

[Sect. 71 needs review of last lecture for first 10 min. or so.]

1. Class lists (not nec. for 71) - seating chart.

2. Announce policy re: questions

a. Can ~~interru~~ interrupt me w.-gg. at any time

b. When time permits, end of class will be given to discussion of what we have seen thus far. Recommended: read over notes between classes: best way to keep up. No review class on this material. The end of class to ask any gg., & if you have none for me, I will give you some to discuss.

3. Introduce John Cavadini:

(MW 11:40 - 12:40; Th 1:15 - 2:15 and by appt.).

3. Review of last class:

3 facets of modern understanding of history:

a. methods → can we know our origins?

b. culture → what is normative?

c. resp. for the making of history

1) general

2) from Teilhard de Chardin

} → how can we determine the significance of our actions?

4. Emphasize: I am building an understanding of some of the main problems that have been faced by modern humanity; I am not saying I agree with all these positions. But: ask yourselves if you experience these problems?

5. Outline: The Philosophy of the Enlightenment:

1st part of class:

a. Enlightenment's place w/- modern phil.

b. " ^{secular} as humanism

c. " as growing radicalism

d. " phil of history

e. the freedom of philosophy: certain characteristics

f. Criticisms of Christianity.

g. The Enlightenment program for human progress.

Re: paper -- you may add your own eval, but main thing is your interp'n.

CW will be placed on reserve.

done
for
you

Theo 128 1- Class lists, seating chart (71), attendance will be checked.

Lecture 3, I ? 2- Intro. Cavardini (71)
3- When time at end, disc. & qu. period. Qq. may be asked at any time.

(over) a. Modern ^{general} Enlightenment
3) The career of ^{modern} ~~modern~~ philosophy is related to and intertwined with the history of modern science and the development of modern methods of studying history, and is another of the principal constituents of modernity.

Obviously, the history of ^{Enlightenment} ~~modern~~ philosophy is a most complicated phenomenon. Once again, I will try to do no more than indicate its principal cultural impact, especially as this has ramifications for theology. This impact lies in the insistence of ^{Enlightenment} ~~modern~~ philosophers on the secularity of human reason, on its autonomy from any external authority, and especially from Christian ^{faith} ~~theology~~. The history of modern thought shows us at least two major struggles for autonomy: first, science struggled to become autonomous from philosophy; secondly, and perhaps partly as a result of the scientific breakthrough, philosophy struggled to become autonomous from theology, reason from faith. We will later witness a more far-reaching phenomenon called secularization, of which these intellectual struggles are partly contributing causes and partly symptoms, but for the moment I want to focus on some of the general characteristics of the spirit of ^{Enlightenment} ~~modern~~ philosophy.

* The Humanism of the Enlightenment.

Modern philosophy hinges around a particularly dramatic period which referred to itself not too modestly as the Enlightenment. "The Enlightenment encompasses roughly the eighteenth century and is a term frequently used to describe much philosophical thought in this century both in Europe and in the United States (Franklin and Jefferson are considered Enlightenment thinkers). Despite

Enlightenment thinkers:

Eng. Hume

Kant

France: Voltaire

Diderot

d'Alembert

Rousseau

America: Jefferson

Franklin

differences among individual philosophers, there are significant enough similarities to warrant them being considered together -- a common style of thinking which allows them to be thought of as forming a single family of intellectuals.

c. The E. as secular Humanism.

In particular, what these thinkers have in common is their struggle for human autonomy, for freedom from oppressive authorities and freedom for autonomous, critical, rational thought. The principal device employed was to take the two parts they had inherited -- the Christian past and the classical pagan tradition of Greece and Rome -- and to pit them against one another, with the aim of winning their own autonomy from both, of establishing a new and modern humanism emancipated from both classical thought and Christian authority. They used classical antiquity to criticize Christianity, but not for the sake of reviving classical paganism, as in the Renaissance two centuries before. Rather their aim was an independent humanism of their own. They were committed ^{to no tradition, but} ^{modern} to the freedom of the human mind to make its own way in the world.

c. A growing radicalism of E.

The intellectual history of the Enlightenment is in general one of a growing and deepening radicalism. The criticism of the past became deeper and wider, more far-reaching, more uncompromising. This, in the first half of the century, a deistic position regarding God held sway, whereas in the second half a atheism became a respected position. Again, in the first half of the century, natural law was the generally accepted basis of ethics, whereas in the 2nd half we can witness a growing utilitarianism. In politics, the first half of the century remained in general somewhat timid, whereas the second became so aggressive that it culminated in the French and American revolutions.

