Chapter Overview

- Two separate conflicts dominated European affairs during the eighteenth century
  - Britain and France dueled for commercial and colonial supremacy
  - Prussia and Austria fought for dominance in central Europe
- Creation of a new balance of power
  - Prussia emerged as a great power
  - Great Britain built a world empire
- The expenses of these wars led every major European government to reconstruct its policies of taxation and finance which, in turn, led to the American Revolution, enlightened absolutism on the Continent, a continuing financial crisis for the French monarchy, and a reform of the Spanish Empire in South America.

Section One: Periods of European Overseas Empires

- Since the Renaissance, European contacts with the rest of the world have gone through four distinct stages:
  - First stage was that of European discovery, exploration, initial conquest, and the settlement of the New World; this stage closed by the end of the seventeenth century.
    - Portugal and the Netherlands penetrated Southeast Asian markets during this stage.
  - Second stage—that of mercantile empires—was one of colonial trade rivalry among Spain, France, and Great Britain.
    - Empires during this period existed to promote trade and commerce.
    - Competition for colonies led to the creation of large navies to protect oversea interests.
      - England and France engaged in a series of naval wars throughout the eighteenth century.
      - Slaves were imported from African to the Americas to sustain the plantation economy; with them, African slaves brought their languages, customs, and ethnic associations which fused with European culture to create a distinctly American heritage.
      - This stage witnessed the independence movements of the 13 North American colonies from Great Britain’s control and the Spanish colonies in Mexico, Central, and South America from the control of imperial Spain.
  - Third Stage—nineteenth century when European governments carved out new formal empires involving the direct European administration of indigenous peoples in Africa and Asia.
    - New nineteenth century empires included Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Algeria.
    - Goals of empire-building included trade, national honor, Christian missionary enterprise, and military strategy
  - Fourth Stage—mid to late 20th century period of decolonization of peoples who had previously lived under European colonial rule.

Section Two: Mercantile Empires

- Section Overview
  - The Treaty of Utrecht (1713) established the boundaries of empire during the first half of the eighteenth century.
    - The Spanish Empire
      - Except for Brazil (Portugal) and Dutch Guiana, Spain controlled all of mainland South America.
• In North America, Spain controlled Florida, Mexico, California, and the Southwest.
• Spain also governed Central America and the islands of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, and the eastern part of Hispaniola (modern-day Dominican Republic).

- The British Empire
  - Colonies along the North Atlantic seaboard, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Bermuda, Jamaica, and Barbados.
  - A few trading stations on the Indian subcontinent

- The French Empire
  - The Saint Lawrence River valley and the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys.
  - West Indian islands of Saint Domingue (modern Haiti), Guadeloupe, and Martinique.
  - Stations in India and the West Coast of Africa

- The Dutch Empire
  - Surinam, or Dutch Guiana in South America
  - Cape Colony in what is today South Africa
  - Trading stations in West Africa, Sri Lanka, and Bengal in India.
  - Controlled trade with Java in what is now Indonesia

- **Mercantilist Goals**
  - **Explanation of the term mercantilism**
    - Economists of the eighteenth century believed this system necessary for a nation to gain a favorable trade balance of gold and silver bullion.
      - Bullion was regarded as the measure of a country’s wealth, and a nation was truly wealthy only if it amassed more bullion than its rivals.
    - Under this system, it was believed that the wealth of one nation was assumed to grow or increase largely at the expense of another nation.
    - This system promoted conflict as nations built large armies and navies to invade its opponents colonies in order to gain access to the profitable resources of that territory.
    - Led countries to seek trading monopolies over certain areas and markets.
      - home countries and its colonies were to trade exclusively with one another
      - governments sought to forge trade-tight systems of national commerce through navigation laws, tariffs, bounties to encourage production, and prohibitions against trading with subjects or monarchs
    - In time, relationships between the mother country and its children were shaken as colonies realized they could purchase products cheaper from other colonies rather than their imperial master.

