

Discussion forum post

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Enlightenment When I imagine these three people (Voltaire, Tomas Jefferson and Locke) appears in 21th century the first thing they'll notice – West civilization's still the one who rules the world. Of course, Chinese and Japanize civilization are developing very fast (as do Islamic countries), but West model's somehow an authority and USA will be the face of West civilization for them, because the country was founded by enlighteners. As three of them were against Church blocking the development of scientific thought I think they'll be glad to know science and experience value more in modern world. People of West civilization don't depend on Church and as Tomas Jefferson wrote Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, this is how it should be (Jefferson, T). But I think these three will be unhappy to find out that developing reason we began to depend on our weaknesses, our bends instead. Voltaire, who was skeptic about idea all people should be equal could say, " Told you!" meaning for example, industry of art now depends on low educated mass needs. We spend fewer resources on science and medicine than on entertainment and wars. Indeed, both World Wars can be examples how scientific-technical progress can help to cause a great damage. Human nature appears to be more complicated mechanism than " tabula rasa" – pure blackboard with learned ideas written on it, as John Locke thought.

Enlightenment is about spreading knowledge, so I think three of them will be fascinated about Internet where anyone can find information in Encyclopedias which enlighteners firstly invented. And that West civilization has a highest percent of educated population, so almost everyone can write and read, and all humans (never mind their physical differences) have the

same rights and West civilization is really the one who stands for individualism. But still, to my mind, enlighteners will be disappointed that we're missing a goal: Enlightenment is about becoming more ideal person using reason, not about using reason to stay as you are.

Works Cited

Jefferson, Thomas. "The Virginia Act For Establishing Religious Freedom".
<http://religiousfreedom.lib.virginia.edu/sacred/vaact.html>