

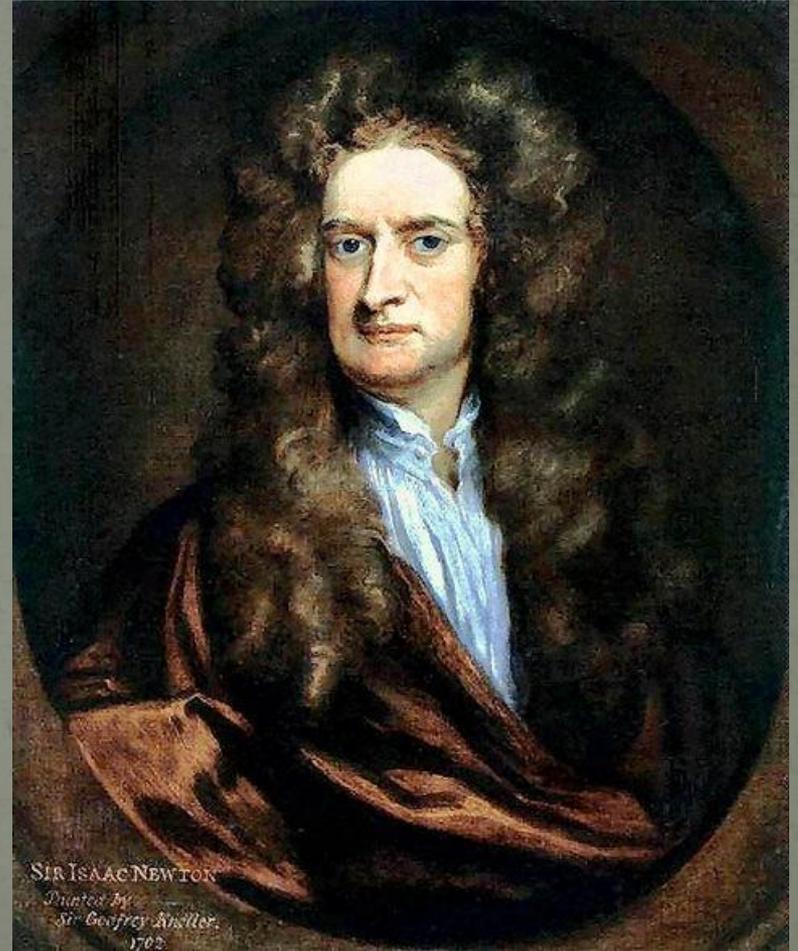
Intellectual Foundations of the Modern World

The Enlightenment



Beginnings of the Enlightenment

- The Age of Exploration led people to believe that truth had yet to be discovered
- The Scientific Revolution questioned accepted beliefs and witnessed the use of reason to explain the laws governing nature.



