CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Introduction

Only July 12, 1789 the French journalist named Camille Desmoulins incited the people of Paris to invade the arsenals and arm themselves in fear that king Louis XVI was about the attack the city. Two days later, on July 14, the people of Paris attacked the fortress of the Bastille, murdered its governor and defenders as well as the city’s magistrates. This violent event was the beginning of fundamental political changes in France and Europe that are known as the French Revolution.

A. The First French Revolution

1. Introduction

   The main characteristic of political revolutions is that they change the political system. The first phase of the French Revolution from 1789-1792 brought about the destruction of royal absolutism. The second phase from 1792-95 destroyed the monarchy. The French Revolution had several important causes. First was the relentless attack by the men of the Enlightenment that undermined the prestige of the government and led to demands for change. The second involved the conflicts between the crown and the nobility over constitutional issues. The third was the conflict between the nobility and the peasants which fueled demands for restrictions on the privileges of the nobility. The immediate cause was the bankruptcy of the French government which forced change.

2. The Beginning of the Revolution

   In the 1780s the French government of King Louis XVI could no longer pay the enormous debts France had acquired in the wars it fought with England in the course of the eighteenth century. In 1787, the king called an Assembly of Notables made up of important people in order to gain support for a tax on land to be paid by all landowners. They refused to give their support and instead advised the king to call the Estates General (French legislator) which had not met since 1614. The king refused and attempted to gain support for the new taxes from the regional law courts called the Parlements. The judges of the Parlements refused. The worsening financial situation forced the king to call the Estates General. The Estates General was made up of three chambers representing the three social groups or estates in French Society: the nobility, the clergy and the commoners or Third Estate. In the months before the Estates General convened the debate raged about how
the Estates General should vote. If they voted by chamber, the noble
dominated First and Second Estates would block any action of the chamber of
the third estate. If they voted by head, the representatives of the third estates
joined by reform elements from the other two could push reform as the
number of representatives for Third Estate equaled the combined number of
the other two estates. The question remained unresolved when the Estates
general convened on May 5, 1789. When the king said he favored the voting
by house, the Third Estate declared itself the national assembly and asked the
other two to join them. When shortly afterwards, the Third Estate was locked
out of its meeting hall, the members moved to a indoor tennis court and took
an oath not to disband until they had written a constitution for France. When
more nobles and clergyman joined the Third Estate, the king was forced to
accept the new situation. As the summer progressed, the social crisis deepened
because of increases in the price of bread. In June, King Louis XVI began
massing troops near Paris. When he dismissed the reform-minded Finance
Minister, Jacques Necker, people began to worry that the king was about to
move against the National Assembly. The people of Paris responded by
forming a National Guard and attacking the Bastille. In the meantime, a crisis
known as the “Great Fear” spread through the countryside as peasants began
attacking the homes of their noble landlords and burning the records.

3. The Creation of a New Political Order

In the period between August 1789 and September 1790, the National
Assembly reorganized French society. They abolished the privileges of the
nobles and clergy, the legal jurisdiction of nobleman, feudal dues, game laws,
and the privileges of provinces and towns. In its place, France was now
composed of equal citizens. On August 26, 1789 the Assembly issued the
Declaration of the Rights of Men and Citizen. The Declaration was influenced
by the Enlightenment and proclaimed the rights to liberty, property, equality
before the law, freedom from oppression, and religious toleration to be natural
rights. The Assembly also reorganized the church by issuing the Civil
Constitution of the Clergy which made the church a department of state, made
the clergy government employees, and ordered that bishops be elected by the
laymen. The property of the church was seized. In 1791, the Assembly issued
a new constitution which made France a constitutional monarchy. It also
declared all citizens equal before the law, abolished titles of nobility, and
made marriage a civil contract.

