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Stupidity During the Enlightenment

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ABSTRACT

From before the steam engine to after Napoleon, the history of the enlightenment conformed to and confirmed the definition and model of stupidity as the learned inability to learn: That is a normal, dysfunctional learning process which occurs when a schema formed by linguistic biases and social norms acts via the neurotic paradox to establish a positive feedback system which becomes first self-sustaining and then renders behavior irrelevant to the environment by carrying detached actions to maladaptive excesses. Particular attention is devoted to the American and French revolutions.

Keywords: steam, God, *philosopes*, logic, Linnaeus, Voltaire, Rousseau, Franklin, Jefferson, Napoleon

1. INTRODUCTION

The Enlightenment began with the application of secular rationalism to human affairs and ended with a revolution. At the turn of the eighteenth century, the expectation was that reason would lead to scientific knowledge which would lead to control and progress that is, people would collect facts and apply reasonable principles which would reveal the general laws which govern human relations. Although this supposition seems naive now, it seemed justified then by Newton's overwhelming success in revealing the divine laws of the cosmos: If reasonable people but set their minds to understanding the *natural* laws of civil behavior that presumably guided social interaction, certainly peace, harmony and happiness would reign on earth as they did in heaven.

As the Greeks of Solon's era had recognized, however, the presumed natural laws, were actually *cultural* mores and did not lend themselves to objective evaluation. Ergo, the culmination of the Enlightenment, which set the intelligencia of the bourgeoisie on a collision course with the ancient regime,¹ was not a utopian revolution but Napoleon's imperial despotism. This dual tragedy of France was due not only generally to the inherent tension between Renaissance humanism and the subjectivity inherent in the new religion of reason but specifically to the unenlightened intractability of French nobility and royalty which drove first critics to extremes and then revolutionaries to excesses.

2. DISCUSSION

When and where enlightened minds enjoyed their modest successes, they did so by reducing human affairs to those elements which could be analyzed by science and reason while blithely ignoring the rest i.e., spiritual values, emotions, etc. The results of a logical analysis of society invariably challenged many of the entrenched beliefs which defined the prevailing class/Christian schemas of the age.

Such time honored prejudices had to be modified or give way before the dawning of the commitment to reason and knowledge could trump religion² and provide its limited light. Although the Enlightenment was essentially a secular movement which was based on the application of reason and knowledge to all walks of life e.g., Franklin's lightning rod and particularly on the Romanesque idea that government could re-solve political/social problems,³ it necessarily entailed a revamping of sacred tenets of intellectual, political and cultural life.

Theology, however, was also revised in accordance with the era's mantra "Dare to know"⁴.

First, God became known as a deist rather than a theist. As a theist, He had been rather personable and listened to prayers and occasionally, on whim, engaged in miracles. However, Newton had converted the universe into a realm in which natural law replaced divine whim.

As a deist, God was still the Great Creator, but having invented if not patented the machinery of the cosmos, He stood aside like a grand clock maker and admired His handiwork including the wretched little creatures on earth, to whom he had, for some reason, granted free will so they could sin. This universe would run forever according to Newton's (not His) laws without further intervention.⁵ As a corollary, believers dedicated their efforts not to prayer but

1. Davidson, I. The French Revolution. Pegasus Books; New York. 2016. p. 5.

2. Erickson, S. Philosophy as a Guide to Living. The Teaching Company; Chantilly, VA. 2006. Part 1; p. 1.

3. Gutzman, K. James Madison and the Making of America. St. Martin's Griffin; New York. 2013. p. 167.

4. Kant, I. Undated. The actual quotation *Sapere aude*, (Horace) is translated as "Have the courage to know". Hecht, J. Doubt: A History. HarperOne; New York. 2003. p. 367. The translation in the text is more conventional. Kant actually defined enlightenment as thinking for oneself, free of dogma liberation from self-imposed tutelage or what could be called "Freedom from oneself". In a pessimistic phase, Sartre matched this by characterizing man as "Condemned to be free" (Wat-son. 2001. p. 408.) as he continued falsely to assume freedom because it is nice to do. JFW

5. Brinton, C. The Shaping of the Modern Mind. Mentor; New York. 1953. pp. 123-124. Pantheist Spinoza had denied God, whom he equated with nature (G. Jones. p. 70. Hodgkinson and Bergh. p. 13.), the freedom to tinker with her universe. (Tractatus. 1670. Chap. 6.) Now, God is not deemed necessary even for creating the universe, much less motion. (Hawking and Mlodinow.) The more science advances, the less God has to do: or God × Science = K.

to learning and understanding and applying their knowledge and wisdom to help themselves⁶ if not God.

Although deism was all very reasonable, it tended to make God a cold, do-nothing, Natural Lawyer a symbolic, atheistic, absolute monarch approachable through reason but not inclined to meddle in human affairs.⁷ This role was not only unflattering and emotionally unappealing to Him, but worse yet, it rendered Him intellectually useless. While an ideology of reason and nature was enough for religious radicals, it was not enough for God and most of His devoted, theist groupies. As unenlightened as it seemed, and although materialists found Him unnecessary and atheists considered Him a non-existent evil, as Kant's appointed unifier of the universe,⁸ sidelined God remained personable, a little quirky and occasionally illogical. Just as reason gets one only so far with kids who do not understand their retrograde parents, so the Almighty became decreasingly logical as He matured, probably because His son drove him nuts with the love bit, which he probably got from his mother as a way to transcend Roman power.☺

With slightly confused, effeminate if not gay God shelved, for the first time in history the creative powers of humans were systematically cultivated and acclaimed but at the price of vulnerability. Having been set aside, God was fairly safe in heaven, but on earth, the dominant Christian establishment became targeted by rationalists for having imposed its control over society. To reduce the Enlightenment to essence, with God on the shelf, people tried to understand why they, themselves, did things.⁹

In this worthy endeavor, adherents of the burgeoning religion of Reason devoted themselves to rooting out what they considered to be established evils and were decidedly anti-clerical. Misery and suffering were everywhere and obviously existed because people were not behaving naturally. Those who were enlightened were going to eliminate unnaturalism by eliminating its causes (be they secular or sectarian), and the Church was obviously just such a cause. Through its corruption, Christians had become Satanic. The new faith would prove itself by providing knowledge about God's perfect, mechanical universe so that reasonable people could live in accordance with His perfect, natural laws.¹⁰ Lost in the shuffle was the fact that people often behave irrationally but then use their brains to rationalize why they did so.

In general, the rationalists and particularly the *philosophes* (i.e., the French philosophers who dumped on Christianity and embraced reality sans theology) were thus not antireligious: They just wanted to re-place Christianity with a belief in reason.¹¹

They (and, later on, the romantics) generally if abstractly wanted to eliminate all the evil institutions be they religious, political or cultural which were keeping people from thinking for themselves and behaving naturally. In fact, as independent, abstract thinkers detached from reality as are their academic descendants today, philosophers were disposed to believe that

6. Locke, J. Some Thoughts Concerning Education. Sec. 94. 1693. ("The best Fence (sic) against the world is a thorough knowledge of it.") A belief in knowledge as proactive was expressed some 250 years later by a devotee of the Great Society who modestly opined that "The new knowledge can literally solve any* problem". Davies, G. From Opportunity to Entitlement: The Trans-formation and Decline of Great Society Liberalism. University Press of Kansas; Lawrence, KS. 1996. p. 38. *Except maybe those it creates. JFW.☺

7. Allison, A., Skousan, C. and Maxfield R. The Real Benjamin Franklin. National Center for Constitutional Studies. www.nccs.net. p. 40 fn19.

8. Watson, P. 2010. The German Genius. HarperCollins; New York. p. 141.

9. Wood, G. The Idea of America. Penguin; New York. 2011. p. 101.

10. Brinton. op. cit. p. 125.

11. Ibid. p. 139.

institutions per se were an evil and perhaps *the* evil. For example, in international affairs, free-traders believed national governments unnecessarily interfered with commerce which, if left alone, would bind peoples of the world together to their mutual benefit.¹² Generally, rationalists shared the belief that the removal of institutions would permit people to be good, whereas it actually would allow them to be monsters.

There is a trade-off here: The establishment keeps things orderly but at the price of enriching the upper class and impoverishing the lower. The critical beliefs of romantic rationalists notwithstanding, civilization depends upon institutions. They can be good or bad and may be made better or worse, but, as Edmond Burke noted, if they go, civil behavior goes with them.¹³

In this age, when Christian ineptitude was promoted by traditions of holy indifference and hallowed neglect, the priests of the new religion of Reason were certainly justified in criticizing and condemning inefficiency,¹⁴ which they did. Accordingly, they criticized the newly burgeoning bureaucracies, which official organizations designed to bring an element of systematic order into the paper world of the developing modern church and state. Unfortunately, their practical effect was to drag everyone associated with them into a formal, frustrating world of forms, files and rubber stamps, but it was precisely those people who ultimately triumphed over enlightened despots and educated elitists committed to reason.¹⁵

The priests of rationalism were actually going after something even more formidable theologically than general or over-organized clerical inefficiency: They were targeting the Christian Church itself. Ironically, it was a Protestant clergyman, *Pierre Bayle*, who, in 1695, *ushered in the Enlightenment by pointing out every dogma could be refuted by "Natural reason"*¹⁶. Rationalists misplaced their faith in thought, however, when they criticized established institutions like the Church and conventional customs according to the new standard of logic,¹⁷ because, while the Enlightenment was grounded on an unbounded faith in reason,¹⁸ it floundered not in rationality but on subjectivity.

Spokesmen for the age hyped reason to a degree unimagined by medieval Muslims poet al-Ma'arri, who ventured, "O Reason, thou (alone) speakest the truth". This ideal was further developed¹⁹ by Thomas Jefferson, who was smugly Confucian with his optimistic, superegoish proclamations like "Fix reason firmly in her seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion"²⁰ and his equally naively idealistic "Reason and experiment have been indulged, and

12. Paine, T. *Common Sense*. 1776. Dreamy idealist John Adams even drew up a model treaty to this effect in July, 1776, but it obviously came to naught. Spivak, B. *Jefferson's English Crisis*. Charlottesville. 1979. p. 1. The notion was still popular in the mid-nineteenth century. (Macdonald. p. 3.) The song continued into the 19th century.

13. Burke, E. *Selected Letters of Edmund Burke*. H. Mansfield. ed. University of Chicago Press; Chicago, IL. 1984. p. 16. One of the best/worst examples of this was the Rolling Stones Rock concert at Altamont, CA on Dec. 6, 1969. It was anarchy gone amok. (Sanchez, T. *Up and Down with the Rolling Stones*. William Morrow; New York. 1979.)

14. Brinton. op. cit. p. 138.

15. Evans, R. *The Pursuit of Power*. Viking; New York. 2016. p. 36.

16. Roberts, J. *The New History of the World*. Oxford University Press; New York. 2003. p. 686.

17. Brinton. op. cit. p. 126.

18. Isaiah. 1:18. Ca. 725 B.C. ("Come now, and let us reason together.") LBJ's motto while Senate majority leader not that he was always reasonable.

19. Voltaire. *Age of Louis XIV*. 1735.

20. Jefferson, T. *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (Edited by A. Lipscomb. Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association. Washington, D.C. 1903. Vol. VI, p. 258.) See also: Gordon-Reed, A. and Onuf, P. *Most Blessed of the Patriarchs*. Norton; New York. 2016.

error has fled before them”.²¹ In a similar vein, Ben Franklin opined, “...when men differ in Opinion, both Sides ought equally to have the Advantage of being heard by the Publick (sic) and that when Truth and Error have fair Play, the former is always an overmatch for the latter”²² except when error deeply appeals to popular emotion²³ or is part of a display put out by hoaxers like 19th century P. T. Barnum who proved that every crowd has a silver lining.²⁴☺

Not only were these exceptions not recognized by enlightened rationalists of the age, but they down-played the impact of different backgrounds and material conditions on reasoners. Like the theologians during the Reformation, they allowed that only one political/cultural position was correct, and any one of another persuasion probably reached his conclusion via an error in logic as opposed to using valid logic from another starting point.²⁵

As heady as the new religion of reason was, in practice it led to the same confusion common to all subjectively interpretable belief systems. For example, Christians had long debated the true nature of God and had certainly differed in the practice of their shared beliefs. Rationalists hardly escaped such problems as the debate surrounding the reasonableness of hereditary nobility showed. Was hereditary nobility reasonable? If so, retain it; if not, abolish it. Aristocrats found nobility very reasonable; the merchant class did not. France did until 1789; but in the 1790's, it did not.²⁶

This example clearly demonstrates that the Enlightenment model of dispassionate reason in the informed citizen was empirically baseless.²⁷ It turned out the reasonableness of a practice or process was dependent upon the reasoner and especially the starting and end points of her train of thought. These, in turn, were both arbitrarily predetermined by the reasoner's subjective perceptions and self-serving values,²⁸ which were matters beyond reason,²⁹ which, as Kant, in his Germanic verbosity so tersely pointed out, never is pure.³⁰

21. Jefferson, T. Notes on the State of Virginia. 1784. (Written: 1781) Query 17.

22. Franklin, B. Apology for Printers. Pennsylvania Gazette. June 10, 1731. In Franklin's Writ-ings. p. 172.

23. Cook, J. Arts of Deception. Harvard University Press; Cambridge, MA. 2001.

24. Floyd, E. The Good the Bad and the Mad. Barnes & Noble; New York. 1999. (2005.) p. 8.

25. Gutzman. op. cit. p. 146.

26. Brinton. op. cit. p. 126. (Specifically, in 1735, the French parliament reminded Louis XV that he must obey the fundamental laws of France, prompting one wag to add, “All that remains is for us to know exactly what these fundamental laws are”. (Marquis d'Argenson. Cited on p. 210 of Blanning.) Thirty-two years later, the American colonists faced the same kind of problem. There was an urgent need to do what was right, but no one knew what that was (Barrington, Lord W. 1767. Quoted on p. 21 of D. Fisher.) because it was so subjective. In the 21st century, the invasion of Iraq in 2003 provided an excellent example of tortured subjectivity: American armed forces were responding to a concocted “Reality” of contrived threats. WMD, etc. which were invented to rationalize a totally unjustified if not criminal act. (Judt, T. Thinking the Twentieth Century. Penguin; New York. 2012. p. 311.)

27. Tabor, C. Quoted on p. 34 of “Voting with the Heart” by C. Choi. Scientific American. Dec. 2006.

28. Madison, J. The Federalist Papers; No. 10. Nov. 23, 1787. (Edited by I. Kramnick. Penguin; New York. 2003. p. 124.) Philosophically, this point was made by Hume, who saw passion as the driving engine of reason that is, reason was a way to realize an emotional goal. (MacIntyre. p. 304.) A nearly absurd example was provided by the Supreme Court in the 1930's. In May, 1936, a New York laundress had no rights to a minimum wage (*Morehead*); ten months later, a chamber-maid in Washington did. (*West Coast Hotel*) The difference was, one of the justices (Roberts) had changed his mind due to supervening conditions. (Justice Hughes's *Parrish* opinion. See Shesol. pp. 403-415. And Leuchtenburg. p. 186.)

29. This problem remains unresolved today and undercuts our reverence for secular thought. E.g: In legal affairs, new precedents in court cases con-tinually remind us that the logical decisions based on yesterday's values are not necessarily binding today. (Napolitano. 2004. p. 69.)

30. Kant, I. 1781. Kritik der reinen Vernunft. (Critique of Pure Reason. Reduced to essence: By the time a person can apply reason ca. 25 years of age, he has an agenda/schema, so his reason is not pure it is biased toward sustaining itself.)

In a more profound matter, enlightened thinkers never successfully dealt with the fundamental meta-physical problem of defining good and bad: They were simply convinced that bad persisted because of human institutions.

Traditionally, Christians had blamed evil on human nature with people being born sinful and redeemed through salvation. During the enlightenment, evil was attributed to the cultural environment as it still is by liberals today. In terms of eternal universals, this was a giant leap sideways for man, but in terms of practical specifics, it was a step forward for mankind. A means for improvement was made available, although those who tried to advance society by appeals to right ideals³¹ became frustrated by their meager results. As a functional compromise, institutions were grudgingly accepted, with the hope that they would be improved and then bad would gradually be replaced by good.³²

Subjectivity notwithstanding, with human institutions considered bad to the degree they kept people from behaving naturally, the final arbiter as to just what constituted good and bad was natural law. In fact, most rationalists were not much concerned with such ethical issues because, like everyone else, they had been awed by Newton's success in divining the laws of the cosmos. They simply assumed that scientists, by reading God's book (i.e., nature)³³ would provide an understanding of and an explanations for miracles³⁴ as well as the moral basis for civilization. There were presumably natural laws and an underlying natural order of things which human reason could discern and apply and which would solve political, eco-nomic and social problems.³⁵ This assumption was itself based on two suppositions: That nature was reasonable and that it therefore could be analyzed by reason.

Many naturalists rigidly applied reason to the study of living things, and the work of the most noted of these, Swedish botanist Carolus Linnaeus (1707-1778),³⁶ epitomized eighteenth century life science. His assumptions were that there was a divine pattern and that he could find it by applying reason to nature. He would prove that nothing changed and that the living world or at least that of plants was regimented and ordered. A further assumption was that species were permanent and constant, as no one would bother to classify organisms which could change into other species or whimsically appear/disappear.³⁷

Linnaeus's career exemplified the point that there are neither stupid people nor stupid ideas just ideas stupidly applied by people. His rigid system of classification was helpful as an aid to organizing knowledge up to a point. However, his pigeonholing of species inhibited an understanding of nature (which can be disorderly) and impeded appreciation of how life actually develops and evolves.

While living forms were deemed immutable, our perception of ourselves was not. Readers of Julien Offroy de La Mettrie's *L'homme machine* (1747) and viewers of Pierre Jaquet Droz's

31. Jefferson, T. Quoted by J. Garraty in *The Case of the "Missing" Commissions*. American Heritage; XIV, #4, p. 9. June, 1963.

32. Brinton. op. cit. pp. 126-127. In fact, reform of institutions is commonly hampered by the desire of those in power to stay there and resist all attempts to make them abide by the rules they decree for everyone else. They live in a world of image and hate the truth.

33. Berkeley, G. *Notebooks*. Undated. Luce; Oxford. 2010.

34. Diderot, D. and d'Alembert, J. *Encyclopedia*. Ca. 1760. *The philosophes' Bible*. (Isaacson. 2003. p. 353.) Basically, miracles were out of fashion: Science (empirically based rationalism) would explain everything. (Cited on p. 91 of McMahan, D. 2013. *Divine Fury*. Basic Books; New York.)

35. Howard, H. *Thomas Jefferson Architect*. Rizzoli; New York. 2003. p. 18.

36. Freeman, S. *Biological Science*. Benjamin Cummings; San Francisco, CA. 2011. p. 8.

37. Boorstin, D. *The Discoverers*. Vintage; New York. 1983. p. 446. Although he specialized in botanical taxonomy, he did, rather reluctantly, classify humans as primates. (Linnaeus. 1747.)

mechanical boy Writer (1772)³⁸ found themselves confronted with determinism, materialism and atheism in a view which put thought on a par with electricity, reduced human nature to physics and put it on a continuum with animal matter. There were only material substances, thus casting doubt on the existence of the soul if not God. Needless to say, Julien found himself in hot water with those who resented attempts to limit their beliefs and views to and by factual knowledge.

