

A History, A Society: A Poem

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Author's Introduction

I wrote this poem in Introduction to Western Civilization as my final project. I wanted to express my love for poetry and excitement for history while also covering every major part of history we discussed in class. I chose poetry not only because I love to write it, but also because poetry has the ability to communicate so much with so little. In other words, I could distill the entirety of a historical event into a single line or stanza. History tells a story, and the best way I knew to tell that story was through poetry, which, in and of itself, is meant to capture the beauty and sorrow of our lives, and in this case, of the history that precedes us.

Topics Covered

[Galileo](#)

[John Locke: Second Treatise of Government](#)

[Mary Astell: Questioning Women's Submission](#)

[Louis XIV](#)

[Abbe Sieyes: The Third Estate](#)

[Voltaire](#)

[Wordsworth](#)

[The Monroe Doctrine](#)

[French Revolution of 1830](#)

[The First Opium War](#)

[Recession of 1873](#)

[The Scream](#)

[The Hague Convention of 1907](#)

[The Great War of 1914](#)

[Nazi Germany](#)

[World War 2 1939](#)

[Looking Forward: A Greater World](#)

Inventions, Ideal Intentions, a star scattered sky, and a pope who wouldn't listen

Helio-centrism and Catholic pretension

Galileo tried, but no one dared stir tension

Then there was Hobbes

Conclusion of Absolutism: Who is to be in charge?

Locke argued the nature of Law and God

Freedom, Choice, Morals

The Earl of Shaftesbury and Locke had no quarrels

The kings have no right to bring court into session

Failed succession, a Glorious Revolution

All acts of Men

"But what of women?" said Mary Astell

With paper and fresh ink, she began to rethink

The submission of Women

In agreement with Locke concerning political representation

"Women have a voice," she declared to the nation

And stirred the beginnings of a feminist political vocation

In her home, England

Ruled Louis XIV, who feuded with feudalism—

The Edict of Nantes, frustrated Huguenots, absolute monarchy—

And died a murderer of the French Protestant Minority

Then came Abbe Sieyes and his organized views

The French Revolution and The Third Estate his muse

Wrote to his king a pamphlet to be read

From Artists, Merchants, Manufacturers

Demanding the right to vote—to say what must be said

Established in 1789, the common people of France were given their time

Then steps in an author—rather, a philosopher,

Voltaire to be exact

Freedom of Religion: Church and State should separate

His criticisms, the Roman Catholics refused to enact

Then Wordsworth expressed his dismay

In ways that only a poet could say

Published "The Prelude" and *Lyrical Ballads*

Coolidge concurred and made their work valid

Next, the Monroe Doctrine against European concern

America agreed internal meddling would not occur

A doctrine against Colonialism presented to the President

Made apparent the concern of each political party resident

Meanwhile, in France, a revolution began

Intending to overthrow King Charles the Tenth

With the creation of a Constitutional Monarchy, Europe had succeeded

Three days were all that they needed

At the same time, China declared war on the United Kingdom

Prompted by Opium, they sought trade relations freedom

China had lost and Britain regained composure

With trade rights to Hong Kong, the United Kingdom found closure

From having goods to trade to having nothing to eat

The Recession of 1873 assured America and Europe's financial defeat

With the Coinage Act at its core, the government desired silver no more

Gold was its standard, until 1879 when protective tariffs kept money safe over time

With all that had happened, academics went awry

Expressionism took its course, began its rise

Edvard Munch felt the need to create a peculiar scream

One that could be felt within the colors of his painting

A person holds their face in horror at the earth

Yearning for an old love—for Artistic Rebirth

Later, the Hague Convention of 1907

Resulted in naval weapon suppression

Until the World War's ascension

The great powers of Europe fought unhinged

As Germany and Austria-Hungary infringed

Imperialism, Nationalism, Militant Men

America swore it would never happen again

But Hitler stirred his country to restlessness

A Jewish-demeaning socialist

Who left Germany hopeless

An Aryan race is what he desired

The death of millions is all he acquired

He who was found dead in his bunker

Left Germany no choice but to surrender their plunder

Meanwhile World War II

A deadly battle of Ally and Axis

Soviet power succeeded, despite madness

Lives lost, despair, and joy kept hidden

Men, Women, Animals, Children

With buildings bombed and bodies buried

Berlin and Germany became Adversaries

Peace Treaties were signed and the League of Nations formed

Uniting our Countries, establishing political norms

Scientists

Feminists

Authors

Many have shaped the world that now prospers

These events, these dates, these significant losses

Shaped our countries, expanded them, made them blossom

But history, as we know, is a cautionary tale

And some seek success, to no avail

Decisions are ranked and voices are heard

As we take from our past and apply what we've learned

Every day is an opportunity for Peace and Prosperity

A chance to attain Universal Solidarity