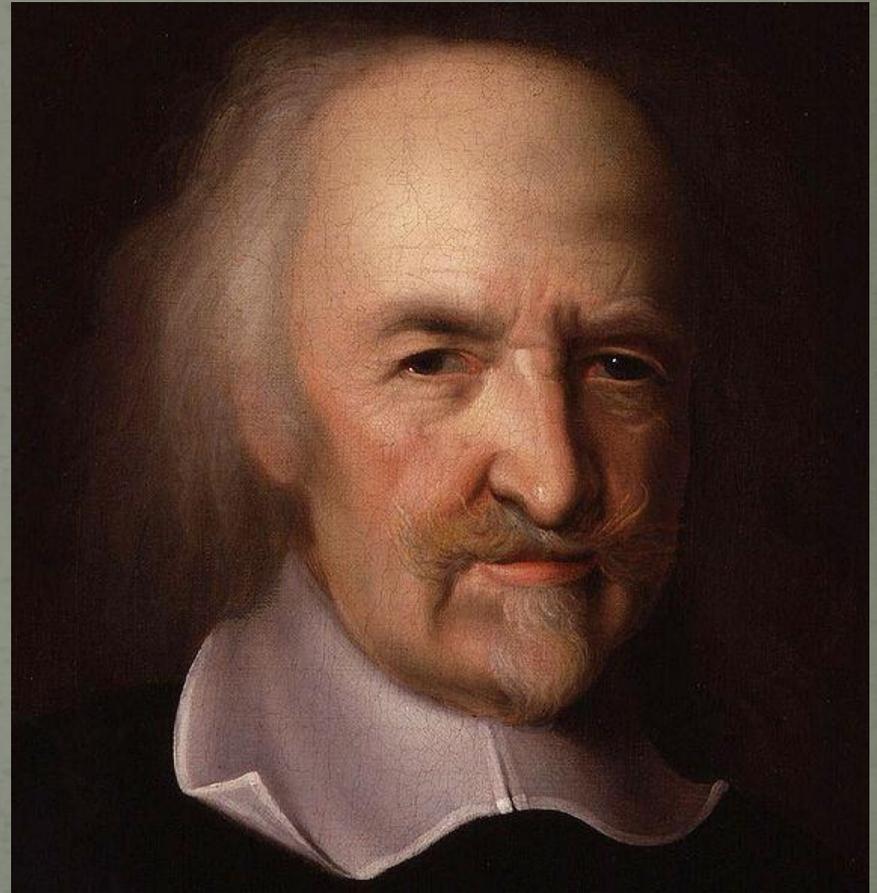
What is the Enlightenment?

- Also known as the Age of Reason
- A revolution in intellectual activity that changed the Western view on government and society
 - People began to look for laws governing human behavior.



Thomas Hobbes's Social Contract

- In his *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes said people agree to give up their natural rights – selfishness – to create a government that will protect everyone.
 - He called this the social contract.
- For Hobbes, the best form of government was an absolute monarchy
 - Could impose order and obedience



Locke's Version of Natural Rights

- The Englishman John Locke believed that people are born free and equal, with three natural rights – life, liberty, and property.
- The purpose of every government is to protect these rights, not take them away.
- In his *Two Treatises on Government* (1690), Locke justifies the Glorious Revolution based upon the idea that government power originates in the consent of the governed.

Consent of the Governed

- If a government fails to protect mankind's three basic natural rights, then it is the right and duty of the citizens of this government to overthrow it and create a new government.



From England to France: The Philosophes Advocate Reason

- The French looked to Britain as an example of how society could be governed.
- Five important concepts formed the core of French Enlightenment philosophy in the mid-1700s.
 - Reason – Truth could be discovered through reason.
 - Nature – What was natural was good.
 - Happiness – A person who lived by nature's laws would find happiness on earth.
 - Progress – Society and mankind could be perfected.
 - Liberty – Society should be set free.

The Ancien Regime

- Under Louis XV, a small privileged class of clergy and nobles regained power
 - Major weakening of the monarchy took place during the 18th century
- As public debt skyrocketed, taxes increased on the masses as well as the privileged
 - The tax-exempt continued to protest through the leadership of Parlements
- Most resentment came from the wealthy middle class that did not buy titles of nobility



Political Critique of the Ancien Regime

- Philosophes shared two main beliefs:
 - Rejected divine right
 - Humans have natural rights
- Locke's *tabula rasa*
 - Humans needed freedom in order to function effectively
 - Best government was essentially one that ruled least!
- Absolutism corrupted society
 - Monarch should serve the people...then, unlimited progress could be attained
- Marquis de Condorcet *Progress of the Human Mind*
 - Elimination of the Ancien Regime would bring humanity into a golden age!

Calls for Religious Toleration

- Due to the PR, toleration is now an issue in Europe
 - First systematic calls occur during English Civil War
 - Though these are founded upon religious principles, not secular principles!
- New Skepticism
 - Pierre Bayle argued that toleration would benefit the state
 - Nothing can ever be known beyond all doubt
- Locke *A Letter Concerning Toleration*
 - Church and State are two separate realms
 - Religious freedom prevents civil unrest
 - True conversion only occurs through persuasion, not violence
- Enlightenment thinkers will attack organized religion as a tool of the Ancien Regime!

