

Source: [KBhHIST201FrenchRevolution](#)

1 | Acien Régime

1.1 | Societal Structure

Strict grid of social hierarchy resulted due to birthright => Great Chain of Being

Great Chain of Being * Entire world organized structurally * God at the top, rocks at the bottom * In which, King on the top — God's divine representative ("L'état c'est moi" — the state is me) * French societies organized into three castes — "estates" * First Estate => clergy; enjoyed high status * Second Estate => aristocracy; provided military and monetary support * *Les Grands*: largest landholders w/ large houses * *Seigneurs*: provincial nobles who simply owned estates in the countryside * Third Estate => 97% of the population * Production! * Reproduction! * Work! * Relatively prosperous, but <40% owned land * Most rented land from lords as tenant farmers/sharecroppers * Economy generally rural + dominate by subsistence farming

1.2 | "Caste" Syste