



THE ENLIGHTENMENT 1700-1800

18th-century intellectual and philosophical movement with origins in scientific ideas, Renaissance, print culture

Philosophers share ideas in woman-led salons

- **1751:** First volume of *The Encyclopedia* by **Denis Diderot** and others shares knowledge of science, crafts, ideas
- **1781: Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason** promotes rational inquiry

Philosophers criticize religious institutions, promote religious toleration; themselves range from Christians to atheists

- **1696: John Toland** (English, 1670-1722) sets forth **deist** outlook of God as divine watchmaker
- **1748: David Hume** (Scottish, 1711-1776) claims miracles cannot be proven in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*
- **1759: Voltaire** (French, 1694-1778) criticizes Catholicism in *Candide*
- **1779: Gotthold Lessing** (German, 1729-1781) calls for tolerance of non-Christian faiths in *Nathan the Wise*

Theorists desire **government reform** but disagree over best form of government

- **1748: Charles de Montesquieu** (French, 1689-1755) promotes constitutional limits on monarchs in *The Spirit of the Laws*
- **1762: Jean-Jacques Rousseau** (Swiss-French, 1712-1778) promotes democracy, personal freedom under the law in *The Social Contract*

Philosophers seek **universal standards of justice**, uniform law, but few promote extending equal rights to women

- **1763: Voltaire** defends persecuted French Protestants
- **1764: Cesare Beccaria** (Italian, 1738-1794) espouses justice, protests against torture in *On Crimes and Punishments*
- **1792: Mary Wollstonecraft** (English, 1759-1797) argues for women's rights in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*

Enlightenment thinkers view **mundane as changeable**, not locked into social categories

- **1690: John Locke** (English, 1632-1704) calls the mind a blank slate in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, believes man can learn, improve
- **1762: Rousseau** suggests in *Emile* that men can be molded with education, women should be subordinate to men

Enlightened economists **oppose mercantilism**

- **1755: Rousseau** blames world's problems on uneven property distribution in *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*
- **1776: Adam Smith** (Scottish, 1723-1790) promotes free markets, specialization of labor in *The Wealth of Nations*

Enlightenment influences **enlightened absolutism**, is blamed for causing French Revolution (right)

ENLIGHTENED ABSOLUTISM

Absolute rulers adopt some Enlightenment ideas, correspond with Enlightenment philosophers; however, rulers do not fundamentally change absolutist rule

Rational reforms strengthen state and military power but do not greatly improve lives of subjects

- **Russia: Catherine II "the Great"** (r. 1762-1796) establishes schools for nobles, printing presses, clarifies nobility's rights; but also imprisons opponents, maintains censorship and serfdom
- **1773-1775: Pugachev Rebellion** of peasants suppressed
- Russian westward expansion continues

- **Austria: Maria-Theresa** (r. 1740-1780) works to end mistreatment of peasants
- **1781: Joseph II** (r. 1765-1790; co-reigns with Maria-Theresa 1765-1780) abolishes serfdom, promotes religious toleration
- Joseph II imposes more taxes on peasants

- **Prussia: Frederick II "the Great"** (r. 1740-1786) supports arts and education, admires Voltaire, reforms justice system, improves agriculture, writes law code
- Reforms ultimately strengthen and streamline Prussian state
- Tax burden still falls on peasants and townspeople

- **1772, 1793, 1795:** In three steps, Russia, Austria, Prussia partition **Poland-Lithuania** among themselves until it is no longer an independent nation
- Unlike Russia, Austria, and Prussia, Poland does not develop strong central institutions
- **1780s-1790s:** Polish King **Stanislaw** promotes military, economic, educational, constitutional reforms
- Reform undermined by Polish counterrevolutionaries, making partitions by powerful neighbors possible

WAR & COLONIES 1600-1789

Spanish empire: South America (except Portuguese Brazil), Central America, southern North America, Caribbean islands

French empire: Québec, Louisiana, Caribbean, Ohio and Mississippi River valleys, Indian territories, Caribbean islands

