

The Modern Era (to WWI) Study Guide

Exploration

Motivation for exploration

- gold, glory, God
- examples:
 - Marco Polo went to the East, came back with riches, inspired others to do the same
 - Hernan Cortez went to spread Christianity; killed and plundered Aztec empire
 - Columbus claimed land for Spain (glory), brought luxuries and trade to North America, sponsored by English and French royalty (King Ferdinand & Queen Isabella)

Spanish treatment of Native Americans in the New World by conquistadors & justification

- terrible treatment, many people killed:
 - territorial disputes
 - diseases from Europe
 - loot plundered
 - mercantilism
- Sepulveda: famous Italian philosopher, historian, theologian, astronomer
 - thought of Greeks and Europeans as civilized and most others as barbaric
 - Spanish have the right to rule them: Spanish are clever and humane with true faith, while they are barbaric and are not clever
 - (Bartolome antagonized Sepulveda, saying that the Native Americans are clever, having a civilization advanced like Europe; they are not barbaric; they are clever; torture and killing is not the way to get people to accept Christianity)

Why was exploration now a possibility more than ever?

- scientific discoveries (scientific revolution): astronomy, navigation, Earth is round
 - Galileo
 - telescope and other astronomical observations/discoveries
 - goes past religion, frowned on by pope, goes through inquisition
 - Kepler
 - heliocentric theory
 - astrology and mathematics and philosophy
 - Newton
 - gravity and motion
 - principles of natural history
 - heliocentric theory

Define mercantilism. Significance?

- economic system in which a country exploits natural resources of another region for their own gain
- Spain stole American resources, turned them into manufactured goods, forced America to buy it back
- Triangular Trade: most well-known form of mercantilism
 - manufactured goods and rum from Europe to Africa
 - slaves from Africa to the colonies
 - raw materials and sugar from colonies to Europe
- made countries very profitable

Define joint-stock company. Significance?

- system to raise money for something by pooling money
- no one gets extreme risk, everyone gets potential gain
- used to pool money for expensive expeditions to the Americas

Define commercial revolution. Benefits to Europe?

- age of colonialism and mercantilism that led to extreme economic growth in European countries
- monarchs amassed huge wealth, and countries were rich

Absolutism

Define absolutism. Compare to Renaissance ideals.

- age of all-powerful, ruthless, careless rulers with a divine right to rule and an extreme social divide
- Renaissance ideals and comparisons: basically opposites; absolutism was a step back
 - skepticism: exercised later, in the enlightenment, when questioning absolute power; not so much in the Age of Absolutism
 - humanism: well-being of people not looked after
 - individualism: the monarch helped himself to this
 - secularism: divine right still in place
 - well-roundedness: not really important; monarchs just too lavish
 - classicism: went against ancient Greek and Roman ideas, especially of democratic governments
 - liberalism: progress and reform not encouraged, and freedom suppressed

Divine Right

- ability to rule is derived from God
- have political and religious power

Hobbes' theory on state of nature

- defender of absolutism
- humans were evil, warring
- people need a strong leader and be willing to give up all rights to be progressive
- opposite of Locke

King Louis XIV of France

- the “sun king” because of his extravagance
- lavish spender: built palace of Versailles
- very extravagant life
- symbolises suppression of lower class— they had to pay all the taxes for the expensive building
- made sure he had absolute power: suppressed nobility

Philip II of Spain & Spanish Inquisition

- Philip II was defender of absolutism
 - wanted to expand Church and get absolute power
 - thought he was guardian to people and Church
 - strong, ruthless king
 - heavily involved with Inquisition (but not created by him)
- “Roman Inquisition” was strict agency of obedience that looked for any sign of heresy
- guilt was assumed; lots of torture; especially for philosophers and scientists

England as the exception to absolutism

- had a parliament, a ruling body of multiple men
- parliament imposed the English Bill of Rights on the monarchs
 - suppressed their power
 - many of rights given in our Bill of Rights (e.g. freedom of speech and religion)

Enlightenment

Define the enlightenment. Why was it created?

- an intellectual movement that was created in response to the Age of Absolutism and inspired by the Scientific Revolution marked by thinkers that revolutionized many ideas, especially government and rights
- it was created in response to the Age of Absolutism, when philosophers started questioning the absolute rule of the rulers
- it was also inspired by the Scientific Revolution, and they hoped to promote reason
- a period of:
 - reason
 - natural law
 - humanism (hope and happiness)
 - progress
 - liberty

Some enlightenment thinkers

- John Locke
 - the “social contract”
 - if government doesn’t protect natural laws, then it can be overthrown
 - opposite of Hobbes
 - in a state of nature people will try to achieve peace and safety
 - natural rights: life, liberty, and property (later changed by founding fathers to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”)
 - people are born with a “tabula rasa” — a blank slate— so they are not evil, and everybody learned through their environment (and through science)
 - made him a leader and inspirer of the Enlightenment
- Montesquieu
 - separation of powers into a three-branch government
 - executive
 - judicial
 - legislative
 - each limits each other’s power, thus preventing domination of one branch and ensuring the freedom of hate people
 - based off of English government
 - American government later based off of this idea
- Voltaire
 - challenged the Church
 - created idea of deism, a religious philosophy in which God created the Earth and set it spinning, but the world is governed by scientific, natural laws
- Diderot
 - created “the Encyclopedia”