On the other hand, an understanding of heat itself during this era was muddled by those who indulged in word games. In the 17th century, Robert Hooke attributed heat to motion of parts of a body or object, and Isaac Newton later agreed with him. Early in the next century, “Plogiston” served as an explanation for the phenomenon: Hot objects had it; cold ones did not. Late in the 1700's, Lavoisier replaced plogiston with “Caloric” a mythical fluid which filled the spaces between molecules of objects. This explained nothing, but true believers clung to the notion well into the next century.³⁹ As experimental evidence accrued, definitions and redefinitions of caloric abounded until it came to mean practically any-thing and everything meaning it meant nothing. Eventually, motion was reestablished as the cause of heat, although not in the minds of all.⁴⁰

Another victim of minds committed to themselves was the previously alluded to idea that natural law would provide the moral basis for human society.⁴¹ This was the era's grand illusion which no one was enlightened enough to perceive as such despite the obvious fact that the more nature was analyzed logically, the less reasonable and systematic it appeared. In fact, as scientific knowledge accumulated, nature became increasingly mysterious until it became unintelligible once again, although it remained admired and a source of pleasure to be saved from improvements wrought by progress and civilization.⁴² It provided, however, no single answer as to just who or what "Natural man" nor anything else was. Indeed, Mettrie's view notwithstanding, natural man became something to be transcended by enlightenment.⁴³ Nature thus became at best vague, ambiguous and irrelevant to metaphysical issues while concealing the big answers which everyone assumed were just waiting for the scientists who asked the right questions.⁴⁴

While scientists found that nature could be analyzed reasonably, they found it is really more like an open book which, like the Bible, could be interpreted any way the reader liked. People found natural rights and natural religion and anything else they sought.

Kings, nobles, merchants and priests all believed they were living in accordance with natural law because each lived in accordance with his own subjective interpretation of it. As everyone could find some natural principle to explain and rationalize if not justify his station and conduct, nature became not the ultimate arbiter of issues and a source of certainty but a field of subjective contention and a fountain of confusion.⁴⁵

38. Johnson, S. *Wonderland*. Riverhead Books; New York. 2016. p. 8.

39. Klein, M. *The Power Makers*. Bloomsbury Press; NY. 2008. pp. 71-72.

40. Hills, R. *Power from Steam: A History of the Stationary Steam Engine*. Cambridge, England. 1989. pp. 164-

41. Otis, J. 1763. *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved*. On p. 126 of *The American Republic: Primary Sources*. B. Frohnen. ed. Library Fund; Indianapolis, IN. 2002.

42. Irving, W. *A History of New York*. 1809. As a wreck-it-myself property owner, I have explicitly conceded, “My lawn will survive all my attempts to improve it.” JFW.☺

43. *New York Magazine*. 5. 1794. pp. 472 and 474.

44. Muller, H. J. *The Uses of the Past*. Mentor; New York. 1952. p. 298.

45. *Ibid*. pp. 297-298.

Although science (i.e., institutionalized, rational empiricism) developed formal checks against the most obvious pitfalls of subjectivity, both rationalism and empiricism succumbed to it. In fact, far from eliminating the confusion caused by subjectivity, the major British "Empiricists" Locke, Berkeley and Hume practically enshrined controversy in philosophy by espousing a liberal tolerance for different views of uncertain truths. As noted previously, Locke's approach was to sacrifice logic to psychic comfort: He simply did not take logical steps which made him feel uneasy.⁴⁶ Like Plato, he never really had a system of thought because he could not face the paradox that an empiricist could not know how he knew and also because he was a bit too respectful of conventional beliefs to permit his thinking to go to psychologically uncomfortably extremes.⁴⁷

George Berkeley (1685-1753) had fewer reservations, especially about absurdities, and really was not an empiricist at all but a rationalist who dealt with issues of perception and knowledge. He structured a fairly consistent philosophical system but at a price reality. Whereas Parmenides had dismissed experience as illusionary, Berkeley denied all together the independent existence of matter, maintaining it existed only when perceived,⁴⁸ and thus he sacrificed the physical world for the sake of his peculiar logic.

However, his commitment to logic had its limits. To have been completely consistent, he would have abolished God and denied the existence of all minds but his own. As an Anglican bishop, he had neither the inclination nor authority to abolish God, who was thus not only retained but enlisted as the Great Perceiver: Matter would cease to exist if not perceived, but as the poor philosopher's handy standby, Omni perceptive God was dragged in to behold all. Hence, the universe existed even if not perceived by humans and trees presumably made sounds falling because God heard them do so. Further, as a social being, he could hardly deny the existence of other minds so he contented himself with being logical as far as he went but, like Locke, did not drive his system to uncomfortable extremes.⁴⁹

If Berkeley limited his commitment to logical consistency, he nevertheless took thinking too seriously and would have starved as a physicist. Like an earlier-day Hegel, who opined "What is reasonable is real; That which is real is reasonable",⁵⁰ he overemphasized thought in contending that logic could prove only minds and mental events exist.⁵¹ Be that as it may, it hardly justified attributing the existence of the universe to God's presumed universal perceptual abilities what happens when He blinks? and eternal commitment to logic. In more general philosophical terms, although he thought he had proved reality is a mental construct, actually all he did was establish the limits of reason.⁵²

David Hume (1711-1776) had already established these by pushing rational absurdity to its logical conclusion. As an anti-empiricist, he was consistent, ideal and pure to the extreme.

46. Russell, B. *A History of Western Philosophy*. Simon and Schuster; New York. 1945. p. 606.

47. *Ibid.* pp. 611-612.

48. *Ibid.* p. 647

49. *Ibid.* p. 702.

50. Hegel, G. *Philosophy of Right*. 1820.

51. Russell. *op. cit.* pp. 657-658.

52. *Ibid.* p. 653. A position eventually established in 1931 by Kurt Gödel, (Watson. 2000. p. 271.) who at the same time proved there are some things we cannot know, (Dawson, J. p. 55.) but it does not matter. (Firestein. p. 42.) The sense of touch was central to Berkeley, (Predeville. p. 144.) suggesting he may not have trusted what he saw and heard. As a personal aside, I have come to believe in "One-step logic" and regard "By logical extension" in a curved universe with extreme skepticism.

He destroyed meta-physics,⁵³ dismissed causation, denied the self, disdained induction, deified certainty and logically established the futility of logic. He went beyond Berkeley's contrived acceptance of matter by rejecting God as the Great Perceiver of the universe. Particularly in his epistemology, Hume's commitment to consistency showed that logic carried to excess could abolish not only matter and God but the distinction between rationality and absurdity if not sanity.⁵⁴

Hume began the modern practice of minimizing mechanical explanations of natural phenomena by showing that the cause/effect relationship cannot be logically proven. Earlier philosophers (like the Scholastics and Cartesians) had simply assumed causation,⁵⁵ but Hume challenged this assumption.⁵⁶ In his way, on this particular point, he was absolutely correct: The proposition that "A causes B" cannot be proved logically.⁵⁷ However, that does not prove or mean causation does not occur: It merely establishes a limit on logic that it cannot be used to prove causation. In terms of understanding the natural world, this is no great loss because nature, as a field of interacting, unreasoning influences and forces, is not necessarily logical, although we may use logic to help us learn about if not understand it.

As the ultimate skeptic, Hume's more general concern was with probable and certain knowledge.⁵⁸ He maintained that mathematics is the only field in which a chain of reasoning retains certainty, but it provides only *a priori* truths based on arbitrary rules governing the use of symbols and gives no information about the external world. On the other hand, echoing if not resurrecting Greek skepticism of the third century B.C. and that of al-Ghazzali of the twelfth A.D.⁵⁹, he demonstrated logically that we can not really be certain about empirical knowledge, which is based upon generalizations induced from experience and therefore need not necessarily be true. For example, the sun has always risen in the east, so we expect it to do so tomorrow, but there is no logical imperative that it do it unless we define it that way. Thus, almost two hundred years before Heisenberg, Hume developed his own unlabelled "Uncertainty principle" that propositions are either certain and uninformative (about the real world) or informative and uncertain,⁶⁰ but it is impossible to have knowledge that is both certain and informative about reality.⁶¹

Hume was basically mesmerized by the idea of certainty and regarded "Knowing" as an absolute condition, but while he was correct in asserting that we cannot know anything about the real world with absolute certainty, we can still be pretty sure about what we do know. In fact, if there ever was a phony issue, certainty certainly is it.

Although Hume must be admired for his intellectual integrity his un-Locke and courage to follow a train of thought to its logical conclusion, he had difficulty *philosophically* dealing

53. Kelsen, H. Abolutism and Relativism in Philosophy and Politics. The American Political Science Review. Vol. XLII. IV. Oct., 1948.

54. Russell. op. cit. pp. 702-703.

55. Ibid. p. 664.

56. Apparently, Hume took this and his position on the uncertainty of empirical knowledge from the Carvaka a 7th century B.C. Indian sect of Hindu bashers.

57. Ibid. p. 669.

58. Ibid. p. 663.

59. Armstrong, K. A History of God. Knopf; New York. 1993. p. 187.

60. In 1927, Werner Heisenberg announced his famous "Uncertainty Principle" that a physicist could know a particle's position or momentum but not both. This was reduced to human terms by Niels Bohr, who, in a conversation with Heisenberg said, "You could be clear or you could be accurate. But if you are clear, you wouldn't be accurate, and if you are accurate, you wouldn't be clear". (Erickson. 2; p. 104.)

61. Berlin, I. The Age of Enlightenment. Mentor; New York. 1956. p. 180.

with the pragmatic fact that most people do not have to be absolutely certain about events in their daily lives.⁶²

However, *personally*, he understood that people get along fairly well without ironclad guarantees about the future so long as they have some functional expectations (i.e., a schema) which helps them navigate through life.⁶³ *Although nature is mechanistic in causation, our of it knowledge is probabilistic* and is usually based on the assumption that the future will resemble the past,⁶⁴ which it does most of the time.

The problem Hume was really dealing with was whether philosophy could accept empiricism. Posed as a question, the problem was, "Is there an intellectual difference between sanity and insanity?" Or, to put it pragmatically, "Is a lunatic who believes he is Napoleon simply a minority of one⁶⁵ or is there something fundamentally deranged about his thinking?" Basing his answer on reason, Hume concluded that beliefs must be irrational because we cannot be certain about reality.

He rejected empiricism (and all Napoleons but one) and dismissed all beliefs as equally worthless because none was *absolutely* certain. To a pure logician, this analysis may be appealing, but practically, it is idiotic. Some beliefs are better founded than others: None may be absolutely certain, but that does not mean all are equally worthless. Nevertheless, as a philosophical absolutist lacking Locke's deference to common sense,⁶⁶ Hume could not accept differing degrees of validity of beliefs (or thoughts),⁶⁷ because of his unjustifiable belief⁶⁸ that all beliefs (including this one?) are equally or at least essentially irrational.⁶⁹

By far, Hume's most popular conclusion was that there is no reason to study philosophy although he could have concluded there was no reason to study anything at all, even if this is unjustifiably extreme. He began rather sensibly but ended up concluding (without proving) that *nothing can be learned from experience* and observation. What he could not comprehend was that he had only qualified but not refuted knowledge by misapplying rationalism when he logically extended reason to a pointless extreme.

In so doing, he carried logic to absurdities Locke failed to reach because he had less tolerance for inconsistencies and more respect for logic than Locke had.⁷⁰ By carrying logic to

62. Durant, W. and Durant, A. *The Age of Voltaire*. Simon and Schuster; New York. 1965. p. 144.

63. Blom, P. 2010. *A Wicked Company*. Basic Books; New York. p. 241.

64. Hume, D. *Treatise of Human Nature*. 1739. Book I, Pt. III, Sec. IV.

65. Russell. op. cit. p. 673.

66. As Voltaire noted, "Common sense is not so common". (*Dictionnaire Philosophique*. 1764.)

67. Although traditionally considered a British empiricist, Hume really was the ultimate rationalist the thinker who drove logic to the nth degree, thereby revealing its inherent limitations. In this vein, he was mimicked by Kant, who used reason to show there is no such thing as pure, objective reason. Dave nevertheless concluded we are free because we can reason, (Scruton. p. 127.) despite the insight that our natural impulses are subjected to rational scrutiny according to our culturally derived identity. (G. Jones. p. 203.) In this sense, Kant was self-refuting—claiming reason makes us free but enslaves us by being inherently biased (Erikson. Part 1; p. 2.), paving the way for Freud's decision determining id. He also mistakenly limited reason to the world of the senses (Ibid. p. 30.) at the expense of mathematics.☺

68. Nevertheless, we are all indebted to him for his belief that the most sacred foundation of government is the consent of the people. He may have picked this up from Rev. Thomas Hooker who, in 1638, in Connecticut preached "the foundation of authority (of the church) is laid in the free consent of the people." (Siemiatoski. p. 12.) This principle found its way into the first written (political) constitution in history that of the colony of Connecticut by the hand of Thomas Welles, one of my 8th great-grandfathers. JFW.☺

69. Hume, D. *Of the Original Contract*. 1748.

70. Russell. op. cit. pp. 671-672.

extremes, he demonstrated not the futility of experience and observation, as he claimed, but the intellectual limits of rationalism.⁷¹ Noting “Carelessness and inattention alone can afford us any remedy”, he then disingenuously added, “For this reason I rely entirely upon them”, presumably to the exclusion of reason and knowledge.⁷² After all, how else is a philosopher or anyone else stupidly to get a desired if invalid conclusion?

Undeterred by Hume’s failure, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) joined him in demonstrating the futility of metaphysical speculation,⁷³ picked up the discredited banner of rationalism, waved it grandly, stumbled backward and planted it firmly at the bottom of the philosophical black hole known as Parmenides’ grave.

Like Parmenides, Kant held we cannot know anything about the world around us, but his substitution of personal constructs for knowledge led to fanaticism in some of his followers⁷⁴ and his own peculiar endorsement of the primacy of ethics in politics⁷⁵ of all things. However, if one moves outside the self-contained vacuum of philosophy, his absurd thesis of non-knowledge has been convincingly demolished by science, which provides us with pinpoint accurate predictions of tides, day length and eclipses.

This is because Kant and Hegel and Schopenhauer really were not philosophers: they were psychologists who were working in a philosophical mode and failed because they could not transcend it. That is, they were stuck being philosophers because psychology did not exist yet, but that is where they were unwittingly headed.

As a specific case of self-refutation of a misplaced intellect, if Kant evenly matched Socrates in know-ing nothing, why did he propose a League for Peace in 1795?⁷⁶

The answer obviously is that he knew what was going on in his world and presumed to offer a solution to one of its major problems. In addition, he allowed the possibility of progress if man could free himself from superstitious religious dogma, which he regarded not as stupidity but as “Self-incurred immaturity”⁷⁷ while congruously maintaining God is a necessary, rational

71. In our contemporary world, this kind of analysis characterizes nerds and bureaucrats who live in cyberspace to the complete disregard of reality. If the computer says, “X=Y”, then it does reality and facts to the contrary notwithstanding.

72. Russell, B. *Philosophy and Politics*. Cambridge University Press; London. 1947.

73. Kelsen. *op. cit.*

74. Santayana, G. *Egotism in German Philosophy*. M. Dent; London. 1916. p. 62. (Nearly twenty years before the Nazis took power, Santayana noted something of a satanic, diabolical moral disease in the proud subjectivism of German philosophy. p. 170. In 1918, Edgar Zilzel decried the dearth of German-speaking people who recognized the danger of the religion of genius, which Hitler as a living refutation of the 20th century cult of materialism—used in his ascent to power. (Cited on p. 220 of McMahon. *op. cit.*) In a more practical vein, in 1909, Karl Kraus predicted that “Soon in Europe they will make gloves of human skin.” (Rosenbaum. p. 305.) Thirty-five years later the Nazis were making lampshades of human skin, especially favoring pieces with artistic tattoos.

75. Kadarsky, A. *Georg Lukás*. Basil Blackwell; Oxford England. 1991. p. 195. During WWI, Hungarian Lukás carried absurdity another step forward by opining that one could lie his way to the truth (Gluck. p. 204.) in the same way one could gain *legitimate* power via terrorism. (Ibid. p. 205.)

76. Kant, I. 1795. *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*.

77. Jones, G. *Karl Marx: Greatness and Illusion*. Harvard U. Press; Cambridge, MA. 2016. p. 53. (Original unknown.) I would think “Self imposed limitations” would be an apter phrase. A big part of Kant’s problem is that he was a lousy writer. Worse yet, he all but established the dung-standard for obscure writing in German. The language unfortunately lends itself to coining jaw-breakers, but in addition, there is now an intellectual standard of confusion to which writers of German aspire due, in part, to Kant’s influence. Generally, philosophers are the worst writers, with scientists coming in a close second. Modern poets cannot be held to any standard at all, so they get a bye preferably a good-bye.☺

postulate.⁷⁸ To put it bluntly, Kant was a philosophical mess☺ while to put it diplomatically, he was wrong but said a number of important things his essential point being that *we are interpreters*,⁷⁹ making reasonable interpretations of our sensory data. This made him a throwback to Locke, in that he did not know how he knew whatever it was he knew or interpreted.⁸⁰ He averred reason could trump irrational urges,⁸¹ and his ideal person would be proper but dull. The “Moral law within him” as he claimed⁸² was not intrinsically, inherently human but a fostered sense developed through bonding with others. At the same time, he did hype the individual as the ultimate end not a means to any other end.⁸³ If there were such an end for Kant, it would have been an elusive universal law which would be applicable to all people in all situations at all times.⁸⁴

With Hume and Kant discrediting logic if not empiricism, the character of the Enlightenment changed dramatically as the lamp of rationalism paled before the fire of romanticism. Until the middle of the eighteenth century, the Newtonian legacy had predominated, and the enlightened person had believed in reason, liberty, common sense and civilized progress⁸⁵ indeed the words “Civilization” and “Perfectibility” entered European languages in 1750.⁸⁶

Thereafter, rationalism somehow survived and would rise again, but for the moment, matters had become too important for reason, which was refuting itself and giving way to romanticism which would eventually, uncontrollably lead to revolution. With logic suspect if not in disrepute, sentiment and feeling reigned extreme, and, to the dismay of Franklin, Voltaire and their ilk, the last half of the eighteenth century belonged increasingly to the inward looking⁸⁷ romantic radicals and rebels who took up the iconoclastic cause of denouncing human institutions.⁸⁸

Romantics cast off the rationalist schema and *rejected outright the principles of the Enlightenment*.⁸⁹ Civilization depended on the suppression of not just subversive thought but of all thought:⁹⁰ e.g., according to an Austrian bureaucrat, the way to truth and God was to print nothing for an indeterminately long time.⁹¹ Further, by emphasizing individual experience and the cause of freedom and by breaking down repressive social mores, romantics encouraged people to part from traditional beliefs, roles and duties.⁹² Artistic creativity⁹³ (i.e., Kant’s human

78. Erickson. op. cit. pp. 36-37.

79. Ibid. p. 40.

80. Ibid. p. 41.

81. Ibid. p. 119.

82. Ibid. p. 110. Dull but not stupid. And p. 112.

83. Butler-Bowdon, T. 50 Politics Classics. Nicholas Brealey; Boston, MA. 2105. p 64.

84. Breyer, S. The Court and the World. Vintage Books; New York. 2016. p. 245.

85. Brinton. op. cit. p. 135.

86. Mishra, P. Age of Anger. Ferrar, Straus and Giroux; New York. 2017. p. 55.

87. Hegel, G. Undated citation on page 456 of Blanning.

88. Notably in the early 19th century and repeatedly thereafter, as it alternated with romanticism throughout western intellectual history showing, successively, that rationalism did not work and that romanticism could not work. So what is left? Have a drink, drop out, struggle on, or write a useless book about it all.

89. McMahon. op. cit. p. 119.

90. Evans. op. cit. p. 81.

91. Gentz, F. 1819. Quoted on p. 81 of Evans.

92. Hecht. op. cit. p. 374.

93. Chateaubriand, F-R. Undated quotation on p. 81 of Evans.

defining “imagination”⁹⁴) not rationalism was considered the divine spark which makes us human,⁹⁵ and Christianity was the only religion that could guarantee contentment and subservience to authority although when it comes to subservience, Islam is tough to top.