Voltaire Combats Intolerance

- Voltaire, one of the most well-known French philosophes, used his pen to fight for tolerance, reason, freedom of religious belief, and freedom of speech.
- “I do not agree with a word you say but will defend to death your right to say it.”



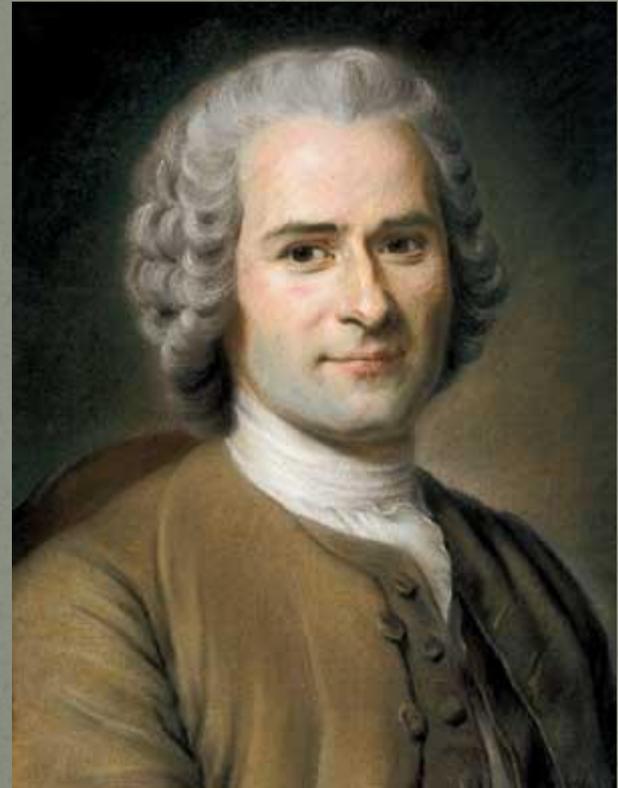
Montesquieu and the Separation of Powers

- “Power should be a check to power.”
- *The Spirit of Laws* (1748) - The best governments were those in which power is balanced between three groups – executive, legislative, and judicial.
- Separation of powers would keep any individual or group from gaining total control of the government.
 - Checks and balances!



Jean-Jacques Rousseau

- Unlike other philosophes, Rousseau believed that civilization and reason destroyed freedom and equality.
 - “Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.”
- In his *The Social Contract* (1762), he argued that men should subordinate their natural rights to the “general will” of society
 - Then true freedom would prevail



What type of gov't is best?

- Voltaire and Montesquieu
 - “Philosopher king”
 - Enlightened despot who works with an educated aristocracy
 - Both looked to the English system as the perfect example
- Rousseau
 - Not a proponent of direct democracy but rather of the “general will”
 - Accepted law that protects freedoms without taking them away



Diderot's *Encyclopedia*

- Greatest intellectual achievement of the Enlightenment
- Goal: Change the general way of thinking!
 - Knowledge was key to progress!
- Completed in 1765 with 72,000 articles in 28 volumes
- Compendium of new ideas that were subversive to the Ancien Regime



