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**Ways of the World: A Brief Global
History with Sources**
Second Edition

Chapter 13

Political Transformations: Empires and Encounters,
1450–1750

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The Mughal Empire
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Page 424 (page 616, With Sources)

1. What does this painting show?

This painting shows the inside of a Mughal palace, recognizable by the distinct columns and arches, the carpet, and the wall decorations. In the front to the left and right stand men in elaborate dress and caps, shields, and armor. Some of them hold banners. Through the central archway, we see a man sitting on a carpet under a canopy. He is turned to the right. A woman can be seen on the right edge of the painting. This is a seventeenth-century painting of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan holding a ceremonial assembly called the durbar.

2. Take a look at the men in the lower left and examine their dress. Who might they be?

The men wear different outfits, so they are most likely not soldiers. Their banners and full warrior regalia suggest they might be leaders of different tribes in the Mughal Empire. This painting thus illustrates the centralizing authority of Shah Jahan in an empire that incorporates different tribes.

3. Describe and explain the figure at the center of the image. What seems to be the foundation of his authority?

His head is surrounded by a halo, giving the shah the appearance of spiritual grace and enlightenment. This seems to be an important source of his authority. But the splendor of the palace also plays a role in strengthening Shah Jahan's power of the tribal leaders.

I. European Empires in the Americas

A. The European Advantage

1. Geography and winds
2. European marginality, land-hunger, and social drives
3. Organization and technology
4. Local allies
5. Germs

I. European Empires in the Americas

A. The European Advantage

1. Geography and winds: Europe had a decided advantage for access to the Americas as it was a short trip across the Atlantic and the winds were steady and favorable, unlike the shifting monsoon winds of the Indian Ocean.
2. European marginality, land-hunger, and social drives: European weaknesses, such as being on the margins of the trade networks, being relatively poor, and needing more land to feed the population recovering from the Black Death all served as push factors to drive Europeans overseas and toward the Americas. Almost all social groups had some reason to favor expansion: The poor and the elites wanted to gain land wealth, merchants wanted markets and imports, the church wanted to spread the faith, knights wanted glory, and everyone wanted gold.
3. Organization and technology: The near-constant, interstate rivalry manifested itself in competition on the seas. These conflicts ensured that the states and trading companies had the organization to take on the project of overseas expansion. Europeans built upon technology gained from contact with the Muslim world to create an increasingly efficient fleet of ships.
4. Local allies: Europeans also found local allies, such as the Aztecs and the Inca, who were eager to fight against empires.
5. Germs: The single greatest advantage was one the Europeans did not understand but carried with them wherever they went: a whole host of infectious diseases.



Map 13.1 European Colonial Empires in the Americas
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 Page 428 (page 620, With Sources)

I. European Empires in the Americas

B. The Great Dying

1. 60–80 million people without immunities
2. Old-World diseases
3. Demographic collapse

I. European Empires in the Americas

B. The Great Dying

1. 60–80 million people without immunities: Estimates are that the New World had a population of between 60 and 80 million people. As they had been isolated from the diseased, rich Old World for thousands of years, they had not developed immunities to both serious epidemic diseases and what were common endemic illness in Afro-Eurasia.
2. Old-World diseases: Illnesses such as smallpox, measles, typhus, influenza, malaria, and yellow fever wreaked havoc in the Americas, exacting a terrible toll.
3. Demographic collapse: In some places, 90 percent of the population died. Central Mexico went from a population of 10 to 20 million to 1 million in 150 years. It was not until the late seventeenth century that the population began to recover but in only some places. This mass death open up the continents for European conquerors and their African slaves.

