

Source: [KBHistoryMasterIndex](#)

# 1 | The Old Regime + The Enlightenment

- 18th Century Monarchies
  - Comprised of absolute monarchies
  - Crown passed to the eldest son or daughter
  - Glorious revolution => 1688
    - Struggle between parliament vs. stuart kings result in constitutional monarchy in England
    - Powers of European monarchs increased after centralization of power
    - Created unified modern states
- Old France
  - “Acien régime” => 1789 to 1800s france
  - Strict grid of social hierarchy resulted due to birthright
  - Societal organization explained by Great Chain of Being
    - Entire world organized structurally
    - God at the top, rocks at the bottom
      - In which, King on the top — God’s divine representative (“L’état c’est moi” — the state is me)
    - French societies organized into three castes — “estates”
      - First Estate => clergy; enjoyed high status
      - Second Estate => aristocracy; provided military and monetary support
        - *Les Grands*: largest landholders w/ large houses
        - *Seigneurs*: provincial nobles who simply owned estates in the countryside
      - Third Estate => 97% of the population
        - Production!
        - Reproduction!
        - Work!
        - Relatively prosperous, but <40% owned land
        - Most rented land from lords as tenant farmers/sharecroppers
    - Economy generally rural + dominate by subsistence farming
  - No national currency, nor system of weights and measures, nor a market
  - Network of highways existed, but not very efficient
  - Economic policy guided by merchantilist theory
    - Notion that precious metals holdings is the ultimate goal
    - Encouraged development of manufacturing to provide for global market
    - Development of the new *bourgeoisie* class — small merchants and shopkeepers
  - Theory came under challenge by newer things like the free market theory
    - Adam Smith’s free market economy/bourseiosie challenged mercantilistic economy
    - Old France very Roman Catholic
      - Church owned large amount of resources => almost 10%
      - Monarchs crowed in cathedrals
- 1700s balance of power
  - European nations began to make international alliances
  - Shifted power to prevent any one country from becoming too powerful
  - Whole economic system begins to be challenged by the end of the 18th century, when [KBhHIST201TheEnlightenment](#) happened, followed by French Revolution, Industrial Revolution, and solidification of the middle class

- [KBhHIST201Enlightenment](#)
  - Applied methods of scientific revolution to study of society
  - Believed natural laws governed human behavior + human institutions
  - John Locke
    - Got on the notion that reason was derived from experience
    - Human nature is essentially good, and character is shaped by education and upbringing
    - Hence, good societies w/ good education will create a better society
    - Man possess natural + inalienable rights to life, liberty, and... property?
    - Political communities are formed by popular consent
    - Had huge influence across the Atlantic
  - Jean-Jaques Rousseau
    - "Man is born free, and everywhere he is shackled"
    - Believes that society corrupts and distorts man's natural freedom and equality
    - Negotiated by social contract
  - Adam Smith
    - Applied Enlightenment ideas to economy and market
    - Argued that government interference in the economy violated natural forces of competition, supply, and demand
    - Self-interest could work for the common good
    - Individual greed + private accumulation of wealth => free market forces are at play
    - Argued for system of *laissez-faire* => laissez-faire management of economy
    - Ideas ultimately influence the development of capitalism
- Perhaps one of the causes of the French Revolution
- Ideas raised by Enlightenment => profoundly setting