Section One: The Crisis of the French Monarchy

- **Section Overview** could no longer command sufficient taxes to finance itself.
- King Louis XVI often came into conflict with the aristocracy and clergy who received exemptions from certain taxes as he wanted to start taxing them to increase the royal treasury.
- Louis XVI was forced to call the Estates General, which had not met since 1614, in order to search for solutions to the economic crisis.

- **The Monarchy Seeks New Taxes**
  - Financial woes of the eighteenth century
    - Seven Years’ War (1756-1763) left France deeply in debt
      - on the eve of revolution, the interest and payments on the royal debt amounted to just over one-half the entire budget
    - French support for the American Revolution against Britain further deepened the financial difficulties for France.
    - Paradoxically, France was a rich nation with an impoverished government.
  - Stand-off between the monarchy and aristocracy
    - Louis XIV firmly established absolutism in France but following the Seven Years’ War, the aristocracy in France challenged the monarchy’s power.
    - Financial advisors to the crown insisted that the king tap the wealth of the nobility but these efforts were blocked by the *Parlement of Paris and provincial parlements*.
    - Louis XV and Louis XVI lacked the character and political skills to resolve the dispute with the aristocracy.
  - Rene Maupeou (1714-1792)
    - Louis XV appointed him chancellor in 1770
    - His goal was to break the power of the *parlements* and tax the nobility.
      - Maupeou disbanded the *parlements* and exiled the members to remote parts of the country.
    - Louis XV unexpectedly died from smallpox in 1774 and his successor, Louis XVI, reestablished the *parlements* and fired Maupeou in order to gain popular support from the people of France.
  - Unpopularity of the Monarchy
    - the merchant and professional classes saw the economic policies of the monarchy as anathema to economic growth
    - once restored, the *parlements* repeatedly quoted enlightenment ideas and accused the monarchy of tyranny
    - the sexually scandalous life of Louis XV was known throughout France
    - the wife of Louis XVI, Marie Antionette, gained a reputation for sexual misconduct and personal extravagance
  - Perception of the French monarchy compared to other monarchs at the time
    - Frederick II of Prussia and Joseph II of Austria genuinely saw themselves, and were seen by their subjects, as patriotic servants of the state.
    - George III of Britain was known for his model character and as seeking the economic improvement of his nation.

- **Necker’s Report**
  - Jacques Necker (1732-1804)
    - Swiss banker who was appointed as the new director-general of finances in France in 1781
    - Necker released a report on the financial situation in France
      - He found that a large portion of royal revenues went to pensions for aristocrats and other royal court favorites.
• this revelation angered the aristocracy and Necker was soon forced out of office.

• Calonne’s Reform Plan and the Assembly of Notables
  o Charles Alexandre de Calonne (1734-1802)
    ▪ Served as minister of finance
  o Calonne’s plan
    ▪ encourage internal trade by removing internal barriers
    ▪ lower some taxes like the _gabelle_ on salt and to transform the _corvee_, peasants’ labor services on public works, into money payments
    ▪ reduce government regulation of grain
    ▪ wanted to establish new local assemblies made up of landowners to approve new taxes; in these assemblies, voting would depend on how much land one owned rather than social status
  o Calonne meets with the Assembly of Notables (1787)
    ▪ This was a committee nominated by the royal ministry from the upper ranks of the aristocracy and the church.
    ▪ The notables distrusted Calonne and called for the reappointment of Necker
    ▪ The notables refused to implement taxes on the nobles and clergy and explained that only the Estates General could give the monarchy approval to institute new taxes.

• Deadlock and the Calling of the Estates General
  o Louis appointed Etienne Charles Lomenie de Brienne (1727-1794), the archbishop of Toulouse, to the position of minister of finance.
    ▪ Brienne attempted to reform the land tax
      • the _Parlement of Paris_ took the position that it did not have the authority to legislate new taxes
      • the government appealed to the Assembly of the Clergy for financial support
        o The clergy, comprised mostly of aristocrats, not only refused to loan the monarchy money, but also reduced the voluntary contribution, or _don gratuity_, that the clergy paid to the government in lieu of taxes.
  o Provincial provinces and aristocrats wanted the monarchy to restore the privileges they possessed before Richelieu and Louis XIV stripped them of their aristocratic rights.
  o Bankers refused in the summer of 1788 to loan the government money.
  o Brienne resigned, Necker replaced him and called for a meeting of the Estates General

