

# DAILY PRACTISE QUESTIONS - JULY 31

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Q.1. What was Kant's idea of Enlightenment?  
How he differentiated between age of Enlightenment & Enlightened age?

Ans: → Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was one of the most influential philosopher of the age of Enlightenment that spread across Europe in 18th century. In fact, he was the first to define the term, 'Enlightenment' in his famous essay, 'What is Enlightenment?' (1784).

→ In his essay, he defines it as 'Man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity'. The ability to use one's courage & wisdom in every sphere & walks of life is Kant's motto of Enlightenment.

→ On the basis of his talisman of reason & logic, instead of faith, superstition etc, he called for a state based on Universal Moral Law; which is democratic & which protects freedom & liberty.

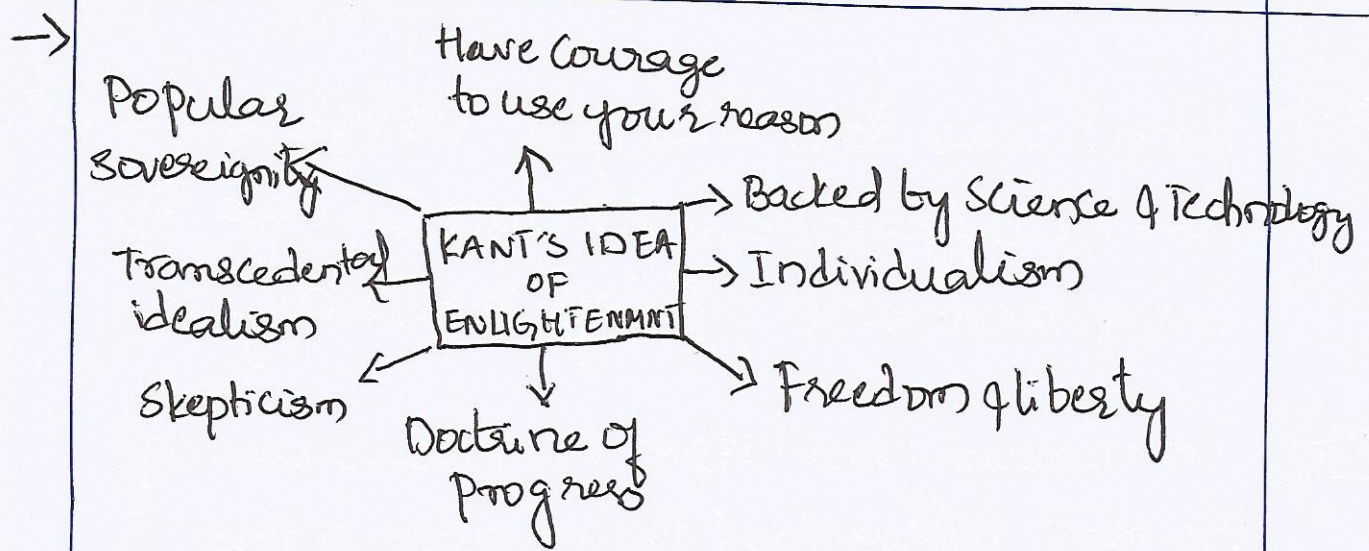


Fig: KANT'S IDEA OF ENLIGHTENMENT

- Kant believed that his times were better than the medieval because now there is liberty to use one's reason to some extent
- A votary of 'doctrine of Progress', he believed that a future even better than present can be created with moral application of science, technology & industrialisation
- Religious tolerance, a state that protects basic rights and a progressive outlook were the basis of Enlightenment for Kant.

# Age of Enlightenment V/S Enlightened Age

→ Kant described 18<sup>th</sup> century as the Age of Enlightenment, because there was now scope & freedom to some extent to use one's reason in all walks of life.

→ An Enlightened Age to Kant is that a time in future where there is complete liberty & freedom to use one's own reason. A democratic state which protects the freedom of speech & liberty is the basis of such an age.

Q. 2. "The Promptings of the heart are more to be trusted than the logic of the mind" - Rousseau. Evaluate the statement in the light of Rousseau's romanticism

Ans: → Jean Jacques Rousseau was one of the earliest exponent of the intellectual movement known as Romanticism in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, that emerged as the reaction to Enlightenment around the same time.

→ The high priest of Romanticism, Rousseau questioned the emphasis that the Enlightenment thinkers placed upon reason & empiricism.

→ Reason, logic, empiricism - which formed the cornerstone of the age - has led to moral degeneration of man, It has made him egoistic & self-centred, said Rousseau.

→ The so-called modern civilization had become too mechanical with no touch of self-pity for others: ~~the~~

→ The modern state has encroached on the freedom of the individuals & does nothing to secure them, opined Rousseau.

→ ~~Diri~~

Emotions, instinct, intuition - which were considered as ~~too~~ subjective & unreliable by the Enlightenment thinkers - were the guiding lights of Rousseau's Romanticism

→ In place of the logic led mindset of the age, he advocated the beauty of emotions.

→ He called for men to go back to nature ~~to~~ enjoy real freedom, instead of the present confines & constructs of the civilization

→ He contrasted the 'state of nature' which he considered as egalitarian, liberal, idyllic, with the restricted unequal society of the present.

Therefore, for Rousseau a society based on emotions & human touch is to be trusted more than the mechanical logic led civilization of the times.

Q.3. Is it correct to say that enlightened despots were really enlightened? Explain

Ans: The Enlightened despots were those absolute monarchs who were influenced by the ideas of enlightenment movement that progressed in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe. The ideals of reason, liberty, religious freedom inspired the policies of these monarchies and led to some improvement in the lives of their subjects.

The prominent enlightened monarchs were - Frederick the Great of Prussia, Catherine of Russia, Joseph-II of Austria, Prime Minister Pombal of Portugal etc

→ Some of the above monarchs introduced reforms in the spirit of Enlightenment, such as :-

→ Frederick the Great : declared himself as 'first servant of the state'

- he reduced censorship of press
- took steps to spread education
- guaranteed religious freedom to all
- reformed the justice system.

→ Joseph II of Austria:

- most radical reformer
- abolished serfdom
- religious freedom to Jews & Atheists

→ Catherine the Great of Russia:

- greatly improved education
- health care was improved
- revised judicial system
- Confiscated property of church

→ However, the above reforms were limited to socio-religious sphere. In the political sphere there were no noteworthy reforms

→ The absolutist feature did not change & they continued to enjoy despotic authority

→ No constitution was adopted. And no parliamentary institutions were created

→ They continued to believe in semi-divine monarchy

→ Word of king was still the law of the land.

→ Besides, some monarchs like Catherine continued to imprison her opponents.

→ Pombal of Portugal used enlightenment to

Crush opposition & suppress criticisms.

→ some even used enlightenment ideals to advance colonial exploitation

In the above light it can be concluded that barring the few spheres, such as socio-religious-cultural, the enlightened despots were not necessarily enlightened in others. (politically)