

FRENCH REVOLUTION

JUST THE ESSENTIALS

This outline provides an overview of important topics and concepts that need to be covered in this unit.

FRENCH REVOLUTION (1700-1830)

- The French Revolution changed the world.
- It overthrew the monarchy and destroyed the widespread privileges of a parasitic aristocracy
- Introduced a certain amount of democracy. into parliamentary government
- Created conditions for the generation of "new" wealth and a class of *nouveau riches*
- And then, using propaganda and revolutionary armies, spread the innovations to the rest of Europe and the world.

THE OLD ORDER

- By the late 1700s, an absolute monarchy still rules France.
- France and the French aristocracy were the "trend setters" in Europe.
- Most people in France did not enjoy the lifestyles of the French aristocracy.

LOUIS XIV (SUN KING → EVERYTHING REVOLVES AROUND HIM)

- Reigned for 72 years (regents for 1st 18 years of his rule)
- Built palace of Versailles outside of Paris → Made nobles live there to control them
- He was harsh toward the Huguenots (repealed Edict of Nantes) & many of these Protestants emigrated to the Netherlands, England, or England's American colonies.
 - This weakened French economy
- Louis XIV also taxed poor for benefit of rich.
- Spent money on lavish lifestyle & wars (War of Spanish Succession & 7 Years War)
- Set Stage for the FRENCH REVOLUTION

PROBLEMS IN FRANCE

- 3 different class levels in France
 - 1st estate – Catholic clergy (paid 1% of taxes)
 - 2nd estate – Nobility (paid 2% of taxes)
 - 3rd estate – Peasants, bourgeoisie (paid 97% of taxes)
 - Paid high taxes, Tithe (church tax), Taille (land tax)
- Gov't was in debt so King taxes 1st and 2nd estate.
- Estates General, (Delegates that represent each estate), wanted to weaken the King's power and take over gov't.

- Who had they recently watched do this?
 - Americans - in the American Revolution
- What was unfair about the way the Estates General was set – up?
 - The 3rd estate had 97% of the people...
- So they should have more power, but they didn't!!!!!!

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

- Created because the 3rd estate was locked out of the Estates General and they want to create a constitution!!!!
- Whose example did they follow? ENGLAND and America.

THE BASTILLE IS RAIDED!

- By the 3rd estate b/c they wanted weapons to defend themselves from royal troops.
- Why the Bastille? It represented the corruptness of France and the power of the King.
- Results → Great Fear – People PANIC... the revolution has begun!
 - Feudalism dies when the nobles give up power...
 - Agree to be taxed, no more feudal dues

THE REVOLUTION BEGINS

- B/c the King Louis XVI refuses to give up power
- The people want more power!
- Chaos erupts across France.
- Increased food shortages
- Royal family is imprisoned.
- National Convention Results
 - Every man given the right to vote.
 - Constitution est.
- Fate of Louis XIV and Marie Antoinette → "Off with their heads"
- Should the revolution continue?
 - *San-Culottes – Yes!
 - *Jacobins “
 - *Robespierre – ruthless leader of the Jacobins
 - *Girondist- No – War had gone far enough
- Why would other countries fight?
 - They were worried that REVOLUTIONS may spread to their country!
- Panic - Warfare!

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REIGN OF TERROR

- July 1793-July 1794
- 17k killed, mostly commoners
- Executions of those against the revolution
- Jacobins want to defeat all opposition in France
- Robespierre v. Danton
 - Danton wants an end to the killings.
 - Robespierre accuses him of disloyalty.
 - Danton and his followers are executed.
- Robespierre increases the Terror
 - Followers have him executed

CHANGES TO THE "IDEALS"

- Convention writes a new constitution in 1795.
- Only propertied citizens can vote.
- Government brought under the control of the wealthy middle class

THE DIRECTORY

- Executive council of five men rules France
- Added bicameral legislature
- Ruled from 1795-1799
- Used the army to squelch uprisings from royalists and sans-culottes
- Problems with the Directory
 - Growing gap between rich and poor
 - Near bankruptcy
 - The council of five has "moral" scandals.
 - French people see only recourse in the army.

AFTER THE DIRECTORY....

- A two- house legislature was established!
- Still see problems, so they look to the military to fix it!

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE WAS A DICTATOR!

- Took over in a coup d'état
- Quick overthrow of the government!

NAPOLEON -

- Saw himself as an emperor
- Very authoritative!
- 1812- He controlled most of Europe from France to Russia.

AS CONSUL -

- Est public schools
- Freedom of religion
- Napoleonic Code (clear and concise laws)
- Brought order to France

CONSULATE

- 1799 Napoleon establishes a new constitution & dictatorship
- Three consuls but Napoleon is First Consul

NAPOLEONIC REFORMS

- Restructure government
- Education
- Bank of France
- Universal taxation
- Slowed inflation and high prices
- Consul for Life in 1802
- by popular vote
- Emperor of France → from democracy to empire in five years by 1804

NAPOLEONIC CODE

- Mostly written by Napoleon and his advisors
- Based on principles of natural law
- Made French law more consistent
- Didn't give universal suffrage
- Women still have little rights

CONCORDAT OF 1801

- Peace with the church
- Religious toleration

NAPOLEON THE WORLD CONQUEROR

- By 1812, Napoleon controls most of Europe.
- "Power is my mistress"
- He was stopped by the British at the Battle of Trafalgar.
- Tries to destroy England with economic warfare → will not trade with Great Britain
 - Leads to war of 1812

NATIONALISM-

- Feeling your country is the BEST and wanting self rule
- ENCOURAGED people to embrace their own culture

TWO COUNTRIES HELP TO STOP NAPOLEON:

- Russia and Great Britain
- Scorched Earth Policy → when land is burned
- To keep people from using it or by the invaders so that the land can never be used again!

NAPOLEON EXILED TO ELBA:

- Because the French monarchy had been restored!
- But he is later reinstated:
- 100 DAYS!
- Finally defeated at WATERLOO!