I. European Empires in the Americas

C. The Columbian Exchange

1. People brought germs, plants, and animals
2. Corn and potatoes to Europe, Africa, and Asia
3. American tobacco and chocolate, Chinese tea, and Arab coffee
4. Silver, slaves, and sugar
5. Europe the biggest winner

I. European Empires in the Americas

C. The Columbian Exchange

1. People brought germs, plants, and animals: The Europeans who came to the Americas not only brought themselves and their germs but also their animals (be they domesticated or pests such as rats) and their plants (again both domesticated plants and weeds). Horses and pigs played an important role in the post-Columbian development of the Americas.
2. Corn and potatoes to Europe, Africa, and Asia: The two most significant food crops to come from the Americas were corn (maize) and potatoes. Corn became a common staple throughout the Old World, but especially Africa. Potatoes, likewise, had their greatest impact in Europe (especially Ireland) but the sweet potato was also very popular in China. Indeed, American crops such as potatoes, corn, and peanuts spread throughout China and made up 20 percent of their agricultural produce by the early twentieth century.
3. American tobacco and chocolate, Chinese tea, and Arab coffee: As a truly global exchange developed, people began to consume a variety of stimulants from around the world. Tobacco, for example, became popular in Europe and China.
4. Silver, slaves, and sugar: Global networks transported commodities such as silver from the Potosí mine in the Andes, human beings from Africa, and sugar increasingly from the Caribbean. New producers and transporters could become fabulously wealthy in this process.
5. Europe the biggest winner: Europe was the biggest winner in the Columbian Exchange, seen both in the wealth it extracted from the New World and its demographic growth. Thanks to the Columbian Exchange, the previously poor and marginal Europe could enter into trade and competition with the historically more powerful and wealthy Asian societies.

II. Comparing Colonial Societies in the Americas

A. In the Land of the Aztecs and the Incas

1. *Encomienda*, *repartimiento*, and *hacienda*
2. *Creoles* and *peninsulares*: “Purity of blood”
3. *Mestizo* and *castas*
4. Indians

II. Comparing Colonial Societies in the Americas

A. In the Lands of the Aztecs and the Incas

1. *Encomienda*, *repartimiento*, and *hacienda*: These were a series of Spanish colonial legal systems for controlling land and labor. In the first, Spanish settlers were given control over a community and allowed to extract wealth and labor as they saw fit. As this system led to blatant abuses, the second system was under more direct government supervision, but still abusive. In the third system, Spaniards built large estates and paid *peons* low wages to work for them.

2. *Creoles* and *peninsulares*: “Purity of blood”: Pure-blooded Spanish were very concerned about their undiluted blood, but they also saw distinctions among themselves. Those born in the colonies were inferior to those from the Iberian peninsula, yet both were superior to mixed race, indigenous, and African individuals. Spanish men jealously guarded their women from mixed race, indigenous, and African men who might dilute the community’s blood and tarnish their honor.

3. *Mestizo* and *castas*: These mixed-race individuals were divided into numerous groups (*castas*) based on their percentage of Spanish, Indian, and African blood. As there were very few Spanish women, most Spanish men took *mestiza* wives, indicating an obvious gender double standard.

4. Indians: The indigenous population suffered from both the Great Dying and from the exploitative colonial regime. Many surviving Indian women sought refuge in mixed or Spanish marriages to protect their children from colonial abuses.

II. Comparing Colonial Societies in the Americas

B. Colonies of Sugar

1. Portuguese Brazil's monopoly (1570–1670)
2. Labor intensive and an international mass market
3. African slaves and *mulattoes*

II. Comparing Colonial Societies in the Americas

B. Colonies of Sugar

1. Portuguese Brazil's monopoly (1570–1670): After learning about sugar from Arabs in the Mediterranean, the Portuguese pioneered sugar production in Brazil and enjoyed a century-long monopoly until the British, Dutch, and French got involved in the Caribbean.
2. Labor intensive and an international mass market: Sugar production and refining was extremely labor intensive and required a type of organization similar to the industrial factories yet to come. Labor demands could not be met by the local population after the Great Dying, so slaves were imported from Africa. The commodity was consumed by a mass market over seas, making the plantation complex an important development in world history.
3. African slaves and *mulattoes*: Some 80 percent of the Africans taken to the New World went to sugar plantations in Brazil and the Caribbean. These colonies maintained large populations that were born in Africa and recently enslaved, in contrast to North America where most slaves were born in the New World. Brazil had a large population of mixed-race individuals with African lineages, known as *mulattoes*. Rather than the clear racial divisions of North America (white, red, and black), Brazil had numerous categories of mixed races with differing levels of social status.



Plantation Life in the Caribbean
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1. What are the people doing in this painting, and where does this take place? Describe the work being performed.

