

Part IV – Royal Despotism and Destined Revolution

Unit XII – Revolution, Part II: The French Revolution and the Rise and Fall of Napoleon

Assignments, Participation, and Grades

For each session, you are expected to read the assignment carefully and to think about the associated questions so that you can fully engage in discussion. Class engagement includes critical listening and vocal involvement. Individual and collective grades will be determined by (1) class engagement, (2) in- and out-of-class writing assignments, and (3) other comprehension assessments.

Read the questions on this unit syllabus before beginning your reading. You should take notes on the nightly reading and/or annotate the text well. In other words, do what you think will help you best understand the material. Use the questions from the syllabus to determine the most significant points. Take time to consider these questions and to develop questions you might pose for the class.

Remember, for any and all classes, your task is to massage the text—look for strengths and tensions in language, patterns and trends, tone and voice, as well as connections to historical moments we have covered. Come to class prepared for discussion; develop strong arguments, backed by evidence and analytical rigor.

Session 1 – The Causes of French Discontent

- Materials
 - Beck et al., pp. 651-655
 - In-Class Video of the French Revolution
- As You Read
 - How did the French social and political system create unfair and unjust conditions?
 - What were the essential characteristics of each estate?
 - What factors contributed to the revolutionary mood in France?
 - When and for what purpose are Estates-General called?
 - By the end of the reading, what was the ultimate effect of the upheaval?
- As We Watch
 - Your contributions and [open-ended] questions to think about

Session 2 – The Revolution Engenders Reform

- Materials
 - Beck et al., pp. 656-658
 - In-Class Video of the French Revolution
- As You Read
 - Was the toppling of the Old Regime and the creation of the National Assembly (and then a Legislative Assembly) a positive turn in France's history?
 - What factions split this new France? How might you describe each faction's ideology?
- As We Watch
 - Your contributions and [open-ended] questions to think about

(If we have time...)

Session 3 – The Revolution Engenders Terror

- Materials

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- Beck et al., pp. 658-661
- Maximilien Robespierre, “On the Morals and Political Principles of Domestic Policy” (1794)
- As You Read
 - Who takes control of France by 1792? What are the fates of Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI by then?
 - How might you characterize Maximilien Robespierre’s leadership and governance?
 - What ends the Terror?
- As We Discuss
 - Evaluate Robespierre’s argument about the necessity of both virtue and terror.
 - Your contributions and [open-ended] questions to discuss