4. Responses to the First French Revolution

While events in Paris were changing the French political structures, in the
countryside the people in villages and towns were rising up and overthrowing
the local leaders and replacing them with supporters of the revolution. At the
same time considerable opposition was also appearing. The clergy refused to
take an oath of allegiance to the nation, nobles began to organize opposition to
new regime, and conflicts erupted between Catholics and Protestants. In the
meantime rulers in other countries began to worry about the impact of French
developments on their countries and took actions to curb dissent.

B. The French Republic, 1792-99
1. Introduction

After 1792, France experienced another revolution that replaced the monarchy with a republic.

2. The Establishment of the Republic, 1792

In the first years of the revolution, it appeared that the new French government would be a constitutional monarchy as support for a republic came only from the radical Jacobins who drew their support from Parisian lower classes called the sans-culottes. King Louis XVI was partly responsible for undermining the monarchy. He never accepted the changes brought by the revolution. In June of 1791 he lost all credibility when he attempted to flee the country. The final blow to the monarchy came from the pressure of war. Other European monarchs became increasingly distressed by events in France. Austria began to organize an alliance to restore the French monarchy. The French Legislative Assembly responded by declaring war on Austria. The war went badly for France and produced a mood of fear that enemies within were undermining the revolution. When on August 10, 1791 the radical republicans overthrew the Paris city government (called the commune) the Legislative Assembly suspended the king and ordered a convention elected to write a new constitution. The hysteria produced by the war defeats, led the Paris mob to attack the prisons and kill 1,200 prisoners whom they feared would give support to the invaders. A French victory at Valmy on September 22, 1791 saved the revolution. Two days latter, the newly elected convention abolished the monarchy.

3. The Jacobins and the Revolution

Several factions were struggling for power in France. Before the overthrow of the monarchy the main factions were the monarchist Feuillants and the republican Jacobins. In the convention the main factions were the moderate Girondins and the radical Montagnards, or “the Mountain”. The Mountain led by people like Maximilien Robespierre (1758-1794) pushed for the centralization of power in Paris, while the Girondins favored federalism. In January 1793, the convention put the king on trial, convicted him of treason and he was executed by using the guillotine. The factional splits worsened with new defeats on the battlefield. The convention ordered a levée en masse or conscription of troops from the entire population which caused federalist revolts within the country. Robespierre saw internal opposition as a Gerondins plot and expelled them form the convention.

4. The Reign of Terror

In order to deal with the internal enemies, the convention entrusted executive power to a Committee of Public Safety led by Robespierre and established special courts to prosecute enemies. They implemented a terror
campaign to crush opposition. Between October 1793 and June 1794 over 17,000 persons were executed and another 20,000 were killed without trial. Many of the victims were nobles and priests as well as people from the outlying regions of the country that favored federalism. Robespierre justified the Terror using ideas of the Enlightenment. The memory of terror has been as closely identified with the revolution as the slogan: “Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.”

5. The Directory, 1795-1799

In June of 1793, moderates in the convention overthrew Robespierre and abolished the Committee of Public Safety. They created a five men directory to govern the country, established a two-chamber parliament and limited the franchise to property holders. Soon opposition arose from the radical Jacobins and sans-culottes over the rising price of bread, but it was crushed. By the end of the decade the financial situation of France again worsened as the assignats or paper money issued based on the value of confiscated church lands became worthless. A new coup brought a new government called the Consulate to power. It was dominated by a young general named Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) who was named first Council. He had made a name for himself by winning victories in Italy against the Austrians.

II. Cultural Change in France During the Revolution

1. Introduction

The French revolution brought important changes to French culture.

2. The Transformation of Cultural Institutions

The cultural institutions of the old regime were either destroyed or radically changed. The confiscation of church property and abolition of religious orders had devastated the system of schools and universities run by the church. The government created a system of public primary and secondary or central schools based on free instructions by teachers paid by the state. Lacking sufficient funds to finance the schools, the new system reached fewer students than the old system. The old scientific and artistic academies were abolished and their work taken over by government committees. The Commission of Weights and Measures established the metric system as the new measuring standard. The Royal Library became the National Library and was given the book collections of the abolished monasteries and academies. The Commission of the Museums created the Louvre museum to house the objects and paintings confiscated from the homes of émigrés and the churches. The revolutionary government also attempted to erase the memory of the old regime by having the tombs of the kings destroyed.