As romanticism rushed in to fill the void left by the failure of rationalism, an outburst of irrational faith in everything but convention swept Western civilization.⁹⁶ Prudence, manners and intellectual restraint were cast aside by people tired of safety and propriety, fed up with poverty and suffering, desirous of change and hopeful of progress.⁹⁷ Patience was replaced by passion, and reasoned liberalism was pushed to the fuzzy border of subjective anarchy. The watchwords of the new era were sensibility, enthusiasm, pity and the heart, which came into its own against the head⁹⁸ as Bach made way for Beethoven.⁹⁹

Basically, the romantics did not so much destroy the ideas of truth and validity¹⁰⁰ as change the cultural standard from logic to aesthetics¹⁰¹ from reason to beauty.¹⁰² The contemptible, contemporary world of industrialism, ugliness and cruelty was unfavorably contrasted with the ancient and medieval worlds, which were invariably idealized by nostalgia.¹⁰³

Oddly enough, the romantics embraced both maudlin sentimentality and gruesome horror¹⁰⁴ as they reveled in not just their own quixotized absolute utopian images and models of perfection but strange, Gothic, morbid and macabre sorts of things as well.¹⁰⁵ Rousseau loved what was useless, destructive and violent (canyons, storms, waterfalls, etc.) while condemning people for loving what is deformed and monstrous,¹⁰⁶ and generally, romantic fiction featured ghosts, castles, decadent aristocrats, despots, pirates and the occult.

Most of all, however, romantics loved medieval chivalry because when writing about kings, knights and tables, they could freely indulge in their stock in trade, which was to cut loose from reality.¹⁰⁷

94. Erickson. op. cit. p. 34.

95. Herzen, A. Undated quotation cited by I. Berlin in *Sense of Reality*. p. 60.

96. Russell. 1945. op. cit. p. 673.

97. Ibid. p. 677. The tragic demise of Mozart is illustrative here: Stuck with himself, he carried rationalism to ornate excess in music when patrons were shifting to emotionalism.

98. Brinton. op. cit. p. 135.

99. Ludwig was more of a transitional figure than he realized. He not only paved the way to romanticism in music but his deeply personal string quartets made his deafness a blessing as their “Indecipherable uncorrected horrors” (Spohr.) anticipated the noise for the delight of the hearing impaired of the latter 20th century. Think of romantic horror set to music.

100. Berlin, I. *Freedom and Betrayal*. Chatto & Windus; London. 2002. p. 60.

101. This change in attitude shaped the gardens which were constructed for the landed estates of the era: Those designed at the turn of the 18th century were rational and ordered, reflecting the disciplined mind’s triumph over nature; those which came later were more random and disorderly, showing a “Go with the flow” romantic mentality shaped by nature. (Switzer, S. *Ichnographia Rustica*. 1718. On p. 443 of Blanning.) It should surprise no one that Thomas Jefferson aspired to wed nature and mathematics when landscaping Monticello. (R. Morgan. p. 11.) In the 19th century, the move was to improve on nature by concentrating beautiful flowers, etc. in an area. (Evans. p. 364.)

102. Richards, R. *The Romantic Conception of Life*. University of Chicago Press; Chicago, IL. 2002. p. 22.

103. Russell. op. cit. p. 600. For example: Novalis. “Christianity or Europe” in F. Beiser, ed., *The Early Political Writings of the German Romantics*. Cambridge University Press; Cambridge, England. 1996. pp. 59-81.

104. Zweig, S. Balzac. Viking; New York. 1946. p. 42.

105. McMahon. op. cit. p. 125.

106. Rousseau, J. *Emile*. 1762. (Opening.)

107. Russell. 1945. op. cit. p. 678.

Science was still acceptable if it led to something peculiar, but when nature was portrayed, it was no longer Newtonian neat, orderly, and mathematical; it was wild, spontaneous and random.¹⁰⁸

If there is a justifiable objection to romantic fiction, it should not be to the aesthetic standards employed nor to the historical licenses accepted but to the indiscriminate values implied. The romantics were remarkably uncritical of expressed emotions and seemed to admire strong passions of any kind regardless of their social or intellectual consequences. Romantic love was certainly approved, but so were destructive impulses. Your basic Romantic was simply fervid, be it in the cause of love or anarchistic, anti-social violence.¹⁰⁹

This is not to imply that Romantics were amoral: They simply based their morality on standards different¹¹⁰ from those of conventional society.¹¹¹ They considered social restraint immoral and favored the immediate expression of passion, but because they could react as much to ugliness as to beauty, they never did anything to improve the conditions to which they were reacting that is, their ethic carried no directive for correction, improvement or progress.

Thus, not only did romantics indulge in idealizing and fantasizing, but they could be accused of seeking, maintaining and even creating strong stimuli to which they could react. They invariably found a lot to feel passionately negative about not only because there were many existent ills, but also because they could not couple their sense of outrage, when offended, to programs of reform, so the ills and their outrage persisted. Your typical romantic might break down in tears at the sight of a peasant family reduced to starvation but could be totally indifferent to a plan to ameliorate poverty.

He could revel in aesthetics but could not formulate a plan to beautify society. She might encourage protests as expressions of sympathy, but these would do little to eliminate grievances because such emotional expressions were not directed toward improving social conditions but rather were intrinsically most satisfying when direct, violent and uninhibited by enlightened thought¹¹² as modern protests often are. Thomas Carlyle exemplified this mentality in that he denounced the social evils of the industrialization of England in the mid-19th century without once offering any remedy. Ditto Jefferson on slavery: When it came to abolition, he was romantically all for it but had no rational plan to end it.¹¹³

In fact, on the issue of slavery, Jefferson was a human contradiction. The general southern approach to slavery was that it was morally acceptable because slaves were not people: They were subhuman. The fact that there were all kinds of mulattos on the plantation did not affect the verbal creed of the gentry except when Jefferson referred to slaves as “Men” in his draft of

108. Brinton. op. cit. p. 136.

109. Russell. op. cit. p. 681.

110. This view eventually opened the way to Einstein’s Relativity and Heisenberg’s uncertainty, which provided scientific confirmation of scepticism that we cannot know what is going on. (Hecht. p. 446.) As a musician, I am of the mind that the relativist/subjective case that it is all a matter of definition, you really cannot tell and everything is equally good is a mask worn by those who cannot sense what is right. Certainly, within the context of what has just transpired and is going on there are a better and worse. Humor makes the same point: a punch line to a good set-up gets a laugh; without the set-up, it does not. (JFW)

111. Ibid. p. 677.

112. Ibid. pp. 675-676. This frame of mind continued into the 20th century in the plays of German Gerhart Hauptmann, who offered no solution to the exploitation of the poor, against which he protested. (Ergang. 1967. p. 208.) In this sense, he was representative of his age’s therapeutic nihilism, which posited that nothing could be done about the ills of society or diseases afflicting the human body. (Watson. 2001. p. 27.) Ditto Rex Tugwell during a town hall meeting in 1940, when he had no concrete plan to help the destitute. (Shales. p. 373.)

113. Morgan, R. *Lions of the West*. Algonquin Books; Chapel Hill, NC. 2012. p. 23.

the Declaration of Independence.¹¹⁴ This belied the cognitive dissonance of saying all men are created equal and slaves are men unless you mentally add the qualifier, “Very unfortunate” men. However he did it, Jefferson lived with the contradiction, although his sentence referring the slaves as men was dropped from the Declaration before it was adopted by Congress.

Unlike Jefferson, the romantic was a mystical rebel. As the ultimate anti-rationalist, he indulged in immediate gratification of whim often at the expense of social or psychological virtue. By his willingness to sacrifice his future for present pleasure, he escaped the oppressive restraint of propriety and experienced a godlike high and that sense of power which often courts disaster. He assumed that God was one with himself, so while truth and duty existed, truth was what he said it was and duty what ever it was he did. Whereas the rationalist carried logical analysis to extremes, the romantic carried subjectivity to excesses. This works fine for people who are independent of others and reality, meaning dictators and madmen.¹¹⁵

If this sounds unsound, it was, but romanticism was not a philosophical movement; in fact, it was almost an anti-philosophical movement. Rationalism was the property of thinkers, and although some enlightened despots (e.g., Frederick the Great) had improved public administration via rational reforms, most people were simply tired of accepting and extending traditional ways of behavior which they strongly suspected were not ordained by God. Hence, romanticism became the great democratic salve. Anyone could become a bit of a romantic just by shedding a little convention and "Being himself" (i.e., indulging his 19th century id), and many were willing and able to do just that, as no enlightened thought was necessary. In fact, informed thought was a bother which most people sought to avoid or escape. The danger inherent in romanticism was that the only social control came from clashes with other equally subjective egos. Liberty made cooperation a fortuitous accident among intellectual anarchists, since social tradition and conventional morality were not questioned, challenged or justified so much as ignored and condemned as impediments to uncondonable if subconsciously desirable behavior.¹¹⁶ This may have been due in part to romantics' ambivalence toward the people, whom they, like their modernist descendants 200 years later, simultaneously praised as bearers of popular genius and scorned as ingrates who stifled the originality of and martyred great men,¹¹⁷ who managed to overcome the oppression of conventional thinking.¹¹⁸

Although romanticism was by its very nature a disorganized, non-philosophical movement, it did have a leader and spokesman. Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) expressed feelings already existing and was especially popular among the French, who have always admired a direct, sincere display of emotion un-encumbered by deliberate, informed thought. As mouthpiece for the frustrated, disenfranchised masses.

He pointed out that civilized people are not particularly happy¹¹⁹ because back stabbing politicians and cut-throat businessmen set up the state as a positive feedback system to benefit themselves.¹²⁰ The voice of romanticism he made emotional expression a cardinal virtue and,

114. Jefferson, T. June, 1776. <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-01-02-0176-0004>. (Thomas Jefferson's draft of The Declaration of Independence.)

115. Russell. op. cit. pp. 681-682. Suskind, R. Without a Doubt. New York Times Magazine. Oct. 17, 2004. 51. Sad to say, Mr. Suskind quotes an inflated, imperious, post-Enlightenment “Senior advisor” to 43. (Bonner.)

116. Russell. op. cit. pp. 682-684.

117. McMahan. op. cit. p. 194.

118. McCalman, I. Darwin's Armada. Norton; New York. 2019. p. 156.

119. Mishra. op. cit. p. 89.

120. Hodgkinson, T and Bergh, H. v. d. How to Sound Cultured. 2015. Publishers Group West; Berkeley, CA. p. 252.

as a throwback to Cicero,¹²¹ found established society irksome if not a sham based on deceit. As a counterpoise to Hobbes, who saw natural man as brutish and cruel, JJ began with people in a natural state of harmony and simple pleasures: it was culture that corrupted them.¹²² As he noted, "...it is manifestly contrary to the laws of nature that...an imbecile should lead a wise man..."¹²³ While he accepted natural (i.e., genetic) differences in abilities some people are stronger or more intelligent than others he anticipated Marx by attributing culturally induced and maintained inequalities to property or lack thereof.¹²⁴

The salons patronized by Voltaire were hotbeds of hypocrisy which cultivated honor without virtue, reason without wisdom and pleasure without happiness.¹²⁵ He invented the "People", the voiceless mass of humanity in everyone else's background,¹²⁶ who, largely thanks to him, developed a class consciousness which found economic identity via Marxism and political expression in democracy. Further, he induced "Isms": Romanticism, socialism, authoritarianism, nationalism and anarchism can all be traced to him.¹²⁷ He opined that our major problems are self-created and taught those willing to learn contempt for convention in all cultural matters from dress and manners to love and morals,¹²⁸ Unfortunately, his call for tolerance was lost in the furor created by his call for moral liberty, which evoked a revolution.¹²⁹

Also lost in the ferment was his solution to the problem of civilization. He did not issue a "Back-to-nature" plea but called for a cultural reset button to encourage the judgment of people for what they do rather than who they are their conduct rather than their pedigree or lack thereof. It might be said he was trying to negate the positive feedback mechanism which characterizes all human societies and leads the proactive ones to intense forms of self-destruction, and, while he did not have the term "Equal opportunity" at hand, he did call for fairness in society.¹³⁰

Nevertheless or therefore, to know JJ was to experience an intellectual nightmare, and to call him and Voltaire rivals would be putting it mildly. Voltaire regarded the vain, paranoid JJ¹³¹ as a depraved, pitiful, abominable, intellectual tramp, while JJ, never noted for his subtlety, wrote to his antagonist simply, "I hate you". Nietzsche considered their relationship as the very essence of the unresolved problem of civilization: the representative of the victorious ruling class (Voltaire) confronted by a vulgar plebeian (JJ) ex-pressing his resentment of his social superiors.¹³² The sophisticated Voltaire spoofed the establishment for failing to live up to its ideals; JJ ridiculed the ideals.

121. Skousen, C. 5000 Year Leap. 1981. National Center for Constitutional Studies; Malta, ID. p. 45.

122. Butler-Bowdon. op. cit. p. 256. In this regard, JJ was one of the progenitors of liber- alsim, which contends we are shaped by our cultural environment and that by changing our conditions will change our conduct.

123. Ibid. p. 258.

124. Ibid.

125. Mishra. op. cit. p. 93.

126. Ibid. p. 91.

127. Ibid. p. 110.

128. Russell. op. cit. p. 676.

129. Mortimer, I. Millennium. Pegasus; New York. 2016. p. 223.

130. Butler-Bowdon. op. cit. p. 259.

131. Hodgkinson and Bergh. op. cit. p. 253.

132. Mishra. op. cit. p. 94.

As an emotional counterpoise to the more rationalistic philosophes, JJ was more capable of feeling strongly than analyzing accurately,¹³³ romanticized the lowly French peasant¹³⁴ and idealized the primitive state of man, about which he knew little, as one of virtue and happiness. For the most part, however, like a paranoid, latter-day Cynic, he vilified society in general as the source of corruption. Like Plato, he idealized Sparta, in which the individual surrendered himself to public service.¹³⁵ In stark opposition to Hobbes and Locke, he averred people were happier in their primitive state of nature than in civil society,¹³⁶ in which freedom was impossible.¹³⁷

People were good; it was their customs, traditions and institutions that were bad. He maintained all that had to be done to improve people and society was to change or eliminate the cultural (i.e., human) environment. Not surprisingly, his message was profoundly disruptive socially as it struck not only at eighteenth century French society specifically but at the very concept of society generally¹³⁸ and the enlightened assumption of continuous cultural progress.¹³⁹ It was echoed in Thoreau, reflected in Gauguin¹⁴⁰ and espoused by hippies. Put another way, JJ's counterpoise was actually not a rationalist but a bureaucrat, but as the survivors of the revolution found, the only thing worse than having cultural institutions was not having them.

Personifying the enlightened, Rationalist bureaucrat, Frederick the Great grounded Prussia on the applications of reason, science and technology to the emerging state, which did pretty well for itself until 1806, when Napoleon knocked it off the map at Jena.¹⁴¹ Voltaire used reason to mock the establishment especially the Church by showing how it abased its own standards. Finally, Rousseau cut loose from reason itself which he deemed *a* if not *the* source of psychic ills as an intellectual standard for judging what is culturally correct in favor of emotional abandon and subjective legitimacy.

133. Smith, A. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Edited by D. Raphael and A. Macfie. Clarendon Press; Oxford, England. 1976. p. 10.

134. Rousseau, J. Julie. 1761.

135. Mishra. op. cit. p. 92.

136. In this respect, Rousseau was a psychohistorian's delight in that his basic values were presumably shaped by in idyllic period in his life beginning at age ten when he lived happily in the countryside and which ended abruptly when he was apprenticed a few years later in Geneva. The experience was wrenching and left him embittered toward society and civil institutions in general. (Blom. p. 25.) He all but married a simple woman with who had difficulty learning the days of the week and never mastered the months of the year. (Durant & Durant. 1967. p. 17.) They had five children, all of whom were put up for adoption. (Ibid. p. 18.) His criticisms of the educational system of the day alienated the Church which drove him out of Paris. A fledgling paranoid, he stayed in Britain with his friend David Hume until he was no longer a friend. He enjoyed some productive years in France until he went insane and died. To add insult to death, he is buried alongside his *mal ami* Voltaire. (Butler-Dowdon. p. 259fn)

137. Burns, J. *Fire and Light*. St. Martin's Press; NY. 2013. pp. 100-101. Mishra. op. cit. p. 91.

138. Wells, H. G. *The Outline of History*. 1920. (Cassel; London. 4th ed. Revised by R. Postgate 1961.) pp. 885-886. Picking up on the theme over 100 years later, Henry Adams wrote, "Society is immoral.....It can afford to commit any kind of folly and indulge in any sort of vice." (*The Education of Henry Adams*. 1907. Chap. 18.) And does, if on a positive feedback jag. JFW.

139. Mishra .op. cit. p. 21.

140. Ergang, R. *Europe Since Waterloo*. Heath; Lexington, MA. 3rd ed. 1967. p. 187. One hundred years after Rousseau, Fernand Khnopff and Ferdinand Hodler likewise expressed visually their pent up frustrations with repressive, civilized society. (Watson. 2010. p. 508.)

141. Jones. op. cit. p. 53.

However, Rousseau's favored emotional beliefs, which may or may not be true, did not lend them-selves to generalization because they were private and subjective and therefore differed among different people. For example, cannibals believed that they should eat humans, whereas Voltaire believed that they should eat only Jesuits. This illustrates the problem anyone would have when attempting to build a universal ethic (or diet) from assumed truths based on individual feelings¹⁴² and led Rousseau to be regarded as a very interesting madman.¹⁴³

Slighting stupidity, JJ's basic paranoid contention was that science, letters and the arts were sources of slavery and enemies of morality if not promoters of criminality.¹⁴⁴ Astronomy was coupled with superstition; mathematics with greed, mechanics with ambition and physics with idleness. He rued the invention of printing for immortalizing rationalists Hobbes and Spinoza, and, as the original Greenie, he opposed the exploitation of the environment.¹⁴⁵

Further, he noted that as we became more reasonable, we be-came more wicked¹⁴⁶ because logic can lead to extreme uses of force which we then rationalize as necessary or justified. In the name of "Natural virtue", he explicitly condoned the repudiation of debts, sexual misconduct, evasion of work and avoidance of education. Consequently, he developed a considerable, sympathetic, devoted following among debtors, adulterers, dead-beats, fools¹⁴⁷ and intellectuals in general.☺

He considered success in war to be the ultimate test of merit but incongruously admired, as would Jefferson,¹⁴⁸ the "Noble savage"¹⁴⁹ whom enslaved (i.e., technologically advanced and politically organized) Europeans could nearly always defeat in battle.¹⁵⁰ He accepted what he considered to be natural inequalities due to age, health, intelligence, etc., but not cultural inequalities due to privileges promoted by social convention.

With his view of private property as the ultimate source of evil did Marx read him? He had considerable impact on learned circles despite the inconsistency of the strange concoction of intellectual and anti-intellectual thoughts which congealed into his confused, often contradictory creed. Regarding JJ's glorification of the "State of nature", Voltaire responded dismissively, "Never has so much intelligence been employed to render us so stupid".¹⁵¹ In the case of American natives, the state of nature included cannibalism, scalping, warfare, slavery

142. Russell. op. cit. p. 694.

143. Mishra. op. cit. p. 93.

144. Tocqueville, A. de. 1835. *Democracy in America*. (Translated by Henry Reeve. Edited by Phillips Bradley. Knopf; New York. 1945. p. 55.) A Mr. Winthrop of MA observed that the most enlightened states produce the most criminals, or maybe they arrest and keep better records of them.

