

Terms and Concepts for the Age of Enlightenment (1750-1800)

Chapter 12: Prelude: Music and the Enlightenment

1. the “Enlightenment”:

a term used to describe the trends in thought and letters in Europe and the American colonies during the 18th century prior to the French Revolution. The phrase was frequently employed by writers of the period itself, convinced that they were emerging from centuries of darkness and ignorance into a new age enlightened by reason, science, and a respect for humanity. Of the basic assumptions and beliefs common to philosophers and intellectuals of this period, perhaps the most important was an abiding faith in the power of human reason. The age was enormously impressed by Isaac Newton's discovery of universal gravitation. If humanity could so unlock the laws of the universe, *God's own laws*, why could it not also discover the laws underlying all of nature and society? People came to assume that through a judicious use of reason, an unending progress would be possible—progress in knowledge, in technical achievement, and even in moral values. Following the philosophy of Locke, the 18th-century writers believed that knowledge is not innate, but comes only from experience and observation guided by reason. Through proper education, humanity itself could be altered, its nature changed for the better. A great premium was placed on the discovery of truth through the observation of nature, rather than through the study of authoritative sources, such as Aristotle and the Bible. Although they saw the church—especially the Roman Catholic church—as the principal force that had enslaved the human mind in the past, most Enlightenment thinkers did not renounce religion altogether. They opted rather for a form of Deism, accepting the existence of God and of a hereafter, but rejecting the intricacies of Christian theology. Human aspirations, they believed, *should not be centered on the next life*, but rather on the means of improving this life. Worldly happiness was placed before religious salvation. Nothing was attacked with more intensity and ferocity than the church, with all its wealth, political power, and suppression of the free exercise of reason. Voltaire: Beginning his career as a playwright and poet, he is best known today for his prolific pamphlets, essays, satires, and short novels, in which he popularized the science and philosophy of his age, and for his immense correspondence with writers and monarchs throughout Europe. Far more original were the works of Jean Jacques Rousseau, whose *Social Contract* (1762; trans. 1797), *Émile* (1762; trans. 1763), and *Confessions* (1782; trans. 1783) were to have a profound influence on later political and educational theory and were to serve as an impulse to 19th-century *romanticism*. The Enlightenment was also a profoundly cosmopolitan and anti-nationalistic movement with representatives in numerous other countries. Kant in Germany, David Hume in England, Cesare Beccaria in Italy, and Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson in the American colonies all maintained close contacts with the French philosophies but were important contributors to the movement in their own right.

A number of European monarchs also adopted certain of the ideas or at least the vocabulary of the Enlightenment. Voltaire and other philosophers, who relished the concept of a philosopher-king enlightening the people from above, eagerly welcomed the emergence of the so-called enlightened despots, of whom Frederick

