

Institute History Session 1 19th Century France

France: the Country: It didn't always have the boundaries we're familiar with today!

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=history+of+western+european+countries&&view=detail&mid=2B43F59C6D2EC059B9FF2B43F59C6D2EC059B9FF&&FORM=VRDGAR>

France: the Society Divided into 3 “Estates”

- **1st Estate = Church**
 - 1516 on King named bishops/abbots of the great monasteries, requested subsidies from the church.
 - 1682 on Pope was not allowed to intervene between king & clergy. Nothing from Rome published in France without royal approval. French clergy could not be judged by any authority outside of the French Kingdom.
 - Bishoprics mostly held (sometimes inherited) by younger sons of noble families not suited to life in the army. Some atheists, many shared in the frivolity and secularism of the fashionable society of the time. They remained primarily great lords, enjoying the pleasures of Paris and the wealthy, luxurious existence of courtiers.
 - Kings outwardly pious though more and more of nobility turn away from Church to philosophers of the Enlightenment
 - Reformation in France was almost as bloody as English Reformation
 - Jansenism – Calvinistic, only so many going to heaven, very infrequent reception of Communion because humans are not worthy
 - 1700's: French School of Spirituality countered Jansenism. Renewal of education of the clergy (diocesan seminary system created), Curé of Ars, Francis de Sales, devotion to the Sacred Heart
 - The secular clergy: more respected and influential than ever. Most were enlightened in outlook and exemplary in conduct, leaders of local life, with close ties to people. They kept the records, supervised education of their people and supervised rudimentary social services. They were very, very poorly paid and sided with the commoners.
- **2nd Estate = Rulers:**
 - Louis XIV rules for 72 years: 1643-1715
 - War after war after war
 - Construction of Versailles
 - Very lavish court lifestyle
 - Louis XV rules for 59 years: 1715-1774
 - Great grandson of Louis XIV, 5 years old when he becomes king – 1st Estate rules in his name
 - More interested in extravagant life of luxury and privilege than in ruling
 - Attempts by ministers to redress the inequities in France's taxation system only lead to heavier burden for the commoners.
 - Louis XVI rules for 18 years: 1774-1792
 - Grandson of Louis XV

Institute History Session 1 19th Century France

- 1778 makes alliance with American Colonies – war with England costs 1.8 billion livres to France
 - Tries to appoint good ministers to see to finances – but plan after plan fails
- **3rd Estate = Common People**

Economics:

- Most of the rise in prosperity in France during the 18th century was limited to the rising middle class. Some development of cottage industries like **lace making**.
- Taxes on the 3rd Estate averaged 10% to the local lord, another 8-10% in ecclesiastical tithes, additional taxes to be paid to the state, market and sales taxes, fees for baptisms, marriages and burials. Criticism of nobility for under-utilization of land and supporting financial decisions that were bad for the country.
- Some of nobility advocated reforms of the tax system and efforts at curbing spending.
- Opening of France to English industrialized industry severely stressed the textile industry. 1785 there were 5,672 looms working in Amiens and Abbeville, and by 1789 3,668 of those were silent. Cloth production was halved in 2 years. Situation was similar across all industries.
- 1778 – Economic depression starts (American Revolution); 1788 – harvest fails. In 1787 all control was removed from the corn trade so there were no reserves. Prices rose dramatically and reached their height in July of 1789.

Culture: huge divide between wealthy and commoners

- Wealthy: life at court and in country homes; low infant mortality
- Health care was archaic (bleeding people), disease was rampant
- As economy spiraled downward – violence, often random, increased
- Commoners: life is work and church; high infant mortality
- Cuvilly: 567 inhabitants in 1790
- Gézaincourt: 370 inhabitants in 1790

The following websites give excellent background information on the France of Julie and Françoise.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_French_history#17th_century

<https://alphahistory.com/frenchrevolution/french-revolution-topics/>

Institute History Session 1
19th Century France

A Virtual Tour of the World of Julie and Francoise via Google Maps

Paris to Amiens: 94.2 miles
Paris to Compiègne: 54 miles
Paris to Beauvais: 63.5 miles
Amiens to Compiègne: 50 miles
Amiens to Bordeaux: 460 miles
Cuvilly to Beauvais: 32.6 miles
Cuvilly to Paris: 61.4 miles
Cuvilly to Gournay-sur-Aronde: 4.9 miles
Gournay-sur-Aronde to Compiègne: 10.9-11.6 miles in a haycart!
Gézaincourt to Amiens: 17.9 miles
Gézaincourt to Bourdon: 18.3-19.5 miles
Gézaincourt to Doullens: 3 miles
Amiens to Bourdon: 13.6-15.6 miles
Amiens to Bettencourt: 15.7-17.7 miles

Questions for Reflection/Discussion

(These were used to guide the reading last year – perhaps they can be a springboard for discussion this year. They will provide the framework for the next few presentations.)

- Who were the important people in this part of the story? What were the relationships between them?
- What places were important?
- Dates and important events?
- What was the impact of war/political unrest?
- What were the relationships with church/hierarchy like?
- What signs of the “primitive spirit” do we see?
- What do we learn of the spirituality underpinning it all?
- What touched your heart?
- Any new insights?