

CHAPTER 22 Section 2 (pages 629–635)

The Enlightenment in Europe

BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read how the Scientific Revolution began in Europe.

In this section, you will learn how the Enlightenment began in Europe.

AS YOU READ

Use the chart below to take notes on important Enlightenment ideas.

| THINKER | IDEA |
|----------------|--|
| Hobbes | <i>social contract between people and government</i> |
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TERMS AND NAMES

Enlightenment Age of Reason

social contract According to Thomas Hobbes, an agreement people make with government

John Locke Philosopher who wrote about government

philosophes Social critics in France

Voltaire Writer who fought for tolerance, reason, freedom of religious belief, and freedom of speech

Montesquieu French writer concerned with government and political liberty

Rousseau Enlightenment thinker who championed freedom

Mary Wollstonecraft Author who wrote about women’s rights

Two Views on Government

(pages 629–630)

What were the views of Hobbes and Locke?

The **Enlightenment** was an *intellectual* movement. Enlightenment thinkers tried to apply reason and the scientific method to laws that shaped human actions. They hoped to build a society founded on ideas of the Scientific Revolution. Two

English writers—Thomas Hobbes and John Locke—were important to this movement. They came to very different conclusions about government and human nature.

Hobbes wrote that there would be a war of “every man against every man” if there were no government. To avoid this war, Hobbes said, people formed a **social contract**. It was an agreement between people and their government. People gave up their rights to the government so they

could live in a safe and orderly way. The best government, he said, is that of a strong king who can force all people to obey.

John Locke believed that people have three natural rights. They are life, liberty, and property. The purpose of government is to protect these rights. When it fails to do so, he said, people have a right to overthrow the government.

1. How were Hobbes's and Locke's views different?

The Philosophes Advocate Reason (pages 630–632)

Who were the philosophes?

French thinkers called **philosophes** had five main beliefs: (1) thinkers can find the truth by using reason; (2) what is natural is good and reasonable, and human actions are shaped by natural laws; (3) acting according to nature can bring happiness; (4) by taking a scientific view, people and society can make progress and advance to a better life; and (5) by using reason, people can gain freedom.

The most brilliant of the philosophes was the writer **Voltaire**. He fought for tolerance, reason, freedom of religious belief, and freedom of speech. Baron de **Montesquieu** wrote about separation of powers—dividing power among the separate branches of government. The third great philosophe was Jean Jacques **Rousseau**. He wrote in favor of human freedom. He wanted a society in

which all people were equal. Cesare Beccaria was an Italian philosophe. He spoke out against *abuses* of justice.

2. Name the types of freedoms that Enlightenment thinkers championed.

Women and the Enlightenment; Legacy of the Enlightenment

(pages 633–634)

What were Enlightenment views about individuals?

Many Enlightenment thinkers held traditional views about women's place in society. They wanted equal rights for all men but paid no attention to the fact that women did not have such rights. Some women protested this unfair situation. "If all men are born free," stated British writer **Mary Wollstonecraft**, "how is it that all women are born slaves?"

Enlightenment ideas strongly influenced the American and French Revolutions. Enlightenment thinkers also helped spread the idea of progress. By using reason, they said, it is possible to make society better. Enlightenment thinkers helped make the world less religious and more worldly. They also stressed the importance of the individual.

3. Explain the influence of Enlightenment ideas.

Major Ideas of the Enlightenment

| Idea | Thinker | Impact |
|--|----------------|---|
| Natural rights—life, liberty, property | Locke | Fundamental to U.S. Declaration of Independence |
| Separation of powers | Montesquieu | France, United States, Latin American nations use separation of powers in new constitutions |
| Freedom of thought and expression | Voltaire | Guaranteed in U.S. Bill of Rights and French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen; European monarchs reduce or eliminate censorship |
| Abolishment of torture | Beccaria | Guaranteed in U.S. Bill of Rights; torture outlawed or reduced in nations of Europe and the Americas |
| Religious freedom | Voltaire | Guaranteed in U.S. Bill of Rights and French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen; European monarchs reduce persecution |
| Women's equality | Wollstonecraft | Women's rights groups form in Europe and North America |

Skillbuilder

Use the chart to answer these questions.

1. Which Enlightenment thinkers influenced the United States government?

2. Which Enlightenment ideas are in the United States Bill of Rights?
