The Spread of Enlightenment Ideas

Basic Ideas of the Philosophes

- **1. Reason**: truth can be discovered through reason or logical thinking; Reason, is the absence of intolerance, bigotry or prejudice in one’s thinking
- **2. Nature**: what is natural is good and reasonable
- **3. Happiness**: a person who lives by nature's laws would find happiness. People should not accept misery here on earth.
- **4. Progress**: with the scientific approach, they believed society and humankind could be perfected
- **5. Liberty**: philosophers envied the liberties that the English had won in their Glorious Revolution and Bill of Rights; they believed that through reason, society could be set free

The Philosophers get into Trouble

- Because in many places it was illegal to criticize either the Catholic Church or the government, the ideas of the philosophers usually got them into trouble
- Many philosophers were either put into jail or exiled
  - Voltaire experienced both
- Despite the reluctant nature of the government and church to accept these new ideas, the enlightenment spread throughout Europe and the Americas

A World of Ideas

- In the 1700’s, Paris was the cultural and intellectual capital of Europe
- Young people from all over Europe and America came to socialize, discuss philosophy and study art
- The Paris salons were social gatherings held in the large drawing rooms of wealthy women
  - Great intellects such as writers, philosophers and scientists would gather at these events
  - The most influential hostess of the time was Marie-Therese Geoffrin
    - She was self educated and from the well-to-do middle class
    - She helped to finance the projects of Denis Diderot

Denis Diderot & the Encyclopedia

- Denis Diderot envisioned a large set of books to hold all of the information of the leading scholars in Europe
- The Encyclopedia, as he called it, would bring together all of the most current and enlightened thinking about science, technology, art, government, and more.
- He began publishing in 1751
- The enlightened views expressed in these works angered the French government and the Catholic Church. Their censors soon banned the work because:
They said it undermined royal authority
- It encouraged a spirit of revolt
- It fostered moral corruption, irreligion and unbelief

- Fearing arrest or banishment, many philosophers pulled their work from the Encyclopedia and urged Diderot to stop the project
- Diderot eventually won permission to publish his work and it continued to release new volumes under his editorship until 1772

New Ideas Circulate

- The salons and the encyclopedia both contributed to new ideas spreading to educated people all over Europe
- Enlightened thinkers shared their ideas across the continent through books, personal letters, visits back and forth, and magazines
- “never have new ideas had such rapid circulation at such long distance”

The Enlightenment and the Middle Class

- Enlightened ideas reached the middle class through newspapers, pamphlets and even political songs
- Enlightened ideas were attractive to the middle class because:
  - 1. They were a growing literate middle class
  - 2. There were ideas about government and equality
  - 3. They had money, but were limited in status and political power

Art and Literature in the Age of Reason

- Artistic style changed drastically from the late 1600’s to the 1700’s
- The late 1600’s were dominated by a style called Baroque- a very grand, ornate style of painting
  - Artists paintings were rich in color, detail, and ornate imagery
  - Musicians such as Bach, wrote dramatic organ and choral music
- The enlightened ideals changed the style of art that was produced
  - Art and literature started to reflect the ideals of order and balance
  - Architecture was simple, elegant, and reflected styles of classical Greece and Rome

Classical Music

- Music during the time of reason became known as classical
- 3 musicians from Vienna, Austria rank among the greatest figures the of classical music period
  - 1. Franz Joseph Haydn
    - 1732-1809
    - Developed the sonata and the symphony
  - 2. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
    - 1756-1791
Began composing music at the age of 5
Wrote his first opera at the age of 12
Set a new standard of elegance and originality
Lived to 35 but wrote over 600 musical works

3. Ludwig van Beethoven
1770-1827
Had enormous range in his work
Wrote piano music, string quartets and symphonies
His early work was similar to the style of Mozart, but his later work began new trends which carried music into the Age of Romanticism

The Development of the Novel

- Many European author’s began writing the novel- a lengthy work of prose fiction
- These books became popular with the middle class audience because they were entertaining stories written in everyday language
- Many female writers emerged during this period
- Author’s such as Samuel Richardson and Daniel Defoe introduced many of the features seen in the modern novel
  - 1. Carefully crafted plots
  - 2. Suspense and climax
  - 3. Explored characters thoughts and feelings

Enlightenment and the Monarchy

- Many enlightened thinkers believed that the best form of government was one in which the monarch or ruler respected the people’s rights
- Soon, the ideas of the enlightenment spread to the Monarch’s of Europe
- Some monarch’s embraced this new form of ruling, making reforms to reflect the enlightenment spirit
- They became known as enlightened despots (despot means absolute ruler)
  - The despots supported the ideas of the enlightenment philosophers, however, they had no intention of giving up their power
  - The changes that they made were motivated by two factors
    - 1. They wanted to make their countries stronger
    - 2. They wanted to make their own rule more effective

The Enlightened Monarch’s

Frederick the Great
- King of Prussia from 1740-1786
- He committed himself to making reforms in Prussia
- He once wrote to Voltaire: “I must enlighten my people, cultivate their manners and morals and make them as happy as human beings can be, or as happy as the means at my disposal”
Although he had the right intentions, his reforms only went so far

**Reforms of Frederick the Great**
- Called himself “the first servant of the state”
- From the beginning of his reign, he made it clear that his goal was to serve and strengthen the state
- He appealed to the enlightenment philosophers
- He DID NOT do anything to change the position of serfdom because he needed the support of the junkers

**Old Monarchy vs. New Monarchy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under Louis XIV, the state and its citizens existed to serve the Monarch.</th>
<th>Under Frederick the Great, and other reformed absolute rulers, the monarch existed to serve the state and support its citizen’s welfare.</th>
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<td>This was seen in Louis XIV’s statement “I am the state”</td>
<td>This was seen when Frederick called himself “the first servant of the state”</td>
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**Joseph II**
- Ruler of Austria from 1780-1790
- Son and successor of Maria Theresa
- Introduced legal reforms and freedom of worship to all religions
- Abolished serfdom and ordered that peasants be paid for their labor with cash
  - The nobles resisted this change, and like many of his other reforms, it was abolished after his death

**Catherine the Great**
- Ruled Russia from 1762-196
- She was the most admired monarch by the philosophers
- She ruled with absolute authority, but made many reforms to modernize Russia

**Reforms of Catherine the Great**
- 1. In 1767, she formed a commission to review Russia’s laws and make reforms based on the ideas of Montesquieu and Beccaria
- 2. She recommended religious toleration, eliminating torture and abolishing capital punishment
- Her commission was unable to accomplish any of these goals
- She did eventually put in limited reforms, but did very little to improve life of Russian peasants
- After the peasants revolted, Catherine gave the nobles absolute power over the serfs ending any traces of freedom they may of had