- **French-British Rivalry**
  - British and French colonists battled over fishing rights, the fur trade, and alliances with Native Americans in the Lower Saint Lawrence valley, upper New England, and the Ohio River Valley.
  - West Indies—where tobacco, cotton, indigo, coffee, and sugar were raised—were the jewels of the colonial empires and were a major area of contention between Britain and France.
  - India was also an area of French-British rivalry
    - Both the British and French traded through privileged chartered companies that enjoyed a legal monopoly.
      - British East India Company
        - Robert Clive—an official in the company—seized the opportunity to annex regions in India as their local governments failed.
      - **Compagnie des Indes**
        - Joseph Dupleix was the French equivalent to Clive.
Europeans viewed India as a springboard into the larger market of China.

The original European footholds in India were trading posts called factories.

Section Three: The Spanish Colonial System

• Colonial Government
  o Since Queen Isabella of Castile had commissioned Columbus, the legal link between the New World and Spain belonged to the crown of Castille.
    ▪ Castile assigned the duties of governing the American colonies to the Council of the Indies who, with the monarch, nominated the viceroy of New Spain (Mexico) and Peru.
  o Viceroyes
    ▪ They acted as the chief executives in the New World and carried out the laws issued by the Council of the Indies.
    ▪ Each viceroyalties was divided into several judicial councils known as audiencias.
    ▪ There were also several local officers, the most important of which were the corregidores who presided over municipal councils.

• Trade and Regulation
  o Casa de Contratacion (House of Trade) in Seville regulated all trade with the New World.
    ▪ The Casa worked in tandem with the Consulado, the merchant guild of Seville, and other groups involved with American commerce in Cadiz.
  o Cadiz was the only port authorized for use in trade with the Americas.
  o The Flota System
    ▪ Each year, a fleet of commercial vessels, controlled by Seville merchants and escorted by warships, carried merchandise from Spain to a few specified ports including Portobello, Veracruz, and Cartagena on the Atlantic coast.
    ▪ Ships were then loaded with gold and silver for transport back to Spain.
    ▪ Trade outside the flota system was banned.
      ▪ For example, Spanish colonists within the American Empire were prohibited from establishing direct trade with each other.

• Colonial Reform Under the Spanish Bourbon Monarchs
  o Following the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714) and the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), the Bourbon family replaced the Spanish Habsburgs as the royal family in Spain when Philip V took the throne.
    ▪ Philip and his administrators used French administrative skills to reassert the imperial trade monopoly which had decayed under the last Habsburg rulers of Spain.
  o Philip institutes coastal patrol vessels to suppress smuggling in American waters.
    ▪ This led to war with England in 1739.
  o The great mid-century wars exposed the vulnerability of the Spanish empire to naval attack and economic penetration, and as an ally of France, Spain was considered a defeated power by 1763.
  o Charles III reforms Spain’s control of the empire.
    ▪ Charles emphasized royal ministers rather than councils; as a result, the role of both the Council of the Indies and the Casa de Contratcion diminished.
      ▪ He instituted the intendant system which relied on loyal, royal bureaucrats to serve as agents of the royal administration.
    ▪ Charles abolished the monopolies of Seville and Cadiz and permitted other Spanish cities to trade with America.
    ▪ He opened more South American and Caribbean ports to trade and authorized commerce between Spanish ports in America.
He organized a new viceroyalty in the region of Rio de la Plata, which included much of present-day Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia.

- Two classes of Spaniards in the New World
  - Peninsulares: persons born in Spain who entered the New World to fill posts, which were usually the most profitable jobs in the region.
  - Creoles: persons of European descent born in the Spanish colonies who were often made to feel as though they were second-class citizens.