145. Rousseau, J. *Has the restoration of the Arts and Sciences had a purifying effect upon morals?* (A winning essay at the Dijon Academy 1750—in which he explicitly absolved stupidity from responsibility for the ills of civilization. Right! ●)

146. Butler-Bowdon. op. cit. p. 257. Hitler is an example of the former; nuclear weapons of the latter. The development of reason is usually presented in terms of the growth of science and intellectual understanding. Its use in rationalizing behavior has been slighted by scientists, of course.☺

147. Wells. op. cit. p. 886.

148. Morgan. op. cit. p. 22.

m The noble savage (i.e., American Indian) caused some consternation as to the hierarchy of human development which came to be perceived as children, women, Indians and white men. (Watson. 2011. p. 525.)

150. Eckert, A. *That Dark and Bloody River*. Bantam; New York. 1995. p. xxi. One exception was Gen. Edward Braddock's defeat in July, 1755 due largely to the European-laced general's stupid failure, despite a warning from Benjamin Franklin, (Allison, *et al.* p. 107.) to adapt to his enemy's tactics and the terrain. Fortunately for many of his troops, he was fragged in time for them to save themselves. (Eckert. lxi.)

151. Himmelfarb, G. *The Roads to Modernity*. Vintage Books; New York. 2005. p. 20.

and environmental insouciance masked by technological simplicity which belied an indifference toward the supporting natural environment.¹⁵²

Although JJ was not a formal philosopher, as the voice for undirected emotions, he made quite a case for his cause by framing convincing arguments which betrayed his expressed contempt for reason. While providing the psychological basis for liberalism,¹⁵³ it was as a social critic attempting to deal with reality that he had his greatest intellectual difficulty. This stemmed not so much from the structure/logic of his arguments and his uncontrollable penchant for compulsive lying¹⁵⁴ as from the general (in) validity of his starting points. Contrary to his favorite contention, there is no actual basis for expecting beliefs based on feelings to be true: E.g., some people believe in heaven because they suffer on earth, which makes sense if there is a just God but that is just another self-serving, suspect assumption¹⁵⁵ in want of evidence.

As a political theorist, JJ indulged in extensive mental gymnastics to bury the emotional individual in a totalitarian community. Although one might have expected him to champion anarchy, he did not. He seemed to revere individual emotionalism but placed it in a repressive, organized, institutionalized context.¹⁵⁶ When he did so, he sacrificed what turned out to be only his nominal love liberty in favor of a suffocating blend of communal morality and political oppression. Thus, his political theory, as set forth in *The Social Contract* (1762), was ironically a throwback to Hobbes: It paid gratuitous lip service to individualistic democracy while justifying the totalitarian state.¹⁵⁷

The problem, as always, was how to have freedom without people harming their own interests, much less those of others: His solution was that the individual should surrender himself to the state. He had no doctrine of natural rights: In fact, Voltaire's beloved rights were explicitly rejected. Citizens were to turn themselves and their non-existent rights over to the "Sovereign" community, which then, in its consuming, romantic wisdom, would somehow force people to be free.¹⁵⁸ According to him, the world was in a mess because people had retained rights and property. Apparently, this it caused tyranny by preventing administrators from effecting the general will of society,¹⁵⁹ which was legally codified by representatives who, according to the romantically naive Rousseau, could not be corrupted by propertied special interest groups.¹⁶⁰ In his fevered intellect, the general will would produce utopian, rational policies based on unanimity not just a functional majority of reasonable citizens. He scorned

152. Stark. *How the West Won*. ISI Books; Wilmington, DE. 2014. pp. 233-236.

153. Harari, Y. *Sapiens*. Harper; New York. 2015. p. 392.

154. Blom. op. cit. p. xv.

155. Russell. op. cit. pp. 691-692. Another challenge to the just, fair universe model is the passing of microbes causing syphilis, rubella and AIDS by mothers to be to their fetuses. (Diamond. 2005. p. 199.) Way to go, God. Are you some kind of sicko or what?

156. While condoning sexual misconduct, he incongruously condemned lust and preached chaste love. (Blom. p. 298) Is this messed up or what?

157. This calls to mind Descartes' invention of the soul in the pineal gland to fulfill a perceived need (i.e., free will). When great minds find themselves boxed in by their own ideas, they concoct some odd construct to provide them with an escape mechanism. Kant did this for the sake of God, whom he felt compelled to respect. (Erickson. Part 1; pp. 42-43.) In Rousseau's case, some means for social control of his romantic psychoanarchists. Ironically, Hobbes and JJ ended up at the same place with people being depraved and evil: Hobbes regarded that as natural while JJ attributed it to the effects of civil society.

158. Hegel would later define freedom as "The right to obey". For JJ (1782) it meant not being forced to do something you do not want to do; it did not mean doing what you want to do. (Now it means the right to conform i.e., be politically/culturally correct.)

159. Russell. op. cit. pp. 694-696.

160. Blanning. T. *The Pursuit of Glory*. Penguin; New York. 2007. p. 342.

faith in reason, reform and progress and condemned enlightenment as the road to slavery,¹⁶¹ and his influence endures. Ironically, he provided rationales for totalitarians Robespierre, Marx and Pol Pot, while his apolitical disciples include the Transcendentalists of the 19th century and the hobos and beats of the 20th as well.¹⁶²

Actually, JJ's notion of "Sovereign" was more metaphysical than political and dealt with matters of right and wrong rather than with facts of power. For him, "The sovereign.... is always what it should be." That is, always right. If we bear in mind that when using the term "Sovereign", he referred not to a ruler but to a collective ideal, his statement boils down to the idea that the theoretically perfect community sets the standards for morality.¹⁶³ This presumably justified political obedience to authority when it represented the general will,¹⁶⁴ although this could happen only in a utopia.

Even there, the general will was left to the interpretation by the elites because he regarded the people collectively as unreliable at best.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, it seems otherwise very much at odds with his favored notion that the individual's feelings not only define truth but provide a guide to the commonly accepted goal of all enlightened people happiness.¹⁶⁶ He predicted humanity would achieve this by imploring God to return them to innocence, ignorance and poverty,¹⁶⁷ which, except for innocence, He certainly seems to be doing quite well.

While essentially everyone agreed on the goal of happiness, they differed as to what constitutes it. While in France in the 1780's, Thomas Jefferson indulged at some length in cognitive dissonance on the bliss of long-term fidelity in marriage over the transient gratification from mere gratuitous sex as he picked up on his fourteen year old slave girl Sally Hemings. He further rhapsodized that most Americans did not know how happy they were and then happily linked monogamy to republican virtue.¹⁶⁸

Others differed as to how the universal goal should best be pursued, although almost all accepted Locke's psychology that the human mind was a blank slate upon which experience wrote the message of the individual's life.

In addition, most intellectuals agreed that the way to happiness was not by saving the soul but by manipulating the environment¹⁶⁹ to write a happier message on the slate of life. However, that was where agreement ended, as it turned out people had very different ideas as to what the ideal environment/message should be. To the establishment, the old environment was quite good enough, thank you, while for reformers, certain changes were in order.¹⁷⁰ Finally,

161. Burns. op. cit. p. 101.

162. Hayward, S. *The Age of Reagan: The Fall of the Old Liberal Order*. 2001. Three Rivers Press; New York. p. 148.

163. Vilfredo Preto would later dismiss the masses as "...those lacking energy, character and intelligence". (Beetham.)

164. Brinton. op. cit. p. 134.

165. Rousseau, J. *The Social Contract*. 1762. Translation by Maurice Cranston. p. 89.

166. Bloom, A. *The Closing of the American Mind*. Simon and Schuster; New York. 1987. p. 299. For a modern qualification see: Gruber, J., Mauss, I. B., & Tamir, M. 2011. A dark side of happiness? How, when and why happiness is not always good. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 6(3), 222-233. Consistent with the "Ignorance is bliss" theme, stupidity and happiness seem to have a reciprocal relationship. Btw, Harari has an excellent chapter 19 on happiness.

167. Rousseau. 1750. op. cit.

168. Steele, B. *Thomas Jefferson and American Nationhood*. Cambridge University Press; New York. 2012. pp. 53-90.

169. Brinton. op. cit. p. 127.

170. *Ibid.* p. 129.

reformers themselves differed as to who would decide exactly just which changes were desirable.

Reformers did agree that people, not God, would decide. The doctrine of divine right of kings had been discredited by Charles II, dismissed by the Glorious Revolution and buried by Louis XIV. In 1683, Charles II beheaded Algernon Sidney for asserting that there was no such right that the right to rule was granted by the people.¹⁷¹ His brother, James II, maintained the divine right position until he was gloriously deposed in 1688. Louis XIV then took it to excesses which offended the developing parliamentarians of the age. So, it was agreed, the people would decide,¹⁷² but that left the question, who? Which people are the source of righteous power?

On the one hand,¹⁷³ the rationalists tended to believe in a small clique of wise and gifted men who would impartially wield their authority to shape the environment presumably to the mutual advantage of all.¹⁷⁴ Politically, they favored "Enlightened despots",¹⁷⁵ and economically, they encouraged industry,¹⁷⁶ but basically, they were elitists¹⁷⁷ ever suspicious of the "Wickedness, stupidity, inhumanity, unreason, inertia and prejudice" of the masses,¹⁷⁸ who could be shaken¹⁷⁹ from their befuddled consciousness and habits of submission not by education but only by dramatic action.¹⁸⁰

As spokesman for the group, father of the Constitution James Madison¹⁸¹ naively believed in liberally educated rational men¹⁸² like himself "Whose enlightened views and virtuous sentiments render them superior to local prejudices, and to schemes of injustice". Those like today's Bilderbergers who held these views saw themselves structuring the coming planned society.¹⁸³ Such views and values would presumably lead them to decide questions of public good in a fair, objective manner,¹⁸⁴ and they would guide the masses to proper conclusions and policies presumably for the good of all¹⁸⁵ but especially for their own wealth. Be that as it may, the framers of the Constitution were geniuses who squared the political circle by setting up a

171. Sidney, A. *Discourses on Government*. Deare and Andres; New York. 1805. Vol. 2: p. 18.

172. Hamilton, A. *Federalist Papers*. 22:152.

173. This and the next paragraph follow a model outlined by Thomas Jefferson in a letter to Henry Lee. Aug. 10, 1824.

174. Comte, A. *Course of Positive Philosophy*. (Six volumes) 1830-1848.

175. Brinton. *op. cit.* p. 128.

176. *Ibid.* p. 130.

177. *Ibid.* p. 137.

178. Diderot, D. Quoted on p. xvi of A. Pagden's *The Enlightenment*. Random House; New York. 2013.

179. In the 19th century, Mikhail Bakunin took this notion to the extreme of anarchy and became the father of terrorism. (Freedman. 276) In 1881, The (oxymoronic) Anarchist Congress called for annihilating all rulers, ministers of state, nobility, the clergy, prominent capitalists and other exploiters. (Freedman. 277.) Replaying an aspect of Roman history, the ferocity and imbecility of autocratic rule was opposed by the ferocity and imbecility of utopian revolutionaries. (Freedman. p. 278.)

180. Freedman, L. *Strategy*. Oxford University Press; New York. 2013. p. 276. Levy, C. *Errico Malatesta and Charismatic Leadership*. In Stutje, J. (Ed.) *Charismatic Leadership and So-cial Movements*. Bergman Books; New York. 2012. pp. 89-90.

181. Gutzman. *op. cit.* p. 136.

182. This kind of thinking led to the Constitutional mandate for the Electoral College, the indirect election of senators and the formation of the Federalist party in the emerging United States and the modern GOP later on. It survives also in the "Government knows best" philosophy of insiders who fight among themselves as to who is insidest. (Report of the Iran-Contra Congressional Investigating Committees.)

183. Brinton. *op. cit.*

184. Madison. *op. cit.* (Wood. *Empire of Liberty*. Oxford University Press; New York. 2009.)

185. Raphael R. *Founding Myths*. The New Press New York. 2004. (Revised edition: 2014.) p. 44.

government based on a document characterized by ambiguity and omission.¹⁸⁶ Followers who used it would breath life into it, and the government it established could be and was, on occasion, run by unprincipled idiots.¹⁸⁷

On the other hand were the usually more inclusive democrats who embraced the cautionary observation of English jurist William Blackstone, “It is not to be expected from human nature that the few should always be attentive to the interests and good of the many”,¹⁸⁸ or as Hegel observed, “The few assume to be the *deputies*, but they are often only the *despoilers* of the many.”¹⁸⁹ In the summer of 1776, the newly enfranchised lower classes were urged to elect “No lawyers or other professional characters or other learned men, but to select men uneducated with unsophisticated understandings”.¹⁹⁰

As General U. S. Grant observed in 1868, “All the romance of feeling that men in high places are above personal considerations and act only from motives of pure patriotism, and for the general good of the public has been destroyed. An inside view proves too truly very much the reverse.”¹⁹¹ Such populists believed the ultimate depository of power to be the people, who would destroy the existing unnatural, bad, civil environment so that everyone could live happily in the ensuing ideal world.¹⁹² Most of these, like the disciples of visionary Thomas Jefferson ironically Madison’s mentor and idealistic spokesman for reason favored majority rule¹⁹³ and assumed the innate wisdom of humanity in pursuit of happiness would lead to a generally perfect or at least better civilization: *Vox populi, vox dei*. Such idealists notwithstanding, generally, enlightened Europeans regarded civilization as a gift bestowed by the informed elite on the ignorant many.¹⁹⁴ In this context, the Enlightenment ended on July 14, 1789.

While rationalists and romantics took different paths to happiness, they all worked to discredit the establishment (i.e., narrow-minded royalty, biased aristocracy and closed-minded clergy) of the eighteenth century.¹⁹⁵ This is hardly surprising because, although romanticism began as a revolt against rational-ism, they had a lot in common.

They were both secular movements based on the assumptions that life on earth could be almost indefinitely improved through cultural adaptation. Thus, they were often woven together in a single individual¹⁹⁶ like rationalist dreamer Jefferson. In the truly enlightened person, heart and head were both sound. As Western Man shifted between them, emotion and reason would

186. Schlesinger, jr. A. 1986. *The Cycles of American History*. Houghton Mifflin; Boston, MA. p. 433.

187. Friedmen, T. Medal of Honor. *The New York Times*. Dec. 15, 2000.

188. Blackstone, W. *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765-1769).

189. Hegel, G. *Philosophy of History*. IV, 3, 3. 1832.

190. Cannon, J. Summer, 1776. Quoted on p. 108 of C. Page’s *James Wilson: Founding Father, 1742-1798*. University of North Carolina Press; Chapel Hill, NC. 1956.

191. Grant, Gen. U. Letter to Gen. William Sherman. Jan., 1868. *Papers*. J. Simon. ed. Carbon-dale, IL. 1967.

192. Jefferson, T. Letter to William Jarvis. Sept. 28, 1820.

193. Theodore Roosevelt agreed 51% of the time; “...the rest of the time, it was the voice of the Devil...or a fool.” (Beschloss. p. 137.) It remains the creed of the modern liberal, who trusts* the judgment of the man in the street while knowing that most people have mean tastes, are superstitious and incapable of any kind of complex thinking. (Hazlitt) As D. Boorstin noted, we must abandon the prevalent belief in the superior wisdom of the ignorant. (McWilliams. p. 183.) Unfortunately, that is usually opposed not by the wisdom of the educated but the influence of the wealthy i.e. special interest groups. *Racist/sexists Jefferson and Woodrow Wilson qualified this ideal by explicitly contending it applied only to white men.

194. Mishra. op. cit. p. 99.

195. Replaced by the corporatocracies of 19th century democracies.

196. As expressed in Bernini’s spiritual and sensual, devotional and erotic mistress piece *The Ecstasy of Saint Theresa of Avila*, in which an angel pierces, with the glowing tip of a spear, the heart of a damsel who, then experiences a cardiac orgasm. (Blanning. Plate 14 and page 457.)

be combined and balanced to usher in an era of compassionate progress through inspired policies based on valid knowledge.¹⁹⁷ Even more often, conversations and debates were among all kinds of clashing egos hyping their conflicting creeds presumably to the benefit of all who took part in the process.¹⁹⁸

Jefferson's "Natural aristocrat" would be an ideal Boy Scout matured—sincere, benevolent, reasonable, tolerant, honest, virtuous, candid, cosmopolitan, elevated and free of prejudice, parochialism and religious enthusiasms of the vulgar and barbaric.¹⁹⁹ In short, he would have made stoic John Calvin proud and JJ puke. However, he was displaced by Marx's proletarian factory worker as the Industrial Revolution, which Jefferson intellectually missed completely, unfolded all around him.

Regrettably, despite all the high minded philosophy, impassioned thinking and rhetoric about enlightenment in the eighteenth century, the spread of factual knowledge during this period remained surprisingly slow for a number of reasons. First of all, knowledge often remained detached from culture in general. Knowledge was still something of a Hellenic ideal, like virtue, to be cultivated as its own reward and not to be sullied by usefulness.²⁰⁰ For example, Thomas Jefferson was aghast that medical research might take place in hospitals, which were regarded as institutes for the sick and dying not places for scientific experimentation.²⁰¹ However, the democratic, pragmatic, empirical science building on facts from the bottom up was gradually displacing the aristocratic, rational model of divining wisdom and truths from the top down.

Further, European universities had been founded not to discover the new but to transmit the old to the next generation. At the end of the century, British universities were characterized by "Lethargy, corruption and sinecurism". Oxford professors ceased to lecture²⁰² and many took snobbish pride in their monastic isolation a tradition which remains in academia to the present. In that spirit, some in the eighteenth century who possessed ideas or facts tried to keep them secret and even labored to prevent others from learning them.²⁰³

In addition, the Royal Society and similar organizations allegedly devoted to advancing science and supposedly designed to promote the discovery and dissemination of knowledge became instead social if not class institutions which furthered the careers of their members. With emphasis in academics placed heavily on priority of discovery, many scientists came to be more concerned with claiming credit for the discoveries they had made than in making new ones.²⁰⁴ As scholars, they became increasingly obsessed with disputes among themselves and more and more wrote books on impractical theoretical issues for each other and shelves.²⁰⁵

197. Brinton. op. cit. p. 116. As President Lincoln advised a friend, in 1864, regarding the Bible: "Take all of this book on reason that you can, and the balance on faith....." (Beschloss. p. 122.)

198. Purnell, C. *The Sensational Past*. Norton; New York. 2017. p. 16. Generally, most who took part were classically educated and cited all kinds of examples from Greek and Roman history. This democratic/republican influence is reflected in the Greco/Roman architecture and fashion of the early American republic. (Sass pp 56-57)

199. Wood. op. cit. pp. 277-278.

200. Clinton, D. "An Introductory Discourse". Literary and Philosophical Society of New York. July 4, 1814. (Published in 1815.) p. 8.

201. Jefferson, T. Letter to J. Banister, Jr. *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. 8: 636. Oct. 15, 1785.

202. Chapman, R. *The Higher Civil Service to Britain*. Constable; London, England. 1970. pp. 18-19.

203. Boorstin. op. cit. p. 409.

204. *Ibid.* p. 410.

205. *Ibid.* p. 414.

Unfortunately, in doing so, they established standards for pettiness which render such matters “Academic” to this day.