3. The Creation of a New Political Culture

To replace the culture of the Old Regime, the revolutionaries set up a new revolutionary culture that gloried the new regime and the ideal of liberty,
equality and fraternity. The new political doctrine was popular sovereignty which claimed that the people were the highest political power in the state. The new culture adopted the dress styles of the sans-culottes. The new revolutionary culture also attempted to de-Christianize France. Churches were turned into temples of reason and Robespierre introduced the new cult of the supreme-being as a universal religion. The Calendar was reformed with dates starting from September 22, 1792 as the first day of the year I. The new months were made up of three ten-day weeks. The new culture was contested from the beginning and much of it was rejected.

4. Cultural Uniformity

The new French culture pushed standardization and equality as appropriate for a society of equal citizens. France was divided into 83 déparments of approximate equal size and population. The new schools were given the same curriculum and books. The metric system became the new standardized measuring system.

III. The Napoleonic Era, 1799-1815

1. Introduction

The Consulate introduced a period of authoritarian rule as the republic gave way to a dictatorship.

2. Napoleon’s Rise to Power

Napoleon Bonaparte was born on the island of Corsica in 1769 to a family of the old lower nobility. He was sent to a French military school for his education. The Revolution provided the opportunity for his rise to prominence. During the terror he led armies against the federalists and royalists. He then achieved impressive victories against the Austrians in northern Italy. He was authoritarian by nature and always took of pragmatic approach to problems. After leading the coup in 1799, he became First Consul. In 1802 he became Consul for Life and in 1804 crowned himself emperor of the French.

3. Napoleon and the Revolution

Napoleon use the radical vocabulary of the revolution, presented himself as an ally of the common man and a supported or equality of opportunity. But as a ruler he was authoritarian. He held carefully orchestrated elections to legitimize his political initiatives. He retained representative institutions but made them ineffective. He can best be viewed as an heir to the revolution in the sense that he continued to centralize the French state and continued to expansion of France and the spread of the Revolution to the rest of Europe.

4. Napoleon and the French State
Once in power Napoleon set out to strengthen the French state by creating an efficient, centralized bureaucracy and a uniform legal system. He also planned to settle the conflict between church and state that had erupted during the Revolution.

To settle the conflict between church and state Napoleon signed the Concordat of 1801 with Pope Pius VII (r. 1800-1823). The Pope gave up all claims to the property confiscated by the revolution, agree that the clergy would take an oath of allegiance to the state and agreed not to appoint bishops without prior approval of the French government. In exchange, Napoleon recognized Catholic Christianity as the religion of the majority of Frenchmen and agreed to pay the salaries of the clergy. When the French radicals called Ideologues objected even to the few concessions Napoleon had made to the Pope, he required that the clergy read government decrees from the pulpit and made the church a department of state.

To standardize the legal system Napoleon promulgated a series of new legal codes. The most important was the Civil Code or Code Napoleon published in 1806. In it he guaranteed the rights to private property, equality before the law and freedom of religion. He gave man control of the family by denying women the right to inherit, buy or sell property.

Napoleon also centralized the bureaucracy. All power rested in Paris where the government ministers oversaw a vast bureaucracy. In the departments a prefect appointed by the central government implemented orders from Paris, conscripted soldiers, collected taxes and supervised public works.

To reward good service, Napoleon created a new order of non-hereditary nobles called notables that gained their status because of talent.

5. Napoleon, The Empire, and Europe

Napoleon also created a massive European Empire. The defeat of Austria in 1802 gave him Italy and the southern Netherlands. Further victories in 1806-7 at Austerlitz and Jena allowed him to gain control of the German states which he reorganized as the confederation of the Rhine with a kingdom of Westphalia being given to his brother. In eastern Europe, he revived Poland as the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. By 1807 he was the master of Europe, but at sea he had been defeated by the British at the Battle of Trafalgar. His attempt in 1808 to take control of Spain by making his brother Joseph Bonaparte king proved to be a blunder. Attempts to close the monasteries and abolish the Inquisition prompted the people to rebel and begin guerilla warfare against the French. In the meantime reaction to French rule led to the rise of nationalism in Germany and Italy.

