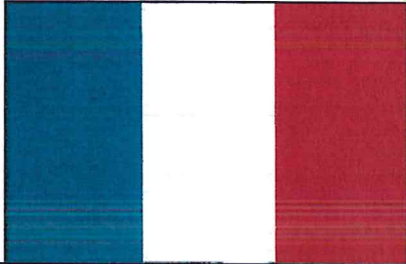


# The French Revolution



## The Old Regime (*Ancien Régime*)

- ▶ **Old Regime** - socio-political system which existed in most of Europe during the 18<sup>th</sup> century
  - ▶ Countries ruled by **absolutism** - the monarch had absolute control over the government
- ▶ **Classes of people** - privileged and unprivileged
  - ▶ **Privileged people** - did not pay taxes and treated well
  - ▶ **Unprivileged people** - paid taxes and treated poorly

## Society under the Ancien Régime

- ▶ In France, people were divided into three estates
  - ▶ **First Estate**
    - ▶ High-ranking members of the Church
    - ▶ Privileged class
  - ▶ **Second Estate**
    - ▶ Nobility (wealthy; royalty)
    - ▶ Privileged class
  - ▶ **Third Estate**
    - ▶ Everyone else - from peasants in the countryside to wealthy bourgeoisie merchants in the cities
    - ▶ Unprivileged class



## Old Regime: The Divine Right of Kings

- ▶ Monarch ruled by **divine right**
  - ▶ God put the world in motion & the King in power
  - ▶ No one can question God's decision
    - ▶ Questioning the monarchy was blasphemy because it meant questioning God



## France Goes Bankrupt

- ▶ King Louis XVI & Queen Marie Antionette spent lavishly
- ▶ Government found its funds depleted as a result of wars
  - ▶ 7-Years War (**French & Indian**) & funding the American Revolution
- ▶ **Deficit spending** - a government spending more money than it takes in from taxes.
- ▶ Privileged classes would not submit to being taxed



## Philosophy of the French Revolution: The Enlightenment (Age of Reason)

- ▶ Scientists discover laws that govern the natural world
  - ▶ Sci Revolution & Enlightenment
- ▶ **Philosophes** - intellectuals who asked if natural laws might also apply to human beings
  - ▶ **Philosophes were secular** in thinking
  - ▶ used reason and logic, rather than faith, religion, and superstition, to answer important questions
  - ▶ Questioned the divine right of kings
    - ▶ Used reason and logic to determine how governments are formed



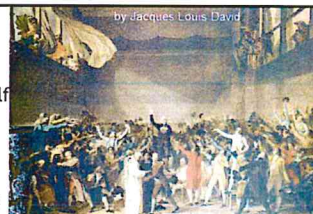
### Meeting of the *Estates-General*: May 5, 1789

- ▶ Voting was conducted by Estate
  - ▶ Each Estate had one vote
  - ▶ First and Second Estates could block Third Estate from having its way
  - ▶ Privileged (2 votes) vs. Unprivileged (1 vote)
- ▶ Third Estate demanded vote by population, which would give them the advantage
- ▶ Deadlock resulted because of their inability to agree



### Tennis Court Oath

- ▶ The Third Estate declared itself to be the National Assembly
- ▶ King Louis XVI locks out Third Estate
- ▶ they relocate to nearby tennis court, vowing to create a constitution.
- ▶ Louis XVI relented on June 23, 1789
- ▶ Three Estates meet as National Assembly and voted, by population, on French Constitution.



### National Assembly (1789-1791) (1<sup>st</sup> Phase)

- ▶ King Louis XVI opposed a written constitution
- ▶ Planned to use military force against National Assembly
- ▶ People storm Bastille Castle on July 14, 1789 to gather munitions
- ▶ Nobles attacked throughout France
- ▶ Church property was seized



### Adieu, Versailles! (Goodbye, Versailles!)

- ▶ Parisians feared Louis XVI would have foreign (Austrian) troops invade France
  - ▶ Marie Antoinette was a member of Austrian Royalty
- ▶ A group of women attacked Versailles Palace on October 5, 1789
  - ▶ they forced royal family to relocate to Paris
  - ▶ Royal family lived in Tuileries Palace in Paris as virtual prisoners



### Declaration of the Rights of Man

- ▶ Freedom of religion, speech & press
- ▶ Guaranteed property rights
- ▶ Liberté, égalité, fraternité (Liberty, equality and fraternity)
- ▶ Right of people to create own laws & to a fair trial



### Declaration of the Rights of Woman

- ▶ Could inherit property because it weakened the privileged class
- ▶ Divorce was easier because it weakened the church

DÉCLARATION DES DROITS DE LA FEMME ET DE LA CITOYENNE.

