

# Rationalist Option

- Rationalism characterized by interest in the world and confidence in powers of reason
- eg. Renaissance Art interest in beauty of human body and the world
- 17th c. many believed goal of reason for understanding the world of nature
- With confidence in powers of reason; effort to show order of nature coincides with order of reason

- i.e. Galileo believed natural world a system of mathematical relations so knowledge meant reducing phenomena to their quantitative expression
- Rene Descartes (1596-1650) embraced method of geometry; only accept undeniable axiom or rationally proven
- He begins with universal doubt so when he finds something it cannot be doubted, certain truth
- First undeniable truth; the doubting subject exists “I think, therefore I am.”
- A thinking thing; still doubt of body

- Proof of God; a) in his mind is idea of more perfect being, b) mind could not produce idea above itself, c) God must have placed it there, d) therefore God exists (second conclusion)
- Once God is proved then he can move on to his own body and the natural world
- Debate whether his philosophy was helpful or it would lead to heresy
- His philosophy led to theological development questioning relationship between two human parts: thinking and physical (body and soul)

1. Occasionalism: body and soul don't communicate directly. God moves body on occasion or soul's decision and the soul on occasion of body's feelings and requirements. Mainly rejected b/c makes God responsible for all events and thoughts.
2. Monism: only one substance like red and round two attributes of one apple, same for God and the world — two attributes of one universe. Rejected by orthodox Christians — God and the world are NOT one.
3. Pre-established harmony: infinite number of monads which cannot communicate with each other. God created them to appear interdependent but aren't. Like clocks in a shop appear to communicate to keep same time. Rejected all things foreordained, no freedom of will.

- Empiricism/Experience: GB, John Locke *Essay on Human Understanding*. Agreed order of world and mind corresponded but disagreed with innate ideas one could discover by looking into oneself. Rather, knowledge comes from experience — outer experience of senses and inner experience know ourselves and functioning of the mind.
- True knowledge: 1) experience of own selves, 2) outer realities present before us, and 3) God whose existence is proved by existence of self and its experiences
- Another level is probability: not proofs of reason but judgment — we have repeatedly experienced John's existence so it is probable he exists even when he's not with us — this is the basis we mostly conduct ourselves

- Faith is assent to knowledge derived from revelation vs reason, so its knowledge is highly probable but never certain
- Reason and judgment must be used to measure degree of probability of what we are asked to believe by faith — against fanatical enthusiasts for religious toleration
- Deism: true religion must be universal — natural to all humankind, based on natural instinct vs. particular revelation or historical events
- Basic doctrines: 1) existence of God, 2) obligation to worship God, 3) ethical requirements of worship, 4) need for repentance, and 5) reward and punishment in this life and the one to come.
- Sought to mediate between dogmatism and atheism

- David Hume (1711-1776) pessimistic of powers of reason; knowledge philosophers thought on observation and reason was irrational mental habits
- Against empiricists we do not observe cause and effect but series of phenomena and our minds have linked them into cause and effect — mental habits
- This undercut Deism since it was based on cause and effect, i.e. someone must have made this world therefore god exists
- Gave rise to common sense philosophy — self-evident knowledge

- French, Francois-Marie Arouet, Voltaire witnessed persecution against Protestants by Louis XIV taking up a form of rationalism using reason and common sense and history is a progression of understanding ourselves and our institutions — Monarchy to defend and respect rights of the subjects
- Charles Louis de Secondat applied Voltaire philosophy to government and concluded republic better than despotism or monarchy; because power corrupts there should be three levels: legislative, executive and judicial
- Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) alternative to rationalism and empiricism; fundamental structures of the mind: time and space, then 12 categories.



- We don't perceive these categories through the senses but are structures the mind uses to organize the sensations from the senses
- Therefore we don't have the things themselves but the things as the mind grasps them so no objective knowledge
- If existence is category of the mind then no way to prove existence of God or the soul — not a denial, but an acknowledgement that if they are true reason cannot know them as the eye cannot hear and the ear cannot see
- Practical reason knows the existence of God as judge, free soul as occasion for moral action and life after death to be rewarded or punished evil

# Spiritualist Option

- Reaction to focus on doctrine (much of low/uneducated couldn't follow) and intolerance among tribes
- Attracted people against dogmatism and little to no formal education then added more educated
- Jakob Boehme (1575-1624) Silesia Germany, traveling cobbler focus on inner life + mysticism
- Had visions with conviction to write them down, theologians unable to decide on them — emphasis: freedom of the spirit, inner life, direct and individual revelation.