Section Four: Black African Slavery, The Plantation System, and the Atlantic Economy

- Section Overview
  - History of European slavery
    - It had existed since ancient times.
    - Slavery had a continuous existence in the Mediterranean world, where the sources of slaves changed over time.
    - After the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the Ottoman Empire forbade the exportation of white slaves from their lands; as a result, the Portuguese began to import African slaves to the Iberian Peninsula from the Canary Islands and West Africa.
    - Slaves served Europeans in domestic work and many royal courts imported them for the novelty of their color.
  - The African Presence in the Americas
    - Initially, Spanish and Portuguese settlers in the New World relied on Native Americans as laborers.
      - In time, disease decimated the indigenous populations and labor became scarce.
      - Spanish and Portuguese turned to imported African slave labor and toward the end of the seventeenth century, English colonists in the Chesapeake Bay region of Virginia and Maryland slowly turned to African slave labor as well.
    - European slave traders relied on Africans to supply them with other Africans as slaves.
      - Internal conflicts in Africa often ended in the victor taking their defeated enemies as slaves; some African groups, in turn, sold their spoils of victory to European slave traders who then transported them across the Atlantic.
    - The West Indies, Brazil, and Sugar
      - Transatlantic economy
        - The first slaves arrived on the Continent of North America in 1619 when a Dutch ship delivered them to Jamestown, Virginia. However, the West Indies and Brazil had been using slave labor since the early 1500’s and African slaves had become a major social presence in these areas.
          - One historian referred to the cultural development in these regions as “a Euro-African phenomenon”.
        - Sugar industry and slavery
          - Whereas slavery decreased in many areas of Spanish South America by the late seventeenth century, it steadily rose in Brazil and the Caribbean throughout the eighteenth century to supply the expanding sugar plantations with labor.
            - Early eighteenth century nearly 20,000 African slaves a year arrived in the West Indies.
            - By 1725 it had been estimated that nearly 90% of Jamaica’s population consisted of black slaves.
          - Brazil also used slave labor to produce tobacco and coffee, and for gold mining.
• Due to high mortality rates among slave populations, reproduction rates of slaves were very low. Therefore, new slaves were constantly imported from Africa to sustain a large labor force.
  • Consequently, newly arrived Africans with their own languages, culture, and beliefs, constituted a high percentage of the slave population.

• Slavery and the Transatlantic Economy
  o Different European nations dominated the slave trade during different periods.
    ▪ Portugal and Spain in the sixteenth century
    ▪ The Dutch in the seventeenth century
    ▪ Great Britain in the late seventeenth and eighteenth century
  o Triangle Trade System
    ▪ European goods—often guns—were carried to Africa to be exchanged for slaves, who were then taken to the West Indies, where they were traded for sugar and other tropical products which were then shipped to Europe.
  o Trade between New England and the West Indies
    ▪ New England fish, rum, and lumber were often traded for sugar.
  o Political turmoil and division in Africa increased the supply of slaves in the eighteenth century.
    ▪ Civil war in the kingdom of the Kongo
      • A dispute broke out over the succession to the throne created a situation in which captives of war were continually sold to slave traders.
    ▪ Similar political unrest plagues the Gold Coast area in the eighteenth century.

• The Experience of Slavery
  o Section Overview
    ▪ African slavery to the New World was the largest intercontinental migration in human history.
    ▪ Conditions on slave ships were cramped, quality of food was poor, and disease was rampant.
    ▪ Since many more men were enslaved than women, it was difficult for Africans to preserve the tradition of an extended family.
    ▪ Different types of slaves
      • Recently arrived Africans, old Africans who had lived in the region for a number of years, and creoles who were descendants of earlier generations of African slaves.
        o Plantation owners placed a higher value on the latter two groups who were accustomed to slavery and the system.
      ▪ Seasoning was the process through which recently arrived Africans were indoctrinated with the idea that they were no longer free.
        • Consisted of training in new work skills, receiving new names, and learning the basics of the local European language
  o Language and Culture
    ▪ Efforts to preserve African culture
      • Although slaves predominately lived in isolated rural areas, they were able to visit their counterparts from other plantations on market days.
      ▪ It took nearly two generations to root out African languages from slaves and even then the language spoken by slaves was a hybrid of the local European language and their native African tongue.
        • For example, Coromantee was the predominant language in Jamaica.
        • In South Carolina and on St. Domingue, most African slaves spoke Kikongo.
      ▪ Preservation of African languages in the New World enabled slaves to organize themselves in nations with other slaves of similar ethnic ties and also served as a sign of solidarity.
• Many African nations in the Americas elected their own kings and queens, who would preside over gatherings of the members of the nation drawn from various plantations.
• Shared language enable slaves to communicate with each other during uprisings like that in South Carolina in 1739, in Jamaica in the early 1760s, and, most successfully, during the Haitian Revolution of the 1790s.
  o Slave owners believed the rebels communicated by playing drums and in the aftermath outlawed drum playing among slaves.

