

History

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THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION (Creating a new world view) of (affiliation)

Location of February 10, The Scientific Revolution

The so-called Scientific Revolution came about as an offshoot of the Renaissance period. This period saw the re-birth of many good ideas which were thought lost during the Middle Ages when people were more concerned with survival. In particular, the Renaissance Period was that time when ancient texts containing vital information and knowledge were re-discovered and then being studied again in earnest. This was a period when old ideas previously accepted as wisdom were challenged by direct observation like the anatomical drawings done by Leonardo da Vinci. Discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus also made people question existing view of geography by Ptolemy (the world is flat). These discoveries spawned a scientific revolution as it spurred new questions to be asked. There was much resistance to new discoveries because the people were skeptical of these discoveries and would rather stick with their old beliefs.

But perhaps more importantly, resistance came from the Catholic Church because ideas from the scientific revolution challenged their hold on the masses by using faith and superstition. In other words, scientific discoveries threatened the social, economic, and political order based on religion, as Christianity was often the central coherent ideology in many European societies. The people would naturally tend to question the authority of the Church because there were now being offered scientific explanations based on reason and logic for many natural phenomena like lightning (just a form of electricity) and not an act of God. The scientific studies by Copernicus in 1543 theorized the Sun to be the center of the solar system and not the Earth as had previously been taught. This striking departure from past

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beliefs made people realize not to accept dogma as truth anymore; science started to challenge the many ideas of religion. The Enlightenment is also called as the Age of Reason and it was influenced by the Scientific Revolution in the sense every observable natural phenomena has to have an underlying scientific, logical explanation for it.

The Industrial Revolution and the Rise of Capitalism

The Industrial Revolution was similar to the Scientific Revolution because it altered the way people think and perceive the natural world. In other words, it was a big paradigm shift for them and society in general. In particular, capitalism destroyed the old feudal order in which the wealth of a person was derived from ownership of vast tracts of land with many people or serfs serving in bondage as peons. The old pattern or business model (paradigm) of wealth generation coming from agricultural production no longer hold true. Instead, new wealth is generated from the ownership and operation of factories and industrial production facilities turning out consumer goods and other products for domestic markets and for export. Land is now merely just another input, together with labor, equipment, machineries, and capital (invested funds), to make wealth.

The aristocracy and the gentry as a distinct land-owning class ceased to exist and in their place a new social class of newly-wealthy capitalists and industrialists came into being of which wealth creation derived from investing their capital. Additionally, a new urban middle class was born, together with the previously unseen urban slums centered near the factories hiring the men, women, and children. Lastly, traditional professional guilds like carvers, weavers, and other hand craft-based associations got replaced with labor unions agitating for fair wages and conditions. A casualty were the

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skills-based guilds and cottage industries which got replaced with the factories as consumer and industrial products became uniform; workers now got alienated from their work as these workers now perform repetitive jobs based on the division of labor, as what Karl Marx had states in his book. Many social sectors got displaced (Bentley & Ziegler, 2010) but the new capitalists welcomed the changes while laborers and workers (previously peasants and farmers) opposed the new social and economic structures because jobs are not assured at all.

Reference

Bentley, J. & Ziegler, H. (2010). Traditions and encounters, volume B: From 1000 to 1800 (5th ed.). Columbus, OH, USA: McGraw-Hill Education.