The people in this image are African slaves working a plantation on the British-ruled Caribbean island of Antigua. The slaves are lined up along the length of the field and are breaking and tilling the ground for planting with long-hand hoes. In the center of the picture three slaves seem to be marking the field in intervals with sticks.

2. Explain the three small figures to the left in this scene.

The tallest of the three looks like an older woman; the other two might be children too young for fieldwork.

3. Discuss the standing male figure in the right front of the image. Who is he?

This man is an overseer and, given his skin color, probably also a slave. He is directing one of the slaves, and he is carrying a whip in his left hand, which is the tool in which he would have exercised force and power over the slaves in the plantation system.

II. Comparing Colonial Societies in the Americas

C. Settler Colonies in North America

1. British get the leftovers
2. British society in transition
3. Class equality with gender inequality
4. Pure settler societies with little racial mixing
5. Protestantism and weak royal control

II. Comparing Colonial Societies in the Americas

C. Settler Colonies in North America

1. British get the leftovers: As Spain and Portugal were wealthier and seized more colonies first, the British were left with the “dregs” of the Americas. New England seemed under-productive and lacked wealthy mines.
2. British society in transition: British society was changing at the time with intense disputes between kings and nobles, civil war, and a rising merchant class. Catholic-Protestant conflicts encouraged large numbers of dissenting religious groups to leave for the freedom of the colonies.
3. Class equality with gender inequality: In the New England colonies, they established family-run small farms, unlike the hereditary land estates of Old England or the large *haciendas* and plantations to the south. While the intense social stratification of Europe was not imported to New England, the conservative Protestant communities were extremely patriarchal and restricted women’s rights.
4. Pure settler societies with little racial mixing: These were colonies of settlement with few surviving indigenous people and few African slaves. As British women came in large numbers, the white population was self-replicating and there was little mixing of the races.
5. Protestantism and weak royal control: Unlike the Catholic colonies to the south, the Protestants had much less interest in converting the native people, but they did encourage literacy amongst the white population. Also in contrast to the Spanish colonies, there was no strong royal bureaucracy. Rather, there were trading

companies, wealthy sponsors, and self-governing communities.

III. The Steppes and Siberia: The Making of a Russian Empire

A. Experiencing the Russian Empire

1. Conquest and *yasak*
2. Settlers put pressure on pastoralists

III. The Steppes and Siberia: The Making of a Russian Empire

A. Experiencing the Russian Empire

1. Conquest and *yasak*: After the Russian state used its military to conquer an area, the local population would be forced to pay *yasak* or tribute. In Siberia, this would be in the form of “soft gold” or furs, the region’s main export at the time.
2. Settlers put pressure on pastoralists: As Russian settlers moved in, they spread their language and religion and also disrupted the pastoralists’ way of life. Soon the local population became dependent on the Russian merchants for alcohol, sugar, grain, and other imports. Epidemic diseases impacted the previously isolated local population as happened in the Americas.



Map 13.2 The Russian Empire
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III. The Steppes and Siberia: The Making of a Russian Empire

B. Russians and Empire

1. Russia becomes multiethnic
2. Wealth of empire
3. Peter the Great (r. 1689–1725) and the West
4. Contact with China and Islam
5. What kind of empire?

III. The Steppes and Siberia: The Making of a Russian Empire

B. Russians and Empire

1. Russia becomes multiethnic: By conquering a variety of peoples in the west, south, and east, Russia had numerous different ethnicities and religions to its holdings.
2. Wealth of empire: The empire brought in great wealth from furs to agricultural produce to trade with the Far East.
3. Peter the Great (r. 1689–1725) and the West: In the West, Russia competed with other states and empires and annexed lands as far west as Poland and in the south parts of the Ottoman Empire. Despite numerous victories, the contact with the West showed some of Russia's backwardness. Tsar Peter the Great decided that he had to reform Russia and pull it into the future by a process of Westernization, including shaving beards and building ships in the Baltic.
4. Contact with China and Islam: While a European empire, Russia was also an Asian empire that had contact with China and an increasing Muslim population.
5. What kind of empire?: While not an overseas empire like Britain or Spain, Russia had built a massive collection of territories by annexing its neighbors. Done by force, this required Russia to be fairly authoritarian in its state system.

