

S.5 BEGINNING OF TERM II EXAMS JUNE 2016

P210/3: HISTORY MARKING GUIDE

(EUROPEAN HISTORY 1789 - 1970)

1. To what extent was the weakness and character of King Louis XVI responsible for the outbreak of the French Revolution of 1789? (25 Marks)

The French Revolution of 1789 was the fundamental social, economic and political change which occurred in 1789 when the poor peasants, discontented bourgeoisie and some disgruntled aristocracy of the nobility and clergy rose up against the ancient regime of the Bourbon Monarchy. The monarchy was under weak King Louis XVI who had come to power in 1774. The Revolution began as peaceful movement for reform but eventually culminated into the destruction of the monarchy and its replacement by a republican revolutionary government.

To a greater extent, the weakness and character of King Louis XVI was responsible for the outbreak of the French Revolution of 1789 as discussed below;

- He ruled as an absolute monarch and a despot which made him very unpopular
- King Louis XVI depended on the bad advice of his wife Marie Antoinette and the privileged aristocracy of nobles and the clergy
- Louis XVI was weak in character and was no real despot which encouraged the masses to rise up against his government
- King Louis XVI failed to handle and control the Estates-General Meeting which marked the start of the Revolution in May 1789
- Failed to address the grievances of the French Army
- King Louis failed to suppress the revolution in its initial stages
- Dismissed reformist financial controllers and ministers like Jacques Turgot and Jacques Necker
- He accepted to sign the 1763 free trade treaty with England which had disastrous effects on the French economy
- King Louis XVI kept himself away from the masses and could not therefore address their problems

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- Louis XVI was extravagant in his expenditures for instance had 2000 horses and 200 carriages
- He involved French forces in the American War of Independence
- King Louis XVI allowed his ministers to issue the 'lettres de cachet' which angered the masses
- King Louis XVI failed to check corruption and injustice in France

However, much as the weakness and character of King Louis XVI was to a greater extent responsible for the outbreak of the French Revolution, there were other factors as analysed below.

- The despotic system of government of the Bourbon Monarchy
- The unfair social class stratification of France
- The huge influence of the system of government of England on France
- The influence of the political philosophers such as Jean Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire, John Locke, Adam Smith and Baron de Montesquieu
- The role and bad character of Queen Marie Antoinette
- Worsening financial crisis and bankruptcy in France
- The bad weather and economic distress of 1788-1789
- The role of the French encyclopedists like Denis Diderot and D'Alembert

In conclusion, there were many factors that were responsible for the outbreak of the French Revolution of 1789 but the weakness and character was to a greater extent responsible as discussed above.

2. Explain the causes of the period of terror in France between 1792 and 1794. (25 Marks)

The period of terror in France was a period in which France was characterised by extreme violence, lawlessness and disorder, dictatorship, massacre and guillotining of guilty and innocent people. It started with the September Massacres of 1792 and went on up to 1794 and was organised by fanatic revolutionaries like Maximilien Robespierre, Jacques Herbert and Danton. The following were the causes of this period of terror.

- The anti-revolutionary activities of the émigrés
- The issuing of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in July 1790
- The death of the moderate revolutionary leader Count Mirabeau in April 1791

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- The struggle for political power between political clubs such as the Jacobin Club, the Girondin Club, the Cordeliers and the Feuillants
- The declaration of Rights of Man and the Citizen in August 1789 caused wild excitement and expectations which were never met and so many resorted to violence
- Weakness of King Louis XVI and his rejection to acknowledge revolutionary changes
- The execution of King Louis XVI in January 1793 caused more violence and bloodshed
- The weakness of the Legislative Assembly which was set up in 1791; failed to restore order
- The emergence of the 'Worship or Religion of Reason' under Jacques Herbert worsened religious violence and struggles
- The extremist activities of the notorious Paris Mob which increased violence and killings
- Establishment of the Committee of Public Safety, Committee of General Security and the Revolutionary Tribunal under the direction of 'blood-thirsty' revolutionaries
- Worsening of economic conditions; widespread poverty, famine, unemployment and bankruptcy
- The flight of General Lafayette into exile in June 1792 left the revolution under the control of violent revolutionary dictators
- Revolutionary wars between France and other European countries like Austria, Prussia and Britain
- The inherent weaknesses of the new constitution of September 1791; provided for only indirect elections and gave the King a six-year veto to any law
- The rise of Maximilien Robespierre and other extremists to the leadership of the revolution
- The inadequate and slow pace of the peaceful revolution made many revolutionaries to adopt violence

In summary, the period of terror in France which is commonly referred to as the reign of terror was a result of the interplay of several social, economic and political, internal and external factors as explained above.

