The French Revolution: The Early Stages 1789 - 1791

The Moderate Revolution
- Estates General Meeting
  o Expectations of the king
    ▪ New taxes -> Go Home
  o Expectations of the clergy
    ▪ Not too much change
      • Split in half
        o Upper clergy willing to cooperate with king
        o Lower clergy wants to help out the poor
  o Expectations of the nobles
    ▪ Wanted to change government to get more power for themselves
      • Willing to trade taxes for power
  o Expectations of the bourgeoisie
    ▪ More rights
    ▪ More privileges
    ▪ Social mobility
    ▪ Vote by head and not by house
  o Expectations of the poor
    ▪ Food

  Cahiers
  o Writings of complaints
  o Abbe Sieyes
    ▪ Member of the clergy
      • Abbe=Abbot
    ▪ “What is the Third Estate?”
    ▪ Similar to “Common Sense”
      • Thomas Paine
    ▪ Vote by head not by house

- Doubling the Third
  o 300 members of the Clergy
  o 300 members of the Nobility
  o 600 members of Commoners
    ▪ Did not solve any problems
      • Still voted by house

- King locked 3rd Estate out
  o June 17th, 1789
  o Cannot get into meeting room
  o Tennis Court Oath
    ▪ Went to an indoor tennis court
    ▪ Some clergymen joined them
    ▪ Declared themselves National Assembly
      • Declared themselves the rightful government of France
      • Rule of the People
    ▪ Vowed to meet anywhere they had to until a new constitution was written

- Bastille Day
  o July 14th, 1789
  o Storming of the Bastille
    ▪ Bastille was old fortress/prison
- Revolt of the Masses
  - Symbol of oppression
  - Commoners wanted weapons
  - Only had a few prisoners
  - After storming they cut off the officers head and paraded it around town
    - King and nobles decide to join the National Assembly
- **Great Fear**
  - Summer of 1789
  - Everybody scared
    - Commoners afraid of nobility
    - Nobility afraid of commoners
  - Minimal violence
  - **Flight of the émigrés**
    - Nobles who left France because of fear
- **Night Session of August 4th**
  - Secret session of the National Assembly
  - Easier to pass at night than day
    - Not as many nobles showed up
  - Nobles would give up privileges
    - Everyone equal
- March of the Women
  - Many 3rd estate women march to Versailles
    - To tell king that bread prices were too high
    - Ended up forcing king to come back to Paris

**Reforms of the National Assembly**
- Dissolved Estates General
  - Everyone now involved in National Assembly
- **Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen**
  - August 26th, 1789
  - Pre-Constitution
  - Rights of man
    - Men born free and equal
    - Natural Rights
      - Liberty
      - Property
      - Security
      - Resistance to oppression
    - Voice in the law
      - With restrictions
    - Freedom of
      - Speech
      - Press
      - Religion
    - Due Process
- **Civil Constitution of the Clergy**
  - Declared French church independent from Rome
  - Abolished tithe
  - Gave state control over the church
    - Rights
• Confiscated church property
• Pay clergy
• Select bishops
  o Guaranteed freedom of religion
  o Required clergy to take oath to Civil Constitution of the Clergy
  o Significance
    ▪ Biggest mistake of French Revolution
    ▪ Some priests refused to take the oath
    ▪ Church considered to be anti-revolutionary
- Constitution of 1791
  o Established Limited Monarchy/Constitutional Monarchy
    ▪ Gave king a limited veto
  o Established Legislative Assembly
    ▪ Replaced the National Assembly
    ▪ Met for first time in October 1791
  o Distinguished between active and passive citizens
    ▪ Only active could vote
    ▪ Active required minimum amount of taxes
    ▪ All are equal before the law
- Other Reforms
  o Sold confiscated lands
  o Abolished internal tariffs
  o Abolished slavery in the colonies
  o Prohibited strikes and unions
  o Established system of uniform weights and measures
  o Issued assignats
    ▪ New currency
  o Reformed local governments
    ▪ Replaced old system of provinces with 83 departments
  o Abolished dues
  o Freedom of religion
    ▪ To Jews and Protestants
  o Clergy and nobility pay taxes

Political Parties
- Jacobins
  o Bourgeoisie
    ▪ Represented lower classes as well
  o VERY Radical
    ▪ Pro-Revolutionary
  o Sans Culottes
    ▪ “Without Pants”
    ▪ Working class
    ▪ Called for reforms
      • Lower prices
      • Republic
      • Jobs
      • Universal male suffrage
  o Headed by Maximilien Robespierre
- Girondins
  o Bourgeoisie
    • Liberals (not as radical)
  o Pro-Revolutionary
    • Wanted foreign war
      • Spread French ideas and democracy