6. The Downfall of Napoleon

In 1812 Napoleon began an invasion of Russia. As the Russian army retreated further inland, Napoleon’s supply lines became over extended. When he faced the Russians at the Battle of Borodine he won but suffered 77,000 casualties. When he reached Moscow, he found it burned and deserted. Facing the Russian winter he ordered retreat. The retreat was a disaster with 380,000 men lost to guerilla skirmishes, hunger, frozen to death and desertion. The changed in fortune prompted the other European power to form an alliance
and defeat Napoleon at the Battle of Leipzig in October 1813. With the further defeats by the Austrians in Italy and the British in Spain, Napoleon abdicated in April of 1814. The French government was turned over to the king Louis XVIII, brother of Louis XVI. Louis XVIII restored the White Flag of the Bourbons and recognized Catholic Christianity as the state religion, but left most changes brought by the revolution to the French government unchanged. Despite Louis XVIII’s attempts at conciliation, Napoleon remained very popular. In March 1815 he escaped from exile on the island of Elba and most Frenchmen rallied for him. The European powers again allied against him and defeated him at the Battle of Waterloo. He was exiled to the Island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic and died there in 1821. Louis XVIII was restore the French throne and France was allowed to retain the borders of 1790.

B. The Legacy of the French Revolution

1. Introduction

The impact of the French Revolution was felt throughout the Western world. Almost 2,000,000 soldiers were killed in the wars of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Empire.

The most important impact of the revolution was that the bourgeoisie replaced the nobility as the dominant political class. This claim is now challenged, but it is clear the men of property regardless of social background profited from the revolution. Women, regardless of rank, did not benefit much from the revolution and continued to be limited to the private sphere.

In economic terms the peasants benefited from the end of the last remnants of feudalism. But the chaos of the revolution delayed industrialization of France.

The major legacy of the revolution was in politics. The revolution promoted the doctrine that the people were the highest source of political authority in the state and led to the active participation of the citizens in politics. The revolution brought about an enormous growth of the power of government and gave it greater control over everyday life of its citizens. The revolution also contributed to the rise of two political ideologies: liberalism and nationalism.

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**TIMELINE**

Insert the following events into the timeline. This should help you to compare important historical events chronologically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Napoleon proclaims himself emperor</td>
<td>1789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle of Waterloo</td>
<td>1792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beginning of Reign of Terror</td>
<td>1793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis XVI convenes an Assembly of Notables</td>
<td>1789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Napoleon overthrows Directory</td>
<td>1793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Estate declares itself National Assembly</td>
<td>1793</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TERMS, PEOPLE, EVENTS

The following terms, people, and events are important to your understanding of the chapter. Define each one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms/People/Events</th>
<th>Terms/People/Events</th>
<th>Terms/People/Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ancien regime</td>
<td>parlements</td>
<td>départements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis XVI</td>
<td>Battle of Nations</td>
<td>First Consul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oath of the Tennis Court</td>
<td>Estates General</td>
<td>Napoleonic Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Estate</td>
<td>French Revolution</td>
<td>Louvre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emmanuel Joseph Sieyes</td>
<td>Old Regime</td>
<td>Waterloo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assignats</td>
<td>Bastille</td>
<td>levée en masse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention</td>
<td>National Assembly</td>
<td>Marseillaise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitution of 1791</td>
<td>Montagnards</td>
<td>federalists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sans-culottes</td>
<td>Maximilien Robespierre</td>
<td>Directory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacobins</td>
<td>Gironists</td>
<td>Napoleon Bonaparte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee of Public Safety</td>
<td>Cult of the Supreme Being</td>
<td>Continental System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reign of Terror</td>
<td>Jacques-Pierre Brissot</td>
<td>Pius VII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concordat of 1801</td>
<td>Ideologues</td>
<td>Louis XVIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitutional Charter</td>
<td>Civil Constitution of the Clergy</td>
<td>Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MAP EXERCISE

The following exercise is intended to clarify the geophysical environment and the spatial relationships among the important objects and places mentioned in the chapter.

