

# The origins of the modern world history essay



Wonderful synthesis of recent scholarship on Rise of the West literature with an economic and ecological focus.

Uses Global Historical Context to address most issues addressed in the Modern World History course.

Use as:

Teacher background

Use isolated quotes/ chapters for all levels

Review book at end of AP curriculum for review

### **Questions raised:**

How did industry and European-style countries called nation-states-rather than highly developed agrarian empires like China and India-come to define our world?

How has the gap between rich and poor increased?

How and why have European ways of organizing the world come to dominate the globe?

Was the Rise of the West a temporary blip?

Scope: Global look (but especially Europe, China and India) 1400 -1900

### **Chapter by chapter breakdown:**

Intro

" In the space of just 200 years, the world has seen a great reversal of fortune: where once Asians held most of the economic cards, today it is primarily Western countries and Japan." (p. 2)

Concepts addressed/ introduced in chapter:

Globalization Enlightenment Communism

Nation-states French Revolution Weber-Protestant work ethic

Disease Industrial Revolution " modernization"

Exploration/ Encounter " Progress History" Colonialism

Renaissance Capitalism Slavery

Modes of Historical Inquiry

Comparative units of analysis

Definition of Eurocentrism

State legitimacy

Concept of Pentimento (p. 8)

Ecological analysis

Historical inquiry - multiple causality (contingent, accidents, and conjunctures)

Chapter 1 Material and Trading Worlds Circa 1400

" The Chinese, for example, had a long history of contact with these kinds of people [nomads], and in fact had come to classify them into two groups the " cooked," those willing to accept some of the trappings of Chinese civilization, and the " raw," those who ere not."

Concepts addressed in chapter:

Birth of " civilization" Nomadic interchange

Agricultural revolution Peasants

Biological Old regime " Cooked" and " Raw"

World systems wildlife population impact on Lebensraum

Largest urban areas Peasant revolts (comp. Pugachev, Taiping, Japan, France)

Bigger Questions:

Role of Population growth and decline

Existence of polycentric world system

Chapter 2 Starting with China

" During those 1100 years [650 - 1750], the Indian Ocean was arguably the single most important crossroads of trade and generator of merchant wealth in the world..." (p. 49)

After European introduction of armed trade... there were responses.

"... some Asian rulers of coastal trading cities responded by walling their territories and purchasing their own cannons and guns.... In Aceh...the Islamic ruler in the early 1500's built a formidable navy for the dual purpose of running the Portuguese blockade and capturing their ships and arms. Later, in the 1500s, through its contacts with the Ottoman empire, Aceh imported several large and well-made Ottoman guns, sufficient not just to defend themselves from the Portuguese, but to threaten Portuguese-controlled Malacca. Portuguese armed trading may have altered much in the Indian Ocean, but dar-al-Islam continued to limit what Europeans could and could not do in the world." (p. 63)

Concepts addressed in chapter:

Chinese history Indian textiles

Zheng He Slavery

Confucius Mongols

Indian Ocean trade Crusades

Origins and Spread of Islam Feudalism/ serfs

Ibn Battuta 100 years war

Islamic empires Reconquista

Role of Constantinople Spice trade

West African empires: Ghana, Mali Mediterranean trade (Venice/ Genoa)

African gold- Mansa Musa Portuguese/ Spanish exploration

East Africa Increase of armed trade in I. O.

### Chapter 3 Empires, States, and the New World, 1500- 1775

" Where previously there had been several " worlds" in the world-the Chinese world, the Indian Ocean world, the Mediterranean world, and the Americas, as yet unknown to Europeans, Asians, or Europeans-after 1500 two new links drew the entire globe into a single world for the first time." (1492 and 1571) .. the first globalization???? (p. 67)

" By 1700, then, England had a government that, in the words of one British historian, 'was prepared to subordinate all foreign policy to economic ends.'" (p. 88)

