

FRENCH REVOLUTION (1789)

FRENCH REVOLUTION WAS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENT OF THE WORLD HISTORY. THE EVENT INFLUENCED THE ENTIRE NATION OF THE EUROPE AS WELL AS OTHER COUNTRIES OF WWORLD. THE REVOLUTION OCCURRED DUE TO THE UNLIMITED MONARCHICAL POWER ENJOYED BY THE BURBON DYNASTY, DESPOTIC RULE, CRISIS IN ADMINISTRATION, INEFFICIENCY OF LUIS XVI AND ARROGANT NATURE OF QUEEN MARIE ANTOINETTE. BESIDES, THERE WERE SOME INTELLACTUALS IN FRENCH LIKE ROUSSEAU, MONTESQUE AND VOLTAIRE, WHO INSPIRED THE PEOPLE OF FRENCH TO RISE IN REVOLUTION. THE REVOLUTION OVERTHREW THE DESPOTIC RULE OF FRENCH AND GIVE MESSAGE TO THE WORLD COMMUNITY THAT THE KING CAN NOT BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF GOD BUT OF PEOPLE.

CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION

A NUMBER OF CAUSES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OUTBREAK OF FRENCH REVOLUTION IN 1789. THE CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION MAY BE CATEGORISE AS :-

- 1. POLITICAL CAUSES**
- 2. SOCIAL CAUSE**
- 3. ECONOMIC**
- 4. INFLUENCE OF INTELLECTUALS**
- 5. OUTSIDE IMPACT**

POLITICAL CAUSE

- 1. DESPOTISM OF THE BURBON DYNASTY:** (RIGHT FROM THE 1553, ALL THE RULERS OF THE BURBON DYNASTY WERE KNOWN FOR THEIR DESPOTIC RULE WHO RULED WITH THEIR UNLIMITED POWE WITHOUT CALLING THE ESTATE GENERAL)
- 2. DEFECTIVE LAWS AND JUDICIARY:** (AT THAT TIME IN FRENCH ALL POWER WAS CENTRALISED INTO THE HANDS OF THE KING. MOREOVER, EVERY PROVINCE HAD THEIR DIFFERENT LAWS WHICH WERE NOT CLEAR, UNEQUAL AND INJUST. LIKewise, THERE WERE MANY COURTS IN DIFFERENT LEVELS WHOSE JUDGES WERE ONLY FROM UPPER CLASS AND ROYAL FAMILY.

3. **DIVINE RIGHT THEORY:** (IN FRENCH, BEFORE 1789, THE MONARCHY ENJOYED UNLIMITED POWER. THE DYNASTY CONSIDERED THEMSELVES AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF GOD. NOBODY HAD THE RIGHT TO CHALLENGE THE AUTHORITY OF THE KING.)

4. **AGGRASSIVE FOREIGN POLICY:** (BEFORE 1789, THE FRENCH RULERS ADOPTED A VERY AGGRESSIVE FOREIGN POLICY AND ESTABLISHED COLONIES IN AFRICA, ASIA. ON THAT GROUND FRENCH HAD TO WAGE A NUMBER OF WARS WHICH CAUSED A HEAVY LOS TO THE FRENCH TREASURY.)

5. **CRISIS IN ADMINISTRATION:** (BEFORE 1789, THERE WAS VERY MUCH ANARCHY OR CRISIS IN FRENCH ADMINISTRATION. THE ADMINISTRATION WAS CORRUPT AND THE OFFICIALS HAD NO RESPONSIBILITY. THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR COMMON PEOPLE IN THE ADMINISTRATION.)

5. **ROLE OF MARIE ANTONIETTE:** (MARIE WAS THE DAUGHTER OF AUSTRIAN EMPRESS MARIA THERESSA. TO DEVELOP FRIENDSHIP AUSTRIA AND FRENCH SHE WAS MARRIED TO LOUIS XVI. HER LUXURIOUS AND PLEASURFUL LIFESTYLE AFFECTED THE TREASURY OF FRENCH BADLY.)

6. **ROLE OF LOUIS XVI:** (ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION LOUIS XVI WAS RULING THE COUNTRY. BUT HE WAS NOT INTERESTED VERY MUCH IN POLITICS AND NOT ENOUGH STRONG TO ROLE EFFECTIVELY THE COUNTRY.)

SOCIAL CAUSES

- 1. FEUDAL LORDS:** (IN FRENCH, THESE CLASS OF PEOPLE WERE EXEMPTED FROM TAX. NOTABLY, THEY HAD THEIR OWN TAX, CALLED “**TALLY**” LEVIED ON COMMON PEOPLE. THE FEUDALS WERE EXPLOITING THE COMMON PEOPLE BY VARIOUS MEANS FOR MANY YEARS IN FRENCH.)
- 2. THE CLERGIES:** (AT THAT TIME, 1/5 OF THE STATES LAND WERE IN THE HANDS OF CLERGIES AND THEY WERE THE OWNER OF ALL RELIGIOUS CENTRES. THEY COLLECT THEIR OWN TAX CALLED “**TITHS**” FROM COMMON PEOPLE.)
- 3. THIRD STATE/COMMON PEOPLE:** (THIS CLASS OF PEOPLE WERE MAJORITY BUT WERE LIVING IN VERY GRAVE SITUATION. THEY HAD TO PAY ALL TYPES OF TAXES TO DIFFERENT DIGNATRIES. THE SITUATION IN FRENCH WAS THAT 90% OF PEOPLE WERE LIVING IN STARVATION. THIS CATEGORY INCLUDED DOCTORS,ADVOCATES, TEACHERS, PROFESSORS, JOURNALISTS, FARMERS, WORKERS ETC.)