*Adoptée par l'Assemblée nationale dans ses dernières séances en vertu de la puissance législative.*

Par le même.

Les mâles, les filles, les veuves, représentantes de la nation, demandent d'être considérées en assemblée nationale. Considérant que l'ignorance, l'oubli ou le mépris des droits de la femme, sont les seules causes des maux publics et de la corruption des gouvernements, ont résolu d'écrire dans une déclaration solennelle, les droits naturels, inaliénables et sacrés de la femme, afin que cette déclaration, constamment présente à tous les membres du corps social, leur rappelle sans cesse leurs droits et leurs devoirs, afin que les actes de pouvoir des femmes, et ceux du pouvoir des hommes puissent être à chaque instant comparés avec le but de toute institution publique, en soient plus respectés, afin que les réclamations des citoyennes, fondées désormais sur des principes simples et incontestables, trouvant toujours au sein de la constitution, des bornes sûres, et au secours de tous.

La conséquence, le vœu suprême en l'honneur comme en courage, dans les souffrances matérielles, reconnaître et déclarer, en présence



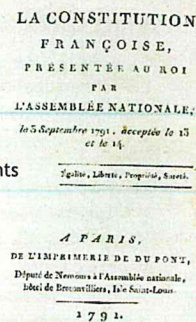
### Constitution of 1791

#### ► Democratic features

- France became a **limited monarchy**
  - King became merely the head of state
- All laws created by the **Legislative Assembly**
- **Feudalism**, where land lord owns land, servants work it, was abolished

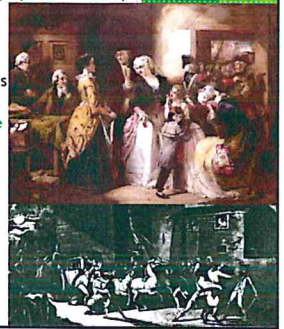
#### ► Undemocratic features

- Voting was limited to taxpayers
- political offices were reserved for property owners



### Legislative Assembly (1791-1792) (2<sup>nd</sup> Phase)

- Royal family sought help from Austria
  - June, 1791, caught in **Varennes** trying to escape to Austria
- Nobles who fled the revolution lived abroad as **émigrés** (political refugees)
  - They hoped that, with foreign help, the Old Regime could be restored in France
- Church officials wanted Church lands, rights, and privileges restored
- Political parties, representing different interests emerged
  - **Girondists** - "republicans" (rich middle class)
  - **Jacobins** - "democrats" (most radical and ruthless; poor)



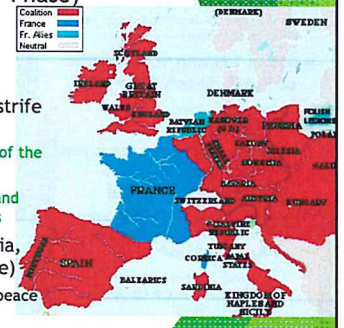
### Opposition to the New Government

- European monarchs feared revolution in their own countries
  - France invaded by Austrian and Prussian troops (Battle of Valmy)
  - France defeated the invaders (Sep. 1792)
- In the uproar, the **Commune** took control of Paris
  - Commune was led by Danton, a member of the Jacobin political party
- New convention est. to write a **republican** constitution for France
  - A republic is a government in which the people elect representatives who will create laws and rule on their behalf
  - thousands of nobles were executed under the suspicion that they were conspirators in the foreign invasion