- II of Prussia, Catherine II of Russia, and Joseph II of Austria were the most celebrated examples. In retrospect, however, it appears that most of these monarchs used the movement in large part for propaganda purposes and were far more despotic than enlightened.
2. the “pursuit of happiness”-
one of the newly found and advanced values of the late 18th century, especially in the growing urban middle class
 3. Rococo:
The term rococo comes from the French *rocaille*, “rock-work,” and hallmarks of the full-fledged style are architectural decoration based on arabesques, shells, elaborate curves, and asymmetry; iridescent pastel colors; and, in painting, light-hearted rather than weighty subject matter. This style of 18th-century painting and decoration is characterized by lightness, delicacy, and elaborate ornamentation.
The rococo period corresponded roughly to the reign (1715-74) of King Louis XV of France
 4. divertimento-
simply music meant as a diversion from the ordinary activity of daily life
 5. novel:
As the novel became increasingly popular during the 18th century, writers examined society with greater depth and breadth. They wrote revealingly about people living within, or escaping from, the pressures of society. Criticism was implicit of characters attempting to ignore society and its conventions, and of society for failing to satisfy human aspirations. *Jane Austen* (*Pride and Prejudice*, 1813; *Emma*, 1816) The first Gothic novel was *Horace Walpole's* *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) which inspired the horror genre of which *Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's* *Frankenstein* (1818) is a lasting example. The English author *Henry Fielding*, in *Joseph Andrews* (1742), *Tom Jones* (1749), and *Amelia* (1751), depicted contemporary life and morals with a generosity combined with great classical learning, enabling him to write what he called “comic epic.” *Tom Jones*, regarded by critics as one of the great English novels, is in the picaresque tradition, involving the adventures and misadventures of a roguish hero. It tells in rich, realistic detail the many adventures that befall Tom, an engaging young libertine, in his efforts to gain his rightful inheritance. (It was made into a successful motion picture, *Tom Jones*, in 1962.)
 6. Neoclassicism:
art produced in Europe and North America from about 1750 through the early 1800s, marked by the emulation of Greco-Roman forms. More than just an antique revival, neoclassicism was linked to contemporary political events. Neoclassical artists at first sought to replace the sensuality and what they viewed as the triviality of the rococo style with a style that was logical, solemn in tone, and moralizing in character. Origins of the neoclassical style in art and architecture: The neoclassical style developed following the excavation of the ruins of the Italian cities of *Herculaneum* in 1738 and *Pompeii* in 1748, the publication of such books as *Antiquities of Athens* (1762) by the English archaeologists James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, and the 1806 arrival in London of the Elgin Marbles. Extolling the “noble simplicity and calm grandeur” of Greco-Roman art, the German art historian Johann Winckelmann urged artists to study and “imitate” its timeless, ideal forms. His ideas found enthusiastic reception within the international circle of artists gathered about him in the 1760s

in Rome. The University of Va. and Monticello are excellent examples of neoclassical Architecture designed by Thomas Jefferson.

7. the “rise of concerts”:

the first time in history that concerts become a significant force in musical life. They were financed by subscription, and it gave many a composer a viable alternative for employment. The popularity of public concerts promotes the popularity of purely instrumental music-namely the *symphony and the concerto* genres. Eventually, in the Romantic era concerts become the focal point of musical life, but in this period the age old patronage system was still the main source of a composer’s livelihood.

The Enlightenment and Music:

the rise of *Humanism*, where the absolute authority of the church was challenged, and peoples standards of living began to rise. The notion emerged that the common man had “common sense” and the right to self-determination for the “common good” (or that the “*pursuit of happiness*” was a God given right). People became more *cosmopolitan* during this period, the ideal of “brotherhood” espoused by humanism saw the downplaying of cultural differences in favor of the common humanity of all people. The steady rise in the standard of living for most people and the movement towards universal education meant an ever increasing desire for music as a hobby. These new *musical consumers* wanted simple, easy, pleasant music to listen to and perform. Finally, music was seen as *entertainment*. Here the Enlightenment ideals most decisive for Classical music come into focus. According to these ideals music must be both *pleasing and accessible in order to entertain*.

8. “natural simplicity”:

The Enlightenment’s ideals for pleasing entertainment, manifested itself in a simpler, more accessible musical language.

9. “pleasing variety”:

A manifestation of the “pursuit of happiness” enlightenment ideal, “pleasing” meant music that could delight and amuse, and a certain amount of variety was needed to produce this.

define these terms and concepts, specifying how they relate to this period:

10. crescendo:

gradually getting louder. First came into use during the classical period. Originally begun with Mannheim’s famous orchestra.

11. diminuendo:

gradually getting softer. First came into use during the classical period.

12. the Classical Orchestra:

The foundation for the classical orchestra was still the Baroque Orchestra. In the classical orchestra, however, the woodwind and brass instruments were given clearly defined and regular roles. Woodwinds such as the flutes, oboes and clarinets were added to boost the higher ranges and in the lower ranges bassoons were added. Brass instruments, such as french horns and trumpets were added in the middle range, mainly used as a supporting instruments, especially at cadences when harmonies where needed to be made particularly clear. The only regular percussion instruments at this time were two timpani. The greatest advance in the

orchestra from the Baroque to the Classical era was the dramatic increase in the flexibility. The flexibility of tone color, dynamics and rhythm that were at the fingertips of the composers of this period.