3. Account for the collapse of the ancient regime in France by 1793. (25 Marks)

The ancient regime was the regime of the Bourbon Monarchy which had ruled France for many years up to 1789 when the French Revolution broke out. It was despotic, conservative and favoured the aristocracy of the clergy and the nobility. The Kings who ruled France during this period included Louis XIV, Louis XV and Louis XVI against whom the revolution broke out in 1789. By 1793, the ancient regime had been completely destroyed

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and replaced by the republican government. The collapse of the ancient regime (old regime) was attributed to the following factors.

- The occurrence of the French Revolution of 1789 was a major factor for the collapse of the ancient
- The bad character of Queen Marie Antoinette forced the French people to destroy the regime
- The fall of the Bastille (state prison) in July 1789 was destructive to the old regime
- Abolition of feudalism in August 1789 contributed to collapse of the ancient regime
- The declaration of Rights of Man and the Citizen in August 1789
- Emergence of anti-monarchy political clubs especially the uncompromising Jacobin Club
- The end of moderate revolutionary leadership after the death of Mirabeau and flight to exile of General Lafayette
- The anti-revolutionary activities of the émigrés discredited the ancient regime
- Enactment of the new constitution of September 1791
- Establishment of the National Convention in September 1792 which tried and executed King Louis XVI, the head of the ancient regime
- The bankruptcy of the ancient regime weakened the regime and contributed to its collapse.
- The hostility of European monarchs towards the Revolution in France provoked the increasingly patriotic revolutionaries to destroy the old regime of Bourbon Monarchy
- The contribution of the revolutionary mobs which detested the ancient regime. For instance they carried out demonstrations at the Tuileries Palace in June 1792 with aim of having King Louis XVI assassinated.
- King Louis XVI's attempted flight Austria and his capture at Varennes hastened the collapse of the ancient regime
- The weakness of King Louis XVI was in part responsible for the fall of the regime
- Execution of King Louis XVI on January 21, 1793 marked the execution of the ancient regime

In conclusive analysis, the many reasons clearly explained above account collapse of the ancient regime in France by 1793.

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4. Assess the effects of the 1789 French Revolution on France. (25 Marks)

The 1789 French Revolution occurred in France in 1789 when the mass of the middle class, peasants and disgruntled nobility rose up against the despotic Bourbon Monarchy of King Louis XVI. The despotic system of government was replaced by revolutionary and republican systems. The revolution had profound immediate and long-term, positive and negative effects on France.

To a greater extent, the 1789 French Revolution had positive effects on France and these include the following.

- The revolution swept away feudalism and serfdom in France to the benefit of the peasant and the serf
- It swept away the privileges of the upper classes and unfair social class divisions
- It resulted into the destruction of the despotic monarchy and introduction republican governments that were increasingly democratic
- The revolution gave rise to the new doctrines of liberty, equality and fraternity in France.
- It led to the introduction of fair and progressive tax system
- The 1789 French Revolution created an opportunity for the rise of new leaders such as Mirabeau, Lafayette and peasants like Napoleon Bonaparte
- The revolution contributed to the establishment of new political clubs and societies in France for example the Jacobin Club and the Girondin Club
- The revolution ended the privileges and the monopoly of the Catholic Church and secured religious freedoms for the French people.
- It contributed to the introduction of administrative reforms which gave France a modern and an efficient system of local government
- The revolution resulted into the introduction of a new metric system
- The 1789 revolution resulted into the reorganisation of education system of France which provided education to all French people
- It contributed to the establishment of constitutional governance in France
- The revolution led to the formation of the National Assembly
- The revolution led to the formation of the National Guard which replaced the Royal Guard
- The revolution of 1789 resulted into the introduction of a new tri-colour flag of blue, white and red which replaced the white colour flag of the monarchy

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- It resulted into the composition of the popular and revolutionary National Anthem of France known as the “Marseillaise”.
- The revolution resulted into the development of French infrastructure and tourism
- The revolution resulted into the development of new paper-money (currency)

However, the 1789 French Revolution also had several negative effects and they include the following.

