

## The Changes in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century

The main features (Changes) of the 18<sup>th</sup> century ; the age of reason, enlightenment age.

Almost each one in this age tried to build his intense individualism. Therefore, there was a need for literary works that embody this characteristic. People began to read a lot because of printing and spread of newspapers. Because of these changes in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, more reading public appeared and made an audience for the English novel ( expected readers).



**All of these changes led to the rise of the novel in some way or another.**

- **Freedom:** There was a belief in human ability to achieve what he wanted without given instructions by anyone or the church.



- **Rational thinking:** It became possible to apply rational laws to describe social and physical behavior, so knowledge could be used in everyday life.



- **Spread of education:** human being is naturally good and can be educated to be better. Reason was the key to truth through education, whereas in the previous ages religion( the church) relied on blind faith not allowing any other authority; not questionable.



- **Material change** : Most thinkers attacked the Catholic Church. Most people began to be interested in material rather than religion. Many people turned against the church and withdrew from religious belief. So secular values gained ground.



- **Scientific change**: Most people were no more interested in the supernatural but in the normal. Technological achievements appeared in this age through scientific methods such as ( observation, experimentation, and hypothesis). There were new scientific discoveries.



- **City Migration:** a lot of people moved from the country (village) to the town(city).
- **Agricultural change:** during the previous ages, people used old methods and techniques in agriculture. Even they didn't grow some kinds of crops because of illogical thinking.



For example, they didn't grow potato because they thought it was the cause of diseases and plagues. Since it was not mentioned in the Bible, it was no good for human



- **Social change:**

Social life developed increasingly. There were coffee houses almost all over England where people met and interacted with each other. In this situation, novelists became closer to normal human nature and everyday life; it became exposed and reachable.



- **Diversity:** in the previous ages, there was no way of diversity, somehow closed- minded attitude. In the age of reason, there was acceptance of other ideas and other cultures.



- **Family life** was gradually changed. There was more respect and equality in dealing with women and children during this age. There was a new outlook towards family life in general. In this age, even the parents began to give different names for their new born babies to chieve their individuality.



- Even the classes of society had changed. According to Daniel Defoe, there were seven classes of people in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
  - 1.The Great, who live lavish life
  - 2.The Rich, who live very plentifully
  - 3.The Middle Sort, who live well



4. The Working Trades, who labor hard, but feel no want
5. The Country People, farmers, etc., who fare indifferently
6. The Poor, that fare hard
7. The Miserable, that really suffer want.



- **Political change:** Political stability and years of peace in England resulted into an economic prosperity that led to emerging of the middle class. People improved their financial situation based on individual achievement rather than depending on fathers' possession( hereditary right).



During the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, there were important revolutions in England and its surrounding countries. They affected the rise of the novel , and they were the main topic of a lot of many novels. These revolutions are:



1. The Glorious Revolution in England
2. The American Revolution
3. The French Revolution
4. The Industrial Revolution





## The Glorious Revolution (1688)

The Glorious Revolution was also called the Revolution of 1688, when William of Orange took the English throne from James II in 1688. William of Orange gathered 21,000 soldiers and sailors and set sail for England. It was "Bloodless Revolution" because few battles took place on English soil.



James II left England to France. According to a well-known historian Burkey, the events of 1688-89 were, "a happy and Glorious Revolution"; it was a transition from illegitimate control to legitimate one.

It aimed at

1. Get rid of James II and his injustice
2. Political and social settlement



## The American Revolution( 1775–1783)

During the last decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, thirteen colonies in North America joined together to free themselves from the control of England and became the United States of America. This revolution (war) began in 1775 and ended in 1783.



The American revolution aimed at

1. Independence
2. Freedom
3. Equality



## The French Revolution (1789-1799)

It began in 1789. It was against injustice and inequality. During the first years of the revolution, many poor people and farmers attacked rich people by breaking into their houses. They stole and killed them. That time was called "the Great Fear". The Revolution ended when Napoleon Bonaparte took power in 1799.



After around ten years of instability, the new France was finally formed, inspired by the American Revolution. America had already founded a democratic system, so the French underwent the same experience.



It aimed at as it was set in the revolution's slogan:

1. Liberty
2. Equality
3. Fraternity

These values inspired novelists at that time.



## Industrial Revolution (1760-1840)

The Industrial Revolution was the transition to new methods of manufacture in the period from about 1760 to sometime between 1820 and 1840. This transition included going from hand production methods to machines, new chemical industry, iron production, the increasing use of steam power and the development of machine tools.



## Bad (negative) effects of the industrial revolution:

1. Air pollution
2. Spread of diseases
3. Materialistic interest
4. Work of children



## Good (positive) effects of the industrial revolution:

1. Transportation became easier
2. Mass production
3. Spread of printing and press



It also included the change from wood and other bio-fuels to coal. It began in England and within a few decades had spread to other countries in Europe and America.

It changed the life of people since they were interested in Agriculture using simple methods. Machines changed their lives upside-down.

All revolutions of that time focused on individualism



England became a great **powerful empire**. It expanded overseas and led to:

- Growth of trade ( internal and external) increased manufacturing.
- The economy began to escalate toward industrial revolution.
- Better food supplies.
- More people survived ( growing number of population)