13. tune:

classical audiences wanted relief from the complex and richly ornamented lines of the Baroque period. The demand here was for *simplicity and clarity* (not “pleasing variety”). They wanted “natural” melodies. Melodies become the most highly prized musical element. Classical melodies are usually clearly stated, memorable tunes.

14. homophony:

Melody and accompaniment was the texture that dominated the Classical period. *About classical melodies: (Rd. pg. 161 and play examples.) Themes (tunes) are the most important and easily recognizable element in music from the Classical period. How they are utilized by the composers of this period is indicative of the “natural simplicity” and “pleasing variety” ideals stemming from Enlightenment thought.*

15. repetition:

Once a theme was stated it tended to be *repeated immediately* after its first appearance, so that listeners could easily get to know them. Also, themes are led into in a very distinctive manner. Passages that do not have much melodic profile, where there is a sense of urgency, of trying to go somewhere- these sections are called transitional.

16. cadence:

the way most classical themes are closed off. The composer wanted to make it clear that the melody was ending, thus that section, phrase or piece was over. These are very distinctive, and made even more obvious at the ends of big pieces where the cadential passage could be quite long and repeat the ending chords several times, to signify the finality of the music.

Chapter 13: The Symphony

17. symphony:

By definition a large multi-movement work for orchestra. More to the point, the symphony was the most important new instrumental genre of this period. It mounted an impressive challenge to opera’s pre-eminent position as the most significant form of musical expression.

18. the symphony movement plan:

by about 1770 the four movement plan emerged as the most common format for the symphony. It proved so successful that composers began to use it for most of their instrumental works. (Introduce the plan in chart form on the board). This encapsulates the idea of pleasing variety, no two movements were alike. Put simply, this plan satisfies all the uses that humans have for music. The first movement stimulates the intellect and satisfies a need for drama, the second movement satisfies a need for beauty, the third movement, a dance, invites a physical response; and the fourth offers the pleasure of a good tune and a brilliant conclusion.

19. sonata form:

Unquestionably the most important new form developed by classical composers. It is the first movement of most multi-movement Classical compositions. It stands apart from other Classical forms because it treats contrasts of key and theme in a new, dramatic, interactive manner.

20. exposition:
the first part of sonata form where the main themes are introduced (exposed) and the fundamental conflict between two different keys is presented.
21. first theme:
The first theme introduced in the sonata form.
22. bridge:
(another word for a *transitional section*) In this case specifically between the two themes in the exposition. Once again, this passage has less melodic character and a sense of urgency or movement (to the next theme or a repeat of a theme).
23. second theme:
the next theme introduced in the exposition and in a contrasting key area. Usually the dominant.
24. cadential theme:
a closing theme, a theme introduced at the end of a section that helps wrap things up. Some composers were more adept at this (particularly Mozart).
25. development:
section of sonata form where the theme(s) are “taken on a ride” by the use of various compositional devices, where the composer wishes to create a feeling of instability and contrast. Devices such as modulation, imitation, inversion, motivic development are used to create momentum in this section.
26. retransition:
the last modulation of the development section returning to the main theme and home key
27. recapitulation:
the return of the main themes, this time in the home key, where a sense of resolution is attained
28. coda:
optional section at the end of a work or movement
29. slow introduction:
optional section at the beginning of a work, lends a dramatic quality to the beginning. Often in double dotted rhythms.
30. slow movement:
the second movement in the symphony plan. Contrasts with the first in its tempo and lyricism. There was no set form for this movement.
31. minuet form:
the only dance type to survive from the Baroque era into the classical era. Mostly utilized as the third movement form of a symphony. Originally utilized in the Baroque the dance suite. Meter was 3/4. Discuss the differences between each period, how the classicists adapted the Baroque minuet and trio by bringing back the first theme at the end of the second theme section, or rounded binary form (which the book calls ternary). Listen to Haydn’s early Minuet (for dancing) where both binary, for the Minuet section, and rounded binary, for the Trio section are used. Also draw a correlation between sonata form and rounded binary where “it is “helpful to think of sonata form as a transformation and huge expansion of minuet form.”
33. ternary form:
another name for classical dance movement form. Better described as rounded binary.