- huge collection of knowledge
- allowed many people to easily access information
- led to more discoveries and thinking
- allowed him to change the general mindset of the people with his own words
 - targeted old French society
 - talked for religious tolerance
 - called for reforms in government
- Rousseau
 - the “social contract” (along with Locke)
 - “Man is born free but is always in chains”
 - people have to get up some rights and abide by the general will of their people
 - if not, they are forced to— Rousseau believed he is forcing upon them their freedom
- American founding fathers
 - used many of the ideas of the Enlightenment, especially Locke

Key terms

- salon: a place of meeting and chatting with others, elegant drawing rooms, where Enlightenment ideas spread the quickest; also, women who worked as maids could suggest ideas or pass on ideas they heard to others
- reason: application of scientific evidence (not superstition or unproved religion) to understand life better, which can be used to better society
- social contract: Rousseau and Locke’s idea that people should abide to the general will of the people, but giving up some rights, so that there exists the greatest freedom; if the social contract (or natural law) is not held up by government, then the government should be overturned
- natural rights: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness/property; every man has the right to these freedoms from birth, and they should not be violated by government or it should be overturned
- separation of powers: no one branch of government should hold all the power, or else freedom would be unlikely; the branches have a system of checks and balances to equal out power

Declaration of Independence, Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen

- Declaration of Independence:
 - American declaring separation from England because natural law was not held by government
 - used many of the ideas of the Enlightenment, especially Locke
- Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen:
 - inspired by the (successful) American Revolution
 - written by National Assembly after King gave in to them (after storming of Bastille and accompanied by the giving up of many first and second estate rights)
 - rights of liberty, property, security, freedom from oppression, freedom of liberty, freedom of speech, and right of equal justice were guaranteed

Impact of enlightenment on society and culture?

- caused people to start thinking more and bettering life, especially about government and human rights
- <http://www.ushistory.org/us/7a.asp>:
 - “The old way of life was represented by superstition, an angry God, and absolute submission to authority. The thinkers of the Age of Reason ushered in a new way of thinking. This new way championed the accomplishments of humankind. Individuals did not have to accept despair. Science and reason could bring happiness and progress. Kings did not rule by divine right. They

had an obligation to their subjects. Europeans pondered the implications for nearly a century. Americans put them into practice first.”

French Revolution

Causes

- absolutism
 - King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette were extremely lavish spenders
- nobility
 - had all the rights, most of the land, and didn't pay taxes
- third estate
 - 97% of the population, very little say in government (always overruled by combined first and second estates), owned very little land, owned very little money, and had to pay all of the taxes

Bourgeoisie and the National Assembly

- drove the revolution (first stage)
- wealthy, educated, upper middle class
- inspired by American Revolution, tried it in their own country
- could get the most gain from the revolution
- created the National Assembly during the Tennis Court Oath
- created a limited constitutional monarchy, gave themselves some power
 - National Assembly
 - group of third-estate delegates who decided to create a limited monarchy
 - were not let into the Estates general hall
 - went to a tennis court, took Tennis Court Oath
 - eventually King gave in, after storming of Bastille (a symbol of political oppression) during the Great Fear
 - Tennis Court Oath
 - oath not to disband until they had written their own constitution, one without suppression of the third estate

National Convention

- second, more radical party and stage of the French Revolution
- Jacobins, the radicals, sat on the left side of the political spectrum (and of the court) — wanted extreme further reforms
 - moderate Girondists in the center
 - conservatives on the left (wanted to conserve limited monarchy)
- Jacobins took power as army did worse and worse
- leaders:
 - Robespierre
 - Marat
 - Danton
- National Convention created
- wanted a republic (not a limited monarchy) — one step farther
- riots broke out
- King executed
- Committee of Public Safety established as war dictatorship

Robespierre and Reign of Terror

- fierce civil war (revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries)
- Marat was killed
- Queen was executed
- Reign of Terror was created to completely crush opposition to the revolution
 - thousands killed of the slightest suspicion
- Danton killed by Robespierre
- Robespierre killed by the people

Directory

- short-ruling council of men
- wealthy bourgeoisie ruled now, as only the wealthy could vote
- became unpopular as it could not solve the debt crisis

Napoleon's Rise to Power and Rule

- had great military campaigns, was popular and was hero of the people
 - lied to public about some defeats, especially one in Egypt that he had to cut short to help out France
- he rose with a military coup d'état (quick seizure of power) in 1799
- stormed the unpopular directory
- created French Consulate with him as first consul for life, and then emperor
- controlled most of continental Europe
- first huge defeat was Britain
 - navy was too powerful
 - Napoleon ordered blockade, Britain did too
 - Britain's blockade prevailed, Napoleon's economy affected more than Britain's
 - Britain free from blockade by Pope and Russia
- marched with enormous army of half a million to Russia, where they found a depleted and destroyed town (unwilling for him to take it)
 - it was winter, and many people died
 - returned severely weakened
- many countries teamed up against him and France
 - he was defeated
 - he was exiled
 - he returned
 - he was defeated (again)
 - he was exiled (again)

Outcome? Legacy?

- not a success: went from limited monarchy to republic to war dictatorship to ruling council to dictatorship to back to monarchy (only much later did it become a democracy)
- legacy:
 - what people would go through for a democracy
 - Constitution: The Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen
 - "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"