d. Enlightenment philosophy of history

The Enlightenment thinkers tended to view all of history as divided between the rule of priests and that of philosophers, the rule of mystifiers and that of men of reason. History they divided into four great epochs: the great river civilizations of the ancient Near East; ancient Greece and Rome; the Christian era; and modern times, beginning with the Renaissance and its recovery of pagan humanism. The first and third epochs were ages of myth, belief, and superstition, while the second and fourth were ages of rationality, science, and enlightenment. Thus they gave a clearly polemical account of history, as a part of their comprehensive effort to secure rational control of the world and freedom from domination by religion. Classical paganism, while it was not what they wanted to reinstate, provided a signpost for the secular spirit, a catalyst for discovering themselves. It was the Greeks who, for all their mistakes, had discovered the human mind, had conquered myth by reason. The Enlightenment thinkers seem to have been the first to identify clearly the two ways in which human beings can confront themselves, their experience, and their destiny: the mythic and the scientific. In the Enlightenment, these two ways were sharply divided from one another, and only the second was recognized as respectable.

e. the freedom of philosophy: certain characteristics

It was above all J. Kant who insisted that philosophy had to be kept totally separate and independent from theology and that the freedom of the philosopher to think autonomously was the precondition of the freedom of all men. Philosophy, the organized habit of asking questions, was to be free both to destroy and to construct, chained by no authority, civil or ecclesiastical, allowed to follow simply the path of its own dynamism. By no means were all the

Re:
theology

philosophers of the Enlightenment atheists. But they did insist that religion be treated as a cultural phenomenon, as one fact among others, as subject to criticism as anything else. Religion w/ the Limits of Reason Alone.

In many instances, the thought of the Enlightenment philosophers showed a distinct tendency to eclecticism, for such an approach gave them generous room to be independent. Eclectic modes of thinking, however, were another avenue to relativism, and the latter inspired an ideal of tolerance for the views of others - a very important factor in their intolerance of ecclesiastical Christianity, which they regarded as the worst of fanaticisms and dogmatisms.

^{finally,}
^{a general}
^{character:} We might describe the thought of the Enlightenment thinkers in its totality as a moral realism: realism, in that the material for their thought was taken from the concrete experience of daily living; moral, in that science and philosophy were to be utilized for the sake of improving the human situation, ^{freeing humanity ft.} _{external authority}.

^{f. Criticism of Christianity:} They had three major criticisms of Christianity: 1) Christianity treated the great works of pagan literature in a compromising manner, did not accept them on their own terms as products of a noble human spirit, but tampered with them in a self-serving manner, thereby surrendering the autonomy of critical thought.
(As eclectic, the E. did this too: so the real difference is motivation).

2) This surrender was a betrayal of the resources of the mind. Christians had turned philosophy into either an ~~emancipating~~ enemy of Christianity's saving truth, or into nothing but a handmaiden of theology. For the E., P had to be autonomous and independent or it was worth nothing at all and entirely ineffective.

3) Christianity rehabilitated myth and superstition, according to the thinkers of the Enlightenment. For Christians, God's creatures were not really real in themselves, but were part of a divine plan for the universe, symbols participating in a myth. ^{Re: their own history, actions were also mythical.} Christians would not analyze and take seriously the psychological and anthropological -- and thus the natural -- origins of their own history. Everything was understood ultimately in terms of a divine and supernatural extrinsicism, and not in its own terms and on its own grounds.

For the E., Recent centuries, from 1300-1700, had begun to turn the tide against a mythic interpretation of things, according to the Enlightenment philosophers. During these centuries, the critical mind began to move toward independence. Secular forces began to serve their own strength, the human person began to become aware that he could create himself. ^{and was brought to completion in the E.} The great drama that extended from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment was the drama of the disenchantment and demystification of the European mind. All the philosophers of the Enlightenment were bound together by a single fision: to cure mankind of all supernaturalist, extrinsicist religion. Such religion was the germ of ignorance, barbarity, hypocrisy, and self-hatred. ^{Explain each.} The only religion any of the Enlightenment thinkers would tolerate was what they called a "natural religion," a religion without miracles, priestly hierarchies, ritual, divine saviors, original sin, a chosen people, or providential history. Any phenomenon was to be understood naturalistically, not supernaturalistically. Religion itself was to be treated

as a social phenomenon like any other. It was to be stripped of its privileged status and prestige. Supernaturalist religion was no more than a dim, meaningless, unwelcome shadow on the face of reason.

To adopt this attitude, of course, brings us again to a position we have arrived at also as a result of our discussions of modern science and the modern study of history: one has to learn to live with uncertainty, w/o supernatural justification, w/o complete explanations, with no promise of permanent stability, with merely probable guides, and yet without complaining. God is silent, and so we are our own masters. We must learn to live in a disenchanted world, we must submit everything to criticism, we must make our own way.

