



GS FOUNDATION BATCH FOR CSE 2024

World History - 01

**(Renaissance, Reformation and the
Enlightenment)**

Renaissance, Reformation and the Enlightenment

The 14th century in Italy was a century of transformation, if not Renaissance. Italians interacted with the Arabs leading to an exchange of new ideas. The most important among them were:

1. The importance of the **mortal realm**.
2. **Humanism** i.e. the importance of man, his ability to change his own destiny and the supreme and see of his genius.
3. The importance of **questioning** established beliefs and practices.

Early historians claimed that 14th century Italians simply re-learned the lost knowledge of ancient Greece and Rome. This thinking has changed over the last 50 years or so. Modern historians believe that the generation and transmission of knowledge is a continuous process. If the Greeks and Romans contributed to it, so did the Chinese, Indians, Persians and Arabs.

14th century Italy was characterised by a number of cultural, scientific and philosophical advancements.

The new writers, philosophers and artists compelled the people to observe, analyse and question their reality. This led to the demolition of many beliefs, practices and institutions and gave birth to the modern physical and social sciences.

Scientists like Copernicus, Newton and Galileo challenged the church's teachings.

- They proved that the earth is a spheroid rather than being flat.
- Gravity was used to explain the reason that objects fall as opposed to the churches teachings that the world is heavy because of the sense of man.
- It was also proved that the earth revolves around the sun.

Not only did these scientific findings transform the outlook of European society, it also set the stage for the **Scientific Revolution** and the **Age of Discovery**, which in turn paved the way to the rise of **Mercantilism**, the **Industrial Revolution** and **Colonialism**.

Poets, painters and sculptors also had a massive impact on European consciousness. The works of Milton, Shakespeare, Chaucer, da Vinci, Raphael, Michelangelo, Bernini etc. **glorified the human form and human ability**. Through their works, they put human beings on a high pedestal close to God.

Religious reformers like Martin Luther and John Calvin started challenging the corruption within the church and the domination of the church in daily life. This challenge caused a schism within the Church forced the Catholic Church to reform itself to a certain degree.

The transforming economic structure had a major impact on politics. The emergent **traders and middle-class** were the first to bring change. They wanted uniformity in laws, taxes, currency etc. and thus supported a strong centralised monarchy instead of a fragmented feudal polity. This eventually led to the emergence of modern nation-states.

The Enlightenment

These changes went on to usher the **Age of Enlightenment**, during which a number of philosophers such as Locke, Rousseau, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Kant etc. put forward their ideas about the nature of the European society, value system, polity and economy their evils, and their solutions.

John Locke: Natural Rights

- Man was free in the state of nature.
- The reason why the state was devised as an institution was to protect the life, liberty and property of individuals.
- Locke also emphasised that humans were born with these inalienable Natural Rights.

- He also questioned the idea of the Divine Right to rule.

Rousseau: Social Contract Theory

- He stated that the subjects of a state voluntarily choose to appoint an authority to govern them. The social contract exists between the subjects and the ruler that they appoint to ensure their welfare.
- Failure on the part of the state/ruler to uphold the social contract could result in the overthrow of the ruler by the subjects.

Voltaire: Secularism

- He argued that the source of all evil in European society was the church.
- He advocated for limiting the role of the church to religious affairs only and emphasised that it should not interfere in matters of state and the daily affairs of the people.

Montesquieu: Separation of Powers

- He argued that the source of evil in European society was the concentration of too much power in a single authority.
- Therefore he advocated for the separation of the executive, legislative and judicial powers of the state and vesting them in different authorities who could exercise a check on each other.

Significance and Impact

The ideas of enlightenment represented a powerful force which would go on to shape the history of Europe and the rest of the world for the next few centuries.

They unleashed the ideas of **liberalism and nationalism**, which inspired a series of **revolutions and counter revolutions** throughout the late 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

Adam Smith's 'Laissez Faire' gave rise to the free-trade movement, which led to the acceleration of the **Industrial Revolution**, which in turn facilitated **colonisation and imperial competition**. Colonial exploitation led to the emergence of **nationalism in the colonies and decolonisation**.