Section Two: The Revolution of 1789

• The Estates General Becomes the National Assembly
  o Debate Over Organization and Voting
    ▪ First estate was the clergy, the Second Estate the nobility, and the Third estate was everyone else in the kingdom.
    ▪ During debates, the Third Estate expressed that it would not allow the monarchy and aristocracy to determine the future of France.
    ▪ In 1788, the _Parlement of Paris_ ruled that voting in the Estates General should be conducted by order, rather than by head.
      • This means each estate was given one vote and thus the first and second estates could use their two votes to prevent the passing of any reforms that represent the interest of the third estate.
  o Doubling the Third
    ▪ Due to intense debate, the royal council decided that strengthening the Third Estate would best serve the monarchy.
    ▪ Therefore, the royal council announced that the Third Estate could elect twice as many representatives as the nobles and the clergy.
This meant that they counted by head rather than order, the Third Estate would have tremendous influence in the Estates General.
- Liberal and reform-minded nobles would support the Third Estate, thus cementing their dominance.
- Voting procedures had not been decided when the Estates General gathered at Versailles in May 1789.

The Cahiers de Doleances
- Cahiers de doléances were a list of grievances that the representatives of each estate brought to the meeting.
- It seems as though the second and third estates had similar ambitions entering the meeting of the Estates General, but conflict rather than cooperation dominated the early sessions.
- Grievances included the following complaints:
  - government waste
  - indirect taxes
  - church taxes and corruption
  - hunting rights of the aristocracy
- Suggested reforms
  - More equitable taxes
  - More local control of administration
  - Free press
  - Unified weights and measures to facilitate trade

The Third Estate Creates the National Assembly
- Representatives of the Third Estate—consisting of local officials, professionals, and other persons of property—refused to sit as a separate order as the king desired and for several weeks there was a standoff.
- On June 1, 1789, the Third Estate invited clergy and nobles to join them in creating a new legislative body.
- On June 17, that body declared itself the National Assembly, and on June 19—by a narrow margin—the Second Estate joined the National Assembly.

The Tennis Court Oath
- Louis XVI decided to call a “Royal Session” of the Estates General and ordered that the room where the National Assembly had been gathering be closed and locked.
- Finding themselves locked out of their usual meeting place, the National Assembly moved to a nearby indoor tennis court where members of the National Assembly vowed to write a constitution for France.
- Despite royal warnings, several members of the First and Second Estates joined the National Assembly in defiance of the king.
- The National Assembly changed its name to the National Constituent Assembly because of its intention to write a new constitution.

The Fall of the Bastille
- Bad decisions made by Louis XVI
  - Louis XVI gathered troops around Versailles and Paris and considered taking military action against the National Constituent Assembly.
  - On July 11, without consulting Assembly leaders, Louis abruptly fired Jacques Necker, his minister of finance.
  - Rather than cooperated with the National Constituent Assembly’s intent to establish a constitutional monarchy, Louis decided to ally himself with the conservative members of the Second Estate.
- Reactions from the people
  - Anxiety grew among Parisians as the king mobilized his forces.
    - The people started organizing a citizen militia.
Furthermore, rising bread prices had produced bread riots.
- They regarded the dismissal of Necker—a popular figure with the people of Paris—as the beginning of a royal offensive against the National Constituent Assembly.

- **July 14, 1789**
  - In Paris, many small shopkeepers, tradesmen, artisans, and wage earners marched to the Bastille to get weapons for the militia.
  - Due to poor leadership, the royal troops stationed at the Bastille fired into the crowd killing ninety-eight people.
  - The crowd stormed the fortress and released seven prisoners who were being held there and they also killed several troops and the commander of the Bastille.

- **July 15, 1789**
  - The militia of Paris, renamed the National Guard, was led by Marquis de Lafayette, a hero of the American Revolution and a young liberal aristocrat.
  - Lafayette chose the cockade—the red and blue stripes from the colors of the coat of arms of Paris, separated by the white stripes of the royal flag—became the insignia for the revolution and eventually the tricolor flag of France.

- **July 1789** are days during the revolution—like the storming of the Bastille—when the populace of Paris redirected the course of the revolution.

- A few days later, Louis XVI visited Paris adorned in the cockade and recognized the organized electors as the legitimate government of the city.

