

To what extent did the idea of freedom bring the emancipation of religious thinking to the people during the Enlightenment, how was it expressed in civilians' daily life

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ABSTRACT: *Almost no period in the history of mankind has exerted such a strong influence on public opinion and social development as the philosophy of the Enlightenment', said Hans Joachim Schneiderich in the History of World Philosophy.1 According to Schneiderich, the Enlightenment in its various aspects greatly supported freedom of thought among the people. This paper discusses the Enlightenment's impact on people's life and thought and details some of the major shifts that occurred in this period. This paper mainly studies the influence of the Enlightenment on the ideological emancipation of the people. The article first discusses the background of the Enlightenment and the enlightenment leaders' thought, then it analyzes in detail the question of to what extent the Enlightenment brought about the liberation of thought and how it helped people in life.*

KEYWORDS: *Enlightenment freedom, religion, life in Enlightenment, Emancipation of free thoughts.*

Introduction:

If the Renaissance was a ray of light in the dark, the Enlightenment lit up the whole sky under the control of ignorance. The Enlightenment in the Europe was ignited in the dark Middle Ages. The sprout of the Enlightenment emerged in Britain and the climax was reached in France. It was a revolution caused by many factors like economic crisis, political conflict and ideological transforms. About the economic crisis, the new social class, the bourgeoisie began to play their role in feudal countries, especially Italy and France which are the derivation of capital economics. The progressive bourgeoisie guarantee a strong rising social class who has the sufficient power against the feudal classes. Moreover, the steep conflict

1 Luo, B., 2011. Shi Jie Zhe Xue Shi. Beijing: Beijing yan shan chu ban she.

between the civilians and the privileged invoke the outbreak of the revolution that people could suffer no longer under the tyranny. The most important weapon for people to topple the yoke is the ideology revolution. Starting from the Protestant Reformation and renaissance. The people and civilian obtain the theoretical directions from those movements which assist them overturn the oppression.

So, who provided them with such strong weapon that is unstoppable to reverse the suffering calamity? This has to be mentioned about those Enlightenment thinkers and scholars. Most Enlightenment thinkers were empiricists. For instance, David Hume was a Scottish philosopher who was a heir of an aristocratic Scottish family, studied law and engaged in business. 【‘Living a very simple life to cope with my limited possessions, to secure my independence, and to consider nothing but the enhancement of my literary talents’.】 (Hume 2019)2.

Hume express his opinion about being reclusive. Hume propose that the causal relationship of much published research on this causal and result issue is problematic and people have no solution for tending this basis as they know nothing except the their own‘world’. His major works are *The Theory of Human Nature* (1739, 1740) and *the Study of Human Understanding* (1748). There are three volumes of the *Theory of Human Nature* which deal with the intellectual and the emotional and the moral aspects of it. The most novel and essential ideas in Hume 's philosophy are concentrated in the first volume in which Hume first discusses the distinction between impressions and ideas, and Hume argues that impressions and ideas are both perceptions. In order to demonstrate his ideas clearly, he put forward an example: although we have not seen the winged horse, people still try to imagine winged horses, all the elements of this complex ideas from impression just in all kinds of ideas, keep much of the original image is memory, the other idea is to imagine.Hume expressed his perspective towards the ability of understanding of humans.

Another two representative thinkers are John Locke and Immanuel Kant. A more detailed account of Locke is given in the following section. 【 ‘The arc of progress from a world of print and publishing where there was no parliamentary and judicial regulation to one of legislation and case law, where interests were at one time restricted mainly to those who controlled the presses and publication to a world which placed at its centre the author, the work and a connecting right of ownership, was a development which could only have occurred in England, which saw a more benevolent form of enlightenment but certainly one which required the enormous influence of that giant of seventeenth century England - John Locke.’ 】 (Doepel 2018) 3

2 Hume, David. 2019. “A TREATISE OF HUMAN NATURE.” In Hume’s Ethical Writings. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvpj759p.7>.

3 Doepel, Mark. 2018. “ResearchOnline @ ND The Emergence & Evolution of the Concepts of ‘ the Author ’ , ‘ the Work ’ and ‘ Literary Property ’ with Specific Reference to Enlightenment England 1450-1769 : The Role and

Locke is the first writer to expound the fundamental thought of constitutional democracy comprehensively and systematically. His ideas profoundly influenced the Founding fathers of the United States and many leading philosophers of the French Enlightenment. Kant was the founder of German classical philosophy. His theory deeply influenced modern Western philosophy and opened many schools, such as German classical philosophy and Kantianism. Kant was the last major philosopher of the Enlightenment period and a representative figure of German thought. He reconciled the rationalism of Rene Descartes with the empiricism of Francis Bacon and is considered one of the most influential thinkers in the West after Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. They expected their new theories or discoveries to meet specific standards of proof and verifiability before they could be accepted as fact. To achieve this, they developed a new system of thinking and investigation, the origins of what we now call the 'scientific method'. The 'scientific method' refers to the various ways and means that conform to the general principles of science. People follow or apply in understanding and transforming the world. These ideas, procedures, rules, skills and modes adopted in the process of scientific activities such as theoretical research, application, development and promotion. It is the result and necessary condition of scientific knowledge. Before the Enlightenment, knowledge was primarily derived from religious teachings, supposition and the writings of ancient forebears. During and after the Enlightenment, knowledge was produced by scientific processes, logic and reasoning.

