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Fall 9-1-2001

HIST 314.01: France in Revolution

Linda S. Frey

University of Montana - Missoula, linda.frey@umontana.edu

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Recommended Citation

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HISTORY 314

FRANCE IN REVOLUTION

Required Reading

Baker, The Old Regime and the French Revolution
Wright, France in Modern Times
Palmer, Twelve Who Ruled
Holtman, The Napoleonic Revolution
Walter, Diary of a Napoleonic Soldier

Exams

Midterm, October 17, will cover Wright, pp. 3-56; and, Baker, up to p. 392, Palmer

Final, December 19, will cover Wright, pp. 57-122, Holtman, and Walter.

Topics

W Sept 5 **ABSOLUTISM AND DESPOTISM IN EARLY MODERN FRANCE**

“A despot, be he the best of men, commits a crime by governing according to his own sweet will. He is a good shepherd who reduces his subjects to the level of animals.” (Diderot)

F Sept 7 **THE ANCIEN REGIME**

“We can see how it was that a successful revolution could tear down the whole social structure almost in a twinkling of an eye.” (Alexis de Tocqueville)

Reading: Wright, pp. 3-13
Baker, 13-47

M Sept 10 **THE INTELLECTUAL ORIGINS OF THE REVOLUTION**

“Our revolutionaries had the same fondness for broad generalizations cut and dried legislative systems, and a pedantic symmetry; the same contempt for hard facts; the same taste for reshaping institutions on novel, ingenious, original lines; the same desire to reconstruct the entire constitution according to the rules of logic and a preconceived system instead of trying to rectify its faulty parts. The result was nothing short of disastrous.” (Alexis de Tocqueville)

W Sept 12

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The Revolution strayed from the primrose path of enlightened happiness to the strait and narrow road of Jacobin virtue, from the principle of representative and constitutional government to the rule of an authoritarian elite, from the philosophes' ideal of peace to the revolutionaries' crusading war and the Napoleonic war of conquest. Nothing could have been more alien to the Enlightenment than this transition from the ideals of democracy and peace to a policy of dictatorship and war...The influence of the Enlightenment cannot be disregarded in any history of the French Revolution; but the revolutionaries did not set their course by its light in the beginning, nor did they steer the ship of state into the haven of the Enlightenment in the end."

Reading: Wright, pp. 24-32
Baker, pp. 428-445, 71-89

F Sept 14

THE ECONOMIC ORIGINS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

"The art of taxation consists in so plucking the goose to obtain the largest amount of feathers, with the least amount of hissing."
(Colbert)

"The recent revolution would not have reached this point had the people had bread. And the people would forgotten freedom and the hope of freedom if they had been able to forget their stomachs."
(Friedrich Schulz, Über Paris und die Pariser)

"How though the reign of Louis XVI was the most prosperous period of the monarchy, this prosperity hastened the outbreak of the Revolution."
(Alexis de Tocqueville)

Read: Wright, pp. 14-23
Baker, pp. 89-97

M Sept 17

STRUGGLE BETWEEN KING AND PARLEMENT

"The story of the resurgence of the French nobility is first and foremost the story of how the high robe was to demonstrate its power to obstruct the monarchy and win general recognition as the indispensable defender of privileged interests."
(Franklin Ford)

"It is astonishing that nowadays it is thought fitting to treat as founded the absolute power of the prince, without hearkening to the testimony of thirteen centuries during which we see the kingdom established solely by the blood, the labor, and the expenditures of the old nobility."
(Boulainvilliers, Lettres sur les anciens parlements de France)

Read: Baker, pp. 47-70, 97-118
Wright, pp. 33-40

W Sept 19

THE FAILURE OF REFORM

"The Revolution was, in the words of Albert Schweitzer, 'a fall of snow on blossoming trees.'" (Alfred Cobban)