IV. Asian Empires

A. Making China an Empire

1. Qing expansion in the West (1680–1760)
2. Colonial?
3. Economic downturn in Central Asia

IV. Asian Empires

A. Making China an Empire

1. Qing expansion in the West (1680-1760): The Qing Dynasty (1644–1912) was a foreign Manchu regime headed by conquerors from the north. While they were resented by many ethnic Chinese, they did try to use Confucianism to justify their rule. For security purposes, they engaged in an eight-decade campaign in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Mongolia.

2. Colonial?: Was this colonial expansion? In many ways it was comparable to European overseas colonial rule as an ethnically distinct group conquered another group at a great distance. However, the empire was built for security purposes and not economic goals or settlement. Indeed, few ethnic Chinese ventured into the “Wild West” and these regions maintained their traditional culture and lifestyle.

3. Economic downturn in Central Asia: As the Qing expanded west and Russia expanded east, Central Asia, once home to the nomadic pastoralists and the cosmopolitan merchant cities of the Silk Roads, soon found itself to be a neglected backwater on the periphery of two great landed empires. The rise in maritime trade only made matters worse.



Map 13.3. China's Qing Dynasty Empire
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 Page 449 (page 641, With Sources)

IV. Asian Empires

B. Muslims and Hindus in the Mughal Empire

1. 20 percent Muslim
2. Akbar (r. 1556–1605)
3. Ahmad Sirhindi (1564–1624)
4. Aurangzeb (1658–1707)

IV. Asian Empires

B. Muslims and Hindus in the Mughal Empire

1. 20 percent Muslim: The ruling dynasty and about 20 percent of the population were Muslim and most of the population followed a form of Hinduism.
2. Akbar (r. 1556–1605): The emperor recognized the diversity of his realm and made many accommodations for Hindus. While he did disapprove of *sati* and other religious restrictions on women, his rule was a time of great tolerance. He removed the *jizya* tax on non-Muslims and sponsored a House of Worship where issues of faith could be debated amongst scholars of all religions. He sponsored a culture that fused a variety of traditions.
3. Ahmad Sirhindi (1564–1624): This Muslim reformer attacked Sufism and the intrusion of Hindu practices and holidays into the Muslim community. He argued for a purified Islam.
4. Aurangzeb (1658–1707): As emperor, he overturned many of Akbar's tolerant policies, re-imposed the *jizya*, destroyed temples, banned dancing girls, and stopped music at court. His reign marked a downturn in Hindu-Muslim relations and provoked bitter reactions from many Hindus.



Spot Map The Mughal Empire
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Page 450 (page 642, With Sources)

IV. Asian Empires

C. Muslims and Christians in the Ottoman Empire

1. "The Sword of Islam"
2. Decrease in women's autonomy yet many rights
3. New importance of Turkic people in the Islamic World
4. Balkan, Armenian, and Orthodox Christians
5. *Devshirme*
6. Fear and admiration in the Christian West

IV. Asian Empires

C. Muslims and Christians in the Ottoman Empire

1. "The Sword of Islam": The Ottoman Sultan became the most powerful leader in the Islamic world and combined absolute political, military, and religious authority.
2. Decrease in women's autonomy yet many rights: While many Turkic women lost their pastoral freedoms as the Ottomans converted to Islam and became urbanized, Ottoman law gave them many rights and protections. Within the sultan's court, elite women had great influence on their men.
3. New importance of Turkic people in the Islamic World: The rise of the Ottoman Empire as the most powerful Islamic state and its control of the holy cities of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem made Turks prominent people in the Islamic world.
4. Balkan, Armenian, and Orthodox Christians: While the conquest of Anatolia and Constantinople had eliminated the majority of the Christian population, there were many surviving communities in the Balkans (where few Turks settled) that negotiated arrangements with the Turks. Many Jews also found a place within the tolerant empire.
5. *Devshirme*: This was a special tax on Balkan Christians whereby they had to turn over young boys to be raised and educated as elite Ottoman administrators.
6. Fear and admiration in the Christian West: While the Ottomans were tolerant of Christians within their realm, they launched a series of wars on Christian Europe. While Europe feared the Great Turk, they also admired the power and culture of the

empire.