In order to understand the meaning of freedom, we should know some information about Rousseau who put this concept forward to the public. Rousseau, born in Geneva, was a great French philosopher, educator, thinker and writer. He was the forerunner of the French Revolution in the 18th century and one of the representatives of the Enlightenment movement. In philosophy, Rousseau maintains that feeling is the source of knowledge and holds the view of deism. Emphasizing the goodness of human nature and the superiority of faith over reason, Rousseau advocated freedom and equality and opposed the significant private ownership and its oppression. In terms of education, he maintains that the purpose of education is to cultivate natural persons. Rousseau oppose the feudal education to torture and stress children and demand for improving children's status in education. In Rousseau's perspective he advocates that educational content and methods should be reformed to conform to the nature of children so that their physical and mental development can be free. For his work, he yearned for freedom. Rousseau's Treatise on the Social Contract, which describes the relationship between man and society, begins with the statement that "man is born free, but everywhere he in chains".Published in 1762, the Social Contract became one of the most influential works of Western political thought.

Influence of John Locke in the Case of Millar v Taylor (1769) PROPERTY ”
WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the
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Compared to Rousseau's view, Voltaire had similar opinions: he believe the efficacy of reason but he proposed that freedom should be limited to some degree. Voltaire advocated freedom and equality, believing that all men are equal and that freedom is the natural right of all men if they have the ability of achieving freedom. Of natural equality, he wrote: all men are equal, though they enjoy their natural faculties; They are equal when they perform the functions of animals, and when they exercise their reason. Voltaire propose the theory of natural equality, aiming at opposing feudal hierarchy and feudal privilege and proving that all men are equal before the law. However, in his view, in social life, the unequal possession of the property, the unequal social status is a matter of course. According to Voltaire, freedom is "the right to try to do what your will requires." It is the inviolable and innate rights of human beings, including freedom of the person, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of worship, and, above all, freedom to own property. For Voltaire, freedom meant opposing despotism and the despotism of the church and awakening the anti-feudal consciousness of the masses. However, he also argued that the right to private property was the most fundamental right of freedom. However, freedom did not mean that everyone owned property. For the vast majority of working people in society, freedom only meant that "they would freely sell their labor to the highest bidder". Voltaire was a great advocate of free speech, but he also thought that if the masses began to talk about politics, everything would go wrong.

It is noteworthy that those great Enlightenment thinkers mentioned above provided us valuable perspective towards the ideal freedom as they define the word 'freedom' in their minds. Further, I would claim my perspective towards freedom and how the freedom in the Enlightenment drastically influenced people's daily life in Enlightenment period.

Hypothesis:

The idea of freedom emancipation during the Enlightenment result in the people's daily life in Enlightenment was greatly changed in many aspects.

Text:

For the purpose of this paper, I would like to proclaim my point of views about freedom explore the effect of my ideal freedom and the Enlightenment freedom brought rational mind emancipation to what extend in people's daily life. For my first step to think about this question is to consider how the movement 'Enlightenment' affect people's behaviors. In the beginning, let us talk about the difference of the scholars' revolt weapons and stand points between Enlightenment and another ideological emancipation movement, Renaissance. The scholars of the Enlightenment were distinctive from the scholars of the Renaissance era for they no longer used religion as an aid to the literary and artistic revival. However, They tried to use empirical and rational thinking to make the knowledge system independent of

the influence of religion as a way to establish moral, aesthetic and ideological systems. Enlightenment advocates saw themselves as fearless cultural pioneers and believed that the purpose of the Enlightenment was to guide the world out of a period filled with traditional teachings, irrationality, blind faith, and tyranny.

It is noteworthy that Enlightenment bring "ignorant" crowds with wise mind and clear motivation. Because of its belief, leaders organized a series of movement corresponding to Enlightenment. Its object is to break up the chains that the aristocratic or monarchy imposed on people's shoulders. on the grounds of Daan's view, 【 ' Unlike negative freedom, which is the freedom from interference by others, positive freedom is the freedom of self-mastery, of rational control of one's life. It is plain that, as with negative freedom, positive freedom is impaired or diminished as the capacity or power of choice is impaired or diminished, but in different ways. ' 】 (Daan 1948)4. I quite accept his opinions. Before the Enlightenment, it was negative freedom that people lived in darkness without proper laws, regulation or misleading faiths. People own their rational minds after Enlightenment movements; the veil of reason has been lifted. Because of the reason, the social atmosphere become inclusive with liberalism which shake people's life with inclusiveness and openness.

With the clear definition of freedom, people were more clearly where they stand, beyond the law or stay in the law. Another scholar who identify with Kant's views gives a similar standpoint. "Insofar as the freedom of public reason is connected to independence, the state has to respect it. However, the freedom of public reason is understood in terms of speaking in one's name, rather than of a sphere free of interference." (Peterson 2008)5.

