangelo to paint the ceiling of the Vatican’s Sistine Chapel in 1508, visiting him frequently with suggestions and criticisms.

 6. Art reveals changing patterns of consumption among the wealthy elite, with nobles spending less of their money on military gear as they adjusted to an urban culture.

 7. For the noble who recently arrived from the countryside or the rich merchant, a grand urban palace adorned with embroidered tablecloths, wall tapestries, and paintings represented the greatest outlay of cash.

 8. After the palace itself, the private chapel within the palace symbolized the largest expenditure for the wealthy of the sixteenth century.

 9. The chapel served as the center of the household’s religious life and its cult of remembrance of the dead.

 B. Changing Artistic Styles

 1. Religious topics remained popular in Renaissance art, although the patron often had himself and his family included in the scene; as humanist ideas spread, classical themes and motifs, such as the lives and loves of pagan gods and goddesses, became more common.

 2. The individual portrait emerged as a distinct genre; Renaissance portraits showed human ideals, often portrayed in a more realistic style.

 3. The Florentine painter Giotto (1276–1337) led the way in the use of realism, especially in his more natural treatment of the human body and face.

 4. Piero della Francesca (1420–1492) and Andrea Mantegna (1430/31–1506) pioneered perspective in painting, the linear representation of distance and space on a flat surface.

 5. The sculptor Donatello (1386–1466) revived the classical figure, with its balance and self-awareness.

 6. Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446) looked to the classical past for inspiration in designing buildings that achieved a sense of balance and harmony.

 7. Art in northern Europe tended to be more religious in orientation than in Italy.

 8. Flemish painters, notably Rogier van der Weyden (1399/1400–1464) and Jan van Eyck (1366–1441)—one of the first artists to use oil-based paints successfully—were considered the artistic equals of Italian painters.

 9. Albrecht Dürer of Nuremberg rendered the human form and natural world in intricate detail and designed mechanical devices that could assist artists in solving the problems of perspective.

 10. In the early sixteenth century, the center of the new art shifted from Florence to Rome, as Renaissance popes expended huge sums of money to beautify the city.

 11. Michelangelo went to Rome and began a series of statues, paintings, and architectural projects that gained international renown, including the Pietà, Moses (the redesigning of the Capitoline Hill) and, most famously, the dome for Saint Peter’s and the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

 12. Raphael Sanzio (1483–1520) became the most sought after artist in Europe, overseeing a large workshop with many collaborators and writing treatises on his philosophy of art in which he emphasized the importance of imitating nature and developing an orderly sequence of design and proportion.

 13. Titian (1490–1576) and other sixteenth-century painters developed an artistic style known as “mannerism” in which artists sometimes distorted figures, exaggerated musculature, and heightened color to express emotion and drama more intently.

 C. The Renaissance Artist

 1. Some patrons rewarded certain artists very well, and some artists gained public acclaim as “rare men of genius.”

 2. Renaissance artists and humanists came to think that a work of art was the deliberate creation of a unique personality who transcended traditions, rules, and theories.

 3. Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci perhaps best embody the new concept of the Renaissance artist as genius.

 4. Though they might be men of genius, artists still were expected to be well trained, and most Renaissance artists trained in the workshops of older artists, where they learned proper artistic techniques and stylistic conventions.

 5. Beginning artists spent years mastering their craft by copying drawings and paintings; learning how to prepare paint and other materials; and, by the sixteenth century, reading books about design and composition.

 6. Some informal groups of younger artists, who gathered in the evenings for drawing practice, turned into more formal artistic “academies” by the late sixteenth century.

 7. The notion of artistic genius was gendered; all the most famous and most prolific Renaissance artists were male, and the types of art that women produced, such as textiles, needlework, and painting on porcelain, were deemed “minor” or “decorative” arts.

 8. Several women became well-known painters, most of them daughters of painters or minor noblemen with ties to artistic circles or eldest daughters from families without sons, but they were not allowed to study the male nude, learn the technique of fresco, or join a group of male artists for informal practice.

 9. Artistic workshops were male-only settings in which men of different ages came together for training and created bonds of friendship, influence, patronage, and sometimes intimacy.

 10. Most scholars and artists came from families with some money; humanist ideas did not influence the lives of most people in cities and did not affect life in the villages at all.