In this regard, Newton was one of the worst examples of the old scientist. He became a virtual dictator of the Royal Society an ego-maniacal despot who became increasingly powerful and difficult as his prestige increased from 1703, when he became president, until his death in 1727. As leader of the first scientific "Establishment", he set a regrettable example by embodying the forementioned problem subjectivity posed for enlightenment by blocking the development of any advances in math or science which might have undermined his own position of authority or diminished his prestige. For example, he maliciously deprived astronomer John Flamsteed of the satisfaction of having his works published in his lifetime. Sadder still was the monumental pettiness he exhibited in his unnecessary dispute with Leibnitz over credit for inventing the calculus, and in a shocking display of academic overkill, he continued his unprincipled campaign in a one-sided battle even well after the death of his opponent.²⁰⁶

Meanwhile, the common man of the eighteenth century remained remarkably unenlightened, and in the pragmatic commercial world, tradesmen and artisans did little to help themselves in this regard. They were usually narrowly suspicious of novelty and resisted innovations as threats to their established positions and entrenched beliefs. Essentially an urban movement, the Enlightenment stopped at the suburbs, where people were too stupid²⁰⁷ to counter the conversion of religious feeling into political oppression. In the country, serfs (not to mention any slaves) were indifferent if not resentful/hostile to any practical reforms which would improve productivity for their lords.²⁰⁸

Likewise, sailors, whose very lives often depended upon knowing their whereabouts, were surprisingly slow to give up hand-drawn charts for printed maps and better methods of navigation indeed, the methods used in 1500 were merely refined but not replaced until the 1920's.²⁰⁹ Gobs were also reluctant to acknowledge the existence of newly discovered lands and unwilling to abandon their traditional illusions about geography²¹⁰ and the beasts and phantoms which were then somehow known to inhabit unknown waters.

In addition, knowledge about sea lanes was jealously guarded by its possessors to keep competitors from easy access to lucrative foreign markets or valuable resources or as state secrets designed to keep vying powers from far-flung parts of the world and ports of both real and potential customers.²¹¹ For example, in the early 16th century when maps were regarded as a form of secret “Intelligence”,²¹²

206. Ibid. pp. 410-416. Leibnitz triumphed in a way, in that the notation used in calculus is his, not Newton's.

207. Diderot, D. Letter to Volland. 1759. In Diderot, Oeuvres. Vol. 5. Correspondence. p. 180.

208. Berzeviczy, G. Undated citation in Blanning. p. 170.

209. Morison, S. The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages. Oxford University Press; New York. 1971. p. 142.

210. Boorstin. op. cit. p. 278. Rink, P. Nathaniel Bowditch: The Practical Navigator. American Heritage; XI, #5, p. 58. Aug. 1960.

211. Manchester. W. A World Lit by Fire. Back Bay Books; Boston, MA. p. 238.

188. Restall, M. When Montezuma Met Cortes. HarperCollins; New York. 2018. p. 8.

Portuguese king Manuel I made stealing official maps a capital offence.²¹³ In a lesser vein, in the 18th century, the Spanish jealously guarded knowledge about their holdings on the American Pacific coast lest it benefit their rivals the French and English.²¹⁴

Worse yet, the knowledge that was available to political leaders was used in shaping public policies which seldom exemplified an ideal combination of reason and emotion and which were of questionable practical value. One example of such unenlightened naiveté was revealed by the first economist in history (Thomas) Robert Malthus.²¹⁵ In his *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798), he showed that policies designed to help the poor directly created bigger problems for everyone later on. Ruthless logic might have dictated letting the poor starve, but enlightened compassion would not permit that. However, the practice of simply feeding the poor and starving, while well intentioned,²¹⁶ promised to create yet more poverty and worse starvation in the future.²¹⁷

Although that was a theoretical problem for those seeking a practical solution, the fact of eighteenth century life was that improvements in agriculture increased poverty by working to the advantage of the large land owners. The old methods of cultivation by small farmers were certainly wasteful and comparatively unproductive, but the improvements deflected profits upward and benefitted the upper class rather than the laboring community. Hence, the rich became richer and the poor became more widespread as applied technology and unenlightened political innovations worked as a positive feedback system going to excess to make the establishment royalty, aristocracy and church even more established,²¹⁸ at least until the French Revolution brought the people to the fore and made necessary accommodations appear more reasonable than continued entrenched intransigence.

Picking up on Hume's observation in *On Commerce* (1752) that people are motivated by self-interest, selfish aggrandizement was all but legitimized by Adam Smith in *Wealth of Nations* (1776).

As the spokes mouth and unabashed promoter of unbridled, small-time capitalism, he correctly noted that an entrepreneur unimpeded by governmental restrictions could improve not only his own lot but those of his associates and that of his society in general²¹⁹ while missing the possibility that small-time capitalism could lead to big-time corporations. His optimism extended to his prognosis that foreign trade would create bonds of friendship across the globe whereas it actually led to exploitation and fierce competition among nations.²²⁰

213. Lester, T. *The Fourth Part of the World*. Free Press; New York. 2009. p. 338. At about that time, Amerigo Vespucci got into *agua caliente* with the Spanish king for leaking cartographic secrets to foreigners willing to pay for them. (pp. 341-342.) The original American business man! JFW.☺

214. Onuf, P. Seefeldt, D. and Hantman, J. *Across the Continent*. University of Virginia Press; Charlottesville, VA. 2005. p. 18.

215. Mann, C. 2018. *The Wizard and the Prophet*. Knopf; New York. p. 75.

216. To this day, the obvious answer of emergency feeding coupled with an effective birth control program remains a remedy too fraught with moral controversy to be suggested much less effectively applied. The fact that the predictions Malthus made have yet to be realized is due to finite fossil fuels. Ca. 2040, we are going to run out of affordable oil, then natural gas and coal. There will be a wrenching adjustment as we shift to nuclear, so-lar and hydrogen power, but doomsday will just been postponed not avert-ed.

217. Brinton. op. cit. p. 136.

218. Wells. op. cit. pp. 854-855.

219. Smith, A. *Inquiry into the Nature and Cause of the Wealth of Nations*. Two volumes. London. 1776. He also missed on the negative aspects of population growth. (Roberts. op. cit. p. 699.) See: Malthus. 1798.

220. Jones. op. cit. p. 173.

However, like Locke, he did not venture where he did not want to go, so he failed to note that clever manipulators could wreck the lives of those around them while lining their own pockets to the max despite William Cotesworth's warning some sixty years before about "...how natural it is to pursue private interest²²¹ even against that Darling (sic) principle of a more general good..."²²²

In that same year, 1714, the dangers of selflessness were fictionalized by Bernard de Mandeville in his book *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Public Benefits* in which a colony collapses as soon as some members mistakenly begin to behave virtuously presumably for the good of apian all. The moral of the story was that selfishness can be beneficial to society—although this entailed a misunderstanding of bee colonies, which are, in fact, dependent on the mindless self-sacrifice of drones and workers.

In human societies, in both agriculture and industry, technological advances were used at the time not to improve the lot of the poor but to grind them down if not dehumanize them. Likewise, unscrupulous financiers to the detriment of all but themselves concocted crafty pyramid schemes like the South Sea Bubble (1720<), which fleeced millions from thousands including Isaac Newton, who lost some £20,000²²³ and led eventually to a measure of government oversight.²²⁴ Perhaps Smith was an optimist²²⁵ who saw what was good and ignored potential ills, but his insights into the workings of free trade were too flat to be enlightening to common readers and political leaders swayed by him. Smith's book, thus, did not have an immediate impact, although it became the Bible of the British/capitalist establishment in the next century.²²⁶

While some eighteenth century European monarchs could properly be termed "Enlightened", the political leaders of England and France particularly seemed perversely immune to informed reason. In these countries, the governing classes devoted themselves to acquiring land and destroying the liberty and happiness of the common people. Britain did enjoy an institutional edge over France, in that, after a period of repression in the 1790's, Parliament eventually provided a legitimate political forum for gradual adjustment to evolving conditions. However, if this mechanism prevented in England the build-up of the tension which exploded into revolution in France, the British aristocracy nevertheless maintained a considerable political advantage over the landless classes. Representation in Parliament was hardly fair in terms of being reflective of Britain as a whole reflecting rather primarily the interests of the big land owners.

The lower classes (including the developing business class) found they had less in common with their betters than with the unruly American colonists and Irish, who were being squeezed by the same system.²²⁷

In the case of America, there would have been no revolution but for the missed opportunities on both sides to accommodate the colonies within the framework of the Empire.

221. As do the "Golden Parachute" executives of our era a new Gilded Age. (Axelrod. 2017. p. 2.)

222. Hughes. *North Country Life: The North East*. p. 39. This was embodied in Bismarckian Germany. (Chickering.) In 1787, the history of Germany was characterized as "...a history ofgeneral imbecility, confusion, and misery." (Madison, J. and Hamilton, A. *Federalist Paper*. No. 19.)

223. Milton, G. *When Churchill Slaughtered Sheep and Stalin Robbed a Bank*. Picador; New York. 2016. p. 116.

224. Morris, R. and Irwin, G. (Eds) *Harper Encyclopedia of the Modern World*. Harper & Row; New York. 1970. p. 660.

225. Heilbroner, R. *The Worldly Philosophers*. CliffsNotes; Lincoln, NB. 1965. p. 15.

226. *Ibid*. p. 18.

227. Wells. *op. cit*. p. 865.

The basics are simple: After the Seven Year's War, it took Britain only twelve years to alienate the loyal colonies to the point of revolt. The basic issue was about who was to pay for the victory over the French and Indians. Briton's answer was the colonies; based on their rights as Brits, as decreed in letters-patent granted by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Humfry Gilbert on June 11, 1578,²²⁸ the Colonists paraphrased response was "Not unless we have something to say about it"²²⁹.

Broadly speaking, any opportunity for accommodation was blocked from within because obtuse British leaders could not recognize the true nature of the dispute in which they were engaged. From its ignominious beginning to its ineffectual end, official policy was based on the notion that the revolutionary movement was simply a conspiracy among "Dangerous and ill-designing men"²³⁰ despite streams of reports from military and civil authorities that it had widespread support inclusive of all classes. His Majesty's Government did so because that was *the way they thought of government*: it came from the top down.²³¹ They insisted on hiding from reality, persisted in ignoring evidence which contradicted going policy and consistently misconstrued the kind and degree of effort it would take to hold the obstreperous American colonies²³² in a multinational empire.²³³

In a rare display of concurrence, albeit negative, leaders on both sides of the Atlantic missed an opportunity at mutual accommodation when they rejected a Plan of Union proposed by Benjamin Franklin in 1754. The idea was of a federation with Britain with the royally loyal colonies represented in an imperial²³⁴ parliament.²³⁵ Franklin later noted in his autobiography that "History is full of the errors of states and princes"²³⁶ The basic problem in this case being that the Brits simply did and could not see the colonists as their political equals.

Another such error occurred in 1764 when the British failed to let the colonies tax themselves a policy which could have resolved peacefully the issue of raising revenue to pay for colonial defense. The Massachusetts Assembly then petitioned Governor Francis Bernard for a special session to enable the colony to tax itself²³⁷ only to have him reject the idea as

228. Morison. op. cit. p. 566.

229. Hock, H. Scars of Independence. Crown; New York. 2017. p. 4.

230. His Majesty's Proclamation for Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition. Aug. 23, 1775. (The title says it all. JFW)

231. Raphael. op. cit. p. 47. See also: Wells, W. The Life of Samuel Adams. Books for Libraries Press; Freeport, NY. 1969. (First published in 1865.)

232. As was noted in 20th century Ireland, most revolutions are caused not by revolutionaries but by the stupidity and brutality of governments. (MacStiofain.) I would mix injustice into the causal nexus. Striking by its absence was the impact of Voltaire and Rousseau on American revolutionary spirit. Apparently, Yanks simply did not read them or found them irrelevant.

233. Tuchman, B. The March of Folly. Knopf; New York. 1984. p. 209.

234. A similar arrangement between Mexico and the Spanish Cortes did not prevent Mexico from breaking away in 1821. (Howe. p. 20.)

235. Franklin B. Letter to Gov. (of Massachusetts) W. Shirley. Dec. 22, 1754. Smyth, A. (ed.) The Writings of Benjamin Franklin. Macmillan; New York. Vol. 3; p. 238. 1906. Remini, R. A Short History of the United States. Harper Perennial; New York. 2008. pp. 28-30. In 1697, William Penn first suggested a colonial union, and by 1754, there had been eleven such proposals. (Payne, S. pp. 612-613.)

236. Franklin, B. The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin. London. (Unfinished.1789.) 1817. The idea of federation was resurrected in 1776, but by then it was too late. Part of the problem was that Europeans were contemptuously dismissive of anything American. French zoologist Georges Buffon made a point later challenged by Thomas Jefferson that European forms of life shrank when sent to America. The only exception, in his mind, was, revealingly, the pig. (Schlesinger. 1986. p. 8.)

237. We must note self-imposed taxation certainly did not work when the states unified loosely under the ineffectual Articles of Confederation.

useless.²³⁸ Most of the other colonies indicated a similar willingness to contribute as well.²³⁹ At least this method (which had been used in the French and Indian War)²⁴⁰ might have been considered if not tried to see if it worked, but colonial petitions to Parliament on self-taxation were summarily rejected due to the formality that petitions were not allowed for a money bill.²⁴¹

When Edmund Burke then presented the idea in the form of a parliamentary motion, it was crushed 270 to 78.²⁴²

In the long litany of British blunders which transformed loyal colonists into Americans, the Stamp Act (1765) exemplified the absurdity of official ineptitude.²⁴³ This was a case where the law was, fortunately for the government, ineffective. As it was, it cost those who created it, supported it and tried to enforce it political points. However, had it been successful, it would have cost the British one or two million pounds a years in lost trade to collect about £75,000 in taxes.²⁴⁴ This was but typical of the way common sense was sacrificed to political principle. The tax on tea, which led to the Boston Tea Party, was another example: It would not even pay to collect itself,²⁴⁵ but it was retained, apparently to shore up the failing East India Tea Company and so that the king could assert his right to impose a tax,²⁴⁶ rights of colonists notwithstanding.

A non-chance at reconciliation was missed when the British bandied about the principle of "Virtual representation" meaning the colonies were represented simply by the existence of Parliament.²⁴⁷ William Pitt denounced this as so contemptible as not deserving of refutation,²⁴⁸ and it gained no traction in America. A real chance was missed by the Americans in October, 1765, when the Stamp Act Congress declared that representation in Parliament was "Impractical".

This would have meant taxation *with* representation, but the colonists preferred to reject token representation (which would not have altered colonial policy at least for years in the future)²⁴⁹ so they could oppose taxation as illegal due to the absence of their participation in Parliament. Thus, just as Parliament was bent upon exerting authority over the colonies, so were the colonists determined to prevent any kind of Parliament, be it merely British or inclusively imperial, from controlling their internal affairs.²⁵⁰ The idea of shared sovereignty, with Americans, as loyal subjects of the king, retaining control of domestic affairs within a

238. Tuchman. op. cit. p. 151.

239. Morgan, E. and Morgan, H. *The Stamp Act Crisis*. University of North Carolina Press; Chapel Hill, NC. 1953. p. 58, n. 15.

240. Langguth, A. *Patriots*. Simon and Schuster; New York. 1988. p. 51.

241. Tuchman. op. cit. p. 152.

242. Durant, W. and Durant, A. *Rousseau and Revolution*. Simon and Schuster; New York. 1967. p. 712.

243. Kilmeade, B and Yaeger, D. *George Washington's Secret Six*. Sentinel; New York. 2014. p. 17.

244. Chesterfield, P. 1766. In *Letters* edited by Bonamy Dobrée. 1932. London. VI, #2410.

245. Meredith, W. 1770. In *Parliamentary History of England* edited by T. Hansard. XVI, 872-873. Bottom line, the price paid by the colonists was lower with the tax, lending credence to the claim that they really did object to Parliament taxing them without representation. (D. Fisher. p. 38.) On the other hand, it may have been that the Brits were going to make tea so cheap that they would run the smugglers out of business, and the smugglers/patriots would not have that. ●

246. Sass, E. *The Mental Floss History of the United States*. Harper; New York. 2010. 41. Boston was at once the most revolutionary and drunkest city in the colonies. (p. 40)

247. Fawcett. 2012. p. 104.

248. Pitt, W. Ca. 1765. Jensen, M. *The Founding of a Nation: A History of the American Revolution, 1763– 1776*. Oxford University Press: New York. 1968. pp. 240–241.

249. Morris, R. "Then and There the Child Independence Was Born". *American Heritage*; XIII, #2, p. 82. Feb. 1962. This might have worked to America's long-term advantage as the country developed

250. Tuchman. op. cit. p. 155.

multinational Empire as the Irish were nominally to do in 1782²⁵¹ was proposed in the first two Continental Congresses (1774-1776) but got nowhere in either.²⁵² It was also proposed by the British two years later (after their loss at Saratoga), but by then it was too late.²⁵³

Actually, the ruling classes in England really did not want the colonies represented in Parliament either. They simply could not visualize themselves and the colonists as political equals, which was precisely how the colonists perceived themselves as loyal British subjects (who incongruously refused to accept representation in Parliament) with all the rights thereof to which they were always appealing: Specifically, *the Bill of Rights of 1689 stipulated that no English subject should be taxed without legislative representation.*²⁵⁴ Even in 1767, Franklin could envisage America prospering within the Empire, but he did not credit Parliament with enough wisdom to effect such a beneficial future.²⁵⁵

Further, the gentry feared that representation of the colonies might encourage unrepresented British towns to demand seats, thus undermining the power of property.²⁵⁶ In this regard, they were but typical of most power establishments, which routinely oppose fairness and regard justice as a threat because, like the truth, once it gets rolling, there is no telling how much damage it will do or where it will stop.

Having settled the issue of colonial representation in Parliament in the negative, the British moved on to the issue of parliamentary power, with the government perversely determined to exercise authority over matters it could neither understand nor control. It certainly did not understand that it was not a good idea to tax colonists to protect newly acquired Indian territories in which they were not permitted to settle.²⁵⁷ Nor was the matter of raising revenues the real issue, for as Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts Thom-as Hutchinson had pointed out in 1765, the money gathered from the Stamp Tax would not begin to match the loss in profits from colonial trade which would result from the ill-will created by imposing such a levy.²⁵⁸ Indeed, the government did succeed in taking in an additional £2,000 in taxes while provoking the revolution.²⁵⁹

Nor was the issue one of parliamentary wisdom, as the government resolutely refused to accept Burke's principle of *self-limitation* that it is not necessarily best to do what one has a right to do: Specifically, it was not wise to exercise the right to tax when the tax was inexpedient.²⁶⁰ As he put it, "A great empire and little minds go ill together",²⁶¹ but he was a

251. Ergang, R. *Europe from the Renaissance to Waterloo*. Heath; Boston, MA. 1954. p. 554. Taylor, A. *The Civil War of 1812*. Knopf; New York. 2010. p. 31. In fact, the going ploy was to bury the Irish as a functionless minority in a British Parliament, thereby keeping control of events in English hands and Ireland from becoming a major power. Phillips, K. *The Cousins' Wars*. Basic Books; New York. 1999. p. 578.

252. Tucker, R. and Hendrickson, D. *The Fall of the First British Empire: Origins of the War of American Independence*. Cornell University Press; Ithaca, New York. 2005.

253. Ellis, J. *American Creation*. Vintage; NY. 2007. p. 83.

254. Sass, op. cit. p. 38.

255. Franklin, B. Letter to Lord Henry Kames. Apr. 11, 1767. Smyth. op. cit. Vol. 5; p. 22. 1906.

256. Tuchman. op. cit. p. 156.

257. Sass. op. cit. p. 39. Randall, W. *Benedict Arnold*. Morrow; New York. 1990. p. 44.

258. Baylin, B. *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson*. Harvard University Press; Cambridge, MA. 1974. pp. 62-63.

259. op. cit. p. 39.

260. Tuchman. op. cit. p. 150.

261. *The Works and Correspondence of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*. Francis & John Rivington; London. 1852. p. 3:288.

lousy speaker, so maybe his point was lost in delivery²⁶² as in “Great ideas and limited oratorical talents go ill together”.