### Convention (1792-1795) (3<sup>rd</sup> Phase)

- Sep. 22, 1792, the Convention met for the first time
- Est. the First French Republic
- Faced domestic opposition and strife
  - Girondists were moderates who represented the rich middle class of the provinces
  - Jacobins (led by Marat, Danton, and Robespierre) represented workers
- War of the First Coalition (Austria, England, Prussia...invaded France)
  - France forced invaders to accept peace treaties



### Abolishment of the Monarchy

- The Convention abolished the monarchy
  - As long as the royal family lived, the monarchy could be restored
    - Put the royal couple on trial for treason
    - Convictions were a foregone conclusion

### Abolishment of the Monarchy

- Louis XVI was guillotined on January 21, 1793
- Marie Antoinette was guillotined on October 16, 1793
- Daughter Marie-Thérèse was allowed to go to Vienna in 1795
  - She could not become queen because Salic law did not allow females to succeed to the throne
- Son Louis-Charles, a.k.a. Louis XVII (lived 1785-1795) was beaten and mistreated until he died in prison



- ▶ Jean-Paul Marat (J-PM) published a newspaper called *L'Ami du peuple* (*The Friend of the People*), calling for a bloody revolution
  - ▶ J-PM was assassinated by Charlotte Corday.
- ▶ George Danton- leader of radical Jacobins was guillotined for calling to end of executions
- ▶ Maximilien Robespierre – leader of Jacobins after Danton's execution

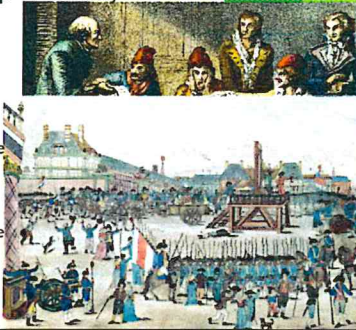


### Growing Coalition against the French

- ▶ Convention drafted Frenchmen into the army to defeat the foreign Coalition
  - ▶ These troops were led by General Carnot
  - ▶ The people supported military operations because they did not want the country back under the Old Regime
- ▶ Rouget de Lisle wrote the "*Marseillaise*"
  - ▶ Became the French national anthem
  - ▶ Inspired troops as they were led into battle
- ▶ After two years
  - ▶ Coalition was defeated
  - ▶ France had gained, rather than lost, territory

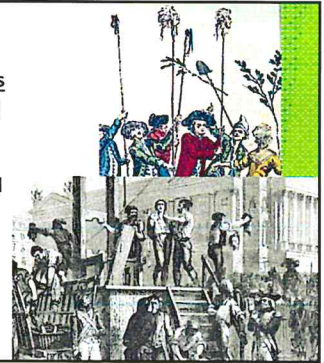
### Reign of Terror(ROT): Sep 1793-July 1794.

- ▶ Danton and his Jacobin political party came to dominate French politics
- ▶ est. a 12-man "Committee of Public Safety" (CPS)
  - ▶ Headed by Danton (and later Robespierre)
- ▶ Those accused of treason were tried by the CPS's Revolutionary Tribunal
- ▶ Approximately 15,000 people died on the guillotine aka. the "National Razor"
  - ▶ Including innovative thinkers like Olympe de Gouges and Madame Jeanne Roland



### End of the ROT

- ▶ Girondists tried to end the ROT initiated by the Jacobins
  - ▶ Opposition to the CPS caused many Girondists to be tried and executed for treason
- ▶ Georges Danton, who wanted to end the executions, was executed



### End of the ROT

- ▶ Maximilien Robespierre became leader of the CPS
  - ▶ He continued the executions
  - ▶ Convention blamed Robespierre for the ROT
- ▶ Thermidorean Reaction - collapse of revolutionary fervor and the ROT
  - ▶ July 27, 1794 - ended the ROT
  - ▶ Robespierre was guillotined on July 28, 1794



### Constitution of the Year III of the Republic (1795)

- ▶ Foreign invaders vanquished; the Convention inaugurates a new constitution; *Reign of Terror* over
- ▶ Similar to the Constitution of 1791
- ▶ Created the Directory (Phase 4)