  o Daily Life
    ▪ Conditions for slaves differed from colony to colony.
      • Black slaves living in Portuguese areas had the fewest legal protections.
      • In Spanish colonies, the Church attempted to provide some protection for black slaves but devoted more attention to the welfare of Native Americans.
      • British and French colonies adopted slave codes but they offered only limited protections to slaves and asserted the dominance of the master.
      • Slave laws always favored the master rather than the slave.
        o Masters permitted to whip and use many varieties of corporeal punishment
        o Sometimes slaves were prohibited from gathering in large groups.
        o Law did not recognize slave marriages.

  o Conversion to Christianity
    ▪ Most African slaves eventually converted to Christianity as it preached to slaves to accept both their slavery and a natural social hierarchy with their masters at the top.
      • In the Spanish, French, and Portuguese domains, they became Roman Catholic.
      • In the English colonies, most became Protestant of one denomination or another.
    ▪ Organized African religion eventually disappeared in the Americas although some practices—like their understanding of nature and the cosmos, and the belief in witches and other people with special powers such as conjurers, healers, and voodoo practitioners—remained.
    ▪ Conversion to Christianity is another example of Europeans crushing a set of non-European cultural values.

  o European Racial Attitudes
    ▪ Europeans considered black Africans to be savages and less than civilized.
    ▪ European languages attached negative connotations to “blackness”.

  o The end of slavery
    ▪ Slave revolt of Saint Domingue in 1794
    ▪ British outlawing of the slave trade in 1807
    ▪ Latin American independence movements
    ▪ Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 in the United States
    ▪ Brazilian emancipation of 1888.

Section Five: Mid-Eighteenth-Century Wars

  • Section Overview
    o Internal relations in Europe during the eighteenth century were unstable and lead major European powers into prolonged wars.
    o Nations generally assumed that warfare could promote their national interests.
    o War rarely touched the civilian populations of western European nations, and therefore did not lead to domestic political or social upheaval.
    o Two areas of power rivalry
- Overseas empires
- Central and Eastern Europe

**The War of the Jenkins’s Era**
- Conflict between Spain and Great Britain in the Americas
  - Spanish officials routinely boarded English vessels to search for contraband.
    - During one such boarding a fight broke out and ended when the Spanish cut off the ear of an English captain named Robert Jenkins who thereafter preserved his severed ear in a jar of brandy.
    - Jenkins and other British merchants lobbied Parliament to relieve Spanish intervention in their trade
  - British Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, declared war on Spain in 1739.
    - This war may have been a minor event but due to developments in continental European politics, it became the opening encounter to a series of European wars fought across the world until 1815.