As for wisdom in general, Burke described the government’s policy as “Meanly to sneak out of difficulties into which they had proudly strutted”.²⁶³ This despite Franklin’s prescient comment when asked by Parliament in 1764 how troops sent to enforce the Stamp Tax would be received: “You will not find a rebellion; they may indeed make one.”²⁶⁴ And they did.☺

Parliament's persistence in imposing its right to tax the colonies led to a colonial policy out of control due to the insistence of the king that he not only reign but rule. The fact was that neither Parliament nor king could control what they could not understand and both were adamant in refusing to understand the colonies. For example, British leaders consistently ignored evidence that efforts to tax the colonies would be met with determined resistance. They did so partially because they perceived themselves as sovereigns over colonial subjects and partially because Prime Minister Grenville (1763-1765) was as doggedly committed to establishing Parliament's eminent domain²⁶⁵ as one of his successors, Lord North (1770-1782), was to pushing royal policy in Commons.²⁶⁶ The tragic result was a government committed to ignoring negative feedback in the pursuit of a self-defeating cause of a lethargic, "Really stupid"²⁶⁷ king and his compliant, complacent minions.

In 1776, Tomas Paine-in-the-royal-neck objectively characterize the history of the English monarchy as a sordid tale of corruption, criminal neglect and institutionalized arrogance.²⁶⁸ George III, as his tutor Lord Waldegrave put it, would seldom do wrong "Except when he mistakes wrong for right".

When this happens, the good Lord continued, "It will be difficult to undeceive him because he is uncommonly indolent and has strong prejudices."²⁶⁹ Poorly educated and resolute to the point of obstinacy,²⁷⁰ insecure and not especially bright,²⁷¹ with an intellect²⁷² overmatched by his emotions,²⁷³ he was a menace to his own empire even when he was sane.²⁷⁴

262. Carnegie, D. *How to Develop Self-Confidence & Influence People by Public Speaking*. Gallery Books: New York. 1926. p. 91. His speeches make great reading, but their luster was lost on his suffering audiences. When he rose to speak, so did everyone else to flee to the exits. He wrote great speeches but should have let someone else deliver them.

263. Burke, E. Apr. 19, 1774<. Hansard. op. cit. XVII. Somewhere between pp. 1163 and 1277.

264. *The Examination of Doctor Benjamin Franklin*. London. Feb. 13, 1766. See also: Isaac-son. 2003. pp. 229-230.

265. Tuchman. op. cit. p. 152.

266. Ergang. op. cit. p. 552.

267. Plumb, June, 1960. *Our Last King*. American Heritage; XI, #4, p. 95. Diplomatically concurring with this assessment, a mob in Connecticut on Sept. 5, 1774, denounced the king as a fool. (Calhoon. pp. 191-194.)

268. Paine. op. cit. The title *Common Sense* conveyed the democratic notion that anyone can tell right from wrong. (Hodgkinson and Bergh. p. 128.)

269. Waldegrave, J. Quoted in *King George III* by J. Brooke. 1972. New York. This is similar to Richard White’s description of President Andrew Johnson: “...once he had reasoned himself into a position, that position, intended to be a fortress, often became a prison.” (White. p. 38.)

270. Durant, W. and A. 1967. op. cit. pp. 687-688.

271. Maier, P. *Declaring Independence*. July 1, 1997. In *Booknotes: Stories from American His-tory*. Edited by Brian Lamb. Penguin; NY. 2007. p. 9.

272. One of the King’s favorite delusions was that the colonies would submit to royal authority once they realized the use of force was the only recourse left. (King George III. Feb. 15, 1775. McWilliams. p. 755.)

273. Niles, D. *We Want to Like You, King George....* Fawcett. 2016. p. 83.

274. Milton. op. cit. Chap. 7. The king is thought to have suffered from porphyria, which causes depression and delirium. (Sass. p. 41.)

Of course, as a threat to the established system, he was aided by his ministers, most of whom were unfit for office and incorrigibly corrupt.

Most of them were unfit because they were elitists trying to maintain traditional roles in a changing world,²⁷⁵ and in this sense, the king epitomized the plight of the ruling class generally. Determination to conserve old ways in the face of new conditions made official behavior increasingly irrelevant if not counter-productive,²⁷⁶ so the control-freak government converted immediate problems into crises, thereby undercutting its long-term authority and prestige.

Perhaps the British government would have understood the colonies better had they perceived the incipient revolution as a political Reformation with Thomas Jefferson playing Luther to Pope George III. Like the Protestant reformers 250 years earlier, the rebelling colonists leveled the charge of corruption against the established powers. Just as the Catholic Church had become corrupted from the top down by worldliness at the turn of the sixteenth century, so had Royal authority become corrupted by power in the middle of the eighteenth. In both instances, the protesters/rebels wanted a restoration of the old order to go back to pure religion in the one case and to bring back Englishmen's rights in the other.

In the years from 1763 to 1776, it was difficult to evaluate British colonial policy because it was not then clear if there was one much less what it was. There may have been none; there may have been many. Was it to terrorize the Americans into obedience or to reach a liberal accommodation maintaining a minimal link between the mother country and its offspring?²⁷⁷ Or was it to create a war?²⁷⁸ If there was one, it was a policy of deliberate and systematic stupidity, but as late as 1776, New York loyalist Peter Van Schaak opined British actions "Seemed to have sprung out of particular occasions, and are unconnected with each other".²⁷⁹ Nor could Edmund Burke find any.²⁸⁰ Although the net effect of governmental action was clearly self-defeating, he considered that to be the result of haphazard, individual decisions. There certainly was no colonial policy set out on paper. Nevertheless, there seemed to be some underlying principle at work, for no matter what the specifics of the situation, officials were consistent in their ability to take any colonial situation and make it clearly worse for everyone—the usually sane king included.²⁸¹

If policy at the time was unclear, action was confused. Official British behavior toward the colonies was condescending, weak, contradictory, irresolute, unconstitutional and otherwise *terribly* English. The government's record was one of backing and filling, passing and repealing acts, threatening and submitting.²⁸² The only constant was that everything the bumbling British did turned out to be wrong: Not once did they do something right or just happen to stumble onto anything sensible simply by sheer accident²⁸³ much less reason.

However, in retrospect, it appears that there was indeed a British colonial policy during this era. It was an irrational, subconscious assertion of the nobility's right to ignore if not

275. Churchill, W. 1957. *The Age of Revolution*. Bantam; New York. p. 108.

276. Plumb. op. cit. pp. 95-96.

277. Mackesy, P. *The War for America, 1775-1783*. University of Nebraska Press; Lincoln, NB. 1993. pp. 20-24.

278. Sass. op. cit. p. 40.

279. Schaak, H. Van. *The Life of Peter Van Schaak*. D. Appleton; New York. 1857. p. 312. (Quoted by Wood, G. 2011. p. 102.) He may have made his remark to make his government look inept rather than evil. JFW

280. Burke, E. Apr. 4, 1774. A speech in Parliament. *Hansard*. op. cit. XVII.

281. Sass. op. cit. p. 40.

282. Tuchman. op. cit. p. 201.

283. Meredith. op. cit.

suppress the rising commercial interests in England. To the extent that this policy damaged the merchants, it suited the landed gentry, which was doing its stodgy worst to prevent England from obtaining an empire.

With the emerging industrial centers not even represented in Parliament,²⁸⁴ the nobles were rather studied in their supercilious mismanagement of affairs. As an expression of dysfunctional classism, colonial policy was an attempt by dottering aristocrats to shoot the up-and-coming Britain merchants in the purse, and they missed, perhaps due to the fact that some of the gentry were themselves moving into commerce.²⁸⁵ Thanks to the lessons reluctantly learned from the impending debacle, the Empire developed and flourished²⁸⁶ to degrees unimaginable had Parliamentary mismanagement continued unabated.

When armed rebellion broke out, the government persisted in its efforts to lose the colonies and added an idiosyncratic touch to routine idiocy when brothers Vice-Admiral Richard and General William Howe were assigned the contradictory roles of being military commanders and peace commissioners. Just how they were to reconcile these was never made clear to anyone especially to them, and they never really succeeded in either.²⁸⁷

This double failure may have been, to some degree, deliberate because the Howes were somewhat sympathetic to the American cause, since older brother Lord George Augustus Howe had fought alongside New England troops until his death at Ticonderoga in 1758. In addition, the Howes were opposition Whigs and reluctant to win a victory which would rebound to the credit of the Tory government. It was probably this personal sympathy for the rebels and political hostility toward the government which led peace commissioners Richard and William Howe to allow the American army to escape repeatedly from sure destruction in the early stages of the war.²⁸⁸

If this was true at some point, it was not evident in William's personal conduct at the Battle of Bunker (i.e., Breed's) Hill in June, 1775. He showed great personal bravery and led the attacks up the hill as his aides and so many others fell all around him. Military affairs focus attention on the way the human mind concentrates matter and energy in the science of destruction, and in this vein, the eternal "Anonymous" condemned William for his decision which led to victory for the British:

"We are all wrong at the head. My mind cannot help dwelling upon our cursed mistakes. Such ill conduct at the first out-set argues a gross ignorance of the common rules of the [military] profession.... This madness or ignorance nothing can excuse."²⁸⁹

Two months later, Washington was confronting his version of the same problem. Specifically, in a humongously long, Lockean sentence, he denounced ".....an unaccountable

284. Phillips. op. cit. p. 239f.

285. Ferejohn, J. and F. Rosenbluth. *Forged Through Fire*. Norton; New York. 2017. p. 119. A countertrend blurred things in the next century when successful businessmen bought land. (Evans. p. 221.

286. Phillips. op. cit. pp. 270 and 309. Also: Ritcheson. *Aftermath of the Revolution*. Norton; New York. 1971. p. 31.

287. Likewise, early in 1776, Sir Guy Carleton trapped the American troops who invaded Canada but, believing that magnanimity was the best policy, deliberately allowed them to escape.

288. Fleming, T. Feb. 1964. *The Enigma of General Howe*. *American Heritage*; XV, #2, 11ff. Fleming, T. 1975. *1776: Year of Illusions*. Norton; New York. 245.

289. Anonymous. June, 1775, Quoted on pages 152-153 of D. Beck, who then attributes most of the slaughter to the lack of discipline of the British troops, as Anonymous did not.

kind of stupidity in the lower class of these people which believe me prevails but too generally among the Officers (sic) of the Massachusetts part of the army..."²⁹⁰ As for the American people, they conducted an unnatural rebellion²⁹¹ altogether out of all proportion to the stimuli a reasonable revolution with little real cause²⁹² taken to excesses unjustified by extent political realities.²⁹³ They began by asserting their rights as British subjects but were driven to independence by British political policy and military conduct. With ignorance, mad-ness and stupidity so evenly balanced, war raged on.

With hostilities underway, the Earl of Camden rose in the House of Lords and questioned the wisdom of the king and his government attempting to impose a military solution on the rebellion with the warning, "It is obvious...you cannot furnish armies, or treasure, competent to the mighty purpose of subduing America."²⁹⁴ In a similar vein, the Earl of Chatham made a summary declaration of stupidity when he stated that Britain had been betrayed into the disastrous war "By the arts of imposition, by its own credulity, through the means of false hope, false pride and promised advantages of the most romantic and improbable nature".²⁹⁵ Burke accused Lord Germain of losing America through "Willful blindness",²⁹⁶ but Parliament sat tight, being uneasy about the costliness of the war but uneasier about changing its policy i.e., admitting it goofed.

Meanwhile, the king, in his arm or of royal righteousness, remained happily oblivious to reality and impervious to the anxiety which was slowly seeping through his government.²⁹⁷ The American Revolution, which was conducted with as much bravery and brilliance as deceit and stupidity²⁹⁸ really was War C for the British; they were much more concerned with beating the French and creating their Empire in India than retaining their colonies in America. Thus, America's best ally was not the French Navy but the British government's casual approach to the rebellion. An early, specific example of their insouciance was Lord Germain's failure to coordinate General Howe's 1777 campaign, which ended up in Philadelphia, with that of General Burgoyne, which ended up in the dumper at Saratoga.

The order directing Howe north from New York simply reached him too late. Although difficulty in communication is com-mon in human affairs, most people make an extra effort to get their messages through when important matters are involved. Perhaps Lord Germain could

290. Washington, Gen. G. Letter to General Charles Lee. Aug. 29, 1775. Papers of George Washington. Quoted on page 174 of D. Beck. Long sentences came back into fashion with William Faulkner. Fleming, C&J. Thinking Places. Trafford; British Columbia. Chap 25.

291. Oliver, P. Quoted on page 159 of Adair, D. and Schutz, J. (eds). Peter Oliver's Origin and Progress of the American Rebellion. Huntington Library; San Marino. 1961.

292. Leonard, D. The Origins of the American Contest with Great Britain. James Rivington; NY. 1775. p. 40. (Rivington was a major spy for Washington during the war.)

293. Wood, G. 2011. op. cit. p. 27.

294. Pratt, C. (Earl of Camden) Speech in the House of Lords, 1775. Quoted in Keegan, J. Fields of Battle: The Wars for North America. Johns Hopkins University Press; Baltimore, MD. 1996.

295. Pitt, W. (Earl of Chatham): Speech in the House of Lords on December 11, 1777. In Donne, B. (ed.) Correspondence of George III with Lord North. London. 1867. Vol. II. p. 114. (Sort of like 43 misleading the USA into Gulf War II.)

296. Valentine, A. Lord George Germain. Clarendon Press; Oxford. 1962. p. 275.

297. Tuchman. op. cit. p. 217.

298. Fisher, D. Bill O'Reilly's Legends and Lies. Henry Holt & Co.; New York. 2016. p. vii.

not condescend to take lowly colonists seriously, so a second secretary was left to write General Howe.²⁹⁹ The letter missed the boat, and Burgoyne was stranded.

It cost the British about £100 million to lose the colonies,³⁰⁰ and whatever the cause, it was not ignorance. The ministry had long known of colonial discontent and the futility of their own policies. These were matters which were routinely debated in Parliament and occasionally caused riots in the streets of London. The ruling majority stuck to its schema of repressing emerging commercial interests with policies which grew increasingly inept and ineffective. The situation deteriorated into a mutually reinforcing positive feedback system with each failure engendering more colonial animosity which, in its turn, called forth sterner measures of futile repression. Until it was too late to save the American colonies, the government would not modify its arrogant attitude toward the up-start colonists³⁰¹ nor toward the merchants upon whom the British Empire would be built.

After its triumph, the United States emerged as an opportunity for enlightened man to plan his destiny. Relatively isolated from the Old World by a broad ocean and bounded on the west by a beckoning wilderness, the new nation was really restricted only by its fundamental ideals and assumptions. Unfortunately, some of these were rather questionable.³⁰²

When Thomas Jefferson rhapsodized that "All men are created equal ...", he meant white, male taxpayers had equal rights. Although there was an implicit possibility that "All men" could someday be redefined to mean "All people", politically the spirit of the Enlightenment favored limited democracy while the rhetoric extolled liberty. Further, the general working assumption of colonial governments was that a strong central authority was bad, so the first attempt to form a functional American union the Articles of Confederation hardly created any government at all.

Denied the power to tax, the new government could do little but bide its time until a new constitution provided the political basis for a true nation.³⁰³ According to one objective observer of the time, "The new nation represented the triumph of knowledge over ignorance, of virtue over vice and of liberty over slavery."³⁰⁴ This is all the more miraculous considering it was created according to Constitutional historian Charles Beard by scoundrels, scalawags, moneylenders, stockjobbers (i.e., insider traders) embezzlers, traitors³⁰⁵ and lawyers.

No sooner had the Constitution created a government with the power to tax and destroy than the pendulum of political opinion swung back to the side of caution, and the Bill of Rights was added to limit the power of the central authority. As much as civil rights needed expressed protection, the amendments belied the naive faith in ideals that characterized the liberal intellects of the eighteenth century: E.g., freedom of the press was expected to guarantee an

299. Valentine. op. cit. See also: Finn, T. *America at War*. Berkley Caliber; New York. 2014. p. 22. An alternative take is that Howe received the order but interpreted it to mean that Burgoyne was to support him when he—by sailing south around New Jersey and up the Delaware River attacked Washington in Philadelphia. (Randall. p. 355.)

300. Tuchman. op. cit. p. 228.

301. Ibid. p. 229. The British could not even entertain the possibility that the American farmers/ rabble could beat the disciplined army and apparently learned nothing from the fact that they did. 125 years later, they indulged in the same arrogance at the onset of the Boer War. (Churchill. 1930. p. 235.) It is tough to learn what you do not want to.

302. Wells. op. cit. pp. 871 and 874.

303. Ibid. p. 877.

304. Rush, B. Letter to Elias Boudinot? July 9, 1788. (H. Butterfield. ed. 1951.)

305. Beard, C. *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States*. Dover Publications; Mineola, NY. 2004. (Original 1913.)

informed electorate. No one anticipated the venality of the popular press nor that the media would become corrupters of public opinion as they traded informational quality (i.e., validity) for emotional impact and appeal in a quest for ratings.³⁰⁶

In a similar vein, the Founding Fathers had no conception of the complexities of vote manipulation and the potential for political corruption inherent in the system they created. They failed to foresee the development of political parties which characterized British politics, not to mention special interest groups, which put the “k” in demockracy.³⁰⁷ At best, the system struggled along despite itself, with calls for reform as common as they were justified and ignored.

Ironically, the failings of the Founding Fathers were due to one of the idealistic assumptions which made them great. If they were human, in that some were jealous and petty and others sleazy and greasy, they were generally disinterested and devoted more to the cause of the commonweal they were creating than in securing immediate personal gain. It is true they self-servingly assumed elitist white males would dominate rational society for the good of all, but it is also true that if they were limited by their assumptions and personal short-comings, they were also animated by a genuine spirit of public service which they naively assumed would always pervade in government³⁰⁸ (while ambitious egos would counter balance each other³⁰⁹) and truly committed to the paradoxical cause of conserving liberal principles.³¹⁰

Such idealism contrasted sharply with the equally naive assumption of the French establishment royalty, nobility and church that the country was there to serve them. Such naiveté coupled with an endemic reluctance to benefit from experience (i.e., stupidity) gave shape to an early form of French idiocy when the fourteenth century Valois monarchs repeatedly devalued their currency whenever they were desperate for cash. That this policy wrecked the economy and angered the people was lost on the leaders until their persistence in this self-defeating, inflationary, positive feedback practice eventually provoked the revolution.³¹¹ This was but another case of insulated rulers, convinced they were right, bringing ruin upon them-selves.

With the Bourbons, French stupidity burst into true gallic brilliance. As the consummate monarch, Louis XIV consummated his country with his ceaseless wars and contributed more than anyone else to the collapse of his way of life.³¹² As another example of an absolutely self centered ruler personifying a positive feedback system gone to a self-destructive excess, he allowed neither good sense nor reasonable com-promise to restrain his unlimited power as he nurtured the deluge. National unity was his grand objective, but in a land weakened and impoverished by his insatiable pursuit of power and wealth, his legacy was one of bitterness, hatred and dissent.³¹³

Along with adventurous militarism, Louis was afflicted with the sense of divine mission which had claimed Philip II a century earlier. He suffered the usual symptoms of conceiving himself to be an instrument of God's will and convincing himself that his own were the

306. Ibid. p. 879. Tannen, D. The Triumph of the Yell. The New York Times. Jan. 14, 1994. p. A15.

307. Wells. op. cit. p. 879.

308. Ibid. p. 880.

309. Gutzman. op. cit. p. 177.

310. Myrdal, G. 1942. Cited in An American Dilemma. 1944. New York. p. 7

311. Tuchman. op. cit. pp. 7-8.

312. Ibid. p. 19.

313. Ibid. p. 23.

Almighty's ways of bringing holiness to the world.³¹⁴ His single stupidest act was also his most popular: the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 converted his country from a land of toleration into one of persecution as the Catholic multitudes set themselves upon the productive, dynamic Huguenot minority.³¹⁵

The long-term effects of the revocation were clearly negative, but they paled when compared to the results of centuries of the disparate distribution of goods and power in France. The concentration of material wealth and coercive power lay in the hands of the landed aristocracy in a world becoming commercial. Like their British counterparts, who were doing their stodgy best to abort the Empire, the French nobles in the eighteenth century were intent on creating a revolution by manipulating their power to their own short-term advantage. Caught up in a neurotic paradox, they lived in luxury while the supporting peasants were allocated just enough to sustain their support.³¹⁶ While it lasted, it was a system of injustice supporting power, with producers having nothing to say about the distribution of their products and distributors passing judgment on themselves³¹⁷ and their system. The wonder is not that there eventually was a revolution but that it was so long in coming.