Capitalist exploitation of the working class gave birth to the ideologies of **socialism and communism**, which later inspired communist revolutions such as the Russian and Chinese Revolutions.

American Revolution

Background

The discovery of the new world in 1492 opened a new source for exploration and opportunities. Many Europeans started migrating to the Americas as adventurers, explorers, outlaws, freethinkers, heretics and outcasts.

They colonised the eastern seaboard and established **13 British Colonies**. These colonies enjoyed a great degree of **political autonomy**. They elected their own legislatures and governors. They enacted their own laws and imposed their own taxes.

Although the British Parliament was paramount and enacted a number of laws affecting these colonies from the 1650s to 1750s, none of these laws were rigidly enforced.

They followed the policy of '**Salutary Neglect**' due to the following factors:

1. The British Government believed that coercive economic and political control over the budding colonies would **stifle** their growth.
2. More importantly, the **Anglo French rivalry** and French control of Canada was a major factor behind the policy. The British were concerned that any effort to exercise direct control of diminish American freedoms would drive the colonies into the arms of the French.

The **American experience** had been one of intense struggle, hardship and individual enterprise. They had built the entire country from the ground up. In doing so, they had to overcome America's unforgiving terrain and hostile natives.

Thus the Americans were fiercely independent and the right to property was considered sacrosanct.

Major Developments and Causes

The Seven Years War (1756-63) resulted in French defeat and the end of French influence in North America. Although the British had emerged victorious, the war had been a very costly affair for them.

1763 Onwards: Abandonment of Salutary Neglect - The British Prime Minister Greenville made provisions to enforce existing **taxes** on essential commodities such as lead, iron, paper, glass, tea, etc. in the American colonies. He also enforced the navigation act of 1651. In addition to this, new laws such as the Sugar Act, Stamp Act and Quartering Act were also passed by the British Parliament.

The British justified this with the logic that **Americans should pay for their own defence**. Further, they were emboldened by the **disappearance of the French threat** and felt confident to **abandon their policy of Salutary Neglect**.

By this period, the Americans had matured politically and desired greater political autonomy. Therefore, these acts were in direct conflict with their aspirations. However the British government continued to ignore them.

1767: Townshend Acts - the British Parliament passed a series of acts known as the Townshend Acts, designed primarily **to assert the right of the Parliament to govern the colonies**. They involved the suspension of a representative assembly and strict provisions for the collection of revenue duties.

These acts were resisted everywhere with verbal agitation and physical violence, deliberate evasion of duties, renewed nonimportation agreements among merchants, and overt acts of hostility toward British enforcement agents, especially in Boston. In response, in October 1768, Parliament dispatched two regiments of the British army to Boston.

1770: Boston Massacre - In Boston, a small British army detachment that was threatened by mob harassment opened fire and killed five people, an incident soon known as the Boston Massacre. The incident was used by American patriots to fuel anti-British sentiment.

1773: Lord North's Tea Policy and the Boston Tea Party - British Prime Minister Lord North made an exemption to the Navigation Act, allowing the East India Company to conduct direct trade in tea with the colonies. Further, the Company was granted a monopoly over tea trade.

Till now, American interlopers had been smuggling tea from China primarily via Holland to bypass the British tax on tea. The new policy would have made the Company's tea cheaper, destroying their competitive advantage. It was also a tool for legitimising the Crown's right to tax American trade.

As a sign of protest, a group of American patriots dumped a consignment of British tea harboured at Boston, into the ocean. This incident became famous as the Boston Tea Party. After this, the physical confrontation between the Americans and British troops increased. From now on, "**no taxation without representation**" became the watchword of the resistance.

1774: Coercive Acts - In retaliation, the British Parliament enacted four punitive laws collectively known as the Coercive Acts. Rather than intimidating the colonists, it had the effect of unifying them in opposition against the British.

