Enlightenment & Revolution
1650
1694 - François-Marie Arouet born in Paris. He adopts the penname "Voltaire" in 1718.

1661 - Thomas Hobbes published Leviathan.
1687 - Newton's Principes Mathematiques
1689 - John Locke publishes Two Treatises of Government
1692 - 1651: English Civil War
1649 - 1660: Interregnum (Cromwell Protectorate: 1653 - 1659)
1660: Stuart Restoration
1688 - Glorious Revolution in England

1700
1725 - Voltaire exiled to England. Returns to France after 8 years.
1726 - Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels (p. 227)

1750
1750 - Voltaire relocates to Potsdam (near Berlin) at the invitation of Frederick the Great.
1751 - 1772: Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond D'Alembert publish Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers
1755 - 1773: Émile deCondillac publishes "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" (p. 390)
1752 - Jean-Jacques Rousseau published The Social Contract

1800
1776 - Voltaire dies
1784 - Immanuel Kant publishes "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" (p. 390)
1762 - Jean-Jacques Rousseau published The Social Contract
1775 - 1783: American Revolution
1789 - French Revolution begins

Voltaire's life

Enlightenment Thought and Publication

Political Events
The Enlightenment Period

• Lasted roughly from the mid-17th century to the end of the 18th century
• The Enlightenment was an intellectual movement affecting philosophy, politics, literature, art, and more.
The Enlightenment Period

• The primary tenet of Enlightenment thought is the idea that logic and reason are superior to emotion and the passions.

• Logic and rational thought should thus serve as the foundation for government systems, legal and judicial systems, and other institutions.

• This notion ran contrary to much previously accepted thought, and in many cases was cause for a rejection of previously established sources of authority.
• Examples:
  – Beginning with Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan* (1651), Enlightenment thinkers reject the idea of the Rule by Divine Right.
  – Later Enlightenment thinkers question the prudence of rule by any monarch.
    • Locke & Rousseau are two of the most prominent.
  – This period saw the rise in popularity of the idea that just governance is derived from the people, not from the rulers.
    • Such ideas were profoundly influential in the American and French Revolutions, and many more political upheavals throughout the next century.
The Enlightenment in Literature

• While many philosophes expressed their theories in philosophical & political treatises (as with Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Paine), other writers chose to express their views through literary fiction or stage drama.

  – Examples:
    • Many of Molière’s plays
    • Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*
    • Voltaire, *Candide*
The Enlightenment in Literature

• Techniques frequently employed:
  – Parody: Comic imitation of a work, style, or person.
    • (e.g. Pangloss is a parody of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz)
  – Irony: A contradiction between appearance and actuality (often resulting in humor).
  – Satire: a method of mocking individuals, groups of people, institutions, or humanity in general. It typically uses comedic ridicule as a means of inspiring social or political reform. Often satire makes use of parody, irony, wit, and sarcasm.
  – Allegory: A system of interrelated metaphors and/or symbols which work together to form a layer of meaning.
“I have known this love, this ruler of hearts, this soul of our soul: It never got me anything except one kiss and twenty kick in the ass.”

-Candide
Voltaire in the Midst of the Enlightenment

POÈTE HISTORIEN
PHILOSOPHE IL
AGRANDIT L’ESPRIT
HUMAIN ET LUI APPRIT
Q’UIL DEVOIT ETRE LIBRE

Poet, historian, philosopher, he enlarged the human spirit and taught it to be free.

Voltaire’s sarcophagus the Pantheon, Paris.
Voltaire’s Embodiment of Enlightenment Ideology

• Advocates logic and reason as a basis for political and social policy.
• Advocates (much as Kant does) free and independent thought.
• Critical of blind faith in monarchs, aristocrats, clergymen, and the institutions of power represented by them.
• Encourages personal responsibility and a strong work ethic.
The French Revolution

1789
French Revolution

- The outbreak of the French Revolution in the summer of 1789 stirred the imagination of nearly all Europeans. The French revolutionaries - that is, those men and women who made conscious choices - sensed in their hearts and minds that they were witnessing the birth of a new age. And if the revolutionaries of Paris, Bordeaux, Lyons or Toulouse knew they were innovating, knew they were helping to usher in the dawn of a New Jerusalem, so too did observers in London, Berlin, Philadelphia, Moscow, Manchester, Geneva, Amsterdam or Boston.
French Revolution

- Upon the ruins of the ANCIEN REGIME - that is, the old order - a new era appeared which seemed to realize the lofty ideals of the Enlightenment. The ideals were genuine and they were optimistic through and through. Man had entered a stage in human history characterized by his emancipation from superstition, prejudice, cruelty and enthusiasm. Liberty had triumphed over tyranny. New institutions were created on the foundations of Reason and justice and not authority or blind faith. The barriers to freedom, liberty, equality and brotherhood were torn down. Man had been released from other-worldly torment and was now making history!
Effects of French Revolution

• The future would be one of moral and intellectual improvement. Human happiness would be found in the here and now not in the City of God. Such optimism, perhaps, could only have been possible in an age which its spokesmen proudly proclaimed to be an Age of Enlightenment. The enthusiasm with which this dawn of a New Jerusalem was announced was often clouded with religious zeal. And so, on November 4th, 1789, the Protestant minister, Richard Price (1723-1791), stood at the pulpit at the Meeting-House in the Old Jewry in London. He was about to address a crowd of about fifty members of the "Society for the Commemoration of the Revolution in Great Britain." His address was, *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country*, and it was intended as the keynote address of the Society's celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. The language is certainly inflammatory. The message is passionate and quite clear. "Tremble all ye oppressors of the world!"