

The Transformation of the West 1500-1750

- At the same time Western nations are creating a new international economic framework outside Europe within Europe enormous transformations are underway. These movements span religious, intellectual, cultural, & political boundaries. They overlap chronologically, and thus exert an ongoing effect upon each other and the societies they ~~also~~ affect.

① Reformation ② Scientific Revⁿ
③ Rise of the State ④ Enlightenment

① The Reformation

* - Splits Western Christianity

- led by a German monk & University lecturer named Martin Luther, who as a deeply pious man was angered by the Church's sale of indulgences, or grants of salvation, for money. His study of the Bible convinced him that only faith could gain salvation. In 1517 he nails a document containing 95 theses, or propositions, to the door of the castle church in his home town of Wittenberg. When Church officials all the way up to the Pope refused to respond to his grievances, Luther extended his criticisms by publishing his 95 theses on local

* printing presses. Soon his message attracts a wide following throughout Central Europe; this wave of dissent sees the emergence of Protestantism.

- Many groups supported Luther, some out of religious conviction and others for more earthly reasons.

① ordinary people supported Luther because they resent Papal taxes and what they viewed as excessive oversight over their lives.

② Local princes saw opportunities for gaining power and land by removing Church influence. These princes would hide Luther from the Church's authorities, and in return the Protestant Churches would accept state control. (Example, The Anglican Church created by Henry VIII)

Effects: ① Fracturing of Christian Unity forces Catholic Church to reform itself (ironically, many of Luther's demands are subsequently implemented) and go on offensive against further Protestant inroads. This is known as the Counter-Reformation and sees the Church slow down & then stop the spread of Protestant beliefs. This is only possible by 1550 through war. Over the next 100 years, Europeans will wage religious war against each other.

① 1 in 3 will die - 100s of cities, towns, villages destroyed. Much of Central Europe devastated - will not recover until 1800s.

② Luther's emphasis on establishing a personal relationship with God will see a huge rise in literacy throughout Europe, as the Bible is translated from Latin into vernacular languages for the first time.

③ The end of conflict in 1648 sees

2 important developments

- ① a grudging acceptance of religious tolerance (with exc of N. Ire still persists today)
- ② The establishment of the modern international diplomatic system through the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648. For the first time, concepts such as national sovereignty assume paramount importance in international affairs. The Reformation sees the state assume dominance over the Church for the first time in 1000 years.

* The Reformation also fatally undermined the Church's monopoly on knowledge and truth. Together with the spirit of critical inquiry generated by the Renaissance this would lead to the emergence of another intellectual movement whose effects would be just as vast = The Scientific Revolution (1500s-1750) Fall 0

* Constitutes a real and decisive break in Western culture, and profoundly re-orientates Western intellectual life right through to the present.

- The Renaissance & the Reformation bequeathed 2 critical legacies - the importance of critical inquiry and the expansion of literacy. With old certainties now open to question, the growth and expansion of new knowledge assumed new importance in Western society.

Scientific Revolution (Cont.)

- The Scientific Revolution consisted of new knowledge particularly about astronomy & physics but also about biology and chemistry. As this knowledge grew, it inspired a general intellectual movement that increasingly defied past wisdom. This movement defined and used new methodology known as the scientific method.

2 principles ① direct observation ② repeatable experiments

* The scientific method also involved the use of new devices and instruments, particularly in the field of optics, to measure the heavens and examine the earth. Examples include the telescope & microscope.

- The scientific method, new instruments, and the use of mathematics all combined to produce new theories or hypotheses on the nature of the universe. Over time, through the incremental work of several individuals, universal natural laws could be derived that explained how the universe operated. These laws, exemplified in the work of Isaac Newton and his 3 laws of motion, disproved older assumptions and revealed the universe operated like a machine rather than part of an unknowable supernatural drama. (+)

Effects

) Begins and solidifies the idea of progress in knowledge through experiment & critical thinking. Skepticism becomes starting point for all areas of human inquiry.

2) Leads to foundation of much of the modern sciences - physics, biology, chemistry, etc. Science becomes center of intellectual outlook of Western Civilization.

3) Scientific discoveries lead to a popularization of science in West - becomes fashionable to engage in scientific research. Information, first in Latin, later in vernacular languages, begins to spread widely among an educated public. Scientific societies, such as the Royal Society in England, are founded to promote and distribute research results. Lectures and popular journals spread scientific knowledge outside normal channels, spreading a growing feeling of excitement, that science held the key to steady human progress.

4) Rationalistic science - a merging of the scientific method with an application of reason - superseded religion and art as the foremost cultural influence in the West for over 100 years.

⊕ Newton's work, elucidated most clearly in his work Principia Mathematica (1687), also confirmed the basic premise of modern science - 'that all nature is governed by laws. Indeed, his own law of gravitation ~~states~~ applied to the whole universe, from a speck of dust on earth to the largest star in outer space. The magnitude of this idea - the concept of universal laws - was exciting and contagious. Within decades it had spread throughout the Western World and had been applied in every area, including human relations.

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3. The Rise of the State ~~of the~~

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- The growth of the power and efficiency of the national state was the key political trend in early modern Europe. The Renaissance had weakened ~~the~~ religious restraints on political power; the Reformation accelerated this process. During the 'seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, leading Western monarchies gained ~~an~~ organizational power. The most complete and obvious example of this development occurs in France, under its greatest king, Louis XIV. (1638-1715)

Louis' early life was characterized by uncertainty and danger. Born in a time of aristocratic rebellion, Louis' childhood was filled with the imminent prospect of violent death. Constantly moved from place to place in secret, the young Prince emerged into adulthood with

2 principal convictions. ① don't trust anyone
② the power of the aristocracy had to be curbed if the monarchy was to prosper. (7)

- Upon gaining power in 1663, Louis began implementing measures designed to increase central authority and limit the influence of other groups and institutions. It is this system that we call absolute monarchy, or absolutism. Several facets of this process.

