

**HISTORY**  
**B.A. SEMESTER-II, PAPER-II,**  
**HISTORY OF EUROPE (1600-1789)**  
**ACADEMIC SESSION – 2019-2020**  
**DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN HISTORY**  
**UNIVERSITY OF LUCKNOW**

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**TOPIC; AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT**

**CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF ENLIGHTMENT**

- The enlightenment movement commenced in France during 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- The influence of scientific perspective was witnessed in Europe.
- The impact of science and rationale was crystal clear during the period.
- Henceforth also referred to as Intellectual Revolution.
- Reason, tolerance and humanity became the most popular expression.
- Style of literature was analytical.
- Literature was more optimistic.
- Thoughts were creative

**Voltaire**

- Most dominant French writer of the 18<sup>th</sup> century
- Born in Paris, 1694
- Real name Francois Marie Arouet
- Influenced by Francis Bacon, Shakespeare, Newton, John Locke
- Captivated at the fort of Bastille, at the age of 21 for writing against Louis-XIV

- His ideology-
- Condemned church
- Condemned the superstitions prevailing in church
- Entire literature writing reflected counteraction against Roman Catholic Church.
- Advocated freedom of religion
- Laid emphasis on freedom of speech
- Recognized separation of state and church
- Wrote first poem Oedipus in 1718
- Wrote La Henriade in 1723
- Subject was religious tolerance
- Was an epic poem
- Written completely in French
- Next was Maid of Orleans
- Highly influenced by the writings of Shakespeare he wrote La Mart de Ceaser and letters on the English
- Letters on the English criticized the prevailing religious system and praised England's constitutional monarchism, freedom of speech, respect for civil rights, civil liberty, religious tolerance, respect for philosophers and scientists
- Its copies were burnt and prohibited in France
- Writings-
- History of Charles-XII
- Age of Louis-XIV
- Essays on Custom and spirit of Nations
- Philosophical Dictionary
- Treatise on Tolerance

### **Montesquieu**

- French Philosopher, historian, idealist
- Born in 1679, a century before the French Revolution
- Also called Charles Louis de Secondat
- Influenced by Aristotle, John Locke, Descartes,
- Famous for the theory of separation of power

- First book publication – The Persian Letters
- Published in 1721
- French name Letters Persanes
- Gained immense popularity
- Therefore had to resign from the position of Judge
- Second book – the Greatness and Decadence of the Romans
- Another book was Spirit of Law
- Published in 1748
- Formed the basis for drafting the Constitution of America
- Condemned the monarchy, appreciated the democratic form of governance
- Laid emphasis on the separation of power – executive, legislative and judiciary
- Spirit of Law was included in the list of Prohibited Books
- Was the most acclaimed book in Britain
- Other books-true History published in 1723
- Essay on Taste- 1757

## **Rousseau**

- French philosopher
- Born in Geneva, June 28, 1712
- Influenced by Voltaire, Montesquieu, John Locke, Plato, Hobbs
- His personal life was complete saturated in poverty therefore the life hardship completely reflected in his thoughts which shaped up with the passage of time
- Criticized modern civilization
- Condemned materialism
- Believer of the fact that hardships only lead to success n moral progress
- Easy life invites laziness and is not connected to any development
- Believer of inequality, which is basically of two types; first natural and second societal inequality
- Maintained expression of thoughts
- Freedom of speech
- Criticized absolute monarchy
- Criticized the concept of divine rights of King

- Strongly believed in democracy
- Came in the forefront after the publication of his first article-Discourse
- Books written-
- The origin of Inequality- 1755
- The New Helicus – 1761
- Emile – 1762
- Social Contrast – 1762
- Emilie was completely written on education
- After the publication of Emilie, orders were passed for his imprisonment
- published an article in 1754 entitled, Discourses on Science and art
- Characteristic feature of writings was strong content
- Napoleon stated- “If Rousseau had not taken birth the emergence of French revolution had not taken place
- Deep impact on people’s mind
- Stirred their thoughts, more simulative
- Also regarded as the Messiah of revolutionaries by Leo Gershoy