**The War of Austrian Succession (1740-1748)**
- In December 1740, King Frederick II of Prussia Seized the Austrian province of Silesia and shattered the provisions of the Pragmatic Sanction and disrupted the balance of power in Central and Eastern Europe.
  - Through this action, Frederick II challenged the dominance of the Habsburgs in Central Europe.
- Maria Theresa Preserves the Habsburg Empire
  - Although just twenty three when Prussia seized Silesia, Maria Theresa rallied her empire to resist pressure from the Prussians and other rivals.
  - Theresa secured the loyalty of the nobility by granting them new privileges and legal rights.
    - She recognized Hungary as the most important of her crowns and promised the Magyar nobility local autonomy.
  - Maria Theresa’s policies weakened the power of the central monarchy but ensured the survival of her empire.
- France draws Great Britain into the War
  - Cardinal Fleury, first minister of Louis XV, was pressured into supporting the Prussian aggression toward Austria—the traditional enemy of France.
    - This decision would have major implications for the future of France.
      - First, it strengthened the growing central German state of Prussia that would later significantly endanger France.
      - Second, the French move against Austria brought Great Britain into the conflict because Britain wanted to ensure the Low Countries remained in the hands of friendly Austria and not France.
  - In 1744, the British-French conflicted expanded into the New World when France began to support Spain’s efforts against Britain.
    - This decision over-expanded France as it could not sustain a war against Austria on the Continent while simultaneously fighting Britain in the New World.
- The war ended in a stalemate in 1748 with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.
  - Prussia retained Silesia.
  - Spain renewed Britain’s privilege from the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 to important slaves to the Spanish colonies.

**The “Diplomatic Revolution” of 1756**
- Following the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle had brought peace in Europe, France and Britain continued the struggle in the Ohio River Valley and upper New England.
These clashes were the prelude to what became known in history as the French and Indian War, which formally erupted in 1755.

- Dramatic shift in European alliances
  - British king, George II, who was also the Elector of Hanover in Germany, thought the French might attack Hanover in response to the conflict in America.
  - Convention of Westminster
    - Prussia and Britain agreed to a defensive alliance aimed at preventing the entry of foreign troops into the German states.
    - Frederick II of Prussia feared an alliance of Austria and Russia.
    - The convention meant that Britain, ally of Austria since the Wars of Louis XIV, joined forces with Prussia, Austria’s major eighteenth century enemy.
  - In May 1756, Maria Theresa’s foreign minister, Wenzel Anton Kaunitz signed a defensive alliance with France, Austria’s long-standing enemy.

- The Seven Years’ War (1756-1763)
  - Frederick the Great Opens Hostilities
    - Prussian king Frederick II ignited the Seven Years’ War when he invaded Saxony in August 1756.
      - Frederick attacked preemptively in order to prevent a conspiracy by Saxony, Austria, and France to destroy Prussia.
      - In response, France and Austria made an alliance with Russia, Sweden, and a number of smaller German states dedicated to the destruction of Prussia.
  - Two factors saved Prussia from destruction
    - First, Britain furnished Prussia with considerable financial aid.
    - Second, in 1762, Empress Elizabeth of Russia died and her successor Tsar Peter II had long admired Frederick II and immediately sought peace with Prussia.
  - Treaty of Hubertusburg of 1763
    - Frederick was able to withstand Austria and France, and the continental conflict ended with no significant changes in prewar borders.
    - Silesia remained Prussian and Prussia clearly stood among the ranks of the great powers.
  - William Pitt’s Strategy for Winning North America
    - British secretary of state William Pitt orchestrated Britain’s victories in every theater during the eighteenth century.
      - In Europe
        - He pumped enormous sums of money to Frederick II in Prussia in order to divert France’s attention from its struggle against the British in the New World.
      - In the New World
        - His goal in the New World was to secure all of North America east of the Mississippi for Great Britain which he met by sending 40,000 troops against the French in Canada.
          - In September 1759, in the Saint Lawrence River Valley near Quebec, the British army under James Wolfe defeated the French under Louis Joseph de Montcalm which marked the end of the French Empire in Canada.
        - Pitt launched attacks on major islands of the French West Indies which fell to Britain and used the profits from seized sugar to finance the war effort.
      - In India
        - British forces under the command of Robert Clive defeated France and its Indian allies in 1757 at the Battle of Plassey.
This victory opened the door for the British conquest of Bengal in northeast India and later all of India by the British East India Company.