1775: First Intercontinental Congress - All 13 colonies send representatives to Philadelphia and together put forward the demand for greater political autonomy. At the same time they were ready to accept British paramountcy. These demands were rejected by the British government.

1776: Declaration of Independence - On 4 July, 1776 the Second Intercontinental Congress was held and the colonies declared independence from British rule. This brought them in direct conflict with the British.

A series of battles was fought between 1776 to 1781. The Americans, assisted heavily by the French, used guerrilla tactics and kept the British

engaged in the South for long periods. Finally, the British were forced to accept defeat. Cornwallis, the commander of the British forces surrendered to George Washington, the American general at Yorktown in 1781. In this manner, the American war of Independence came to an end. The British formally recognised American independence through the **Treaty of Paris (1783)**.

American Constitution

Once American independence was formally recognised, now the biggest task before the Americans was to make a new constitution. A constituent assembly of 55 members performed this task in 1787-88. This four page document is considered to be one of the most important and forward-looking constitutions in the world.

The 13 colonies surrendered their sovereignty and ratified the Articles of Confederation to form a federation known as the United States of America.

The Constitution ensured liberty and equality along with several fundamental rights such as:

- Freedom of speech, thought and expression.
- Freedom of religion, movement and occupation.
- Right to a dignified life.
- Right to property.

The independence of the judiciary was well defined. However, the separation of powers was not watertight initially. This was established later through amendments.

The most important achievement of the Constitution was its Republican form of government. George Washington was elected as the first president of the US in 1789.

Significance of the American Revolution

The American revolution signalled the beginning of a new era. It marks the birth of a powerful **continent-sized republic**.

The American constitution **inspired many modern Constitutions**. The American Bill of Rights inspired the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizens in France after the French revolution.

The American revolution was the **first practical example of the success of enlightenment era ideas** of philosophers such as John Locke, Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau.

It had a direct and profound impact upon the **French Revolution** which followed a decade later.

- The financial and military support extended by the French monarchy worsened the economic position of France, leading to proposals for increasing the burden of taxation on the French people thus precipitating a revolt.
- The French soldiers who participated in large numbers in the American revolution argued that the same ideals must be replicated/upheld in France as well.

The idea of republicanism was also very attractive. It inspired a string of **republican revolutions** in Ireland (1798) Latin America (1820s) and Europe (1830, 1848).

The American revolution also taught a hard lesson to the British. They had made the mistake of following the policy of benign neglect which was partly responsible for the revolution. They avoided the same mistake in India. The **Pitt's India Act of 1784** started the process of increasing direct government control over India's politics.

The essence of the American revolution had been liberty and equality. However the scope of these ideals was quite limited in the American constitution. The evil of **slavery** continued to persist. In fact the status of slaves as private property was confirmed by the Constitution. Further, there was **no political equality** between whites and non-whites or between men and women.

American Civil War (1861-65)

Causes

The **economic disparity** between the North and South American states is seen as the major cause for the civil war. The southern economy was a plantation and mining-based economy which needed intense labour provided by slaves. The northern economy was industrial and needed cheap labour which could be provided by freed slaves.

The American constitution had failed to abolish slavery. A section of Americans resented this on moral and religious grounds and in 1793, the **Abolitionist Movement** was born. It was viewed suspiciously by the South as a northern conspiracy.

The **Westward expansion** of the United States had also become problematic. Every time a new state was incorporated, differences would arise on its status as a 'free state' or 'slave state' and the Missouri Compromise (1820) and the Compromise of 1850 offered temporary truce but could not diffuse the conflict permanently.



The **election campaign of Abraham Lincoln** deepened the suspicion of the South. He had taken a strong anti-slavery position. After his election, although he did not make any moves to emancipate slaves, **11 southern states** led by South Carolina formed a **Confederacy** and declared independence from the union. They were able to do so because the **Constitution had not explicitly prohibited secession from the Union**.