IV. Social Hierarchies

 A. Race and Slavery

 1. Renaissance people often used the words “race,” “people,” and “nation” interchangeably; they made distinctions based on skin color, but these distinctions were interwoven with other characteristics.

 2. Since the time of the Roman republic, a small number of black Africans had lived in western Europe; they had come, along with white slaves, as the spoils of war.

 3. Unstable political conditions in many parts of Africa enabled enterprising merchants to seize people and sell them into slavery.

 4. Local authorities afforded them no protection in a culture where tradition sanctioned the practice of slavery.

 5. In the fifteenth century, Portuguese sailors began bringing Africans to markets in the Mediterranean, and by 1530 between four thousand and five thousand were sold to the Portuguese each year.

 6. By the mid-sixteenth century, blacks, both slaves and free, made up about 10 percent of the Portuguese population, and cities such as Lisbon had significant numbers of people of mixed African and European descent.

 7. Although blacks were concentrated in the Iberian Peninsula, black servants were much sought after in northern Italy and other parts of Europe, in part because of a continuing interest in curiosities and the exotic.

 8. In Portugal, Spain, and Italy, slaves supplemented the labor force in virtually all occupations.

 9. Most Europeans perceived Africa as a remote place, the home of strange people isolated by heresy and Islam from superior European civilization.

 10. The expanding slave trade only reinforced negative preconceptions about the inferiority of black Africans.

 B. Wealth and the Nobility

 1. The word “class” was not used in the Renaissance to describe social divisions, but by the thirteenth century, the idea of a hierarchy based on wealth was emerging, especially in cities.

 2. This hierarchy of wealth was more fluid than the older divisions into noble and commoner, allowing individuals and families to rise—and fall—within one generation.

 3. The development of a hierarchy of wealth did not mean an end to the prominence of nobles, however, and even poorer nobles still had higher status than wealthy commoners.

 4. The nobility maintained its status in most parts of Europe not by adhering to rigid boundaries, but by taking in and integrating the new social elite of wealth, often through marriage.

 5. Along with being tied to hierarchies of wealth and family standing, social status also was linked to considerations of honor in warfare and occupations.

 6. In cities, sumptuary laws reflected both wealth and honor.

 C. Gender Roles

 1. Toward the end of the fourteenth century, learned men (and a few women) began what was termed the *querelle des femmes*, a debate about women’s character and nature.

 2. Misogynist critiques of women from both clerical and secular authors denounced females as devious, domineering, and demanding, which prompted several authors to compile lists of praiseworthy women.

 3. Christine de Pizan was among those writers who were interested not only in defending women but also in exploring the reasons behind women’s secondary status, thus anticipating discussions about the “social construction of gender.”

 4. The development of the printing press spurred interest in the debate about women, circulating various works and popularizing prints that juxtaposed female virtues and vices.

 5. Beginning in the sixteenth century, the debate about women also became one about female rulers and about whether gender or rank was the stronger determinant of character and social role.

 6. Despite a prevailing sentiment that women were not as fit to rule as men, there were no successful rebellions against female rulers simply because they were women, in part because female rulers emphasized qualities regarded as masculine.

 7. Ideas about women’s and men’s proper roles determined the actions of ordinary men and women even more forcefully.

 8. The dominant notion of the “true” man was that of the married head of household; unmarried men whose social status and age would have normally conferred political power did not participate in politics to the same level.

 9. Women also were understood as “married or to be married,” which meant that women’s work was not viewed as supporting a family—even if it did—and women who worked for wages earned about half to two-thirds of what men did, even for the same work.

 10. Maintaining power relationships in which men were dominant and women subordinate symbolized the proper functioning of society, and disorder in the gender hierarchy was linked with social upheaval and viewed as threatening.

 11. Of all the ways in which Renaissance society was hierarchically arranged—social rank, age, level of education, race, occupation—gender was regarded as the most “natural” and thus the most important to defend.

V. Politics and the State in Western Europe

 A. France

 1. The Black Death and the Hundred Years’ War left France drastically depopulated, commercially ruined, and agriculturally weak, but Charles VII (r. 1422–1461) revived the monarchy and France.

 2. By reconciling warring factions within France, expelling the English, reorganizing the royal council, and strengthening royal finances through taxes on certain products and land, Charles began France’s recovery.