"But the freedom which had conquered was the freedom of the medieval nobleman, clutching his special bundle of perogatives, crying "Liberty" and meaning Mon_droit. It was to this doomed conception that the crown was henceforth hopelessly committed."
(Franklin Ford)

Reading: Baker, pp. 118-154

F Sept 21

THE OVERTURN, MAY TO AUGUST 1789

“Court society was given to intrigue and family politics, and the fluctuating balance of power that resulted was not conducive to the pursuit of vigorous and consistent policies.”
(Hampson)

“What then is the Third Estate? All; but an all that is fettered and oppressed. What would it be without the privileged order? It would be all; but free and flourishing. Nothing will go well without the Third Estate: everything would go considerably better without the two others.” (Sieyes)

Read: Wright, pp. 41-51
Baker, pp. 154-208

M Sept 24 **THE FALL OF THE BASTILLE TRIGGERS EVENTS**

“Louis XVI: “It’s a revolt.”
I: “No, Sire, it’s a revolution.”
(Duke of Lioncourt)

“What then, is their blood so pure?”
(Barnave)

Read: Baker, pp. 208-239

W Sept 26 **THE SECOND PHASE OF THE REVOLUTION, 1789-1791**

“Let us make haste while we are still in our political youth while the fire of liberty still burns within us and our holy and generous enthusiasm still endures.”
(Duport)

Read: Baker, pp. 239-261

F Sept 28 **THE FLIGHT TO VARENNES**

“The nation can never give back its confidence to a man who, false to his trust, perjured to his oath, conspires a clandestine flight, obtains a fraudulent passport, conceals a king of France under the disguise of a valet, directs his course toward a frontier covered with traitors and deserters, and evidently meditates a return into our country, with a force capable of imposing his own despotic laws.”
(Placard, 1 July 1791)

“What remains to the King other than a vain semblance of monarchy?”
(Louis XVI, 20 June 1791)

Read: Baker, 269-286

M Oct 1 **THE WIDENING FISSURES**

“La guerre revolutionna la Revolution.”
(M. Reinhard)

W Oct 3 **“THE SECOND REVOLUTION” – THE UPRISING OF AUGUST 10**

“The Revolution is over.”
(Robespierre, September 1791)

Read: Baker, pp. 286-302

F Oct. 5 **THE REVOLUTIONIZING OF THE REVOLUTION**

“For the violence of the revolutionary movement tore apart the structure of French society, leaving a country so bitterly divided on political, religious, social and economic principles and

policies as to be virtually ungovernable.”

“Nous sommes places entre l’anarchie du terrorisme et celle du royalisme.”
(Florent Guiot, Representative on mission in the Nord)

Read: Wright, pp. 52-54
Baker, pp. 302-330

M Oct 8 **THE REIGN OF TERROR**

“Les dieux onto soif.”
(Camille Desmouline)

“There is no middle ground; France must be entirely free or perish in the attempt, and any means are justifiable in fighting for so fine a cause.”
(Parisian newspaper)

Reading: Palmer, 3-108, 130-177, 202-360
Wright, pp. 54-56
Baker, pp. 330-354, 354-362, 368-384

W Oct 10 **THE TERROR AND PROPAGANDA**

“There is nowhere so much talk of liberty as in a state where it has ceased to exist.”
(Rousseau)

Read: Baker, pp. 362-368
Palmer, pp. 177-201

F Oct 12 **THE CREATION OF UNE VOLONTE UNIQUE**

“Marat n’est point mort.”
(Jacques Roux)

Read: Baker, pp. 261-268
Palmer, pp. 108-129

M Oct 15 **THE FALL OF ROBESPIERRE**

“The blood of Danton chokes him.”
(A Deputy)

Read: Wright, pp. 56-57
Palmer, pp. 361-396
Baker, 384-391

W Oct 17 **MIDTERM**

F Oct 19 **ART AND REVOLUTION**

“David, where are you; take up your brush.”
(Guiraut)