Lincoln wanted to avoid a civil war and offered **amnesty** to the confederacy, which was **rejected**. Thus, he was left with no option but to declare war.

Consequences

The civil war proved to be the **bloodiest conflict** in American history till date. It proved that the military strength of America was quite weak and as a conscious effort was made to modernise and restructure the army. As a result, America emerged as **one of the strongest military powers** in the world.

After the war, the ambiguity regarding the rights of states to secede was clarified. The Constitution affirmed America's status as an **indestructible union of indestructible states**.

Slavery had been abolished through the Emancipation Proclamation of Abraham Lincoln in 1862. This was formalised by the **13th Amendment** to the American constitution.

The **14th Amendment** was adopted giving whites and non-whites **political equality**. Freed slaves were recognised as full **citizens**.

They were given the right to **vote** by the **15th Amendment**.

With the abolition of slavery, the inhuman **Atlantic slave trade came to an end**.

However, civil rights for African Americans would continue to be threatened especially in the deep south i.e. Mississippi, Alabama, Virginia, Louisiana and Texas. They would have to wait for another century until the **Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s**, which ended some of the worst policies of **segregation and Jim Crow**.

Industrial Revolution

- Definition
- Factors responsible for its emergence in England
- Different phases of the industrial revolution
- Impact/consequences of the industrial revolution
- Significance for Europe and the world

Definition

The term industrial revolution refers to the wider social, economic, cultural and political **changes which accompany the transformation of the production process** from traditional handicrafts based cottage industries **to machine based mass production in factories**. Capital plays a major role in organising the various factors of production.

Factors responsible for its emergence in England

1. Geographical

Britain is an **island nation** with a long coastline which was traditionally dependent on a strong navy for its security. This led to the development of a large and advanced shipping industry which was essential for carrying out trade and commerce.

It had vast resources of **coal and iron** in close proximity with each other which also facilitated industrialisation.

Navigation through rivers and canals was more developed in England than the rest of Europe. Transportation was improved further with the emergence of the Metallised Road/MacAdamised road.

Railways were introduced in the early 19th century. This further facilitated industrialisation.

Due to its **isolation from mainland Europe**, England also remained free from continental politics and wars.

2. Economic

An **agricultural revolution** had taken place in England during the 17th and 18th centuries as a result of the '**Enclosure Movement**' which had led to the consolidation of land holdings and the **freeing up of labour**. **Increased productivity** had led to a surplus which was sufficient to sustain the large industrial population.

Capital accumulation, which is essential for industrialisation, was maximum in England because of the agricultural revolution and England's maritime trading activities.

The **availability of credit** from large established banks also helped in the emergence of industrialisation. By 1800, London alone had more than 600 banks.

Training institutions were set up by industrialists to impart industrial skills on a large scale.

3. Political

After the **Glorious Revolution of 1688**, England emerged as a **constitutional monarchy** and Parliament became supreme. The **rule of law** became stronger and the rights to **property and personal liberty became sacrosanct**. This resulted in an impetus for private enterprise, open competition and bolstered investor sentiment. Elsewhere in Europe the economy was constrained by antiquated and arbitrary restrictions and the monopoly of guilds.

The late 18th century witnessed the **entry of capitalists into Parliament**. Naturally, they supported policies which favoured industrialisation such as free trade, the end of the monopoly of the East India Company, protection for domestic industries, etc.

4. Socio-cultural

The English society was far more **liberal** than the other European societies. As a result its people were more adventurous and enterprising.

Unlike continental Europe, the English society was **free from the control of the Catholic Church**. England had been a Protestant nation for more than 200 years before the beginning of the industrial revolution. Thus, the '**Protestant Ethic**' which emphasised upon the accumulation of material wealth was operating in the society. This favoured industrialisation.

The Protestant ethos of **questioning established practises** helped in the generation and circulation of **new ideas**, leading to several inventions and discoveries. Between the 1780s and 1820s more than 3000 inventions were made in the textile, metal, chemical and other machine industries.