34. rondo form:
a simple form based on popular music styles of the period. Used mainly for closing movements (also called fourth movement form). The main principle is repetition, where the main tune comes back again and again, interspersed by episodes. Sometimes the return of the tune is somewhat changed but there is enough of a similarity to recognize it.
35. episodes:
portions of a rondo that provide contrast to the theme material.
- Chapter 14: Other Classical Genres
36. sonata:
the genre of sonata (not the form) is by definition, a chamber work in several movements. Typically in the classical period the sonata is a work for solo instrument, with or without accompaniment. Most common during the classical period are sonatas for solo keyboard, then for violin and keyboard accompaniment, and flute and keyboard accompaniment etc.
37. sonata movement plan:
classical sonatas usually omitted the minuet movement (the third movement). Generally, composers utilized a more flexible attitude towards the sonata movement plan when dealing with these smaller chamber settings. For example, Mozart's Piano Sonata in A, K. 331 omits the first sonata movement all together opting to begin it with a slow theme and variations movement instead.
38. classical concerto:
a large multi-movement work for solo instrument and orchestra. Derived from the Baroque concerto grosso (with the capitalization on the interplay between soloist and ensemble) with the addition of the classical symphony's four movement plan.
39. classical concerto movement plan:
The result was a hybrid of the two, the first movement was an adaptation of the sonata form, the second movement was slow and lyrical, and the third was fast and brilliant, but favored rondo and theme and variations forms.
40. cadenza:
an improvised passage for the soloist in a concerto, or sometimes in other works. They usually appear near the end of the first movements.
41. classical variation form:
a continuation of Baroque variation forms (i.e. ground bass), where a theme is presented and then systematically modified in successive sections.
42. theme and variations:
most typical and popular type of classical variation form
43. chamber music:
works written for smaller performing forces. Most important from this period is the String Quartet genre. The string Quartet is a multimovement work for two violins, a viola and a 'cello. Goethe described it as a conversation between four intelligent adults. Like all other instrumental genres the string quartet was also influenced by the symphony's four movement plan. Unlike the sonata and concerto genres, the string quartet often follows the plan literally, without adaptation. (Occasionally, the second and third movements do trade places).
44. opera buffa:
or "comic opera" developed in the Enlightenment for the same reasons other new musical procedures did - to create a more flexible, realistic, more "natural" vehicle for musical expression. Baroque audiences loved extremes in emotional

display and the “opera seria” of the day served up all the strongest emotions - Love, rage, grief, triumph and so on - by the bushel. By the late Baroque the formal procedures of the opera had become standardized and very predictable. Also, the operatic “star” system required many arias. Since arias required singers to step outside the action to express and reflect on strong emotion, opera plots were contrived to create countless situations in which extreme emotions were plausible and the momentum of the story was constantly stopped for the next aria.

Jean Jacques Rousseau launched a devastating attack on the aristocratic opera seria of the late Baroque. In doing so he called into question the basic aesthetic assumptions of the Baroque period and in doing so indirectly attacked the aristocracy that supported Baroque opera as well. He believed that Baroque opera plots and characters were as hopelessly artificial as their overcomplicated music. He suggested that the only opera relevant to the humanist spirit of the Enlightenment was an opera that portrayed real people, in real life situations.

Opera Buffa did not deal with ancient heroes, their idealized feats, and extreme emotions, but with contemporary middle- and lower-class people expressing themselves in a clear and natural way.

Important additions and changes include the ensemble. Where opera seria consisted entirely of solo arias alternating with recitative, opera buffa added frequent ensembles, in which two or more characters sing at the same time. In opera seria the action halts for a singer to reflect on their emotion, but in opera buffa the characters are allowed to interact freely, therefore moving the action ahead effectively. Classical opera buffa becomes a much more dynamic and expressive genre than its predecessor the Baroque opera seria.