The Treaty of Paris of 1763
- This peace settlement was crafted by the earl of Bute who took over for Pitt after a quarrel with George II led to the release of Pitt from office.
- Britain received all of Canada, the Ohio River Valley, and the eastern half of the Mississippi valley.
- Britain returned Pondicherry and Chandernagore in India and the West Indian sugar islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique to the French.

Section Six: The American Revolution and Europe

**Resistance to the Imperial Search for Revenue**
- Following the Treaty of Paris of 1763, Britain sought revenue to pay for the continual maintenance of its empire.
  - Since the American colonies had benefitted most from the victory, Britain felt it was rational for the colonies to bear part of the cost of their protection and administration.
  - Britain also had to pay for the organization and administration of the new lands acquired in the Saint Lawrence area to the Mississippi area which was populated by French and Native Americans.
- Different taxes used to raise revenue
  - Sugar Act of 1764
    - Enacted by Prime Minister George Grenville
  - Stamp Act in 1765 put a tax on legal documents and other items such as newspapers which the British saw as legal since it had been approved by Parliament.
- Colonies form the Stamp Act Congress in October 1765 in order to draw up a protest to present to the crown.
  - Groups like the Sons of Liberty in Massachusetts rallied colonist to refuse to import British goods.
    - Consequently, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in 1766.
- Stamp Act Crisis established a pattern of British colonial relations with their mother-country
  - First, Parliament would approve revenue or administrative legislation.
  - Next, the colonists would resist by reasoned argument, economic pressure, and violence.
  - Then, the British would repeal the legislation and the process would begin anew.
- With each encounter, Americans more fully developed their own thinking about political liberty.

**The Crisis and Independence**
- Events of 1767
  - British finance minister, Charles Townshend, led Parliament to pass as series of revenue acts pertaining to the colonial imports.
  - When the colonist resisted, Parliament sent customs agents to administer the law and troops to protect these officers.
- Boston Massacre of 1770
  - British troops killed five citizens during protests against the Townshend revenues.
  - To diffuse the situation, Parliament repelled all the revenues except the one on tea.
- Intolerable Acts 1774
  - Under the ministry of Lord North, Parliament was determined to assert its authority over the colonies and instituted a series of laws known in American history as the Intolerable Acts.
  - The new laws did the following:
    - shut down the port of Boston
    - reorganized the government of Massachusetts
allowing troops to be quartered in private homes
- removed the trials of royal customs officials to England

- Quebec Act 1774
  - extended the boundaries of Quebec to include the Ohio River Valley
  - Americans regarded the Quebec Act as an effort to prevent their mode of self-government from spreading beyond the Appalachian Mountains.

- Steps Toward Independence
  - Citizens arranged committees of correspondence throughout the colonies to make different areas aware of the problems in their regions and they encouraged united action.
  - In 1774, the First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia
    - This body hoped to persuade Parliament to restore self-government in the colonies.
  - Battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775
    - The colonists suffered defeat at the Battle of Bunker Hill.
    - Although defeated, assemblies of colonists began viewing themselves as autonomous of the British crown.
  - The Second Continental Congress gathered in May 1775
    - Sought conciliation with Britain, but the pressure of events led it to begin to conduct the government of the colonies.
    - King George II declared the colonies in rebellion in August 1775.
    - During the winter, Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* widely circulated and galvanized public opinion in favor of separation from Great Britain.
    - A colonial army and navy were organized.
    - In April 1776, the Continental Congress opened American ports to the trade of all nations.

- On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution began.
  - France and Spain support the colonists
    - Early in 1778, the war widened into a European conflict when Ben Franklin persuaded France to support the rebellion.
    - In 1779, the Spanish joined the war against Britain.

- The War of the American Revolution continued until 1781 when the forces of George Washington defeated those of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown.
  - The Treaty of Paris in 1783 concluded the conflict, and the thirteen American colonies finally established independence.

