Scientific Revolution

Contextualization: With the turmoil of the Protestant Reformation and the subsequent Age of Religious Wars still prevalent in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Europe nonetheless experienced a dramatic change in its scientific view of the universe. There was a profound rethinking of moral and religious matters, along with the emergence of new scientific theories. This was the Scientific Revolution, an era that represented a new direction for thought and culture in Europe. Thesis: Scientific thought as it had emerged after the Renaissance truly did signal a crucial turning point in modern European history. The Scientific Revolution represented a significant challenge to the ways of thinking that had dominated the late medieval times and influenced Europeans to reconsider the world in which they lived. Argument: The Scientific Revolution ultimately resulted in a major transformation of Western society and civilization.

Body 1: New ideas and methods of science challenged the modes of thought associated with late medieval times.

- Evidence: New discoveries and advancements in astronomy rejected and refuted the dominant Ptolemaic systems. Copernican astronomy established heliocentrism as opposed to the previously believed geocentrism.
- Analysis: These new revelations of astronomical knowledge allowed Europeans to part with accepted knowledge and adopt instead revolutionary modern ideas that would continue to influence science into the future.
- Evidence: The revolution in scientific thought contributed directly to a major reexamination of Western philosophy. Natural philosophers explained the world in mechanical terms, comparing the universe to a machine.
- Analysis: This new way of thinking transformed nature from a realm of divinity to a realm of utility. Natural knowledge now represented the path toward the improvement of human beings. Humans could command nature to be benefit themselves.

Body 2: The scientific ideas that arose during the Scientific Revolution provided Europeans with a new perspective on their lives and the world in which they lived.

- Evidence: The expansion of science led to the emerging idea that genuinely new knowledge about nature and humankind could be discovered. Scientific societies developed to support this new learning.
- Analysis: The new pursuit of the advancement of learning, and the belief that new knowledge would be continuously created, allowed intellectuals to focus on humankind and life on earth. Knowledge could now be applied practically.
- Evidence: The new science was viewed by many contemporaries as posing a potential challenge to religion. Most of the natural philosophers genuinely saw their work as contributing to a deeper knowledge of the divine.
- Analysis: The conflict between science and religious faith led to a new view of religion in Western society. Religion no longer held a prominent position in light of reason.

Conclusion: The Scientific Revolution and the thoughts and ideas that if gave rise to marked a major turning point in the history of Western culture. Synthesis: Revolutionary thought and new discovery was a recurring phenomenon for Europe. Both the Renaissance and the Reformation are testimony to how change can drastically alter culture and society. The fundamental changes associated with the Scientific Revolution gave rise to a modern way of thinking that would establish the foundation for the later eighteenth century movement known as the Enlightenment.