Dutch empire: South Africa, Indonesia, territories in South America and India

British empire: North American east coast, India, Caribbean

British, French, Spanish, Dutch battle over global economy; **navies** grow to defend colonial empires, with Britain's particularly strong

18th-century nations seek **balance of power:** if one grows too strong, others unite in war and diplomacy to limit it

- **1740-1748: War of Austrian Succession:** Austria, Russia, Britain fear expansion of Prussia (aided by France), prevent disintegration of Habsburg empire
- **1756-1763: Seven Years' War:** First global war pits Austria and France against Prussia and Britain
 - Fighting occurs in Europe, North America, India
 - War of nations, not just monarchs
 - Britain ends France's North American empire (in America, war is known as the **French and Indian War**)
- Wars are expensive and cause domestic instability

1783: British recognize independence of **United States of America;** American Revolution inspires many Europeans to question traditional government

Armies of **conscripts** and **mercenaries** use bayonets, muskets, line formations, cavalry charges, defensive tactics

Battles usually only limited engagements, as armies are too expensive to risk destroying in entirety

Dynastic wars led by chivalrous aristocratic officers inflict fewer civilian casualties than 17th-century wars of religion

SOCIAL CLASSES & FAMILIES 1600-1789

Social classes given by birth, sometimes called **estates**; define legal rights and privileges

- **Nobles:** Dominate political life, but increasing wealth of non-nobles causes anxiety
- Nobles own large estates, are exempt from taxes
- Large nobility in Poland, Russia, Hungary, and Spain; small nobility in Britain
- Tension grows between old nobility, newly ennobled families
- Nobles try to hold onto traditional privileges

Clergy: Hold legal privileges but are divided between wealthy bishops and impoverished village priests and ministers

Urban middle classes: Artisans, merchants, manufacturers

- Some members of middle class acquire sizable fortunes
- Middle classes resent persisting privileges of nobility
- Social life of cities thrives in cafés, theaters, private clubs

Peasants: Make up majority of European population

- Russia 90% peasants; Prussia, France 75%; Britain very few
- Peasants owe taxes, work duties; some peasants own land, others work on large estates for wages and food
- Landowners use legal measures to prevent poor peasants from hunting, chopping down trees, gathering wood on their property
- Eastern European peasants live in worse conditions, often as serfs, under noble authority

Urban and rural poor: Struggle to survive despite starvation, disease, social control

- Many turn to begging, smuggling, prostitution, crime
- Towns imprison beggars, increase punishments for crimes to maintain order
- Bands of thieves threaten travelers, traders on highways
- Unwanted children are increasingly left at foundling homes, where many die quickly

Jews: Required to live in separate communities called **ghettos**; have few rights, experience legal discrimination based on their religion, live mostly in poverty

Gender difference continues to determine social lives of men and women, regardless of class, from time of birth; opportunities, expectations, economic and cultural roles generally more limited for women

Families, not individuals, are the primary economic unit

- Family members work together in agriculture, artisanal crafts, small industries to provide for each other
- **Households in western Europe** include married couple, children, servants
 - Older children move away, establish their own households, marry late
 - Women leave home to earn money for **dowry**, with goal of establishing a household with a husband
- **Households in eastern Europe** include several generations under one roof; children marry young, stay with parents after marriage

AGRICULTURE, CONSUMPTION, & INDUSTRY 1700-1800

Population explosion across Europe in 1700s: less devastating warfare, more children, better nourishment, fewer epidemics

Agricultural revolution in western Europe in 1700s: new crops, enclosure of open fields, commercialization of agriculture increase food production and distribution

Britain industrializes first (late 1700s) due to free trade, consumer demand, social mobility

Rising demand for convenient, inexpensive **consumer goods** (furniture, clothing, housewares) prompts industrial innovation

Wealthy willing to risk money, or **capital**, to start an industry

Government laws protect and promote industry, trade; money from global economy invested in manufacturing in Europe

New **technologies** invented in Britain make industrial production faster, separate production into many steps