- The revolution caused massive loss of lives and property destruction
- Forced many French people into exile for instance the émigrés, General Lafayette and General Dumouriez
- The revolution caused wars between France and other European nations
- The revolution led to the rise of dictatorship in France for instance of the Paris Commune
- It caused the conflict between the Catholic Church and the state in France
- Caused a further decline in the economy of France
- It encouraged the violent revolutions of 1830 and 1848 in France
- It led to introduction of paper currency which quickly lost value and became inflationary

In conclusion, the French Revolution of 1789 had several positive and negative effects on France but its positive effects were to a greater extent as assessed above.

5. Examine the achievements of the Directory Government between 1795 and 1799. (25 Marks)

The Directory Government was established by the National Convention at the end of 1794 but it started its works in early 1795. The Directory was composed of five directors with one director retiring each year and the Legislature of two houses; the Council of Elders of 250 members and the Council of Five Hundred members. It was expected to end terror, restore peace and order, reorganise the economy, achieve military glory and deal with all other problems that France had been facing.

To a greater extent, the Directory Government was successful and recorded the following achievements.

- The Directory Government completely ended the reign of terror in France
- The Directory tried to check dictatorship in France

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- It suppressed the attempt by the 'Society of Equals' under Francois Babeuf to overthrow the government
- The Directory suppressed the royalist and Jacobin conspiracy of October 1795
- Established the rule of law and ended mob rule in France
- It set up a strong army under the direction of Director Carnot
- Extended the revolutionary doctrines of liberty, equality and fraternity to other states in Europe
- The Directory expanded the frontiers of France to the Papal States, Lombardy, the Cisalpine Republic, Venice, Belgium, West Bank of the Rhine and the Batavian Republic
- It disintegrated the allies of the First Coalition
- Promoted tourism by developing the museum at Louvre
- Secured war reparations/indemnity from the conquered states for instance 10 million Francs from Modena, 300 million from the Papacy
- Restored constitutional rule after a period of anarchy
- It developed the French Navy
- The Directory Government introduced and implemented economic reforms
- The Directory initiated public works reforms
- It tried to reconcile various political groups
- Defeated the Austria, France's archenemy in the Italian Campaign

However, the Directory also had some failures which made it unpopular and these include the following;

- It failed to check corruption and embezzlement of public funds by its officials
- Abolished the 'Law of Maximum' which allowed the greedy middle class exploit the poor
- It restricted the franchise (right to vote) to a few property owners and tax-payers
- It failed to protect the territories which Napoleon had won for France
- The Directory was increasingly divided and involved in power struggles
- Failed to fix the economic and social problems faced by the French people
- The Directory over-depended on Napoleon Bonaparte and could not survive without him
- The Directory failed to suppress socialism in France
- It rigged the elections of 1797
- It was dominated by and favoured the conservative middle class
- The Directory failed to complete the conquest of Egypt in 1798-99

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In summary analysis, despite the several failures, Directory Government was to a greater extent successful as examined above.

6. Explain the factors that contributed to Napoleon Bonaparte's rise to power in France by 1799. (25 Marks)

Napoleon Bonaparte was an army officer of peasant background who rose to power in November 1799 after overthrowing the Directory Government in the military coup d'état. He set up a Consulate Government headed by him and ruled up to 1815. His rise to power was contributed by several factors as explained below.

- The contribution of the French Revolution of 1789 brought Napoleon Bonaparte to power.
- The personal ambition, oratory power and great character of Napoleon Bonaparte
- The military brilliance and abilities of Napoleon Bonaparte
- The weakness and contribution of the Directory Government
- The role of the external military campaigns; the Italian Campaign of 1796-97 and the Egyptian Campaign of 1798-99
- The contribution of the Bonaparte family especially Charles Bonaparte and Lucien Bonaparte
- Napoleon Bonaparte's marriage to Josephine Beauharnais the daughter to Director Paul de Barras
- Support to Napoleon from the French Army was an important factor in his rise to power
- Luck or good fortune in part contributed to Napoleon Bonaparte's rise to power
- The poor background of Napoleon Bonaparte
- The education Napoleon obtained helped him capture power by November 1799
- The success of the coup d'état of Brumaire of November 1799 was the immediate factor which brought Napoleon Bonaparte to power

In conclusion, Napoleon Bonaparte's rise to power was an exciting episode in the history of modern Europe and it was contributed by many social, political, military and economic factors explained above.

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