- American Political Ideas
  - The political ideas of the colonists were borrowed from the English Revolution of 1688 which was launched by the aristocracy against the political absolutism of the Stuart monarchs.
    - Due to the measures taken by George III from 1763-1776, the colonists reasoned that the British were attacking many of their fundamental liberties, and, therefore the two should not be united.
  - Influences on American political heritage
    - John Locke and Whig political ideas were one influenced the Americans.
    - British political writers known as the Commonwealth men, who were intellectually rooted in republican political views that first developed in the radical thought of the Puritan revolution.
    - John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon wrote a collection of essays known as *Cato’s Letters* that criticized the British government for undermining liberty.

- Events in Great Britain
  - Section Overview
• George III sought to strip a few powerful Whig families of their power because he believed they bullied his two predecessors.
  • When George appointed the early of Bute to secretary of state when Pitt resigned, he sought the aide of a politician that the Whigs hated.
  • George tried several ministers between 1761 and 1770 to see who could gain the crown support in the House of Commons.
  • In 1770, George turned to Lord North, who the Whigs hated, who remained the king’s first minister until 1782.
• Powerful Whig families believed the king was a tyrant for trying to curb the power of one particular group of the aristocracy.
  o The Challenge of John Wilkes
    • Wilkes was a London political radical, member of Parliament, and publisher of a newspaper called *The North Briton*.
      • In issue number 45, Wilkes vehemently criticized Lord Bute’s handling of the peace negotiations with France.
      • Bute had Wilkes arrested but he was released soon thereafter.
    • The House of Commons ruled that issue number 45 was libel and it expelled Wilkes who then fled the country; Wilkes was popularly supported by the British people throughout the ordeal.
    • In 1768, Wilkes returned to England and was elected to Parliament but the House of Commons—under the influence of George III’s friends—refused to seat him.
    • Wilkes was reelected four more times before the House of Commons just gave the seat to the candidate they supported.
    • Uprisings of artisans, shopkeepers, and small property owners supported Wilkes as did aristocrats who wanted to humiliate George III.
    • Wilkes was finally seated in 1774 after having become the lord mayor of London.
    • The American colonists closely followed the affair as they saw George III regarded as a tyrant by supporters of Wilkes, it reaffirmed their feeling regarding the new taxes.
  o Movement for Parliamentary Reform
    • British citizens and colonist question the power of a self-selected aristocratic political body.
      • British subjects at home who were no more directly represented in Parliament than were the Americans adopted the colonial arguments.
      • Both the colonial leaders and Wilkes appealed more to popular opinion in Britain than the legally constituted political authorities.
    • The colonial leaders established revolutionary, but orderly, political bodies—the congress and the convention—who’s power lied in the consent of the governed.
  o The Yorkshire Association Movement
    • Discontentment in Britain resulted from the mismanagement of the American war, high taxes, and Lord North’s ministry.
    • In 1778, Christopher Wyvil—a landowner and retired clergyman—organized the Yorkshire Association Movement.
      • Property owners, or freeholders, met in a mass meeting to demand moderate changes in the corrupt system of Parliamentary elections.
      • The association examined and suggested reforms for the entire government.
      • The association collapsed in the early 1780s but it provided many British citizens with a new civic consciousness.
    • Parliament was aware of the reforms called for by the association and in April 1780, the House of Commons passed a resolution that called for lessening of the power of the crown.
• George III continued to appoint his allies as ministers.
  • Parliament did force Lord North to share the position with James Fox, a longtime critic of George III.
  • In 1783, George appointed William Pitt the Younger to prime minister at the age of 24.
    o Pitt constructed a House of Commons favorable to the monarch.
    o Pitt sought to formulate trade policies that would make him popular with the British people.
• With the help of Pitt, George managed to reassert the monarchs power in political affairs.
• **Broader Impact of the American Revolution**
  o The Americans—through state constitutions, the Articles of Confederation, and the federal Constitution—had demonstrated to Europe the possibility of governments without kings and hereditary nobilities.
  o Americans demonstrated that natural law, rather than divine right or hereditary, was the highest political authority.