Revolutionary Ideas

1. Most of these new thoughts about government were connected to the Enlightenment - principal theorists were French social philosophers, called philosophes
   1. Popular Sovereignty
      1. Kings and emperors justified their rule by connecting themselves to gods or claiming that they were gods
      2. Thinkers during this period began to question these concepts of legitimate power - alternative called popular sovereignty - people in charge, not god or heaven
      3. Important theories of popular sovereignty - social contract between people and government
         1. Thomas Hobbes - people needed government to protect them from each other
         2. We give up some of our rights in order for the government to protect us
         3. John Locke - people need government to protect their natural rights (life, liberty, property)
            1. If a government doesn’t do this, people have the right to overthrow the government
         4. Jean-Jacques Rousseau - the people are the sovereign and whatever the majority decides is the right thing for everyone
   2. Other important Enlightenment ideas
      1. Individual Freedom - Voltaire - societies will be stronger if they permit religious freedom and freedom of speech
         1. Wrote extensively in all formats calling for these principles
      2. Equality (see Rousseau)
      3. Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances - Montesquieu - it’s not reasonable to place all the power in one body - that can lead to tyranny
         1. Separate the powers into multiple bodies and allow them to be able to stop the other bodies
   3. These ideas spread socially (through books, social gatherings, etc) but also when reformers took rights that were previously denied to them
2. American Revolution
   1. Revolution begins with the Seven Years War
      1. Prior to this, American colonists thought of themselves as British and took part in British culture (books, food, religion, dress, language, etc.)
      2. The North American component of the war was called the French and Indian War (1754-1763), but the basic theme of the war remains, English vs. French trade interests
      3. British win this part of the war, but went into debt doing so
         1. Passed a bunch of new taxes to pay for it - Sugar Act, Stamp Act, Townshend Act (on imported goods) and the Tea Act
      4. American colonists upset because during the Glorious Revolution, it was agreed that all taxes would be passed through Parliament, with the people’s consent
         1. The Americans didn’t have representation in Parliament, however
         2. Hence, “No Taxation Without Representation”
      5. Americans boycotted British products (Boston Tea Party) and organized the Continental Congress to coordinate the colonies activities (they were 13 separate states - worked together as the “United States.”)
      6. Issued Declaration of Independence on 7/4/1776 - based on Locke’s ideas of natural rights and general ideas of Enlightenment equality
         1. Justification and causes for rebellion
      7. Both sides at disadvantage
         1. Americans were divided and independence was not a popular idea with everyone; poor, ill-equipped and ill-trained
         2. British relied on supplies and troops from thousands of miles away; British soldiers only fighting because they were ordered to
      8. Americans won because Europeans joined in against Great Britain - France especially, but others joined, too.
         1. Wanted to knock GB down a few pegs, it had become really powerful after victory in 7 Years War
      9. War over in 1783, Treaty of Paris saw British surrender and recognize the United States
         1. US wrote Constitution in 1787 (More on this later)
3. French Revolution
   1. The causes of the French Revolution can be described as both long-term and immediate
      1. Long Term Causes
         1. Three Estates - 1st - Clergy (0.3%), 2nd - Nobility (4%), 3rd Everyone else (95%)
            1. Only the 3rd estate paid taxes, but the 1st and 2nd estates owned about 50% of the land
         2. Absolutism is expensive and benefits only the nobility - paid for by the 3rd estate exclusively
            1. No way to actually listen to the demands of the people
      2. Immediate Causes
         1. War debt - a large portion of which went to pay for the American Revolution
         2. Louis XVI needed a way to increase revenue and called the Estates General (the closest thing to a parliament in France) in order to start taxing the 1st and 2nd estates May 1789
            1. Not in session since 1614
            2. Each estate gets one vote (third estate is always outvoted)

Nobility and clergy prevented reform from going through

* 1. On June 17, 1789, the 3rd Estate broke from the Estates General and began calling themselves the National Assembly
     1. 6/20/89, they found themselves locked out of the meeting room and found an indoor tennis court to meet on - Tennis Court Oath - vowed to keep meeting until they wrote a new constitution
  2. July 14, 1789, in response to Louis sending troops into Paris to defend him, the people of Paris stormed the Bastille prison in order to get guns
  3. 8/1789, National Assembly issues the DoRoMaC - a similar document to the Declaration of Independence
  4. Between 1789-1791, the National Assembly put Enlightenment ideas into practice and abolished the old order, made the church part of the government and made the king part of the legislative process, not the only part (like in an absolute monarchy)
  5. In 1792, things took a radical turn
     1. Other European kingdoms began to be afraid of the French Revolution and issued the Declaration of Pillnitz, which promised to put the old regime back in power
     2. In response, France invaded Austria and Prussia in 1792 and most other countries in Europe in 1793
     3. A new legislative body called the Convention was formed to fight these wars and prevent counterrevolution
        1. Levee en masse - universal conscription for the army
        2. Guillotine to scare people into following the revolution
           1. Executed Louis and Marie Antoinette in 1793
  6. Executions ushered in the Reign of Terror 1793-94
     1. Led by the Committee of Public Safety and Maximilien Robespierre (Jacobins)
     2. More frequent executions
     3. Complete removal of Catholic ideas, including street names and the calendar
        1. New religion, cult of reason
     4. More rights for women, but no voting or political affairs
     5. Ended with Robespierre’s allies turning on him and executing him
  7. New legislative body - the Directory 1795 - more realistic and pragmatic, but in trying to walk down a middle path between the old regime and the Revolution, they didn’t actually fix any of the problems
     1. Unstable government led to a strong leader coming to power and overthrowing the Directory - Napoleon
  8. Napoleon was a war hero that quickly rose through the ranks to lead French forces
     1. He was a general at 24 and a staunch defender of the Revolution
     2. Defended the Directory against a popular uprising in 1795
     3. Defeated the Austrians in Northern Italy in 1796-97
     4. Attacked the British in Egypt - found the Sphinx and the Rosetta Stone there
     5. Returned to France in 1799 looking to become active politically
  9. Napoleon staged a coup d’etat in 1799 and overthrew the Directory
     1. Some historians argue that Napoleon had support from the Directory itself in taking over
     2. In any event, the Directory was seen as weak and many French were eager to have Napoleon take over

1. Napoleonic France
   1. Napoleon brought stability to a France made unstable by revolution and war
      1. At first, Napoleon called himself First Consul
      2. Later crowned himself Emperor, with the Pope and everything
   2. He made peace with the Church, but France kept all the land it took during the Revolution
      1. France continued to pay the salaries of clergy and Catholicism became the preferred religion of France again
      2. Freedom of Religion granted to protestants and Jews
      3. Napoleon himself wasn’t religious, but saw the ability of Christianity to provide stability to the French people
   3. Napoleonic Code
      1. Civil law code - all men are equal
      2. Bureaucracy of merit
      3. Restored patriarchy by eliminating many of the new rights granted to women by the Revolution
   4. Limited free speech and free press
      1. Used secret police to ensure that his policies were followed
   5. Meanwhile, Napoleon is fighting against all of Europe
      1. In all, Napoleon fought 7 wars against Europe
      2. He went 5-2
         1. After his first loss, the rest of Europe exiled him to the island of Elba
         2. He escaped Elba, came back to France, raised an army again and picked a fight
         3. Lost again and was exiled to St. Helena, far away from Europe where he died