Different phases of the Industrial Revolution

1. Phase 1: 1760-1800

During this phase, the **textile industry** developed the most with new inventions in weaving, spinning and ginning respectively.

Inland waterway navigation expanded rapidly after the invention of the steam engine in 1769. During this phase, all the city's of Britain were connected by a network of canals and waterways.

2. Phase 2: 1800-1820

During this phase, the **iron and steel industry** developed the most because of the use of coal instead of charcoal or wood.

In the same phase, the **railways and road** networks were also expanded.

3. Phase 3: 1830s onwards

After the 1830s, the **chemical, cement and heavy machine industries** witnessed rapid development. This quickly made England the most developed industrial nation in the world.

Impact/consequences of the industrial revolution

1. Economic

The industrial revolution resulted in the creation of huge amounts of wealth, making **England the richest country** in the world.

It led to the growth of industrial centres located mostly in cities, leading to rapid **urbanisation**.

It resulted in changing the nature of the English economy from a primarily agricultural to **primarily industrial**.

Many banks and financial institutions were established leading to the **expansion of the credit and insurance market**.

2. Socio-political

As the industrial revolution accelerated, the **capitalist class became increasingly influential in British politics**. Many industrialists themselves entered Parliament. The government was also dependent on the capitalists for economic strength and offshore colonies. Many acts and laws favouring the industries were made.

Two major classes were born due to the industrial revolution

- Industrialists
- Workers

The **working and living conditions for industrial workers were extremely poor**. Working conditions in the factories and mills were not regulated. There were no laws related to working hours, minimum wage, job production, workers' insurance or holidays. They lived subhuman lives of filth and squalor in slums. Diseases were rampant and malnutrition was widespread.

The close proximity of workers led to the birth of **class consciousness**, resulting in the emergence of trade unions which agitated on behalf of workers. They were also supported by some intellectuals who played an important role in shaping the **socialist ideology**.

3. Socio-cultural

The industrial revolution brought a **new trend in literature and arts** such as theatre, painting and sculpture.

Novels and modern fiction became extremely popular. They often revolved around themes such as the struggles within the rapidly transforming English society, the differences between the classes and the cultural bridges which united them and the stark differences between the urban landscape and the countryside. The characters in the stories were more realistic and grey rather than black and white.

On the other hand, painters and sculptors depicted the real life of the industrial workers, their struggles, their class consciousness, their anger, frustration and hopes.

Thus, the changes brought about by the industrial revolution in society had completely transformed the cultural landscape.

Significance for Europe and the world

The industrial revolution prepared the ground for the **political hegemony of Britain**. It was the richest, most technologically advanced and militarily superior country in the world.

It also intensified the **rivalry** between England and other European countries who had been left behind in the race for industrial supremacy and were forced to rapidly industrialise.

The industrial revolution became a major cause for the **rapid colonisation** of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Since colonies were reliable sources of raw material as well as captive markets, the late entrants to the industrial revolution, such as Italy, Germany and Russia started scrambling for them, resulting in frequent **colonial conflicts** between different European powers.

The industrial revolution brought **new technology to the colonies** along with modern means of transportation and communication. Although these had been introduced for efficient exploitation by the colonial powers, eventually the people of the colonised world used them to their own advantage.

French Revolution (1789)

- France on the eve of Revolution/ Causes of the revolution
 - Social Causes
 - Political Causes
 - Economic Causes
- Beginning of the French Revolution
- Phases of the Revolution
 - Phase 1: 1789 to 91 – National Assembly
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 - Phase 3: 1793 to 94 – Reign of Terror
 - Phase 4: 1795 to 99 – Rule of the Directory
 - Phase 5: 1799 to 1804 – The Consulate
 - Phase 6: 1804 to 1813 – Napoleonic Empire
- Estimate of Napoleon's Contributions
- Significance of the French Revolution

France on the eve of Revolution/ Causes of the revolution

Social Causes

The French society was divided into three classes known as the **Three Estates**.