- George Fox (1624-1691) disgusted by fellow cobbler apprentices, left at 19 traveling attending religious meetings looking for illumination and devoted self to study of scripture
- Fox critical of traditional church: buildings, worship and employed pastors/priests
- Inner light a seed in all humans true way to find God; capacity to recognize and accept presence of God
- Began feeling led to interrupt services to proclaim his version of Christianity those who followed called *friends* but detractors called them *Quakers*

- Because Fox believed structure in worship was obstacle to work of Spirit service occurred in silence — those being called to speak or pray aloud free to do so (women as well as men)
- Fox would not preach unless he felt led by the Spirit to do so and they didn't practice baptism and communion for fear of drawing attention away from the spiritual
- Being viewed as seditious and disrespectful many died in prison
- Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) well to do and highly educated, interested in scientific discovery led to religious

- Claimed a vision of eternal truths; what exists is a reflection of God's attributes so visible world corresponds with the invisible
- Believed his writings would begin new era in history and his receiving revelations is what Bible meant by second coming of Christ

# Pietist Option

- Reaction to dogmatism and rationalism
- German Pietism: Philip Jakob Spener (1635-1705) Lutheran, studied theology and pastored in Frankfurt. Went beyond preaching and sacraments to fostering personal faith of parishioners — colleges of piety
- Priesthood of all believers less separation between clergy and laity all called to intense life of devotion and study — examining all for true Christians; preaching to call people to obey Word of God not show off knowledge
- Focus on sanctification which lay closer to Calvin than Luther

- Disqualified by reading Revelation as happening in his day
- August Hermann Francke, Spener's greatest follower, insisted on joy of Christian life — should be a song of praise to God

“Suddenly, God heard me. As easily as one turns a hand, my doubts vanished. In my heart I was certain of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Since then I was able to call God, not only “God,” but also “Father.” Sadness and anxiety immediately left my heart. And I was suddenly overcome by a wave of joy, such that I praised and magnified God aloud, who granted me such grace.”

- Thousands embraced Pietist movement despite detractors; also moved to German Reformed tradition
- Most significant contribution is birth of Protestant mission; at the time understood mission was for apostles
- Pietism impacted Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, Spener's godson; entered court of Dresden to serve and encountered Moravians — Hussites who fled Moravia to escape persecution
- 1731 met group of Eskimos converted by Lutheran missionary which created zeal for missions leading to Africa, India, South and North America



- Greatest impact on John Wesley; late 1735/early 1736 2nd Moravian contingent sailing to New World to preach to Indians of Georgia
- On board ship was young Anglican priest who was going to serve as pastor in Savannah and hoped to preach to the Indians; He learned enough German on board to converse with Moravians
- When storm struck and mainmast split it was Moravians calm (not chaplain—Wesley) who helped passengers and crew through
- After Wesley was told they were calm because they did not fear death causing him to question the depth of his own faith

He said, “My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God?” I was surprised, and knew not what to answer. He observed it, and asked, “Do you know Jesus Christ?” I paused, and said, “I know he is the Saviour of the world.” “True,” replied he; “but do you know he has saved you?” I answered, “I hope he has died to save me.” He only added, “Do you know yourself?” I said, “I do.”

P.S. “But I fear they were vain words.”

- Father Samuel was Anglican priest, mother Susanna daughter of another — she raised her children with careful religious and moral instruction
- John 5, fire broke out and John was saved leading her to declare him a brand plucked from the burning; distinguished Oxford scholar and came to lead religious society founded by brother Charles and friends mocked as “holy club” and “methodist”
- Wesley had to return home fleeing the law; he engaged Moravian Peter Boehler as religious advisor — Wesley feeling as if he lacked saving faith

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation: And an assurance was given me, that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.

- Being secure in his salvation he turned to the salvation of others; George Whitfield had become famous preacher beginning to open air preaching invited Wesley to sub while he engaged in missions

- Wesley got used to this preaching and to people's reaction to it but eventually the two split over theological reasons (Calvinism vs. Arminianism)
- Wesley's a movement to prepare for Anglican worship, organizing into societies, then into classes as they grew too big
- Met weekly to read scripture, pray, discuss religious matters, and collect funds; female classes with female leaders giving women a place of leadership
- When CofE tried to limit he said world is my parish
- Added lay preachers (many women) not to offer communion
- Greatest success in North America

The Pilgrim's Progress  
Week 6  
Pages 69-84

1. What is the most important characteristic to note about Shame? Why is that important?
2. What is the ultimate way to deal with Shame?
3. What is the difference between Faithful and Christian's faith and Talkative's? Should there be a fear of 'works righteousness'?
4. Several times we have encountered the idea of someone not being responsible for another's blood — what is that all about? Is it appropriate?
5. What is Evangelist's warning and why is this significant?