In order to foment a revolution, the ruling class must fail to distribute goods according to the needs cum demands of the people. Thus, the trick is to balance supply with demands. When demands increase and the supply system remains constant, a band of revolutionaries appears promising to satisfy those demands.³¹⁸ In the case of eighteenth century France, the aristocracy really did not have to do anything new or different to precipitate the revolution. Accumulated grievances simply built up to the breaking point so that once they were given the opportunity for expression (i.e., the summoning of the States General in May of 1789), revolution burst upon the land. It was the stupid failure of the rigid French establishment to adjust and respond to the conditions it created that caused its demise.

Since royalty, nobility and clergy were essentially exempt from taxation, the burden of supporting the country fell upon those least able to pay. This arrangement allied the upper classes against the peasants and created an oppressive stability which made the Revolution much more extreme when it came.³¹⁹

Actually, within this context of oppression, the origins of the French Revolution can be traced back to the ambitious absurdities of royalty. In terms of both ambition and absurdity, the French kings were archetypical of the eighteenth century European monarchs who ruled their kingdoms like personal estates with arbitrary and irrational policies³²⁰ that tended to be short sighted and unreal. Generally, the royal egotists made wars upon each other and frittered away the substance of Europe. In France, the enormous expenses of maintaining the splendid monarchy were piled upon those for schemes of aggrandizement requiring massive expenditures on war materiel. These costs exceeded the taxable capacity of the French economy until, eventually, the deluge took everyone unawares as it burst from the depths³²¹ because while creating the problem of bankruptcy, the king at the same time alienated those who could have

314. Treasure, G. 1966. *Seventeenth Century France*. New York. p. 368.

315. Tuchman. op. cit. 19. Providing grist for Beard's mill.

316. Hammond, P. 1978. *An Introduction to Cultural and Social Anthropology*. 2nd ed. Mac-millan; New York. p. 159.

317. As in eastern Europe 200 years later!

318. Arnold, T. 1937. *The Folklore of Capitalism*. Yale University Press; New Haven, CT. p. 38.

319. Wells. op. cit. p. 884.

320. Darnton, R. *Censors at Work*. Norton; New York. 2014. p. 38.

321. Wells. op. cit. p. 884.

helped him solve it the nobles and bourgeoisie and, among them, the lawyers³²² and influential writers.³²³

While the inflation of French royalty was due primarily to its own absurdity, the decay of the aristocracy was due largely to its own stupidity. Like the Roman aristocrats before them, the French nobles thought they were the people and, like their kings, believed that they and their values defined France. Not only did they overrate themselves, but they wed their stupidity to ambitions worthy of their headstrong sovereigns. In the ruthless pursuit of power and riches, the nobility rendered themselves impotent and ignoble.³²⁴ While the standard of living in general was rising, the upward concentration of wealth, partially due to laws passed by the rich for their short-term benefit with compounding disinterest, increased the rising discontent among the powerless poor, who were continually squeezed by the tax gatherer.³²⁵

Meanwhile, the Catholic Church in France worked to convince the people that they all should be content with their lot. This was typical of eighteenth century churches, which were not centers of civil protests and did not demand from secular authorities a better life for their parishioners here and now. Far from calling for reform, the churches generally and the Catholic Church in particular played a passive, conservative social role³²⁶ which was commonly criticized by semi-enlightened intellectuals who, according to Rousseau, constituted their own priesthood.³²⁷ Both icy analyst Gibbon and inveterate doubter Voltaire, for examples, found the continuing existence of Christianity perplexing and inexplicable because it makes no sense. They could not comprehend³²⁸ that the spiritual contribution 'the sacred prejudices of the vulgar' made to those who had little in this life but the hope that the next one would be better³²⁹ so to whom improving this life in this world was a matter of overwhelming indifference.

Gibbon's view was that despite Christianity, which had made the individual the measure of man, Western civilization was steadily advancing toward an ideal perfection. He noted every age increased the real wealth, happiness, knowledge and presumably humanity. He saw the West as a military bastion against eastern barbarism and technology as the means to Western salvation from threatening hordes of savages.³³⁰ He was confident that the refined, educated leaders of Europe had saved civilization from decay and invasion. Despite all the acumen he displayed in analyzing the ancient past, he completely failed to appreciate the Rousseauian socioeconomic discontent which was threatening not only elitists in France but the hidebound contemporary European establishment in general.³³¹

As for Voltaire, he challenged the privileges of both church and crown. Accused of contributing to if not actually causing creeping deism, he suggested as had Leibnitz before him

322. Davidson. op. cit. p. 2.

323. Ibid. p. 5. According to de Tocqueville (1856. p. 175.), of all people on earth, the French were the most literate and in love with intelligence and yet out of touch with themselves.

324. Pitkin, W. *A Short Introduction to the History of Human Stupidity*. Simon and Schuster; New York. 1932. p. 253.

325. Wells. op. cit. p. 853.

326. Nor did the church in the American south in the mid-20th century, (M King 1963. Quoted on p 506 of McWilliams.) or likewise, the Catholic Church in early 21st century Latin America. (Paget. p. 355.)

327. Mishra. op. cit. p. 100.

328. In 1740, the Church reached the apex of indecision trying to find a candidate unworthy enough for the papacy vacated by the death of Clement XII. It dithered and dathered for a year before Cardinal Lambertini offered himself as a buffoon worthy of the post and won. (Frederick the Great.)

329. Wells. op. cit. p. 847. (Words in semiquotes are paraphrased from Frederick II.)

330. Ibid. pp. 849-851.

331. Ibid. p. 858.

Europeans look to China for moral salvation and develop a truly enlightened despotism by embracing Confucianism, which, unlike Christianity, was a religion of reason free of superstitions, foolish legends and humanity. Ironically,³³² he did so just at a time when xenophobic China was grinding to an intellectual halt.³³³ By way of contrast, one of the tenets of deism was that God could be discovered through reason and by the study of nature rather than slavish adherence to revealed doctrine and divine revelation.³³⁴ That is, this was just the time when the West was opening up intellectually.

If Voltaire and Gibbon found Christianity's continued existence perplexing, Frederick the Great found the religion itself downright idiotic.³³⁵ Unsparing in his denunciation of it, he characterized it as (para-phrased) 'an old metaphysical fiction, stuffed with fables, contradictions and absurdities; spawned in the fevered imagination of Orientals and then spread to Europe, where some fanatics espoused it, some intriguers pretended to be convinced by it and some imbeciles actually believed it'. Otherwise, it just fine for anyone disposed to such nonsense.

The moral effect of deism was something else again, as the young Benjamin Franklin discovered to his dismay in 1726. He had converted a couple of friends to the cause only to have them betray him. Also, he found his own conduct toward his betrothed suspect at best. Just as Athenians had questioned the impact of Socrates on the youth of the city, Franklin questioned not the validity but the utility of deism and found it wanting. He soft peddled the Calvinist/Puritanical credo, which was that souls were saved by a predetermining God through divine grace rather than good works. Franklin's enlightened approach to religion was to embrace a God who encouraged moral conduct to the benefit of both the individual and society.³³⁶ Put another way, he considered the purpose of religion was to improve society, was tolerant of all sects³³⁷ and specifically separated Puritan theology from its practical effects.³³⁸

Looking back on the 1780's, one cannot help wondering why virtually no one saw the impending disaster. Part of the answer seems to be that although there was widespread misery and discontent, there always had been and so there always would be: The world had always abounded in absurdity and injustice, vice and stupidity and would simply continue to do so. Hence, financiers extended credit, and commerce suffered along in its ancient ruts hampered by taxes and duties, while inarticulate peasants toiled and suffered, full of quiet despair and simmering hatred for the nobles who loafed above and lorded over them. Although France was consuming beyond its productive capacity, only the voiceless workers were feeling the pinch. Meanwhile, the enlightened wits who criticized and satirized the situation felt they were just

332. Just as historian George Bancroft missed completely when, in Dec., 1865, he predicted that extreme radical opposition to President Johnson's reconstruction policy would be over when it had more than eleven years to go. (Johnson, A.) Historians, like stock market analysts, are excellent explainers of the past but worthless as predictors of the future because there are too many unknown variables at any given time.

333. Morris, I. *Why the West Rules for Now*. Farrer, Straus and Giroux; New York. 2010. pp. 472 and 474.

334. Isaacson, W. *Benjamin Franklin*. Simon & Schuster; New York. 2003. p. 46.

335. Hume lumped Christianity, ignorance and stupidity together (Hume. *Letters* Vol. 1. p 498. Ca. 1760) to the shame and disgrace of ignorance and stupidity.☺

336. *Ibid.* p. 54.

337. *Ibid.* pp. 93-94.

338. Updike, J. *Many Bens*. *The New Yorker*. p. 115. Feb. 22, 1988. Commager, H. *The American Mind*. Yale University Press; New Haven, CT. 1950. p. 26.

talking, and might say anything since the world of ideas was totally divorced from that of worldly power. Thus, it seemed to everyone nothing significant would ever change.³³⁹

One who suggested a reasonable change depending on who you were was economist/administrator Anne Robert Jacques Turgot. In 1763, he outlined a plan which, reduced to essence, would have taxed God.³⁴⁰ This kind of rationalism which drove romantics and God to irrational excesses and revolution.³⁴¹

Despite such helpful suggestions, the status quo remained and might have lasted even longer but for the personal influence of Marie Antoinette, the silly and spendthrift wife of the dull and ill-educated King Louis XVI. With the exchequer exhausted by the war in America, she used her position to thwart efforts toward economy in government by encouraging extravagance as she labored to restore the Church and royal court to the conditions of grandeur they enjoyed under revered Louis XIV.³⁴²

Her minister of finance, Charles Calonne, was really more a magician than an economist, but even his skill in making money appear was overmatched by the Crown's ability to make it disappear, so by 1787, with loan piled upon loan, the monarchy was bankrupt. His suggestion that land be taxed angered the nobles, who demanded that the States General be summoned.³⁴³ In so doing, they had no idea of the opportunity they were creating for the commoners below them, and when it met in May of 1789, the royal couple permitted the boring fuss about finances to disrupt their social life as little as possible³⁴⁴ until it became transformed into a revolutionary deluge.

There would have been no transformation had someone in the king's retinue recognized the essential political nature of the movement. The key was: would the three estates (nobles, clergy and commoners) meet and vote separately as three "Houses" or as one, in which the commoners badly outnumbered the members of the other two estates. The commoners forced the issue when they refused to leave the room in which the king made opening remarks to the three estates assembled. In effect, they took over the hall after the king left and declared it their meeting place. Had the nobles and clergy examined all options and joined them to listen and debate but insisted on voting as separate entities or, better yet, found their own places to meet and vote there would have been no revolution. However, they instead met with and were out voted by the commoners, thereby setting the course history followed. Politics aside, as a romantic movement from the bottom up, inspired if not engendered by Rousseau, the French Revolution set the tone for the Italian Fascist and Communist revolutions (and Hitler's abrogation of democracy) in aspiring to replace Christianity with a religion of state worship administered by a clique of elitist priests in the bureaucratic name and cause of the collective people while individual rights were ground into dust.³⁴⁵

339. Wells. op. cit. pp. 884 and 886.

340. Maier, C. *Once Within Borders*. Harvard University Press; Cambridge, MA. 2016. pp. 111-112.

341. When the National Assembly finally dealt with the issue of finance on Nov. 2, 1789, it overwhelmingly placed church property "At the disposal of the nation" which was its weaselly worded way of nationalizing the church without saying so. (Davidon. p. 54.)

342. Ibid. pp. 886-887. Zweig, S. *Marie Antoinette. The Portrait of an Average Woman*. Viking; New York. 1933. Chaps. VIII and IX.

343. Louis XIV had refused to do so in 1706 fearing the Pandora's jar of demands which might have been opened. (Simms p 72) Had he done so, non-revolutionary reforms might have been undertaken at that time.

344. Wells. op. cit. pp. 887-888.

345. Goldberg, J. 2007. *Liberal Fascism*. Doubleday; New York. p. 38.

Mob murders of two officials following the storming of the Bastille led to a peculiar example of cognitive consonance when the victims were associated with a deliberately conjured up plot to starve the people of Paris.³⁴⁶ The fabricated myth served admirably to assuage the consciences of the mob leaders³⁴⁷ and was trotted out occasionally³⁴⁸ whenever pangs of guilt induced it.

No pangs of guilt were induced as the National Assembly³⁴⁹ slid into imperial wars. In the spring of 1790, it solemnly vowed that France would never use its armed forces against the liberty of other people. It then took the bit between its legs and proceeded to bridge its way from wars of self defense to counter-attacks, to wars of liberation, conquest and annexation.³⁵⁰ When it declared war on Austria in April of 1792. It did so with mixed motives as it was then a mixed country: Republicans hoped the war would spread liberty beyond French borders while royalists hoped it might restore the monarchy. Marat, playing Jiminy Cricket to Robespierre's Pinocchio, opposed it, justly fearing the rise of a Napoleon.³⁵¹

The war began badly for the French, but Prussia came to their rescue by supporting Austria. The Duke of Brunswick issued one of the stupidest proclamations in history when he announced he was invading France to restore royal authority. This made every Frenchman a republican at least for the duration of the war which made France a positive-feedback, money-grubbing empire³⁵² and, as it made moderation impossible, induced the extreme murderous, Jacobin phase of the revolution.³⁵³

When the Jacobin insurgents attacked the palace of the Tuileries on August 10, 1792, the king fled to the protection of the Legislative Assembly, which turned around and suspended him and called for a National Convention to frame a new constitution. As the French armies fell back, fear of betrayal from within led patriotic zeal to become paranoid hysteria.³⁵⁴ The requisite virtue disappeared as royalists were hunted down until the Paris prisons were full. In early September, 1792, the insurgents took them over and, egged on by Marat,³⁵⁵ established autocratic kangaroo courts based on Rousseau's general will of the people rather than the rights of the individual. Accordingly, mostly apolitical prisoners were either pardoned or pushed outside to be hacked death by the waiting mobs.³⁵⁶

Perhaps the most disturbing thing about the Jacobin Revolution (1792–1794) was its hysteric if not outrageous sincerity. Its leading mentor, Maximilien Robespierre, went slightly mad with righteous power consistent with the historic “3R” formula for 18th century France - Rousseau × Robespierre = Revolution. Consumed by revolutionary passion cum mania, this disciple of Rousseau and forerunner of Hitler worked to realize the Platonic ambition of forcing

346. Had JJ and Voltaire debated the event, JJ would have accused the rational reformer of rearranging the bedding in the cells of the prison, while Voltaire would have asserted JJ wanted to close down not only the Bastille but all prisons, since they would be unnecessary in his ideal, Edeneque non-state of natural anarchists.☺ For his part, Thomas Jefferson, the American ambassador in Paris viewed the revolution through his frog colored glasses and completely missed the demonic nature (Paul. p. 56.) of the ensuing, emotional chaos.

347. Davidson. op. cit. p. 27.

348. Ibid. p. 46.

349. Kerrison, C. Jefferson's Daughters. Ballantine; New York. 2018. p. 99.

350. Davidson. op. cit. p. 51.

351. Wells. op. cit. p. 900.

352. Davidson. op. cit. Chap. 15.

353. Wells. op. cit. p. 901.

354. Blanning. op. cit. p. 625.

355. Davidson. op. cit. p. 113.

356. Wells. op. cit. p. 902.

people³⁵⁷ to be virtuous³⁵⁸ by tearing the facade of political corruption down and slaughtering thousands of innocents³⁵⁹ in the cause of incorruptibility.³⁶⁰ He saw himself as the prophet of the new order which, inspired by and intended to realize The Social Contract, would be first constructed by the infamous guillotine,³⁶¹ and then eventually nourished by and finally drowned in blood. He advocated limited liberty, in that everyone was free to agree with him; otherwise they were beheaded.³⁶² In the year before June, 1794, there were about 100 executions per month. Then, in a seven week period during the Reign of Terror, there were 200 per week, reaching a total of 1,285 in Paris alone. By a positive feedback system gone to amok, nobles were guillotined; atheists were guillotined;³⁶³ and Danton was guillotined for protesting there was too much guillotining.³⁶⁴ The modern readers needs be reminded that the Reign of Terror was not one of individuals against others or the state: it was state sponsored terror against individuals who were charged with ambiguous crimes like opposing unity, disliking Paris, federalism, being ambitious,³⁶⁵ becoming a suspect, embracing moderation, defending the king, taking part in a non-existent conspiracy³⁶⁶ or demonstrating insufficient revolutionary enthusiasm.³⁶⁷ The center of activity was the Jacobin Club, which fittingly met in a former Dominican monastery, whose members had been active in the inquisitions of the 13th and 16th centuries. According to one analyst, making a summary statement of stupidity:

As was the building, so were the inhabitants. The new, like the old, had, as a fixed idea, a narrow orthodoxy.... Their rigidity of attitude, their outward fixity, were all the more necessary to them because in reality their creed was very fluid. Whatever change the situation produced, whatever deviations it imposed on their doctrines, they insisted on unity. (Michelet. II, p. 38.)

At the very least, there was no hypocrisy in the Terror trials. They were all about killing, and everyone knew it. If anything, everyone went through the motions with a total disregard for formalities like documents, evidence and lawyers.³⁶⁸ The judges could choose one of two

357. Robie's Rousseauian attitude toward the Platonically abstract people was summed up in his genial statement, "The people is always worth more than individuals.... The people is sublime, but individuals are....expendable." (Himmelfarb. 2005.) Or as Hegel would later put it: The whole defines the parts.

358. Zweig, S. 1921. Romain Rolland. Thomas Seltzer; New York. p. 108.

359. One of the most symbolic was that of Antoine Lavoisier,* the father of quantified (i.e., modern) chemistry, who also did some tax gathering for the royal establishment. Obviously, the Enlightenment did not reach the manic people.*His execution calls to mind the killing of Archimedes in 212 B.C. Maybe every 2000 years or so some nut case has to dispatch the leading scientist of the day just to demonstrate his perverse stupidity. (For more on Lavoisier, see: Dolnick. pp. 249-251.)

360. Gutzman. op. cit.

361. The instrument was not invented by Dr Joseph Guillotin, who merely recommended its use, but by one T. Schmitt, a German harp maker.

362. Bartlett, J. 2017. Radicals Chasing Utopia. Perseus; New York. p. 315. Almost Islamic in its intensity.

363. The Jacobins were not only denouncing Christianity but attempting to replace belief in God with belief in the state.* (See Davidson. Chap 9) The battle against Christianity went to the extreme that during the Terror one person was executed for having a picture of a crucifix. (Tulard. p.1125.) *This characterizes the later development of the West in general.