1. **The First Estate consisted of the clergy.** They numbered about 150,000 and enjoyed numerous privileges.
 - They owned around 30% of all the land of France and did not pay any taxes. Rather they had the right to collect 'Tithes' (religious tax) and extract 'Corvée' (forced labour).
 - The first estate was not homogeneous and there was a class division within it. The higher clergy, which numbered around 10,000, formed the elite section of the clerical class and enjoyed all the privileges and controlled most of the resources.

- The remainder of the clergy i.e. the lower clergy lived among the commoners and sympathised deeply with the interest and concerns of the third estate.
2. **The Second Estate consisted of the nobility or the aristocracy.** They were the ruling elite who enjoyed hereditary titles and lands. They were dynastic in nature and monopolised all important offices of state. They were exempt from paying taxes and controlled another 30% of the land. They numbered about 200,000.
3. **The Third Estate consisted of the common people.** It consisted of peasants, artisans, craftsmen, traders, merchants and a small section of intellectuals and professionals.
- The **entire burden of taxation** fell upon their shoulders and they did not enjoy any privileges.
 - They were **not allowed to hold any important state office** and were required to serve the first two Estates.
 - Among them the position of the peasants was the worst. They formed about 80% of the French population, numbering roughly 20,000,000 and paid the heaviest rates of tax.
 - It is estimated that an average French peasant in 1789 paid roughly 2/3 of his income as tax.

Political Causes

King **Louis XVI was an incapable and unwilling ruler** leading to indecision and anarchy. Queen Marie Antoinette, along with some corrupt ministers, was the de facto ruler. The people of France were deeply suspicious of her because of her Austrian heritage and lavish lifestyle.

Provincial and local administration was also in bad shape. Illegal extortion and atrocities by the authorities were common. Rule of law had broken down completely. Arrest warrants known as 'Letters de Cachet' could be purchased from the courts. Appointment to state office was not done on the basis of merit, rather the practice of selling government

office to the highest bidder had become common. This had made local administration even more exploitative.

Political thinkers also played an important role in engendering political consciousness among a section of the urban French. Writers such as Rousseau, Voltaire and Montesquieu put forward ideas such as liberty equality, secularism, rule of law and the separation of powers. Some even supported republicanism. Many of them were inspired by the success of the American revolution.

In Paris, political activists such as Bailly mobilised a section of the **Parisian mob**. The mob, a volatile mix of the urban middle class and the Sans Culottes, motivated by hunger and rumour, became a major force in shaping the initial stages of the revolution.

To divert the attention of the people, the king tried to drag France into diplomatic and military conflicts. However, the local issues were too significant to ignore.

Economic Causes

Due to the Seven Years War (1756-63) and irresponsible spending, France had accumulated a **huge debt** both from internal as well as external sources.

The **budgetary practices of the French kings** were also to blame to a large extent for the economic difficulties of France. Instead of undertaking expenditure in accordance with the resources available, the French monarchy had fallen into the **habit of raising taxes and loans** to cover them. As a result, the taxes and interest rates were abnormally high.

The **French economy was not as diversified** as the English economy. Industrial production was negligible and agricultural growth had also stagnated.

The **tax burden was mostly on farmers** and traders since the nobility and clergy were exempt.

In order to overcome financial difficulties, new taxes were proposed. Since the Third Estate had been taxed to the highest level possible, **Necker, the King's finance minister suggested taxing the clergy and nobility.**

However, the nobility and clergy pressured the king not to impose these taxes and convinced him to convene a meeting of the Estates General, a feudal assembly with representation from all 3 Estates, which had not been called since 1614. They emphasised that only the Estates General had the authority to impose new taxes on the First and Second Estates. This episode is known as "**The Aristocratic Revolution**" in French history.

It was in this background that France witnessed consecutive floods and droughts, leading to **crop failures**. **Food shortages** caused the price of food grains to skyrocket and distressed **peasants started migrating towards cities** in search of work.

