

Legacy: The West & The World - Chapter 4 The Enlightenment

Euro Society in 18th Century

- pop growth (less wars, less epidemics, better hygiene)
- corn & potatoes stabilized food supply
- more people, more movement to cities
- Agricultural Revolution & Enclosure*
- new techniques used in farming (crop rotation, fertilizers, etc... led to great changes throughout Europe beyond farming).
- Enclosure: new system of land distribution... landowners reclaiming common land, renting out in strips... redistribution led to rioting in some areas, eco & demographic changes.

Industrial Revolution

- 1750s: gradual series of changes in agric, trade, industry
- inventions= changes in labour needs = urbanization
- Dr. Francois Quesnay (Laissez-faire- no interference)... need for luxury items and consumerism for good of economy. Voltaire “the superfluous is necessary”
- commercial capitalism increased... > trade
- nobility was weakening... after Louis XIV died in 1715... many monarchs thought nobility too greedy
- Europe after Louis XIV
- conflicts among monarchs and powerful families resulted from attempts to increase land and commercial advantage.
- military decisions made by monarchs & aristocrats with little care for populace.
- main element was balance of power in Europe.

Enlightenment Ideas

- not accepted everywhere- Church still resisted (eg Spanish Inquisition). Br., Fr., Holland, Denmark... enlightenment ideas spread... most other areas met various resistance... Ottomans were not exposed to most ideas. Power holders resisted new ideas as a threat... people like Voltaire were disliked by conservatives because of his anticlericalism.
- criticized unquestioned obedience to authority
- Deism: philosophical trend – God did not participate in human affairs.
- “my mind is my church”

The Enlightenment

- most people were concerned with themselves & family... yet new people started to concern themselves with the welfare of the people/society as a whole: these people came to be known as *intellectuals*. Thinkers of the Enlightenment in France were called *philosophes* (philosophers).
- freedom of thought, free market, rationalism, optimism, progress. Human rights: public education, freedom of thought, abolition of slavery, etc... increased literacy & books = widespread access to these new ideas.
- Encyclopedia: France 1751- provided info on all subjects... embodied ideals of enlightenment.

Enlightened Despotism

- Frederick the Great (1740-1786)
ruler of Prussia: ‘enlightened despot’.
- an absolute ruler but acts with reason
- Catherine the Great (1762-1796)
Empress of Russia. Considered one of Europe’s most successful monarchs, brought Russia to major power status in the world. Yet, she did not free the largest part of her population: the serfs.

Art, Music & Literature

- ART** Classicism: Baroque Art can be seen as a reaction to Renaissance... dynamic, grandiose, emotional... Classicism was a reaction to Baroque... felt it was too emotional, preferred ideal world of classical Greece.
- Rococo: more in tune with smaller spaces as opposed to the opulence of Louis XIV Palace of Versailles. Style of the Salons.
- MUSIC** Baroque: Bach, Handel... Classical: Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Beethoven... in 18th C Opera became popular.
- LIT** Critical as a social commentary. Famous writers such as Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, Samuel Johnson were extraordinary.

Enlightenment Thinkers

John Locke (1632-1704)

- defended need for elected gov't
- leave "state of nature" people will enjoy life more in a well ordered society where gov't looked after its people.
- Locke heavily influenced Am Revolution: "right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"

Cesare Beccaria (1738-1794)

- Le Café: like salons but without invitation...
- On Crimes and Punishment*. Called for end to capital punishment & judicial torture.
- Yet was resisted by many religious & others that liked torture

Immanuel Kant (1723-1804)

- studied ethics, logic, metaphysics....
- Book written, *Critique of Pure Reason*.
- like Voltaire, Kant saw "religious matters" – and freedom from bigotry and superstition – at the heart of enlightenment.

Adam Smith (1723-1790)

- Most famous economist of the time.
- Need for free trade, market should be regulated by competition and supply/demand. Against Mercantilism.
- *The Wealth of Nations*. Described a capitalist system. Was an optimist. But industrialists later used theories to legitimize exploitation of the working classes.

Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803)

- believed in nationalism & differences between people.
- opposed to the individual, liberal contract theory of society advanced by the philosophes.
- influenced by Rousseau... binds of community... saw the link in language....
- His ideals became the rallying cry of the destructive nationalism of the 19th C.

Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755)

- Book *Spirit of Laws*: laws are: "the necessary relationships deriving from the nature of things". Politics is key.
- influenced by Asian and classical thought.
- importance was in his broad scope.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

- moral reform of society. Did not accept idea that humanity was improving. *The Social Contract*: "Man was born free, and everywhere he is in chains". Put forward concepts of "Common Good" & "General Will".

Voltaire (1694-1778)

- defended tolerance & attacked religious piety.
- early in life confrontational toward establishment. Later championed victims of injustice.
- 1753- historical revolution... need evidence as proof. Big Impact

Edmund Burke (1729-1797)

- conservative viewpoint
- concerned about speed of French Revolution... believed in importance of established traditions & institutions.
- believed society was a contract between everyone.

Marquis de Concorcet (1743-1794)

- welcomed Fr. Revolution, critic of ancient regime... died in prison
- forced into hiding during the Reign of Terror. Wrote that the enemies of clear thinking were priests

The Marquise du Chatelet (1706-1749)

- respected intellectual, long time companion of Voltaire. Had opportunities that few women had.
- Wrote about the discrimination against women.
- Book *Institutions* met with excitement by philosophers... leading intellectual of the day.