RELIGIOUS CAUSES

- 1. LUXURIOUS CLERGIES:** (AT THAT TIME THERE WERE NEARLY ONE AND HALF LAKH CLERGIES AND NUMBER OF RILIGIOUS CENTRES WERE 5000 HAVE 25000 MEN AND WOMEN IN ALL CENTRES. WITHIN CHIRTIANITY ROMAN CATHOLIC HAD THE MONOPLOY. AT THAT TIME IN FRENCE ALL WORST THINGS WERE GOING ON IN THE NAME OF RELIGION.
- 2. REKIGIOUS INSTITUTION AND INJUSTICE TO THE COMMON PEOPLE:** GENERALLY IT WAS THE DUTY OF THE CLERGIES TO MAINTAIN AND INCREASE THE SOCIAL MORALITY OF THE PEOPLE. BUT ACTUALLY THE THIG WAS DIFFERENT IN FRENCH AND THE CLERGIES WERE BUSY IN POLITICAL AFFAIRS. THEY HAD LAND RIGHTS WHICH MADE THEM LIKE FEUDAL LORDS. EVEN THE CONCENT OF THE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY WAS ESSENTIAL FOR CORONATION CEREMONY OF THE KING. SO UNREST WAS AMONG THE COMMON PEOPLE AGAINST THE RELIGIOUS CENTRES AND CLERGIES.

INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND

- 1. ROLE OF ROUSSEAU:** (1712-1778) BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION ROUSSEAU WROTE A NUMBER OF FAMOUS BOOKS. "MY COFESSION" WAS HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY. "AMIL" AND "SOCIAL CONTACT" WERE HIS TWO WORLD KNOWN BOOKS. HE WROTE THAT MAN WAS BORN FREE, NO NEED TO GIVE IT. HE CRITICISED THE ROLE OF CLERGIES AND THEIR HYPOCRISY. HIS WORK WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OUTBREAK OF REVOLUTION.
- 2. VOLTAIRE:** WAS A POET, JOURNALISTS, AUTHOR AND SCHOLAR OF LAW. HE CRITICISED THE ROLE OF CHURCH AND LUXURIOUS LIFESTYLE OF THE CLERGIES. HE WROTE FAMOUS BOOK "CANDID" WHIOSE MAIN SUBJECT WAS MONARCHY AND RELIGIOUS CORRUPTION. HE SUGGESTED TO OVERTHROW THE REIGN OF BURBON FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LIMITED MONARCH.

3. **MONTESQUE: (1689-1755)** HIS FAMOUS BOOK WAS “SPIRIT OF LAW” PUBLISHED IN 1748. IN THE BOOK, HE CRITICISED THE MONARCY AND PROPAGATED FOR DEMOCRACY. IN HIS OPINION PERLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY WAS IDEAL FOR PEOPLE’S WELFARE.

4. **DIDRO:** WAS A FRENCH ECONOMIST AND SAID THAT PROGRESS DEPENDS UPON FREEDOM OF AGRICULTURE, BUSINESS AND TRADE. HENCE, EMANCIPATION OF THE FARMER WAS ESSENTIAL FROM THE CLUTCHES OF THE UPPER CLASS.

ECONOMIC CAUSES

- 1. FEUDAL STRUCTURE:** THOUGH FRENCH WAS A AGRICULTURIST COUNTRY, ITS 60% LAND WAS UNDER FEUDAL LORDS., 20% UNDER THE CLERGIES AND REST 20% WAS IN THE HANDS OF THE COMMON PEOPLE. OUT OF 80 LACS FARMERS 10 LACS WERE SERFS UNDER FEUDAL LORDS AND THEY HAD TO PAY HEAVY TAXES TO THE FEUDALS.
- 2. CONDITIONS OF MERCHANTS CLASS:** THOUGH, THERE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE YET NO STEPS HAD BEEN TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE SAME.
- 3. INEQUALITY IN TAXATION:** INJUSTICE PREVAIL IN THE TAXATION SYSTEM. BURDEN OF TAXES WERE IMPOSED ON COMMON PEOPLE. ON THE OTHER HAND, RELATIVES OF KINGS, MINISTERS, FEUDALS, CLERDIES HAD ENJOYED TAX CONSESSION. THERE WAS NO RULE FOR TAXATION.

BANKRUPTCY: ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION THE CONDITION OF THE COMMON PEOPLE WERE WORST. GOVERNMENT PAID NO HEED. IN ADDITION TO THAT, THE AGGRASSIVE FOREIGN POLICY, UNDUE EXPENDITURE OF ROYAL FAMILY, LOAN ON NATION ETC., MADE THE NATION BANKRUPT.

OUTSIDE IMPACT

AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE: AMONG THE OUTSIDE EVENT THAT ENCOURGAED THE FRENCH PEOPLE MOST WAS THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE OF 1776-1783. IN THE WAR, FRENCH SENT TROOPS TO HELP THE AMERICANS AND FINALLY AMERICA GOT THEIR INDEPENDENCE FROM BRITAIN. THIS EVENT ENCOURAGED THE FRENCH PEOPLE THAT THEY CAN ALSO OVERTHROW UNWANTED OWN GOVERNMENT.

IMAGES FROM FRENCH REVOLUTION



PROBABLE QUESTIONS

1. WHO WAS THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK “SOCIAL CONTACT”?
2. WHO WROTE THE BOOK “SPIRIT OF LAWS”?
3. “CANDID” WAS WRITTEN BY.....?
4. WHAT WAS “TITHS”?
5. WHAT WAS “TALLY”?
6. WHO WAS MARIE ANTONIETTE?
7. MENTION ANY TWO SCHOLARS WHI INSPIRED THE PEOPLE OF FRENCH TO RISE IN REVOLUTION?