- **1765: Spinning jenny** allows fast thread production in home
- **1776: Steam engine** first used commercially
- **1769: Water frame** allows small-factory thread production

Most **weaving** still done by hand until 19th century

- Families in rural areas and small villages do textile work at home to earn extra money
- Merchant entrepreneurs supply raw materials to workers in their homes, then sell textiles

Villages in contact with cities sell their **agricultural products** in exchange for manufactured and imported goods

Women's role in agricultural production and in large-scale mechanized industry declines

- Women continue to earn money in **cottage industries** or as domestics, but they have fewer options
- Women's work increasingly associated with the home, tradition, viewed as supplemental to a husband's income

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Unrest stems from population increase, famine, popular Enlightenment ideas that promote democracy and lower prestige of monarchy, monarchy's financial crisis, and increasing view that the **parlements** and the **public** represent the French nation more than the monarch does

1787-1788: Government's attempts at reform fail

1789: King **Louis XVI** (r. 1774-1792) opens meeting of **Estates-General** to resolve financial problems (Estates-General is a meeting of three **estates**—clergy, nobles, and all others)

- **1789: Priest Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès** says the Third Estate (non-clergy, non-nobles) is the true French nation and should have political power
- Estates-General goes further than expected, renames itself **National Assembly**, turns absolute monarchy into **constitutional monarchy** (king answerable to an elected legislature), abolishes noble privilege
- Parisians storm **Bastille** (old prison seen as symbol of injustice)
- Women of Paris force king to come to Paris from Versailles

1791: Louis XVI tries to flee France, denounces Revolution

1792: France becomes a **republic**, promoting "liberty, equality, and fraternity," but women lack right to vote or participate

- Government creates new calendar, metric system
- Republic takes control of Catholic Church; move is divisive
- **Sans-culottes** ("those wearing long pants") and tricolor (red, white, blue) flag symbolize republican support

1792: France wars against antirevolution European powers

- War continues sporadically for 23 years, spreading nationalism, democracy, and suffering across the continent

1793-1794: Reign of Terror: Government in hands of a few radicals (**Jacobins**) led by **Maximilien Robespierre**

- Aristocrats and some peasants start counterrevolution
- **Federalists** want decentralized revolution; crushed by Jacobins
- Over 20,000 people guillotined, including King Louis XVI and wife, **Marie-Antoinette**

1794: Robespierre's regime falls; replaced by unstable government called the **Directory** (lasts until 1799)

THE NAPOLEONIC ERA

General Napoleon Bonaparte takes control of French government in 1799, declares himself emperor in 1804

Napoleon brings **domestic order** to France

- **1801:** Makes peace with Pope in the **Concordat**
- **1804: Napoleonic Code** reforms, codifies French law; promotes traditional ideas about family and women
- Napoleon uses **plebiscite** (yes or no vote) to gain popular approval of himself and his policies
- Strengthens **centralized administration**, social hierarchy based on **service to the state** rather than noble birth
- Censorship, arrest for those who disagree

Europe in **almost constant war** during Napoleon's reign

- Napoleon a genius at military organization, strategy
- **1805:** British confirm naval superiority at **Battle of Trafalgar**
- **1805:** France defeats Austria and Russia at **Austerlitz**
- **1806:** Napoleon **blockades** British trade with rest of Europe
- **1806:** Holy Roman Empire dissolves
- **1808:** Spanish resist French invasion
- **1812:** French invade **Russia**
- **1815:** Coalition of Austrian, British, Prussian, and Russian forces defeat Napoleon at **Waterloo**

French army spreads ideas about democracy, stirs **nationalism** throughout Europe

1814-1815: Congress of Vienna establishes a conservative order in Europe

- Austrian Chancellor **Klemens von Metternich** dominates meeting of major European powers
- Pre-Napoleon national boundaries restored
- Legitimate **Bourbon monarchy** restored to France
- England, Austria, Prussia, Russia, France form the **Concert of Europe**
- Agreement to maintain a balance of power under which no one nation can become too strong
- Agreement to squash revolutions, maintain order

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