Early Capitalist Society

Intro
- A rapidly expanding population and economy encouraged the development of capitalism.
- Technologies of communication and transportation enabled businessmen to profit from distant markets.

Population Growth and Urbanization
- The foundation of European economic expansion in early modern times was a rapidly growing population, which reflected improved nutrition and decreasing mortality.
- The Columbian Exchange enriched European diets by introducing new food crops such as potatoes, corn, tomatoes, and peppers.
- Better nourished people were better able to resist diseases like smallpox.
- Decreasing mortality resulted in rapid population growth.
- Rapid population growth drove a process of equally rapid urbanization. Some cities grew because they were chosen as sites of government. Other cities were commercial and industrial as well as government centers and their numbers grew with the European economy.

Early Capitalism and Protoindustrialization
- Capitalism—an economic system in which private parties make their goods and services available on a free market and seek to take advantage of market conditions to profit from their activities.
- The center of a capitalist system is the market in which businessmen compete with each other, and the forces of supply and demand determine the prices received for goods and services.

-Capitalism developed as businessmen learned to take advantage of the market by building efficient communications and transportation.
-Private parties organized many institutions and services to supply capitalism.
-Banks appeared in major cities in Europe, they held funds and granted loans. They published business newsletters.
-Insurance companies developed.
-Stock market developed.
-Joint-stock companies were important institutions in early capitalist society.
-Joint-stock companies spread the risks of expensive business enterprises.
-Trading companies organized larger commercial ventures than ever before.
-Capitalism was supported by governments and merchants.
-Merchants had a lot of power in English and Dutch states.
-English and Dutch states enforced contracts and protected the right of owning land.
-They also chartered joint-stock companies.
-Capitalism developed partly because of imperialism.
-Some capitalist entrepreneurs turned to the countryside, instead of urban artisans to produce things like cloth, nails, pots, and many other goods.
-They organized a "putting-out system" in which they would take raw materials into the countryside, pay small wages for people to turn it into cloth, and then sell it in markets.

Social Change in Early Modern Europe
I. Introduction
- Capitalist economic development brought unsettling change to European lands.
- The putting-out system, for example, introduced considerable sums of money into the countryside.
- The increased wealth was good and bad in a sense.
- It brought material benefits.
- Peasant households acquired more cabinets, furnishings, and tableware.
- Rural residents had better clothes, food, and wine.
- Better income resulted in individuals their own economic interests to become more financially independent.
- But it also undermined the rural lifestyle that had long been established.
- When women and young adults began to earn their own income, many feared that things were getting out of control.
- Eastern Europe had very few cities so in expanding agrarian states like Poland, Bohemia, and Russia, most people had no choice but to work in the countryside.
- Landlords took advantage of this and forced peasants to work under extremely harsh conditions.

II. Serfdom in Russia
- Russia was a huge, but sparsely populated empire with little trade or manufacturing.
- Romanov tsars restricted the freedoms of most Russian peasants and tied them to the land as serfs.
- Serfdom required semi-free peasants to provide labor service for landowners and prevented them from marrying or moving away without the landlord’s permission.
- The government promulgated a law code that provided a tight state control over the Russian labor force, by establishing a rigid caste-like social order that restricted occupational and geographic movement.
- This didn’t turn serfs into slaves, but in the late 17th and 18th centuries, landlords sold serfs to one another as if they were property.
- Therefore, landlords made enormous income from cheap labor costs and sale of agricultural products.
- In the larger economy of Europe, eastern lands also relied on semi-free labor.
- By early 16th century, the Netherlands depended on grain imports from Poland and Russia through the Baltic Sea.
- Capitalism flourished in western Europe because the labor of serfs provided food and raw materials that fueled economic development.

III. Profits and Ethics
A. Capitalism also posed moral challenges.
   - Theologians regarded profit-making as morally dangerous because profiteers looked to their
     own advantage instead of the welfare of the community.
   - Church officials attempted to forbid the collection of interest on loans.
B. Bankers were not willing to risk large sums of money on business ventures without realizing
   handsome returns on their investment in the form of interest.
C. Most important of the early apostles of capitalism was the Scottish philosopher Adam Smith (1723-
   1790), who held that society would prosper when individuals pursued their own economic interests.
D. Capitalism created deep social strains, which caused bandits to plague the countryside of early modern
   Europe, muggers turned whole sections of large cities into danger zones, and witchcraft represented
   toward women.

IV. The Nuclear Family
A. Nuclear families became more important economically, and they also became more socially and
   emotionally independent.
B. Love between a man and a woman became a more important consideration in the making of
   marriages.
C. Children became a more important ingredient in family life.
D. Capitalism did not necessarily cause these changes in families, but it may have encouraged
   developments that helped define the nature and role of the family in modern European society.

The Reconfiguration of the Universe

Until the Seventeenth century, European astronomers baser their understandings of the universe on the work of the
Greek scholar Claudius Ptolemy of Alexandria. They believed that the Earth was the center of the Universe and
everything revolved around it. The planets moved in a circular movement around the Earth but to them they would
sometimes slow down, stop, or even reverse direction. Then in 1543 the Polish astronomer Nicolas Copernicus
published a treatise On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres that broke with the Ptolemaic theory and pointed
European science in a new direction. It proposed that the Earth was not the center of the Universe but The Sun was.
Copernicus’s ideas not only challenged prevailing scientific theories but also religious beliefs. His theory implied that
it was possible that there might be life on other planets this notion made it difficult to reconcile with Christian
practices, which held that the earth and humanity were unique creations of God.

Scientific Revolution

Copernicus
- Inspired astronomers
- He claims that the Ptolemaic universe didn’t correspond with reality based on mathematical and observational
evidence
- Thus the Ptolemaic universe is abandoned in favor of the Copernican model of the universe
- By the mid-17th century observations and math had come to dominate mechanics and astronomy and this
brought about the scientific revolution

Galileo
- Two mathematicians Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) explained that planetary orbit was not circular
- Galileo took the telescope and pointed it at the sky. He recorded sun spots, four moons around Jupiter, and
unknown stars giving evidence of a larger universe
- Galileo studied terrestrial motion, the affects of gravity on the body

Isaac Newton
- Depended on accurate observation and mathematics
- He outlined his works in The Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy
- He thought a law of universal gravitation regulated the motions of bodies in the universe
- His laws allowed him to explain seemingly unrelated phenomena
His laws became the unquestioned framework for the physical sciences

The Enlightenment - a difference between science and society

- Enlightenment thinkers sought natural laws that governed human society in the same way that
  Newton’s laws governed the universe
- John Locke - all human knowledge comes from sense perceptions
- Adam Smith - laws of supply and demand determine price
- Montesquieu - used political science to argue for political liberty
- Center of Enlightenment was France where philosophes debated issues of day
- Voltaire (1694-1778)
  - French philosophe, champion of religious liberty and individual freedom
  - Prolific writer, wrote some seventy volumes in life, often bitter satire
- Deism popular among thinkers of Enlightenment, including Voltaire
  - Accepted the existence of a god but denied supernatural teachings of Christianity
  - God the Clockmaker ordered the universe according to rational and natural laws
  - The theory of progress - the ideology of the philosophers
- Impact of Enlightenment
  - Weakened the influence of organized religion
  - Encouraged secular values based on reason rather than revelation
  - Subjected society to rational analysis, promoted progress and prosperity