

# The Modern World System

Immanuel Wallerstein's  
Theoretical Framework for the  
Rise of the Modern World



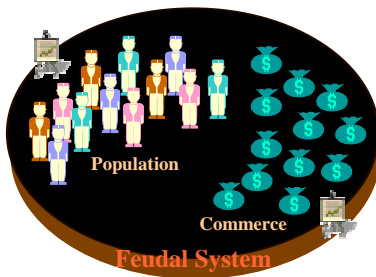
1

# Medieval Prelude

- ◆ Before 16th century, feudalism dominated Western European society.
- ◆ Between 1150-1300, both population and commerce expanded within feudal system.
- ◆ From 1300-1450, this expansion ceased, creating a severe economic crisis.

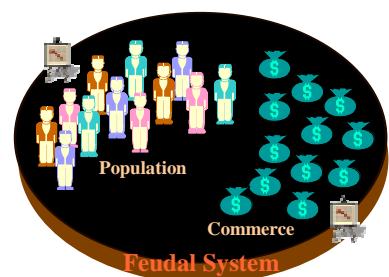
2

# Before Feudal Crisis



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# After Feudal Crisis



4

# Reasons for Feudal Crisis



1. Agricultural  
Production Fell



2. Economy Began  
to Shrink



3. Climatic Changes  
Increased Epidemics



5

# Solution to Feudal Crisis

- ◆ A capitalist world economy to ensure continued economic growth



6

## A World Economy Entailed:



1. An Expanded Geographical Area



2. New Ways to Control Labor



3. Strong State Machineries

7

## Economic Links

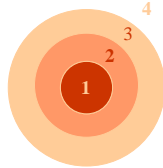
- ◆ Superseded national or other political boundaries



8

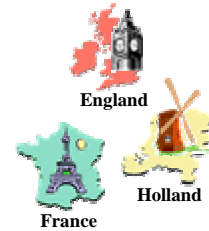
## Regions of the World

- ◆ 1. Core
- ◆ 2. Semi-Periphery
- ◆ 3. Periphery
- ◆ 4. External Areas



9

## The Core



10

## Core Political Conditions



1. Strong Central Governments



2. Extensive Bureaucracies



3. Large Mercenary Armies

11

## Core Beneficiary

- ◆ The local bourgeoisie obtained control over international commerce and extracted capital surpluses for their own benefit.



12

## Core Labor Source



Impoverished Peasants Moved to the Cities, Providing Cheap Labor for Manufacturing

13

## Core Agricultural Productivity Increased



1. Independent Farmers Were Commercially-Oriented



2. More People Were Raising Livestock



3. Farm Technology Improved

14

## The Periphery



Latin America

15

## Periphery Political Conditions



1. Lacked Strong Central Governments.



2. Exported Raw Materials to the Core



3. Relied on Coercive Labor Practices

16

## Periphery Beneficiary

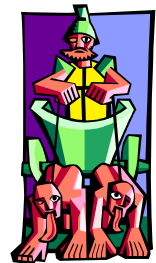
- ◆ The aristocracy grew wealthy from their relationship with the world economy and could draw on the strength of a central core region to maintain control.



17

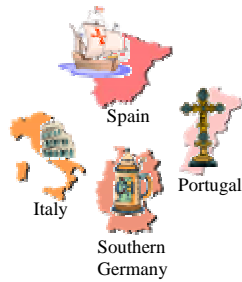
## Periphery Labor Sources

- ◆ Labor came from forced serfdom, enslavement of native populations, importation of African slaves, coercive labor practices (e.g., *encomienda*), and forced mine labor.



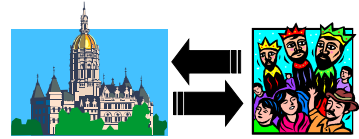
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## The Semi-Periphery



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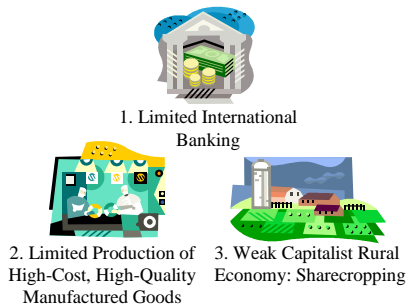
## Semi-Periphery Political Conditions



**Exhibited Tensions Between the Central Government and a Strong Local Landed Class**

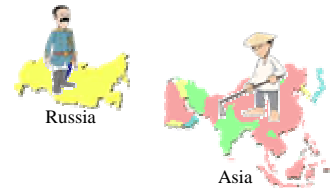
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## Semi-Periphery Economy



21

## External Areas



22

## External Economies

- ◆ Maintained their own economic systems and managed to remain outside the modern world economy.
- ◆ Internal commerce remained more important than outside trade.



23