**Chapter 12 – The Worlds of the Fifteenth Century**

**Big Picture Questions**

1. Assume for the moment that the Chinese had not ended their maritime voyages in 1433. How might subsequent development of world history have been different? What value is there in asking this kind of “what if” or counterfactual question?
2. How does this chapter distinguish among the various kinds of societies that comprised the world of the fifteenth century? What other ways of categorizing the world’s peoples might work as well or better?
3. What common patterns might you notice across the world of the fifteenth century? And what variations in the historical trajectories of various regions can you identify?
4. What would surprise a knowledgeable observer from 500 or 1000 CE, were he or she to make a global tour in the fifteenth century? What features of that earlier world might still be recognizable?

**Main Point Question**

1. What predictions about the future might a global traveler in the fifteenth century have reasonably made?

**Margin Review Question**

1. In what ways did the gathering and hunting people of Australia differ from those of the northwest coast of North America?
2. What kinds of changes were transforming the societies of the West African Igbo and North American Iroquois as the fifteenth century unfolded?
3. What role did Central Asian and West African pastoralists play in their respective regions?
4. How would you define the major achievements of Ming dynasty China?
5. What political and cultural differences stand out in the histories of fifteenth-century China and Western Europe? What similarities are apparent?
6. In what ways did European maritime voyaging in the fifteenth century differ from that of China? What accounts for these differences?
7. What differences can you identify among the four major empires in the Islamic world of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries?
8. In what ways do the civilizations of China, Europe, and the Islamic world in the fifteenth century seem to be moving in the same direction, and in what respects were they diverging from one another?
9. What distinguished the Aztec and Inca empires from each other?
10. How did Aztec religious thinking support the empire?
11. In what ways did Inca authorities seek to integrate their vast domains?
12. In what different ways did the peoples of the fifteenth century interact with one another?

**Chapter 13 Questions – Political Transformations: Empires and Encounters**

**Big Picture Questions**

1. The experience of empire for conquered peoples was broadly similar whoever their rulers were. Does the material of this chapter support or challenge this idea?
2. In thinking about the similarities and differences among the empires of the early modern era, what categories of comparison might be most useful to consider?
3. Have a look at the maps in this chapter with an eye to areas of the world that were not incorporated in a major empire. Pick one or more of them and do a little research as to what was happening there in the early modern era.
4. Compared to the world of the fifteenth century, what new patterns of development are visible in the empire-building projects of the centuries that followed?

**Main Point Question**

1. In what ways did European empires in the Americas resemble their Russian, Chinese, Mughal, and ottoman counterparts, and in what respects were they different? Do you find the similarities or the differences more striking?

**Margin Review Questions**

1. What enabled Europeans to carve out huge empires an ocean away from their homelands?
2. What large-scale transformations did European empires generate?
3. What was the economic foundation of colonial rule in Mexico and Peru? How did it shape the kinds of societies that arose there?
4. How did the plantation societies of Brazil and the Caribbean differ from those of southern colonies in British North America?
5. What distinguished the British settler colonies of North America from their counterparts in Latin America?
6. In what ways might European empire building in the Americas be understood as a single phenomenon? And in what respects should it be viewed as a set of distinct and separate processes?
7. What motivated Russian empire building?
8. How did the Russian Empire transform the life of its conquered people and of the Russian homeland itself?
9. What were the major features of Chinese empire building in the early modern era?
10. How did Mughal attitudes and policies toward Hindus change from the time of Akbar to that of Aurangzeb?
11. In what ways was the Ottoman Empire important for Europe in the early modern era?

**Chapter 14 – Economic Transformation: Commerce and Consequence**

**Big Picture Questions**

1. To what extent did Europeans transform earlier patterns of commerce, and in what ways did they assimilate into those older patterns?
2. How should we distribute the moral responsibility for the Atlantic Slave Trade? Is this a task appropriate for historians?
3. What lasting legacies of early modern globalization are evident in the early twenty-first century? Pay particular attention to the legacies of the slave trade/
4. Asians, Africans, and Native Americans experienced early modern European expansion in quite different ways. Based on Chapters 13 and 14, how might you describe and explain those differences? In what respects were they active agents in the historical process rather than simply victims of European actions?

**Main Point Question**

1. In what different ways did global commerce transform human societies and the lives of individuals during the early modern era?

**Margin Review Questions**

1. What drove European involvement in the world of Asian commerce?
2. How did the Portuguese realize their own goals in the Indian Ocean?
3. How did the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch and British initiatives in Asia differ from one another?
4. To what extent did the British and Dutch trading companies change the societies they encountered in Asia?
5. What was the world historical importance of the silver trade?
6. Describe the impact of the fur trade on North American native societies.
7. How did the North American and Siberian fur trades differ from each other? What did they have in common?
8. What differences in the operation and impact of the spice, silver, and fur trades can you identify?
9. What was distinctive about the Atlantic slave trade? What did it share with other patterns of slave owning and slave trading?
10. What explains the rise of the Atlantic slave trade?
11. What roles did Europeans and Africans play in the unfolding of the Atlantic slave trade?
12. In what different ways did the Atlantic slave trade transform African societies?

**Chapter 15 – Cultural Transformations: Religion and Science**

**Big Picture Questions**

1. Why did Christianity take hold in some places more than in others?
2. In what ways was the missionary message of Christianity shaped by the cultures of Asian and American peoples?
3. In what ways did the spread of Christianity, Islam, and modern science give rise to culturally based conflicts?
4. Based on Chapters 12 through 15, how might you challenge a Eurocentric understanding of the early modern era while acknowledging the growing role of Europeans on the global stage?

**Main Point Question**

1. To what extent did the cultural changes of the early modern world derive from cross-cultural interaction? And to what extent did they grow from within particular societies or civilizations?

**Margin Review Questions**

1. In what ways did the Protestant Reformation transform European society, culture, and politics?
2. How was European imperial expansion related to the spread of Christianity?
3. In what ways was European Christianity assimilated into the Native American cultures of Spanish America?
4. Why were missionary efforts to spread Christianity so much less successful in China than in Spanish America?
5. What accounts for the continued spread of Islam in the early modern era and for the emergence of reform or renewal movements within the Islamic world?
6. What kinds of cultural changes occurred in China and India during the early modern era?
7. In what ways did religious changes in Asia and the Middle East parallel those of Europe, and in what ways were they different?
8. Why did the Scientific Revolution occur in Europe rather than in China or the Islamic World?
9. What was revolutionary about the Scientific Revolution?
10. In what ways did Enlightenment challenge older patterns of European thinking?
11. How did nineteenth-century developments in the sciences challenge the faith of the Enlightenment?
12. In what ways was European science received in the major civilizations of Asia in the early modern era?