- M Oct 22 **THE THERMIDOREANS**
- “There are as it were thirteen governments which can neither act harmoniously nor get on with one another.”
(Thibadeau)
- W Oct 24 **THE DIRECTORY**
- “Studied barbarism, systematic atrocity, calculated corruption.” (Joseph de Maistre)
- Read: Wright, pp. 57-61
Baker, pp. 392-403, 445-452
- F Oct 26 **MIRAGE OF THE MODERATES**
- “Your tyrants have destroyed the altars of your God and the throne of your king.”
(Louis XVIII)
- M Oct 29 **COUP OF 18 BRUMAIRE**
- “What’s in the new constitution?”
Reply: “Bonaparte.”
- Read: Wright, pp. 61-62
Baker, pp. 404-407
Holtman, 26-34, 120-138
- W Oct 31 **THE CONSOLIDATION OF HIS AUTHORITY**
- “If he lasts as year he will go far.”
(Talleyrand)
- Read: Wright, pp. 63-78
Baker, pp. 408-415
Holtman, pp. 72-99
- F Nov 2 **NAPOLEON AND FRANCE**
- “Napoleon was as great as a man can be without virtue.”
(Alexis de Tocqueville)
- Reading: Wright, pp. 79-82
Holtman, pp. 139-162, 99-120
Baker, pp. 416-426
- M Nov 5 **NAPOLEON’S ART OF WAR**
- “In war all that is useful is legitimate.”
(Napoleon)
- Read: Holtman, pp. 35-71
- W Nov 7 **NAPOLEON’S DEFEAT**
- “You accuse us of failing in our duty to our honor and Napoleon...We have done enough for him; our present duty is to save our country.” (Layfayette)
- Read: Baker, 426-427
Walter, all
- F Nov 9 **APPRAISAL**

“In time of violent passions, we must surely keep from speaking reason.”
(Malesherbes)

Read: Holtman, pp. 163-193

M Nov 12 **THE VIENNA SETTLEMENT**

“A World Restored?”
(Kissinger)

W Nov 14 **THE BOURBON RESTORATION**

“Given in Paris in the year of our Lord 1814, and of our reign the nineteenth.”
(Louis XVIII)

Reading: Wright, pp. 89-92

F Nov 16 **THE HUNDRED DAYS**

“An act of madness which can be dealt with by a few rural policemen.”
(Moniteur)

Read: Wright, pp. 93-98
Baker, pp. 426-427, 452-461
Holtman, pp. 194-212

M Nov 19 **CHARLES X AND THE REVOLUTION OF 1830**

“The Charter cannot keep me from doing my will.”

Read: Wright, pp. 98-105

W Nov 21 **TRAVEL DAY FOR STUDENTS**

F Nov 23 **HOLIDAY**

M Nov 26 **THE JULY MONARCHY**

“He had a profound knowledge of human beings, but he knew them only through their vices.”
(Alexis de Tocqueville)

Read: Wright, pp. 106-118

W Nov 28 **PROBLEMS OF THE MONARCHY**

“Enrichissez-vous”
(Guizot)

F Nov 30 **REVOLUTION OF 1848**

“The revolution of contempt.
(Lamartine)

Read: Wright, pp. 118-122

M Dec 3 **THE WRONG REVOLUTION?**

“There have been more mischievous revolutionaries than those of 1848, but I doubt if there have been any stupider.”

(Alexis de Tocqueville)

W Dec 5 **DAUMIER**

“Do you not feel a gale of revolution in the air?” (Alexis de Tocqueville)

F Dec 7 **THE ALTERNATIVE VISION**

“Let us not pose as the apostles of a new religion.” (Proudhon)

M Dec 10 **TECHNOCRACY**

“A system is needed to replace a system.” (Saint Simon)

W Dec 12 **RECAPITULATION**

F Dec 14 **REVIEW**

W Dec 19 **FINAL, 8:00-10:00**