However, because of the economic downturn, demand was at an all-time low. There was no work to be found. The ranks of the unemployed, hungry and angry Parisian mob started to swell and a cloud of uncertainty and unrest hung over the city. The situation had become decidedly revolutionary. All that was needed was a spark.

Beginning of the French Revolution

In 1789, the king called a meeting of the **Estates General** which had not been convened since 1614. This itself was a revolutionary development because it symbolised the surrender of royal prerogative to tax subjects.

Traditionally, the three Estates were represented by 300 members each. They sat separately and considered proposals. Each Estate collectively had one vote.

The Third Estate demanded that its strength be doubled to 600, which was accepted by the king. However, he did not accept the demand of joint sitting.

On 5 June, 1789, the first meeting of the Estates General was held at Versailles. The representatives of the Third Estate complained about poor facilities and shabby treatment. From the very beginning, there was an air of mistrust.

On 17 June, 1789, the **members of the Third Estate clashed with the royal forces** after being denied entry into the assembly.

On **20 June, 1789**, the assembled at the Royal tennis courts where they took the famous “**Tennis Court Oath**”, that they would not disperse until they made a new constitution for France. They began referring to themselves as the **National Assembly** and took up the job of drafting a new constitution.

On **14 July, 1789**, the Parisian mob stormed the Bastille, an infamous prison where political prisoners were held. They killed a few guards and liberated the prisoners. The ‘**Fall of Bastille**’ is regarded as the “Real Beginning of the French Revolution”. It symbolised the overthrow of the ‘Ancien Régime’ along with all of its attendant features.

Phases of the Revolution

Phase 1: 1789 to 91 – National Assembly

A **new constitution** was drafted during this period. Its important features were as follows:

- The principle of **Constitutional Monarchy** was established bringing the absolute rule of the Bourbons to an end.
- **Feudalism was abolished**. The privileges of the first and second Estates were abolished and political equality was established among all French.
- The **Declaration of Rights of man and Citizens** guaranteed the right to life, liberty and property.

- The Constitution provided for free and fair **elections**, to elect a Legislative Assembly.

However, it was **not completely democratic** and created two classes of citizens i.e. Active (taxpayers) and passive (non-taxpayers).

- Only active citizens had the right to vote.
- Further, women were also denied suffrage.

The provisions of this Constitution clearly indicate that **middle class interests** had prevailed and the interests of the working class were largely ignored.

Phase 2: 1791 to 93 – Legislative Assembly

The Legislative Assembly elected by active citizens, became **divided on the issue of the continuation of monarchy**. Those who favoured a constitutional monarchy sat to the **right** of the assembly and those who preferred a republican government sat to the **left**. The **Jacobins**, a group within the left, led by Maximilien Robespierre would play a very important role in the time to come.

Alarmed by the spread of revolutionary sentiment, Prussia and Austria, through the **Declaration of Pillnitz (1791)** declared their intention to restore absolute monarchy in France and mounted an invasion.

A **Committee of Public Safety** was established in order to organise the defence of France and safeguard the revolution. It came to be dominated by the Jacobins who used the invasion as an excuse to **persecute suspected royalists**. Although the French forces managed to repel the invasion, the war had not ended.

In **1792**, **Louis XVI tried to escape** from France to Austria. He was captured and brought back to Paris.

Phase 3: 1793 to 94 – Reign of Terror

Robespierre used this incident to further inflame the threat of a royalist conspiracy and gained the trust of the mob. The Committee of Public Safety organised a **Revolutionary Tribunal** and the guillotine became the main instrument of serving ‘revolutionary justice’.

The **king and queen were both tried for treason and executed**. The Reign of Terror witnessed the execution of **more than 20,000** people belonging to all three Estates.

During this period, some important agendas were carried out by force.

- Fixing the prices of commodities.
- Fixing minimum wages.
- Reforming education which was divested from the church.
- Introducing the decimal system in weights and measures. Ending special uniforms and dresses for the clergy and nobility.

