The Dutch Republic: The Rise and Decline of a Golden Age, 1581-1715

- Why did the Dutch choose a republic?
- Why a “golden age”?
- To what extent was the Dutch Republic “the most bourgeois of all of Europe?”
Classical Models of Government:

Democracy / Republic / Aristocracy / Oligarchy / Monarchy

What form of government would European States adopt, 1648-1715?

How would the European states influence each other in their choices of government?

- France
- England
- Russia
- the Netherlands

Why does it matter?
The Dutch Republic and the Global Economy of the 17th Century

- What important innovations of the 17th century transformed the global economy?

- To what extent did European consumerism shape the global economy?

- What is the connection between the global economy and the Dutch Republic’s Golden Age?
The Peace of Westphalia, 1648, recognized the new boundaries of European states that included an independent Portugal and United Netherlands. It also recognized the growth of the Ottoman Empire into the Balkans.
The emergence of Dutch power: Anti-Spanish & Anti-Hapsburg resistance
“As it is apparent to all that a prince is constituted by God to be ruler of a people, to defend them from oppression and violence as the shepherd his sheep...and when he does not behave, on the contrary, oppresses them, seeking opportunities to infringe their ancient customs and privileges, then he is no longer a prince but a tyrant, and the subjects are to consider him in no other view.”
Chronology: The Rise

- 1609: Twelve Years’ Truce recognizes an independent Dutch state in the northern provinces; founding of the Bank of Amsterdam
- 1612: Manhattan Island settled as a Dutch colony; New Haarlem colony created
- 1621: The Dutch West India Company is Created; Dutch prepare for war against Spain (30 Years’ War)
Chronology: The Height

- 1652: Portuguese South Africa is turned over to the VOC; origin of Afrikaaners
- 1640s-1660’s: Series of Navigation Acts passed by British Parliament against the Dutch
- 1670’s: French government issues first mercantilist policies directed against the Dutch and English
Why a Golden Age?

- **SOCIAL:** religious tolerance, bourgeoisie dominate
- **POLITICAL:** Mercantile oligarchy balanced by the House of Orange “staatholder” (military ruler); relative political freedom
- **INTELLECTUAL:** Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment begin here
- **CULTURE:** Dutch masters – painting
- **ECONOMICS:** Financial & Shipping Power
Chronology: The Decline

• 1688: The Glorious Revolution in England. William of Orange (Dutch) and his Scottish wife, Mary, assume the royal crown of England.

• 1670’s – 1710’s: Series of commercial wars weaken the Dutch economy & govt.

• 1715: Treaty of Utrecht. British mercantile power eclipses the Dutch.
An openness to capitalism

THE TULIP INDUSTRY
A Shipping & Commercial Superpower
Vesalius: Modern Anatomy
Published Without Censorship

Vesalius Plate 26: the muscles
The Illustrations from the works of Andreas Vesalius
“An Old Jew”
Rembrandt van Rijn
De Hoek.
View of Delft, by Vermeer.
“Study: Head of a Negro”  
Rembrandt van Rijn
Vermeer.
“The most bourgeois” of all European countries, 17th century.
Vermeer.
Dr. Tulp’s Anatomy Lesson by Rembrandt
The House of Orange balances the government.

William III of Orange
Science & Enlightenment
Leeuwenhoek
The Microscope
Emblem of The Dutch East India Company, the “VOC” (in Dutch)
Domination of the global economy

Dutch Trade Routes, ca. 1650. The Dutch were the greatest commercial nation of the seventeenth century.
Christian Huyghens (1629-1695)

- Dutch scientist who worked mainly in physics and mathematics
- Refined the telescope
- Invented clocks with pendulums
- Developed the wave theory of light
Hugo Grotius, 1583-1645

- Father of modern international law
- Developed the “just war” theory (only wars of defense are justifiable)
- Refined international maritime law
Baruch Spinoza, Philosopher, 1632-1677

- Portuguese Jew who fled to the Netherlands
- Revived medieval Islamic tolerance
- "god is in everything, and there is one god"
- Father of Modern religious tolerance