 3. Charles also created the first permanent royal army anywhere in Europe.

 4. Louis XI (r. 1461–1483) used the army to control nobles’ militias and to conquer Burgundy, and he gained other territory through inheritance.

 5. The marriage of Louis XII (r. 1498–1515) to Anne of Brittany further enlarged the state of France.

 6. In the Concordat of Bologna in 1516, French king Francis I and Pope Leo X reached an agreement that allowed the French ruler to select bishops and abbots and, thus, control the policies of church officials.

 B. England

 1. The aristocracy dominated the government of Henry IV (r. 1399–1413) and indulged in disruptive violence at the local level.

 2. A decline in population and the chronic disorder caused by the Wars of the Roses hurt trade, agriculture, and domestic industry.

 3. Edward IV (r. 1461–1483), his brother Richard III (r. 1483–1485), and Henry VII (r. 1485–1509) used Machiavellian methods to reconstruct the monarchy, restore royal prestige, crush the power of the nobility, and establish order and law at the local level.

 4. Edward IV and subsequently the Tudors, except Henry VIII, conducted foreign policy on the basis of diplomacy, avoiding expensive wars and thus undercutting Parliament’s influence.

 5. Because Henry VII distrusted much of the nobility, he chose small landowners and urban residents trained in law to be members of his royal council, which governed at the national level.

 6. The council dealt with real or potential aristocratic threats through a judicial offshoot, the Court of Star Chamber, which employed methods that ran counter to English common-law precedents but effectively reduced aristocratic troublemaking.

 7. When Henry VII died in 1509, he left a country at peace both domestically and internationally, a substantially augmented treasury, an expanding wool trade, and a crown with its dignity and role much enhanced.

 C. Spain

 1. The marriage of the dynamic and aggressive Isabella of Castile and the crafty and persistent Ferdinand of Aragon constituted a dynastic union of two royal houses, not the political union of two peoples.

 2. Although Ferdinand and Isabella (r. 1474–1516) pursued a common foreign policy, Spain continued to exist as a loose confederation of separate kingdoms, each maintaining its own cortes (parliament), laws, courts, and system of taxation.

 3. Ferdinand and Isabella curbed aristocratic power by excluding high nobles from the royal council, which had full executive, judicial, and legislative powers under the monarchy, and instead appointing lesser landowners.

 4. They secured the right to appoint bishops in Spain and in the Hispanic territories in America.

 5. With revenues from ecclesiastical estates, they expanded their territories to include the remaining lands held by Arabs in southern Spain.

 6. The victorious entry of Ferdinand and Isabella into Granada on January 6, 1492, signaled the conclusion of the reconquista.

 7. The majority of Spanish people viewed the Jews as potentially dangerous.

 8. Even though Jewish industry, intelligence, and money had supported royal power and financed many Christian businesses and ventures, a strong undercurrent of resentment of Jewish influence and wealth festered.

 9. Anti-Semitic pogroms swept the towns of Spain in the fourteenth century, and perhaps 40 percent of the Jewish population was killed or forced to convert.

 10. Those converted—*conversos,* or New Christians—were often well educated and held prominent positions in government, the church, medicine, law, and business.

 11. Aristocrats resented their financial dependence on conversos; the poor hated the converso tax collectors, and churchmen doubted the sincerity of their conversions.

 12. In 1478 Queen Isabella and Ferdinand established their own Inquisition to “search out and punish converts from Judaism who had transgressed against Christianity by secretly adhering to Jewish beliefs and performing rites of the Jews.”

 13. Because most conversos identified as sincere Christians, officials of the Inquisition argued that a person’s status as a Jew was in their blood and was heritable, so Jews could never be true Christians.

 14. “Purity of blood” laws made having pure Christian blood a requirement for noble status.

 15. In 1492 Isabella and Ferdinand issued an edict expelling all practicing Jews from Spain.

 16. Many Muslims in Granada were forcibly baptized and became another type of New Christian investigated by the Inquisition.

 17. Absolute religious orthodoxy and purity of blood served as the theoretical foundation of the Spanish national state, while marital politics, as well as military victories and religious courts, upheld it.

 18. Isabella and Ferdinand’s grandson, Charles V (r. 1519–1556), succeeded to a vast inheritance that included the Burgundian Netherlands and the Holy Roman Empire.

 19. Charles’s son Philip II joined Portugal to the Spanish crown in 1580, politically uniting the Iberian Peninsula.