364. Wells. op. cit. pp. 906-909.

365. Davidson. op. cit. p. 201.

366. Ibid. p. 219.

367. Christianson, G. Greenhouse. Walker; New York. 1999. Chap. 1; Box 3.

368. Davidson. op. cit. p. 202.

verdicts: acquittal or death.³⁶⁹ Further, the government rushed through supporting, unconstitutional laws as occasion demanded.³⁷⁰

Although not as spectacular as the Reign of Terror, the stupidest chapter in this story was that of the swift, shallow solutions the Committee of Public Safety proposed for the problems facing the nation. Basically, everything from the calendar to greetings was rethought from the bottom up not the top down.³⁷¹ Opulence had become so despised that property had to be equalized. Further, profit was to be abolished thus undercutting the incentive for commerce. Anticipating modern totalitarian states, there was a plan to replace God with reason—with “Liberty, Equality and Fraternity” the new Holy Trinity, although everyone still practiced corruption, vice and debauchery.³⁷² Replacing spiritualism with statism proved to be too much, however, even for Robespierre, who believed in some kind of Supreme Power beyond the guillotine and who, at the height of the Reign of Terror found himself more than ever in need of religious consolation. Accordingly, he elected a democratic Supreme Being on May 7, 1794³⁷³ who replaced the aristocratic “God” and in fit of righteousness had those who celebrated a Feast of Reason in Notre Dame guillotined.³⁷⁴ He also equated terror with virtue, which he presumed to represent if not embody.³⁷⁵

Not that it really mattered. No matter who was in power, no one was in control, so no one nor any government could consistently provide bread at an affordable price to the citizens. As the pendulum of rights and threats swung back and forth, and the civil war between the haves and have-nots had been presumably settled in favor of the latter, a conciliatory gesture to those with property led to Romanesque statutes which were “made by the rich for the rich”.³⁷⁶

Despite such sops, the hysterical sincerity of the victorious lower classes had run to uncontrollable excesses to the point that Robespierre realized word games were not enough to bring order to chaos.³⁷⁷ Events in the streets had outrun the revolutionaries, so more drastic measures were called for than the moderates would have otherwise endorsed. Put another way, the Reign of Terror was Robespierre’s way of staying in power,³⁷⁸ and the legal structure revolutionaries had erected fell into disrepute.

Finally, in July, 1794, Robespierre's excesses turned everyone against him because, as the self-appointed voice and defender of humanity, he had become a threat to everyone. After being shouted down at the National Convention and betrayed by some soldiers of the Paris Commune, he was guillotined, thus ending the Reign of Terror. As bad as it was, this bloodiest chapter in the story of the French Revolution with 50,000 victims was not the work of the whole country but of a city mob which, as a political expression of Newton’s Third Law of equal but opposite reactions, had been driven to excesses of cruelty and savagery by long standing social injustices the king had stupidly permitted.³⁷⁹ As a self-sustaining positive feedback system, it went to

369. *Ibid.* p. 221.

370. *Ibid.* p. 227.

371. Freedman. *op. cit.* p. 259.

372. Paul, J. *Without Precedent*. Riverhead Books; New York. 2018. p. 125.

373. Wikipedia. Robespierre/Reign of Terror.

374. Wells. *op. cit.* pp. 906-907. Still, the belief or its lack lives on. Aritani, L. *Miami Herald*. Mar. 15, 2012. 4A. Sorry, God.

375. Robespierre, M. Speech at the (Revolutionary) Convention. Feb. 5, 1794. On the Principles of Political Morality etc. Excerpted in Davidson, p. 214.

376. Davidson. *op. cit.* p. 180.

377. *Ibid.*

378. *Ibid.* p. 190.

379. Schama, S. *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*. Vintage; New York. 1990. p. 836.

excesses because until everyone opposed it, no one safely could,³⁸⁰ and Tocqueville's take on it could serve as well for the rise of the Nazis 140 years later in Germany: "The Revolution had been prepared by the most civilized classes of the nation and carried out by the most un-civilized and the roughest of people."³⁸¹

By the summer of 1794, extremism was out, and there was a general desire for a government which could hold the country together and deal with its problems. The Directory achieved the first of these for four years but was too corrupt to deal successfully with extent economic crises e.g., the price of bread. During this period, however, French armies ousted kings and created republics throughout Europe, and as these victories became sources of revenue, a positive feedback system led France to become as imperialistic as it had been under its most acquisitive kings.³⁸²

Thus, the tragedy of the French Revolution was that ten years after it began, the new France so closely resembled the old. It had its new rich instead of its old rich, and it had more vigor, because the peasants worked harder than they had before, but there was no Millennium. It had a new army (at the expense of the navy), but the old foreign policy of conquest remained. It was vintage France in a republican wineskin.³⁸³

The ultimate irony of the Revolution was that while French republicans were committed to helping the people of Europe gain their liberty, France itself became a military state. It did so not because the revolutionaries were unprincipled but because they were idealistic to the point of absurdity. In the name of humanity and liberty, they had committed atrocities which shamed the most amoral anarchist. After a few years of revolution, concern for human rights (liberty, equality, fraternity) and civilized values was replaced by a commercial interest in the rights of property and the values of enterprise. Finally, the rise to power of Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) showed that, for whatever the reasons, the French people simply were not yet fit and able to govern themselves.³⁸⁴

The French Revolution was archetypical in that the anarchy and chaos of misapplied ideals³⁸⁵ brought on a reversion to autocracy as soon as a competent administrator could assert himself. Although the revolutionaries defeated their foreign and domestic foes, they could not establish a functional government after removing the monarchy³⁸⁶ because they could not control themselves.³⁸⁷ Repeating the fall of the Roman Republic, Napoleon seized power after the need for order became popularized by the excesses and abuses of liberty by an oligarchy³⁸⁸ made a mockery of equality and fraternity.³⁸⁹

Napoleon's career serves as an example of the positive correlation of power and stupidity. Admittedly a romantic genius of boundless energy and wide-ranging interests³⁹⁰ and a demonic

380. Wells. op. cit. pp. 909-910.

381. Tocqueville, A. de. *L'ancien régime et la Révolution*. 1856. p. 227.

382. Wells. op. cit. p. 911.

383. *Ibid.* p. 918.

384. Muller. op. cit. p. 300.

385. During the Revolution people were free to agree with Robespierre the equalst of them all.

386. Davidson. op. cit. pp. 244-245.

387. Tuchman. op. cit. p. 6.

388. Ferguson, N. 2011. *Civilization: The West and the Rest*. Penguin. New York. p. 156.

389. Effective self-control is forever missing in the human equation as self-deceptive, stupid people repeatedly, demonically self-destruct, clearing the way for the next group to do the same. Is anyone reading this?

390. McMahon. op. cit. p. 116.

artist who used Europe as his canvas,³⁹¹ as his power grew, his judgment weakened.³⁹² In this respect, he appears very human as people use their wits to gain power and then, as they use their power, lose their wits and abuse their power. Although one might correctly assume that those in power would need their wits more than others, the mighty seldom seem to have even common sense, much less uncommon wisdom in anything but the most narrow political cum paranoid context. It may well be that stupidity is power's way of moving on: By corrupting judgment, stupidity encourages others to demand justice, thus inducing the expression of new combinations of developing trends in idiocy.

Actually, Napoleon's rise and demise serve as a lesson for all students of Western Civilization. He was extremely efficient up to and even including the point that he destroyed himself through excesses of arrogance and over extension. As a model for Schopenhauer's thesis of "Will",³⁹³ he brought organization to chaos and, as one who broke precedents and shattered norms,³⁹⁴ he occasionally brought worthy ideals to the fore: For example, he selected officials according to their intelligence, energy, industry and obedience³⁹⁵ rather than their ancestry, religion or other irrelevant criteria unrelated to job performance.

On the other hand, he missed when he rejected Robert Fulton's offer to build him a fleet of steam-ships³⁹⁶ superior to the British fleet. Although he was otherwise very efficient at achieving his ends, his basic problem was that there was no self-imposed end to his ends, which, as a positive feedback system, went to fatal excess. His urge for self-aggrandizement was insatiable and motivated him both to succeed and ultimately fail. He could not perceive that the pursuit of his own best interest eventually came to be in his own worst interest because there was no greater moral purpose controlling his development and directing his behavior.

A child of the Revolution,³⁹⁷ he personified action for its own sake and burned him-self out proving that his Machiavellian power had meaning only if it could be used to gain more power. Unfortunately for everyone, power, far from being a limiting factor on him, was limited only by his own boundless will.³⁹⁸

Characterized as the very model of a "Daemonic man",³⁹⁹ he was thoroughly modern in that he was totally amoral and, like Henry VIII, as great as anyone without virtue could be.⁴⁰⁰

391. Hugo, V. Cited in J-B Decherf's "Napoleon and the Poets: etc." *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 10, #3, pp. 362-376. 2010. 1

392. Pitkin. op. cit. p. 284.

342. Bonaparte, N. Undated. Quoted on page 100 of D. Carnegie.

394. McMahan. op. cit. p. 121.

395. Tuchman. op. cit. p. 6.

396. Kennedy, D. *Freedom from Fear*. Oxford University Press; New York. 1999. p. 659. The lesson was not wasted. When president Franklin Roosevelt was considering committing limited national resources to incipient atomic research in 1942, he recalled Napoleon's failure to develop steam power when he had the chance and opted for the new potential energy source. (Goodwin, D. p. 347.)

397. McMahan. op. cit. p. 119.

398. *Courrier de l'armee d'Italie*. 1797. (Cited on p. 117 of McMahan.)

399. Goethe, W. *Conversations with Eckermann*. Mar. 2, 1831. p. 317.

400. This calls to mind a comment made in the mid-19th century about New York's infamous Boss Tweed: "Were he not a supreme scoundrel, he would be a great man." (Strong. p. 394.) As for Napoleon, he cared not a fig for human life (Burne. p. 8.) nor rights. In this latter context, Thomas Paine denounced him as "the completest charlatan that ever existed". (Hodgkinson and Bergh. p. 128.)

Nevertheless, as a tireless self-promoter⁴⁰¹ and one of the most underrated politicians⁴⁰² in history, this modern Charlemagne managed, in 1802, to get himself made First Counsel for life with the power to appoint his successor, proceeded to create an empire and then crowned himself Emperor. Peace was rendered totally improbable by his unbounded ambition which (like that of Hitler in the next century) provoked war with practically everyone around. Basically, he simply was not happy unless he was fighting someone, but in a surprising lapse of strategic thinking, he pushed Europe into war before bringing his fleet up to par with the Royal Navy. The consummate soldier had failed to appreciate the importance of sea power in Egypt, when the British had stranded his army on the shore in 1798,⁴⁰³ and was too impetuous to wait the few years it would have taken to shift balance of naval power in his favor. Thus, his occupation of Switzerland in 1803 brought on a war with Britain he was not prepared to win.⁴⁰⁴

However, he won practically every other war he fought while creating an empire of inveterate enemies. Rather than create a new world, he contented himself with wrecking the old. Still, by 1810, he had matured enough to compromise a bit with the establishment he had so long confronted: He married an Austrian princess and became another autocrat.⁴⁰⁵

He did not become "Just" another autocrat because nothing could take the fight out of Napoleon. In 1812, while at war in Spain, he emulated Alexander, who did not know when to stop,⁴⁰⁶ and provided Hitler with a wasted example by ignoring unanimous advice from his counselors because it was not what he wanted to hear confirmation of his own opinion,⁴⁰⁷ he stupidly created a two-front war by invading Russia. He then turned that foolhardy campaign into a disaster by refusing to recognize that taking a burned out, deserted Moscow was an empty victory. He had not defeated the Russians, who continued to raid his supply lines and waste his army. Further, he refused to escape while he could, preferring to stay in Moscow and scheme his impossible schemes.⁴⁰⁸

Previously, Napoleon had been lucky. He had escaped from Egypt by deserting his army. The Royal Navy had saved him from getting caught in Britain by defeating his steam less fleet before he could invade. Now, his luck ran out, and Moscow became his Waterloo. Ignoring the the Russian winter had taught Sweden's Charles XII in 1709,⁴⁰⁹ much too late in October, he began his retreat into eventual oblivion.

That he attained so much power was partly because his mind was logical, mathematical and retentive and partly because he was, like any good Roman, heartless, unscrupulous and insensitive to the misery and suffering he created. He was a careful, precise planner who was successful as long as he knew what he *should* do.⁴¹⁰ His fatal error was one any good fighter might have made he presumed the Russian army would give him a decisive battle in 1812.⁴¹¹ He presumed so because he made the mistake of judging others by his own values, and "Not

401. McMahon. op. cit. p. 117.

402. But one of the worst businessmen. Selling the Louisiana Territory for \$15 million was one of the worst deals ever made.

403. Harvey, R. *Maverick Military Leaders*. Skyhorse; NY. 2008. p. 103.

404. Wells. op. cit. p. 928.

405. *Ibid.* p. 933.

406. Horne, A. *Ruler of the World*. In *What If?* R. Cowley (Ed.). Putnam; New York. 2001. p. 210. Napoleon provides an ideal case study of the positive feedback mechanism going to excess.

407. Zweig, S. *Joseph Fouché*. Viking; NY. 1930. p. 234.

408. Wells. op. cit. p. 933-934.

409. Davis. P. *Decisive Battles from Ancient Times to the Present*. Oxford; NY. 2001. p. 294.

410. Emerson, R. *Napoleon*. In *Representative Men*. 1850.

411. Pitkin. op. cit. p. 282.

fighting" was an element missing in his own belligerent schema, and he was at a loss when he did not have a battle to win. He did, however, have to fight the Russian people, and, anticipating Hitler mistake, he came as a conqueror rather than a reformer or savior.

Although he betrayed the revolution making a mockery of liberty, equality and fraternity and his empire crumbled, he left an enduring legacy in his Code Napoleon, which froze what he wanted to pre-serve. It codified all old laws into a new legal system whose chief virtue was the substitution of plain statements for legal obscurities, but its chief defect was that it presumed to limit France and other areas under its jurisdiction to what they were in the early nineteenth century. Typically Napoleonic, it was made for short-term efficiency at the expense of long-term adaptability.⁴¹² It defined things so that people could get to work on them, but as there was more energy than intellect in Napoleon, it often defined them in terms that were limiting and confining⁴¹³ (to wit, the father was made dictator of the family, labor unions were banned and the principle of equality before the law generally renounced).⁴¹⁴ Sacrificing liberty for order, he provided equality for some: A warrior to the core, he brought enlightened, improved subjugation if not fraternity to others. Overall, he used his hard, clear, narrow mind to put his world in a straitjacket, and for more than 100 years, French women, laborers and peasants struggled to gain economic status and political rights denied them by his unenlightened, restrictive net of definitions.⁴¹⁵

History, so sparing with second chances, was generous to the Bourbons, who proved unequal to their political opportunities.⁴¹⁶ Their attitudes and conduct had justified Talleyrand's condemning quip, in 1796, that they had "Learned nothing and forgotten nothing".⁴¹⁷ They attempted in a post-Napoleonic, hopeless way to turn the clock back and live by the schema that had once produced a revolution: They brought themselves down as they failed in their efforts to regain the property and privileges afforded by the old regime.⁴¹⁸ By 1830, they proved they had learned nothing and forgotten everything.

3. CONCLUSIONS

An enduring legacy of the Middle Ages was the belief that the establishment was immutable: the political, economic and social order was set by God and eternal. The poor and oppressed accepted their lot and attributed their plight to bad luck or God's will. The essence of the Enlightenment was that, worshiping the new trinity of republics, progress and reason, people could relieve suffering and create happiness by deliberately and consciously altering the conditions of life.⁴¹⁹

412. By introducing revolutionary nationalism in every country he conquered, he, as Robespierre on horseback, (G. Jones. p. 449.) sowed the seeds of his own destruction because the local populations often came to favor their freedom over fraternal, French occupation. (P Davis. p 273)

413. Wells. op. cit. p. 928.

414. Durant, W. and A. The Age of Napoleon. Simon and Schuster; New York. 1975. p. 181.

415. Wells. op. cit. p. 928.

416. The Bourbons actually had three chances. Their second came when Napoleon was exiled to Elba. They fled upon his return and were restored after Waterloo. The Stuarts also had a second chance in seventeenth century England but blew it.

417. Talleyrand-Périgord, C. 1796. In a letter to Mallet du Pan from Chevallier de Panat.

418. Evans. op. cit. pp. 29-32.

419. Mishra. op. cit. p. 156.

For all its naiveté, the Enlightenment did improve world.⁴²⁰ It combated ignorance, bigotry and tyranny, won some battles and provided inspiration and rhetoric for those who would continue the struggles against secular evils. However, while in America it converted Puritans to Yankees, its greatest triumph was that it led Western Civilization away from a dependence upon either religion or reason as people fashioned a culture built on experiential (if subjective) knowledge and functionally useful explanations of their Newtonian world. If this was enlightening, it was also troubling when emotions ran away with themselves, put the “b” in “Democracy”, took it to the point of anarchy and led capitalism to the extreme of concentrated greed. Although these evils were logically inherent in these political and economic systems, they were not exposed by reason⁴²¹ but became obvious only as those systems went to excesses.⁴²² Unfortunately, the eighteenth century fostered excesses because Enlightened Man lost faith in traditional control systems religion, reason and nature, which seemed increasingly irrational and subjective.

The common belief had been that the natural world was designed for man's benefit but something in him original sin, ignorance and/or stupidity kept people from attaining heaven on earth. It was thought that by a concerted moral and intellectual effort, humanity could find happiness by discovering and attuning itself to natural law. While successful in undermining traditional belief systems, thinkers searched for a universal system of natural moral values which would free civilization from the evils of institutionalism. What they found, on one hand, was that rationalistic Christianity would not do, as it seemed heretical to fundamentalists and left no place for a personal God who listens to prayers.⁴²³ On the other, they found science could not provide answers to the big metaphysical questions like what is good or bad, right or wrong: In fact, all science seemed to do in this regard was suggest they stop asking questions science could not answer,⁴²⁴ which left everyone wondering about fundamental spiritual concerns like suffering, grief, loneliness and guilt.⁴²⁵

While the enlightened thinkers of the eighteenth century were condemned at the time for promoting religious disbelief, they were likewise resented for promulgating what became the underpinnings of modern, mechanized democracies technology, the secular state and universal human rights.⁴²⁶ What they produced at the end of the rainbow of reason was not a general, guiding morality but political revolution, dictatorship, war and fear of more thereof because the dream that rational, self-interested individuals would use science and *moral self-control* to

420. Gore, A. *The Assault on Reason*. Penguin; New York. 2007. p. 14.

421. Exemplified by the aptly entitled *The Age of Reason (1794-1795)*, penned by the common sensical Thomas Paine, who characterized all religions as “.....set up to terrorize and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit.” (Carroll. p. 376.) Specifically, he noted, “Of all the systems of religion that ever were invented, there is none more derogatory to the Almighty, more unedifying to man, more repugnant to reason, and more contradictory in itself than this thing called Christianity.” His mindmate “Cut and paste Christian” Thomas Jefferson opined the priest craft had turned Christianity “Into mystery and jargon unintelligible to all mankind and therefore the safer engine for their purposes. (Jefferson. 1814.) It had made half of the people fools and the other half hypocrits. (Jacoby. p. 45.) The Trinity was “Hocus-pocus... so incomprehensible to the human mind that no candid man can say he has any idea of it.” (Jefferson. 1822.) Ridicule he wrote, was the only weapon that could be used against it. (Jefferson. 1815.) Enter Mark Twain. See *Letters from the Earth*.

422. Muller. op. cit. p. 304.

423. Brinton. op. cit. p. 143.

424. Roberts, M. *The Modern Mind*. Farber and Farber; London. 1937.

425. Watson, P. 2010. op. cit. p. 777.

426. Barzun, J. 2000. *From Dawn to Decadence*. Perennial; New York. p. 392.

create a good society⁴²⁷ turned into a nightmare. Nor have we fared much better since. This may be not only because no such grand ethic exists but because, in the nineteenth century, Western man stopped searching for it and concentrated on developing and applying to excess the advances of the Enlightenment by exploiting human and natural resources via the industrial revolution.

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427. Mishra. op. cit. p. 235.

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