The new ideological freedom born in Enlightenment period achieved many accomplishments which change people's daily life dramatically. One of the most important effect it bring would be the free-spirits of aesthetic.

A significant contribution of the Enlightenment is liberating art becoming an essential part in the field of a public museum at the beginning of the Enlightenment to the public. It becomes indispensable to enlightening cultural sites and museum, also an essential product of the Enlightenment. As an important carrier bearing and spread of history and art. Since there, the art began to have a relationship with common' lives. Complete freedom has two elements: moral freedom and bodily freedom. (Masroori 2000)6. Body freedom is differentiated from the thinking freedom, aesthetic idea freedom. At first, It is unfortunate that the art and beauty just belonged to the nobility or church; the beauty just existed in a small group of top

4 Daan, Albert. 1948. "The Idea of Freedom." *Synthese* 6 (9–12): 476–86.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00590716>.

5 Peterson, Jonathan. 2008. "Enlightenment and Freedom." *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 46 (2): 223–44. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hph.0.0021>.

6 Masroori, Cyrus. 2000. "European Thought in Nineteenth-Century Iran: David Hume and Others." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 61 (4): 657–72. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3654074>.

people in power. The aristocrats could impose their definition of beauty by their noble status over the poor commons while the civilians have no authority of evaluation even their freedom of expression was banned by the noble before Enlightenment. During the period of Enlightenment, the first large scale of art exhibition was shown in Louvre, France by then, the exhibitions are opened to the public, and the civilians had the opportunities to appreciate the extraordinary collections in the exhibitions around France. Akhundzadeh presents emphasis about the necessity of freedom of ideas and expression for the discovery of truths and the effect of adhering to customs and traditions in preventing human progress. The art flew among people, but they did not have any skills in appreciating. Going through time, people's common aesthetic idea and have their definition of beauty and no longer just belonging to the nobility. The freedom ideology allows people to form their unique thoughts, having different styles of art. The appreciation skills towards paintings and portraits from the common finally popularized and influenced our modern aesthetic concepts.

With the concept of freedom popularized, the society gradually emerge some new styles like Rococo. 【The word Rococo is derived from the French word *rocaille*, which denoted the shell-covered rock work that was used to decorate artificial grottoes.】⁷

Rococo Style, born in the Enlightenment period, is a branch of Baroque. Rococo style prevails in the reign of Louis xv, the so called Louis xv, the art form has a light delicate and exquisite in the process of heavy and complicated characteristics of Rococo art form under the influence of east Asian art, some people think that the Rococo style is the late baroque style, namely the decadent and stage of the collapse of Rococo art style is widely used in decorative painting, literature, sculpture, music, art, etc. Compared with the early Baroque and late neoclassicism, Rococo reflected the social atmosphere of hedonism, luxury and love interwoven at that time. In addition, inspired by the foreign culture at that time, rococo painters added many exotic elements to their creations which means its eclectic feature influenced by freedom ideology from Enlightenment. In the 1730 s, the rococo art high-speed development, and gradually influenced by Chinese art style from building decoration extension to painting and sculpture field rococo furniture retained the baroque complex image and fine texture, and gradually and the integration of a number of other features and elements, including Oriental art and asymmetric combination and so on.

【While Baroque paintings are associated with deep colors and emotive shadows, Rococo works are characterized by an airy pastel palette. Jean-Honoré Fragonard captures the alluring light-heartedness of this color scheme in his most famous painting, *The Swing*. Set in swirls of light green foliage, *The Swing* stars a woman

⁷ Encyclopedia Britannica. 2020. Rococo | Definition, Art, Painting, & Characteristics. [online] Available at: <<https://www.britannica.com/art/Rococo>> [Accessed 10 October 2020].

dressed in a pale pink dress playing on a swing and flirtatiously flinging off her shoe.】 8



The swing

【 ‘Rococo furniture and design spread throughout Europe and the British colonies in North America, though not without frequent inflection of enlightenment ideas and even commentary on the social and moral values of the day. The satirical images of William Hogarth (1697-1764) are an excellent example of a growing tendency to look upon the aristocracy with critical eyes.’ 】 9

The Rococo style’ applications powerfully demonstrate the civilians’ thoughts towards their ideal style in that period, and the commons had the awareness of freedom and vigorously were eager to express their perspective in their daily life.

8 Abdou, K., 2020. Celebrate The Elegance And Exuberance Of French Rococo Art. [online] My Modern Met. Available at:

<<https://mymodernmet.com/rococo-art/#:~:text=Renowned%20for%20the%20lightheaded%20nature%20of%20its%20fine,equally%20extravagant%20yet%20distinctively%20playful%20works%20of%20art.>> [Accessed 10 October 2020].

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<https://art188.lib.miamioh.edu/18th-and-19th-century-art/1-enlightenment-and-rococo/#:~:text=Rococo%20furniture%20and%20design%20spread%20throughout%20Europe%20and,the%20social%20and%20moral%20values%20of%20the%20day.>

Conclusion

The Enlightenment movement bring the ideological freedom about people's daily life of aesthetic and living styles. The civilians change their lives by practicing these thoughts from their concept of freedom.

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