- **The Great Fear and the Night of August 4**
  - **Great Fear**
    - Rumors spread across the French countryside that royal troops would be sent into rural districts.
    - In response rural peasants burned chateaux, destroyed legal records and documents, and refused to pay feudal dues
      - They were reclaiming rights and property they had loss throughout the eighteenth century.
      - Their targets were aristocrats and ecclesiastical landlords.
  - **Night of August 4, 1789**
    - A meeting was called by the National Constituent Assembly in order to bring a halt to the riots in the countryside.
    - Liberal nobles and clerics rose up and renounced their hunting and fishing rights, judicial authority, and legal exemptions.
    - The significance was that after August 4, all French citizens were subject to the same and equal law.

- **The Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen**
  - In late August 1789, the National Constituent Assembly decided to publish a document stating the broad, or general, political principles of their organization; this document is known as *The Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen*.
  - The document asserted that:
    - all men were “born and remain free and equal in rights
    - natural rights proclaimed were “liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression”
    - all sovereignty lies with the people and their representatives
    - taxation was to be apportioned equally according to capacity to pay
    - freedom of religion was affirmed
    - property was “an inviolable and sacred right”
  - The document used universal language applicable across national borders.
  - The document applied specifically to men, not women.
    - Men were suited for citizenship, women for motherhood and domestic life.
Women lobbied for inclusion primarily due to their desire to secure property rights of their inheritances.

The Parisian Women's March on Versailles
- When Louis XVI stalled to ratify the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen and the aristocratic renunciation of feudalism, people became suspicious that he may attempt to use force.
- Bread was scarce and expensive.
- On October 5, 1789, 7,000 Parisian women armed with pikes, guns, swords, and knives marched to Versailles demanding more bread.
- Reluctantly, Louis announced his ratification of the end of feudalism and approved the Declaration.
- The crowd ordered Louis and his family to return to Paris with them where he took up residence in the old palace of Tuileries in the heart of Paris.

Section Three: The Reconstruction of France

- Section Overview
  - The National Constituent Assembly organized the government as a constitutional monarchy.
  - The Assembly sought social equality and extensive democracy.

- Political Reorganization
  - Section Overview
    - The major political authority of the nation would be a unicameral Legislative Assembly, in which all laws would originate.
    - The monarch was allowed a veto that could delay, but not halt, legislation.
    - The Assembly also had the power to declare war and peace.
  - Active and Passive Citizens—Citizens of France were divided into these two groupings
    - Active Citizens
      - Man paying annual taxes equal to three days of local labor wages could vote.
      - They chose electors who voted for the members of the legislature.
      - Further property qualifications were required to serve as an elector or legislature.
      - Only about 50,000 citizens of 25 million could qualify as electors or members of the Legislative Assembly.
      - These arrangements transferred political power from aristocratic wealth to all forms of propertied wealth in the nation.
  - Olympe de Gouges's Declaration of the Rights of Women
    - Olympe de Gouges was the daughter of a butcher in northwest France who became a major revolutionary in Paris.
    - Her Declaration of the Rights of Women was directed to Marie Antionette in which she demanded that women be regarded as citizens, and not merely as daughters, sisters, and wives.
    - Other reforms she advocated:
      - Equality in marriage
      - Improved education for women
    - Her document, which draws heavily from the language of the Declaration of Rights of Man, illustrates how the universal language of the document can apply to even those not mentioned in it.
  - Departments Replace Provinces
    - The National Constituent Assembly abolished the ancient French provinces of Burgundy and Brittany and established in their place 83 administrative units called departments.
      - Departments were subdivided into districts, cantons, and communes.
      - All ancient judicial courts and parlements were abolished and were replaced by a unified court of elected judges and prosecutors.
      - The most degrading punishments, such as branding, torture, and public flogging were deemed illegal.

- Economic Policy
• Workers’ Organizations Prohibited
  ▪ Chapelier Law
    • Forbade workers’ organizations because they reflected the guilds of the Old Regime.
      o In addition, these labor organizations oppose the new values of the revolution like political and social individualism.

• Confiscation of Church Lands
  ▪ Financial problems in France
    • Poor economic conditions persisted in France as the National Constituent Assembly worked to sort out the debt compiled by the Old Regime.
      o They couldn’t simply erase the debt as the government owed bankers, merchants, and commercial traders.
    • The Assembly decided to pay the debt by confiscating and selling Roman Catholic church property and land holdings.
      o The results were further inflation, religious schism, and civil war.

• The Assignats
  ▪ Assignats were government bonds and their value was guaranteed by the revenue expected to be generated from the sale of church property.
  ▪ The assignats began to be used as currency.
  ▪ The Assembly decided to produce more in order to liquidate the national debt and to create a large body of new property owners with a direct stake in the revolution.
  ▪ The plan backfired as the value of assignats dropped and inflation increased, putting new stress on the urban poor.