1. Locate the following places on the map.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Russia</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>Grand Duchy of Warsaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leipzig</td>
<td>Austerlitz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterloo</td>
<td>Elba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacobins</td>
<td>universal male suffrage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girondins</td>
<td>Montagnards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>federalists</td>
<td>Reign of Terror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>popular sovereignty</td>
<td>de-Christianization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideologues</td>
<td>Napoleonic Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress of Vienna</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MAKING CONNECTIONS

The following questions are intended to emphasize important ideas within the chapter.

1. What were the causes for the collapse of the French ancien regime?

2. What was the structure of Estates General in 1789?

3. What was the nature of the Constitution of 1791? Why did it fail to achieve permanence?

4. What were the major causes of the Reign of Terror? From which social classes did its victims come?

5. How did Napoleon Bonaparte seize control of the French Revolution? What sort of government did he establish?

6. What led to Napoleon’s downfall?

DOCUMENT QUESTIONS

The following questions test your ability to interpret the primary source documents in the textbook.

1. How does the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen reflect the ideas of the Enlightenment?

2. What are the main reasons the people of France accepted Napoleon as Emperor?

PUTTING LARGER CONCEPTS TOGETHER

1. What were the causes of the "Reign of Terror"? How could such violence stem from the ideals of equality and freedom?

2. In what ways did French culture change as a result of the Revolution?
SELF-TEST OF FACTUAL INFORMATION

1. Which of the following is NOT a cause of the French Revolution?
   a. satirical attacks on the prestige of the monarchy
   b. debts acquired in the wars with Great Britain including American Revolutionary War
   c. conflicts between the crown and nobility over constitutional issues
   d. the expansion of wealth of the peasant class

2. Prior to 1788, the Estates General of France last met in
   a. 1614.
   b. 1713.
   c. 1688.
   d. 1354.

3. Which of the following statements concerning the storming of the Bastille is MOST accurate?
   a. The successful storming of the royal castle resulted in the seizure of the royal family.
   b. The purpose of the attack was to seize grain to feed the impoverished masses of Paris.
   c. The purpose of the attack was to seize arms in order to prevent the royal army from suppressing the reform movement.
   d. The successful storming of the royal castle resulted in the seizure of the summoning of the Estates General.

4. The Civil Constitution of the Clergy
   a. produced a national political consensus in favor of the revolution.
   b. caused the pope to denounce the principles of the revolution.
   c. bound the Catholic Church more closely to the process of revolution.
   d. reduced the likelihood of aristocratic counter-revolution.

5. What caused the Constitution of 1791 to fail?
   a. the attempted flight of the royal family and the king’s abandonment of the revolution
   b. the Austrian and Prussian invasion of France
   c. the English defeat of the revolutionary army at Toulon
   d. the king’s dismissal of the National Assembly
6. The *sans-culottes* were
   a. disaffected nobles.
   b. the bourgeoisie.
   c. lower classes of Paris.
   d. rural peasants.

7. The more radical political faction in France in 1793 was the
   a. Girondins.
   b. Plain.
   c. nobility.
   d. Montagnards.

8. Which of the following was NOT an action of the radical government during the Reign of Terror?
   a. women sharing in political power
   b. almost forty thousand executions
   c. massive military mobilization
   d. de-Christianization of the state

9. Napoleon’s most enduring achievement was
   a. the Napoleonic codification of laws.
   b. the establishment of revolutionary democracies throughout Europe.
   c. the conquest of England.
   d. the Continental System.

10. What military campaign brought the final end to Napoleon in 1815?
    a. Austerlitz
    b. Jena
    c. Trafalgar
    d. Waterloo