

The western world

Business



“ To understand the natural world and humankind’s place in it solely on the basis of reason and without turning to religious belief was the goal of the wide-ranging intellectual movement called the Enlightenment” (Oxford English Dictionary). This period has also been called the Age of Reason followed by the fact that it led to the emergence of a majority of thinkers during the 17th and 18th centuries. This period was characterized by a conflict between religion and ideological perspectives that sought to explore the otherwise perceived facts based on evidence and proof. The 18th century particularly saw the greatest impact of these ideological developments on Sir Isaac Newton. The Newtonian science sought to natural laws of human affairs similar to those that science had discovered in the physical universe. However, the great traditional effect was a major challenge behind the advances made during the Age of Enlightenment.

During this era, the West experienced dynamism both in terms of innovations and improvements of the existing practical issues. The most affected component in the society was art. In relation to this, the quantity and diversity of artistic impression during this period fail to easily fit into categories that can be interpreted. The development of art in this era was a result of the resurrection of both the Greek and the Roman models in artistic forms. In Western Europe, the Enlightenment philosophy was expressed through informal means such as art and literature. This explains why there were a lot of art and literature throughout this period.

The whole society seemed to have been affected by a sudden wave of change from Neoclassicism to a more advanced form which was the Enlightenment period. However, the Enlightenment was not very popular

movement and it originally only caught scientists, philosophers and some theologians. However with time, the movement was taken up by other literate figures that eventually spread the ideology of Enlightenment to the middle classes. Consequently, the movement reached the common people in a rather simplified manner which was easily applicable and understood. The most significant feature of Enlightenment is that the movement emphasized on faith and belief in human progress.

Hence, nature was perceived to be a complex of well-structured interacting laws that govern the universe. Dupre noted that human beings were just part of a system design to act in a rational manner and in accordance with a free will (pp. 17). With respect to the fact that people were allowed to act according to the free will fulfilling their wishes, it would make them naturally good in order to further create happiness for others. In the 18th century, the movement of Enlightenment was originally confined in England and Holland. John Locke, one of the greatest philosophers of all times was among the most prominent people believed to have nurtured the spread of the Enlightenment in the Western world.

After returning from exile, Locke applied previously introduced Newton's philosophy and ideology in both political and economic theories. This is one of the factors that led to subsequent spread of the Enlightenment.