" In 1775, Asia produced about 80% of everything in the world, probably an increase from 1500. In other words, two-thirds of the world's population- Asians-produced four-fifths of the world's goods. Seen from another perspective, Europeans, at one-fifth of the world's population in 1775, shared production of one-fifth of the world's goods with Africans and Americans. Asia thus had the most productive economies in the three centuries after 1500." (p. 81)

Concepts addressed in chapter:

Imperial expansion Russia (4x), China(2x), Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal

Decreased nomadic influence

Aztec (25 m.) and Incan (16 m) empires (strengths and weaknesses)

Arrival and impact of Cortez and Pizarro

Columbian Exchange

Disease

Forced labor

Silver mining - Potosi, Chinese demand, Spanish Armada

Textiles

New World economy: Plantation system, increase of slavery, sugar

State-building (wars, competition, debt, expulsions, Inquisition, Enlightenment)

Mercantalism

7 year's war/ French Indian wars = the first world war?

Chapter 4 The Industrial Revolution and its Consequences, 1750 -1850

" Indeed, India around 1700 was the largest exporter of cotton textiles in the world and supplied textiles not just to meet English demand, but throughout the world as well. Southeast Asia, east and west Africa, the Middle East, and Europe were major export markets, in addition to the large domestic Indian market. No wonder that the demand for Indian cotton in the eighteenth century was 'greater than all the weavers in the country can manufacture'

and that India accounted for fully one quarter of the world manufacturing output in 1750." (pp. 96- 97)

" It was as if the British had subjugated the Indian peninsula simply in order to use its resources against China." (p. 117)

Concepts addressed in chapter:

Use of coal to replace wind, water & animal power

Cotton textiles-cost of food not labor is what made textiles cheaper

Increased protectionism by E.

Role of VOC and EIC

Battle of Plassey/ Clive - > India

Use of slave markets in Americas for cheap textiles

Demographic changes in China

Role of gender in textile industry in China (107)

Tea

Opium Wars

Use of iron and steam

Chapter 5



" By 1900, India accounts for barely 2% of world manufacturing output, China about 7%, while Europe alone claims 60% and the United States 20%."

(p. 123)

" Without opium ... there probably would have been no British empire." (p. 130)

Concepts addressed in chapter:

De-industrialization/ ruralization of India

Industrialization of Br, Fr, Ger, US, Russia and Japan

Recessions

Social consequences of Industrialization

factories and work

women and families

resistance and revolution (Communist Manifesto)

Nationalism (nations- French Rev)

state legitimacy

Tools of empire in Africa and China (Maxim gun, quinine...)

Taiping Rebellion (20 m.)

Japan's imperialism

Spanish American war

Ecological trends

Deforestation- India, Latin America

El Nino - famines (p. 148) HOW DOES THIS WORK?)

Social Darwinism, racism justifies the success -> genocides

Conclusion

" interactions among various parts of the world account for most of the story of the making of the modern world, not the cultural achievements of any one part. Indeed those achievements are not understandable except in a global context. The whole-in this case the world and its modern history-thus is greater than the sum of its parts." (p . 155)

" It seems to me that pentimento is an apt metaphor for exploring the patterns of change and continuity in world history. If we think of the pattern of world history being composed of two primary layers, the first is a picture of a world in which Asia shines most brightly, as it did from 1400 to about 1800. That picture, though, was covered up over the past two hundred years by a new one depicting the rise of the west. Now though that second painting is beginning to fade and elements of the first one-the wealth and power of Asia are again beginning to show through, reasserting some of the world's previous patterns, though in new contexts and with important variations." (p. 159)

Concepts addressed in chapter:

<https://assignbuster.com/the-origins-of-the-modern-world-history-essay/>

20th century developments

wars, depression, technological developments, decolonization

role of international organizations

Idea of pentimento--Change and continuity

## **Sequel: Story of resistance to Modern World (p. 161)**

Critiques:

1900 stop but examples go beyond that year

Time jumping within periods (ex. of peasant rebellions)

China emphasis

Redundancies

Synthesis

Dense for students?