Thus, while in the first phase of the revolution middle class interests had dominated, during the terror some working class demands were fulfilled.

The Reign of Terror ended with a coup and **Robespierre himself was guillotined** on the charges of treason.

Phase 4: 1795 to 99 – Rule of the Directory

The Committee of Public Safety was replaced with a five member Directory shortly after the execution of Robespierre.

This phase is associated with **ineffectiveness and weakness**. The internal policies of the directory could not revive the French economy, which had been ravaged by constant warfare. Its external policy was also weak and France faced reversals on all fronts.

Alarmed by the **rising popularity of Napoleon**, who was seen as the great French hope and had proven victorious in Italy, the directory sent him to Egypt instead of keeping him on the Austrian front.

Phase 5: 1799 to 1804 – The Consulate

It was in this background that Napoleon rose to power. His status as a national hero and the Directory's unpopularity allowed him to replace it with a **Consulate** consisting of 3 Consuls. **Napoleon named himself First Consul.**

The people of France welcomed Napoleon's rule because they were tired of continuous war and wanted stability. This was against the revolution and the ideal of republicanism. However, ten long years of war had **weakened the revolutionary zeal** of the people. They were **more interested in stability and security** which a strong leader like Napoleon could provide.

Phase 6: 1804 to 1813 – Napoleonic Empire

In 1804, Napoleon ended the French Consulate and crowned himself as the Emperor. His army defeated one European power after another and by 1807 he had become the undisputed master of Europe. He also introduced some far-reaching reforms in France:

In 1800, he established the **Bank of France** to rapidly industrialise the country.

He established the **Paris University** in 1800 and **re-organised the education system** by replacing private and religious institutions with government schools known as 'Lycee'. The curriculum was designed to promote the feeling of nationalism and national service. **Primary education was made free.**

The principle of **meritocracy** replaced nepotism in matters of state appointments.

Before Napoleon, France did not have a uniform code of laws. The ancient Roman code had been modified heavily alongside a number of local variations. Napoleon corrected this by qualifying all the civil and criminal laws of France. This is known as the '**Code Napoleon**' and it continued to guide lawmakers long into the future.

Napoleon also undertook a number of important **public works** such as the canal system of Paris, the railway network of northern France and the road network of France and Germany.

He also introduced a uniform civil service known as the '**Auditure system**'. Civil servants such as prefects, sub-prefects, inspectors and sub-inspectors were appointed directly by him and were answerable to him as well.

However, some of his policies were against revolutionary ideals.

These were:

Napoleon's rule was a **despotic monarchical rule**. He had revived the institution of absolute monarchy and all powers of state flowed through him.

Freedom of the press, speech and expression were rigidly regulated.

He created a system of military honours known as the '**Legion of Honour**', which was a reincarnation of the old aristocracy.

Napoleon **appointed his own brothers and cousins to high office** including as monarchs of other countries.

Gender relations in the Napoleonic era were quite backward. He considered women to be nothing more than breeding stock, whose only role was to produce brave sons for France.

In this way, Napoleon was both a champion and destroyer of the revolution.

Significance of the French Revolution

The French Revolution ensured **numerous rights** for its citizens. Initially for the middle class and later for all classes.

It ended the **Ancient Regime**, removed the old monarchy and established a republic for a brief period.

The ideas of **liberty, equality and fraternity** took deep root within the French consciousness and **spread** to the rest of Europe through its revolutionary occupation armies.

A **series of revolutions** took place in Europe during the early half of the 19th century. The major ideals of these revolutions were liberalism and nationalism. They had emerged from the French Revolution and during the 19th century, France continued to provide ideological leadership to Europe.

It was due to the immense influence exercised by France over Europe that the Austrian Chancellor Metternich had famously commented "**When France sneezes, all of Europe catches cold**".

The **colonies** of Asia, Africa and Latin America were also attracted to the ideas of the French revolution. A section of the educated urban intelligentsia in these colonies drew inspiration from their success and shaped their own **national movements** on the basis of these ideas.