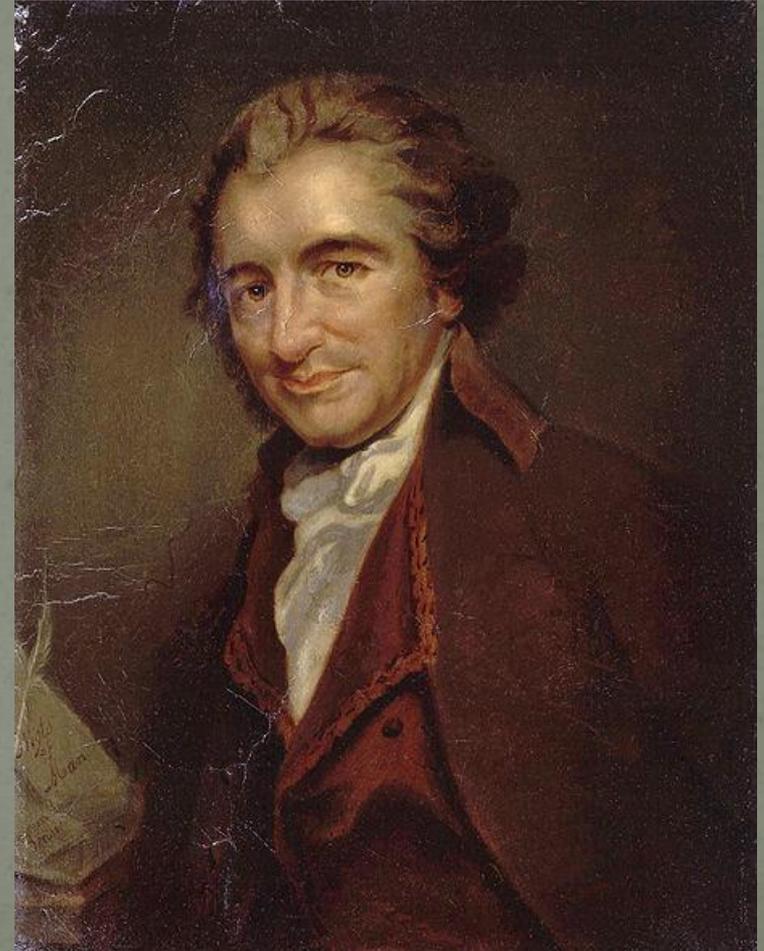
Spread of the Enlightenment

- Production and consumption of books increased
 - Led to a reading revolution, in which reading became silent and individual
- Creation of the public sphere
 - Importance of discussion, conversation, and debate
 - Use of coffeehouses and salons
- Cheap broadsides and public readings spread main ideas to the masses



Religious Rationalism - Deism

- Many philosophes rejected organized religion, which encouraged intolerance, fanaticism, superstition, and persecution
- Therefore, many rejected Christianity in favor of the Newtonian watchmaker
 - God created the universe and then left it be!
 - Simple piety and human kindness was religion enough!



“Great Awakening” – Reaction to Deism

- Pietism

- Began in Germany where Lutheran church services had become very dull
- Called for a warm, emotional religion to bring people closer to God
- Characterized by enthusiasm!!!!!!!

- Methodism

- Religious revival in England led by John Wesley
- Focus on the mystical “conversion” experience
- Preached sermons to thousands of people in open fields
- Creation of a new sect of Christians outside of the state church

