

The Enlightenment: Revolutions in Science and Thought



The Enlightenment Why Did it Happen?



in the 1500s, people believed the earth was flat

by the 1600s, the seeking of knowledge led to the questioning of old assumptions and then to a breakthrough in Western thought

transformations of religious thought:

deism: religious philosophy based on reason and the idea of natural law

methodism: religious movement that stressed the value of personal religious experience through community work
(these people and their ideas later spread to America)



which all contributed to the movement that became known as
the Age of Enlightenment

this cultural movement of intellectuals that emphasized using reason rather than tradition

thinkers of the Enlightenment who spread exciting new ideas were known as **philosophes**

Revolutions of Thought

natural law

a universal moral law that could be understood by applying reason



Thomas Hobbes

(1588-1679)

English political theorist

said people form a **social contract** to live obediently under a ruler, because without a leader people naturally are violent and disorderly
Leviathan (1651), showed a world without government in which life was “nasty, brutish, and short”



Baron de Montesquieu

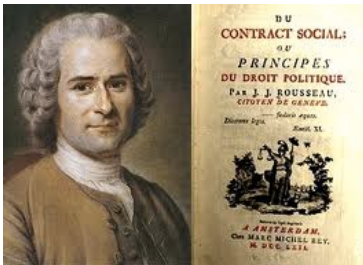
(Charles-Louis de Secondat; 1689-1755)

French political theorist who admired English government
believed in the separation of powers

legislative, executive, and judicial branches

contributed to the *Encyclopedie* and wrote *The Spirit of Laws* (1748)

Revolutions of Thought



Jean-Jacques Rousseau

(1712-1778)

French philosopher born in Geneva to French Huguenot parents

The Social Contract (1762):

government should be made by the people

Voltaire

(Francois-Marie Arouet; 1694-1778)

French satirist who was jailed twice

for writing about the Church and insulting a nobleman

Candide (1759):

challenged the idea that everything works out for the best

“I disapprove of what you say,

but I will defend to the death your right to say it.”



Immanuel Kant

(1724-1804)

German philosopher who claimed that there were two worlds
the physical world, which is known through the senses
the spiritual world, which is known through faith
religion is real even though it can't be scientifically explained

The Enlightenment Spreads



Encyclopedie (1751)

28 volumes containing all the new theories
banned by Catholic Church for its criticisms of the Church



salons
gatherings held in
the homes of
wealthy patrons held
partly as a social
gathering and partly
to increase the
knowledge of the
participants through
conversation



Madam de Pompadour (Jeanne Antoinette Poisson)
Louis XV's mistress from 1745 until her death in 1764
hosted salons and noted for her intelligence and wit



Enlightened Despots

absolutist rulers who governed by Enlightenment principles while keeping their royal powers



Frederick II of Prussia
(ruled from 1740–1786)
abolished the use of torture
established elementary schools
promoted industry and agriculture



Maria Theresa of Austria
(ruled from 1740–1780)
most far-reaching measures of
enlightened despotism occurred
under her reign
set up elementary schools
freed all serfs who worked on
her estates

Joseph II of Austria

(Maria Theresa's son, ruled with her from 1740–
1780, then alone until 1790)

abolished serfdom
made land taxes equal for nobles and peasants
instituted freedom of the press
took property from Catholic Church;
used the money to fund hospitals
granted religious freedom to
Protestants and Jews