① Creation of powerful image. Responding to the principle scientific theory of the time, heliocentrism, Louis dubbed himself "The Sun King", and used the solar symbol as his own. 2 meanings: ① Sun is giver of life: King has same power - implied in this is his power to ^{also} take life away. ② Just as all ~~celestial~~ bodies revolve around the sun, so too shall all earthly bodies revolve around the king.

- In order to permanently remove the threat of aristocratic rebellion, Louis built a grand new palace at Versailles, outside Paris. Built consciously to inspire awe, Versailles became the center of the royal court. After its completion Louis created an elaborate system of court life, involving festivals, banquets, and other leisure activities. He then invited all of France's most powerful aristocrats to join him, rent-free, and live at the palace. Awed by the wealth and magnificence of the Royal Palace, they accept, and soon immerse themselves in the hedonism of Versailles. This of course is all engineered by Louis; now all of his potential rivals are subject to his surveillance - they no longer possess the freedom of

④ In the 150 years after the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia, European state power took ② different forms

① Centralized power, exemplified in the absolute monarchy of Louis XIV in France. This system would be widely emulated, particularly in formerly marginal states such as Russia and Prussia.

② Limited power, with monarchical authority limited by constitutions and representative institutions such as parliaments. This emerges in Britain and the Netherlands during the seventeenth century. Although constitutional monarchies would prove more durable, at the time centralized political systems produced more immediate change.

Louis XIV - Absolutism (cont.)

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Aspects (cont.)

② Transformation of royal military. Louis standardizes army training, discipline and uniforms for first time.

- Improved military pay, benefits, & conditions of service

- This facilitated increase in size of French Army from 70,000 to 400,000 - largest standing Army in Western history. *these forces could also be used to repress internal rebellions

- Also built huge navy from scratch - part of grand strategy to build enormous colonial empire.

* Army used to enlarge France's territory; for 50 of 52 years of his reign, French Army in the field. Modern boundaries of France established through these campaigns

③ Closer control of economy - In an effort to increase revenue ~~and~~ through ~~just~~ increased taxes and supervision of manufacturing, Louis encourages a system known as mercantilism - designed to maximize exports and reduce imports.

④ Creation of centralized administration and bureaucracy. Louis created a system of centralized administration separate from aristocratic control and influence. Most of the employees in this new system came from the middle class, who gained tremendously from this development.

- Many of Louis' reforms would be emulated throughout Europe - overall they would encourage 3 developments by 1715:

① Propelled Western states into the forefront of international political systems - Western states now more efficiently governed and organized than any other political system.

② Increased size, reach of Western bureaucracies meant they had more effective contact with their people than any other ~~contemporary~~ governments elsewhere in the world.

③ Increased power, presence in ordinary people's lives encouraged popular perception that governments, states now responsible for welfare, well-being of citizens.

1680-1800 The Enlightenment ('Lumiere')

- Acceptance of ideas made popular during the Scientific Revolution, such as the existence of universal natural laws and a belief in human progress through the application of reason, drove the final cultural transformation of the West in the Early Modern Period we will consider - The Enlightenment.

→ Like absolutism, this will be a movement centered in France but with adherents and supporters throughout the Western world, in particular in England's North American colonies.

→ The Enlightenment, known in France as 'Lumiere', was the effort to banish errors in faith and superstition through an application of reason and critical inquiry.

* Simply put, Enlightenment thinkers, known as philosophes (intellectuals), believed that the principles of the Scientific Revolution could be applied to human affairs.

- In other words, rational laws could be applied to social as well as physical behavior, producing an understanding of how humankind operates.

↳ This knowledge could then be used in the formulation of government policy.

Enlightenment (Cont.)

Enlightenment thinkers believed that humanity was inherently good & rational, & thus was inherently capable of improvement. This leads to transformation in several areas of Western Society.

① Education - Previously, children believed incapable of improvement - suffered widely in family relationships, domestic abuse - Now children seen as improvable through education * Results in slow movement toward universal education system we have today

② Penal (Justice) System - Criminals seen as irredeemable * end to physical punishment as principal form of discipline - marked physically through torture, physical punishment as deterrent. Failure of these methods to prevent crime encourages Enlightenment thinkers to propose rehabilitation of criminals through education and non-violent confinement. * This forms basis of modern criminal and penal system.

③ Economic Theory

- Enlightenment thinkers such as the Scot Adam Smith in his work The Wealth of Nations criticized state-controlled economic systems as wasteful, & irrational. Proposed doctrine of laissez-faire (leave it alone) as alternative - argued that individual self-interest, or capitalism, was the key to economic progress. * Still the basis of U.S. and Western economic systems.

Enlightenment (cont.)

(3)

④ Political theory - Theorists such as John Locke, Baron de Montesquieu and Jean-Jacques Rousseau applied reason to existing political systems, in particular absolutism, and found them at odds with reason. ① Philosophes argued that natural laws of mankind - life, liberty, property, pursuit of happiness - all fatally restricted, compromised by absolute monarchy. * Instead, argued that political life, institutions can improve through less official oversight. Also called for checks & balances - limits on royal power through constitutions & representative structures. Although heavily censored, these ideas soon spread throughout the West's literate community, and would serve as one of the catalysts for two major political upheavals, the American and French Revolutions.

Significance

* The Enlightenment, therefore, serves as the intellectual origin ~~of~~ a number of impulses in western society

① Sets stage for modern political movements, from liberalism to socialism

② establishes foundation of modern social sciences - economics, poli sci, sociology, etc.

③ creates framework & perspective for modern thought