Great Revival Meeting



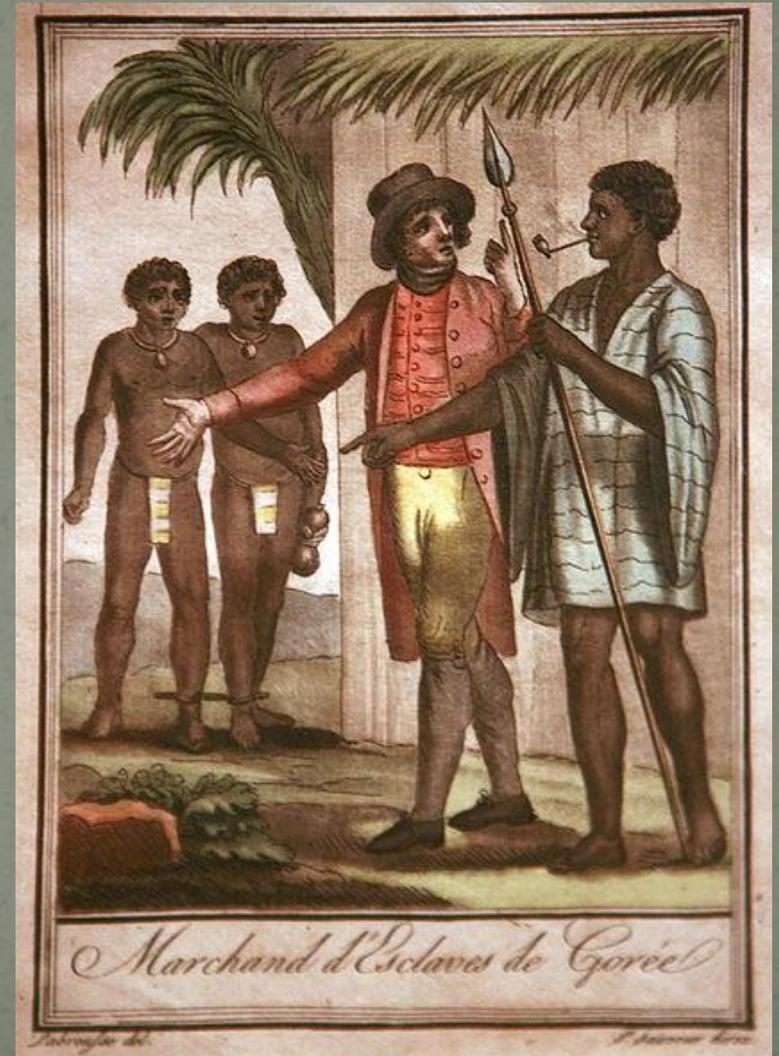
Humanitarian Reform Efforts

- In response to the unjust nature of the early modern criminal justice system, philosophes called for more reasonable forms of punishment
- Cesare Beccaria
 - Argued that prison was a more powerful deterrent than capital punishment
 - Torture should be abolished
 - Punishments should fit the crime!
- Abolition movement develops in late 18th century England
 - Slave trade was ended in 1807



Race and the Enlightenment

- Scientists began to classify humans into orders of “race”
 - New idea – before people were grouped by “nations”
- Hume and Kant argued that all races had physically and culturally degenerated from the original “white brunette” race
- This new scientific racism helped legitimate the massive growth in the 18th century African slave trade!



Women and the Enlightenment

- “Woman’s Question” Continued
 - Though some philosophes supported women, most argued that natural biological differences prevented women from being intellectuals
 - **Mary Wollstonecraft – The first feminist**
 - She used the principles of the Enlightenment to argue that women were just as capable as men
 - **Mary Astell**
 - English woman who argued for the right of women to be educated as well as equality within marriage
- Role of Women in the Enlightenment
 - **Emilie du Chatelet**
 - Translated Newton’s *Principia* to French
 - **Salonnières**
 - Upper class women who hosted gatherings of Enlightenment intellectuals, and subsequently, helped spread Enlightenment ideas!
 - Madame Geoffrin helped fund the Encyclopedia

Impact on the Visual Arts

- Rococo
 - A reaction by the nobility to the Baroque style associated with Louis XIV
 - Depicted the idealized life of the French nobles
 - *The Swing* by Jean-Honore Fragonard
 - Portraits of Elisabeth-Louise Vigee-Le Brun



Impact on the Visual Arts

- Neoclassicism
 - Influenced by the Enlightenment, it reemphasized the ideals of Greece and Rome
 - Young artists travelled to Italy to study recent excavations
 - Emphasized ideals of loyalty and morality
 - *Oath of the Horatii* by Jacques-Louis David



Impact on the Aristocracy

- The Enlightenment was very cosmopolitan
 - Education in Latin classics
 - French as the international language
- The Grand Tour
 - Sons of aristocrats completed their educations by travelling to Europe's major cities



Impact of the Enlightenment

- Belief in Progress
 - They argued for more social equality.
- A More Secular Outlook
 - They wanted to rid religious faith of superstition and fear and promote tolerance of all religions.
- Importance of the Individual
 - The Rise of Individualism
 - By questioning the traditional authority of the monarchy and the Church, people began to look to themselves as valuable decision-makers in society.