• The Civil Constitution of the Clergy
  o In July 1790, the National Constituent Assembly issued the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in order to reconstruct the Church in France after its lands had been confiscated.
    ▪ Number of bishoprics was reduced from 135 to 83
    ▪ Elections were to be held for pastors and bishops and they would be salaried employees of the state.
    ▪ Dissolved all religious orders in France except those that cared for the sick or ran schools
  o Civil Constitution of the Clergy is regarded as a major mistake by the National Assembly
    ▪ It embittered relations between church and state in France
    ▪ The Assembly required that all members of the clergy take an oath to support the Constitution
      • members of the clergy who refused to take the oath were labeled as “refractory” and they were removed from their clerical roles.
    ▪ The conflict between the revolutionary government in France and the Catholic Church created a moral crisis for many people in France.

• Counterrevolutionary Activity in France
  o Emigres—collective name for the 16,000 aristocrats who left France during the revolution in order to plan to stifle revolution
  o Flight to Varennes
    ▪ the queen and the king’s brother, the count of Artois, persuaded Louis XVI to attempt to flee the country
    ▪ on June 20, 1791, disguised as servants, the royal family fled Paris but were recognized and escorted back to the city by soldiers
    ▪ many believed this signified that he was a traitor
  o Declaration of Pillnitz
    ▪ Under pressure from French émigrés, Emperor Leopold II of Austria, who was the brother of Marie Antionette, and King Frederick William II of Prussia issued this ultimatum.
    ▪ The two monarchs vowed to intervene in France to protect the royal family and to preserve the monarchy.
Section Five: The End of the Monarchy—A Second Revolution

- **Section Overview**
  - Major challenges for the Assembly
    - Resistance to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy
    - How to deal with the king’s flight
    - What to do about the Declaration of Pillnitz

- **Emergence of the Jacobins**
  - Who were the Jacobins?
    - a club of like-minded men that emerged out of the National Assembly
    - they established networks throughout the provinces
  - What were the political views of the Jacobins?
    - they wanted a republic rather than a constitutional monarchy
    - held the ideologies of the most radical thinkers of the Enlightenment, and, particularly the views of Rousseau who emphasized equality, popular sovereignty, and civic virtue
  - Girondists were a subgroup of the Jacobins and assumed leadership in the Assembly
    - they led the Assembly to declare war on Austria
    - they believed the war was necessary for the revolution to survive
  - War with Austria
    - War radicalized politics in France and led to the overthrow of the constitutional monarchy and established a republic—this is commonly known as the Second Revolution
    - A group of women led by Pauline Leon petitioned the National Assembly for the right to bear arms and the right to fight to protect the revolution
      - Some women enlisted and served in the army during the war with Austria.
    - Brunswick Manifesto
      - The duke of Brunswick, commander of the Prussian military, issued a declaration threatening to burn Paris to the ground if the royal family was harmed.
      - This ignited further suspicions against the king.
    - The “commune” formed in Paris in order to protect the gains of the revolution from both internal and external threats.
    - August 10, 1792
      - Crowds swarmed the Tuileries Palace and forced Louis XVI and Marie Antionete to take refuge in the Legislative Assembly.
      - The crowd fought with the royal Swiss guard.
      - Royal family was from here out imprisoned—in comfortable quarters—but the king was not permitted to perform any political functions

- **The Convention and the Role of the Sans-Culottes**
  - The September Massacres
    - In September 1792, the Parisian crowd again rose to action by summarily executing about 1,200 people who were in the city jails.
      - The prisoners included some clergymen and aristocrats, but most were common criminals who the crown assumed were counterrevolutionaries.
    - The Paris Commune legitimized these killings.
    - The Paris Commune compelled the Legislative Assembly to assemble a new committee to write a constitution for France that advocates universal male suffrage.
      - The committee was to be chosen by election.
      - It was named the Convention after the American Constitutional Convention of 1787.
      - The Convention met on September 21, 1792 and declared France a republic—that is, a nation governed by an elected assembly without a monarch.
      - On the same day, the French army—filled with patriotic recruits—halted the Prussian advance at the battle of Valmy in eastern France.
Section Six: Europe at War with the Revolution

- Section Overview
  - Most of Europe had been ambivalent toward the revolutionary events in France but some who favored political reform regarded the revolution as a wisely and rationally reorganizing a corrupt and inefficient government.