→ ^(Break) q. program for human progress: Our own way toward what? Any study of the E. must focus on more than their intellectual positions, for these positions were put forward in the interests of a program for humanity. The Enlightenment thinkers were saturated with the notion of progress. It was their conviction that in the struggle to master nature the tide had finally turned, the balance of power was in the hands of man. We could, they proclaimed, rationally rely on our own energetic action. We could ^{also} devise a social and political program for the sake of freedom. The 18th century saw a decline in mysticism, a growth in hope in human effort, an exaltation of the powers of the ego, a resurgence of commitment to inquiry and criticism, an interest in social and political reform, an increasing secularism ^{in social + political life as well as in the life of reason}, a growing willingness to take risks.

In looking to the future,

wh. they associated
w. religion.

There was a passionate call for a break from fatalism, It had been presaged by 17th century precursors, esp. Descartes and Bacon.

Descartes' Discourse on Method is considered by some the actual opening of the Enlightenment. In it Descartes called for a practical, and not just a speculative science, a science that would make men masters and possessors of nature. Bacon had proclaimed that "man is the architect of his ~~nature~~ nature." But it took the 18th century to consolidate these proposals under the conviction that knowledge is power.

Kant summarized and formalized the conviction of his century in his insistence that intelligence is an active force in the world, that reason acts like a judge who compels the witness (the data of sense) to answer questions that the judge himself has formulated, and that it thus imposes its own terms on the data.

The 18th century thinkers were convinced, that, however painful were the birth pangs that had to be suffered to become modern, life was becoming better, safer, easier, healthier, more predictable, more rational, more subject to human control. What led them to this conviction? There were many forces: the spectacular career of the natural sciences, advances in medicine, the growth and spread of humanitarian sentiment, the slow crumbling of traditional social hierarchies, revolutionary changes that were beginning or at least thought about in such things as the production of food and the organization of industry. New sciences were being developed, all in the service of human power over the environment: sociology, psychology, political economy, modern education. Diffusion of information was becoming more rapid, organized. Intelligence was devoting itself to practical results: mechanical innovations, new institutions, etc.

But the most tangible cause of confidence lay in medicine. If we were to study the statistics on disease and brevity of life of this period, we would find them chilling, but there were real signs of solid achievement in medicine and a genuine hope for advance. There was especially a dramatic growth in population. There were major innovations in medical theory, advances in anatomy, in the classification of diseases, in surgery. Accompanying these advances there were, of course, mounting attacks on superstition.

The 18th century also saw the birth of a secular social conscience or humanitarianism. Also, many of the characteristics of capitalism were emphasized: ceaseless activity was commended, along with the postponement of immediate gratification for the sake of some higher and more enduring satisfaction. The merchant class was extolled for their ability to combine the making of money, exciting work, and benevolence toward humanity. They were socially useful, and were regarded as contributing much more to the peace and prosperity of their fellows than were members of the aristocratic class or priests.

In sum) Most of the past was repudiated by the Enlightenment as a tragic fife of error. It was, with few exceptions, to be studied more for its mistakes and injustices than for models to be imitated.^{Polemie agst. tradition} The argument from tradition was accorded the lowest status of all arguments that could be offered in behalf of an idea or a course of action. This sharply contrasts with the attitudes of both the ancient pagan world and of Christianity, both of whom looked to the past for their ideals. The Enlightenment was very suspicious of a nostalgic attitude as simply a way to escape present misery -- but by fantasy, which paralyzes our will to action. We can escape

frequent misery by freeing our energies for progress, not by longing for the past.

b. The theological impact of the Enlightenment mentality was enormous. Catholic theology completely failed, even refused, to face the challenge until very recently, and as a result has had a lot of catching up to do if it intends to dialogue with the modern world. The Enlightenment introduced a clash of cognitive claims between autonomous reason and Christian theology. The challenge of the Enlightenment to Christian thinkers was to fully to demystify the Christian religion and to affirm this world and the possibilities opened up for life in this world based on reason and scrupulous inquiry into all evidence. Christian thinkers who wished to take seriously the challenge of modernity as it was born in the Enlightenment had above all to face the question as to whether the new methods of rational analysis must simply lay waste the rich mythical imagination and the life-style of Western Christians. Christians who wished to be both modern and Christian moved quickly to point out that the basic Christian vision of the world in its original integrity had championed rather than denigrated rational inquiry and analysis, and so the Enlightenment challenge was not a wholesale destruction of Christianity but would mean simply eliminating the merely mystifying components of Christianity but would restore with new integrity Christianity's central vision of God and humanity. But the struggle over the last two centuries has demanded that, if you're going to be both Christian + modern, if you're going to take that we call into question every important cognitive claim of the Christian life in this world as seriously as the E. demanded, then you must establish tradition, every major ethical position of Christianity, and that we define anew on the basis of verifiable foundations, ^{in human exp. for the} without the fundamental faith of Christianity. ~~really means~~. Huxley has gone furthest in this direction.

Qn: Do you think the E. is still alive?

W/o knowing it,
Jung has helped!