Map 13.4 The Ottoman Empire
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 Page 453 (page 645, With Sources)

V. Reflections: The Centrality of Context in World History

A. Contextual thinking

B. Not all empires are equal

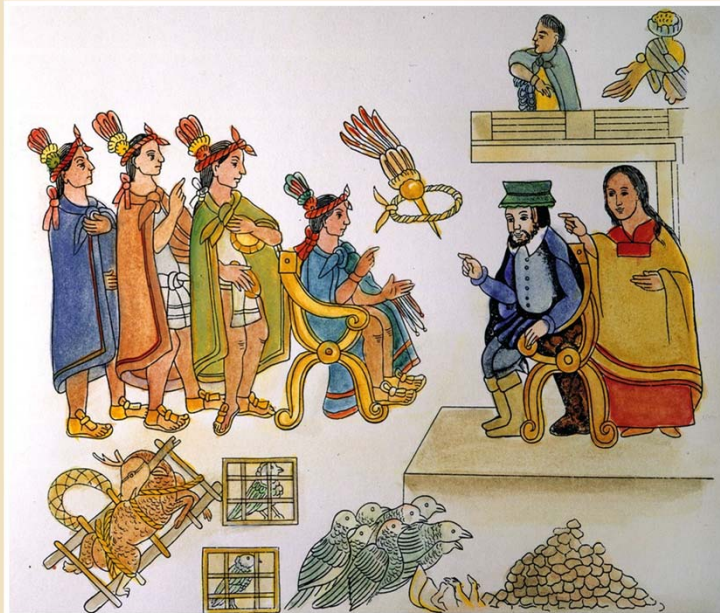
V. Reflections: The Centrality of Context in World History

A. Contextual thinking: World history considers many different topics that require us to put diverse areas of the world into a proper context.

B. Not all empires are equal: Contextual thinking allows us to compare the European empires in the Americas with the Ottomans and the Asian empires in terms of violence and impact upon the conquered peoples.



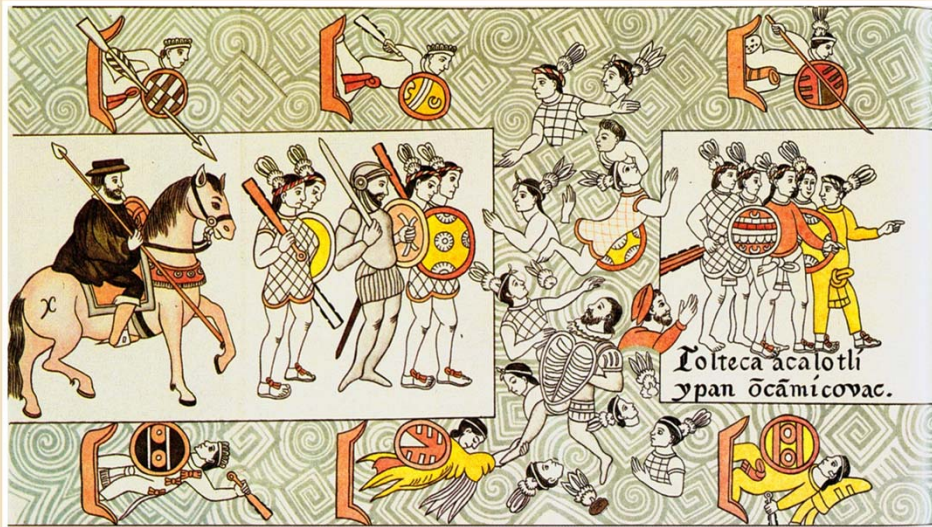
Visual Source 13.1 Disaster Foretold
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Visual Source 13.2 Moctezuma and Cortés
The Granger Collection, New York
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Page 663



Visual Source 13.3 The Massacre of the Nobles
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Page 664



Visual Source 13.4 The Spanish Retreat from Tenochtitlán
The Rout of La Noche Triste (June 30, 1520). Lienzo de Tlaxcala, Pl 18. Library of Congress
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