- Edmund Burke Attacks the Revolution
  - Burke was concerned that turmoil would persist as people not used to governing attempt to reconstruct a war ravaged nation.
  - Thomas Paine composed *The Rights of Man* in response to Burke in which he defends the revolutionary principles.
  - Burke’s book became a handbook for conservatives throughout Europe.

- The Suppression of Reform in Britain
  - William Pitt the Younger
    - Turned against reform and popular movements and suppressed the London Corresponding Society which was founded in 1792 as a working-class reform group.
    - Pitt secured Parliamentary approval for acts suspending habeas corpus, and making the writing of certain ideas treasonable.

- Goals of the Sans-culottes
  - The second revolution was the work of the radical Jacobins and the people of Paris known as the sans-culottes.
  - Sans-culottes means “without breeches” which was derived from the long trousers that, as working people, they wore instead of aristocratic knee breeches.
  - They included shopkeepers, artisans, wage earners, and even some factory workers.
  - Role of the sans-culottes in the revolution
    - Sans-culottes were severely impacted by persistent food shortages, inflation, and the fall of the value of assignats.
    - The revolutionary leaders realized they needed the support of the san-culottes if they wanted the revolution to succeed and, therefore, their ideals attitudes, ideals, and desires were the primary factors in the internal development of the revolution.
  - Political views of the sans-culottes
    - they advocated a community of small property owners who would participate in the politics of the nation
    - believed the original revolutionary leaders from the Third Estate simply wanted to share political power, social prestige, and economic security with the aristocracy; sans-culottes, however, wanted to ensure equality among all citizens
    - they were anti-monarchical, strongly republican, and suspicious even of representative government
    - the Paris Commune was their chief political vehicle and crowd action their chief instruments
  - The Policies of the Jacobins
    - Although the Jacobins hated the aristocracy and hereditary privilege, they, unlike the sans-culottes, were not suspicious of all wealth and also sought representative government
    - The Jacobins favored an unregulated economy.
    - Once the Convention began to deliberate in order to draw up a constitution, the Jacobin members, known as the Mountain because their seats were high up in the assembly hall, worked with the sans-culottes to carry revolution further.
    - Other members of the Jacobins, known as the Girondists, did not support or agree to work with the sans-culottes.
In Birmingham, a mob forced the radical political thinker and chemist, Joseph Priestly, out of the country.

- **The Second and Third Partitions of Poland**
  - Reasons for the partitions
    - Eastern powers feared the principles of the French Revolution were establishing themselves in Poland.
  - Polish Patriots
    - group of nobles who issued a new constitution that substituted a hereditary for an elective monarch, provided for real executive authority in the monarch and his council, established a new bicameral diet, and eliminated the *liberum veto*.
    - they also adopted the ideas of equality before the law and religious toleration
  - In April 1792, conservative Polish nobles invited Russia to restore the old order.
    - Russian army quickly defeated the reformist Polish forces led by Tadeusz Kosciuszko.
    - Prussia moved troops from its western border, where they were fighting against France, to the east to protect Poland from Russia.
    - Catherine of Russia and Frederick William II of Prussia, however, came to an agreement in early 1793 to carry out the second partition of Poland.
  - Impact of the second partition of Poland
    - In 1794, Polish officers mutinied against efforts to unite their forces with the Russian army.
    - As the mutiny expanded, the language and symbols of the French Revolution appeared in Polish cities.
    - On November 4, 1794, a coalition of Prussian, Austrian, and Russian troops were sent into Poland to quell the mutiny.
      - Russian troops carried out the killings of over 10,000 Poles outside Warsaw.
  - Third Partition of Poland
    - In 1795, the three eastern powers portioned Poland among themselves.

**Section Seven: The Reign of Terror**

- **War with Europe**
  - The French invasion of the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium) roused the rest of Europe to active hostility against the France.
  - The Convention announced that the Scheldt River was open to free trade which violated an agreement the British had established with Austria and Holland.
    - The British were on the verge of declaring war on France; however, the Convention made the declaration of war on Britain first.
  - By April 1793, the Jacobins had control of the government and France was at war with Austria, Prussia, Great Britain, Spain, Sardinia, and Holland.
    - Known as the First Coalition, this alliance sought to protect their social structures, political systems, and economic interests against the revolution.
  - There was a perception in France that a “new” kind of war had developed.
    - The goal of this war was to protect the revolution.
    - The government took extraordinary actions in order to ensure the survival of the ideals of the revolution.
      - Thousands of people, from all walks of life, were arrested, and in many cases, executed.
      - These actions, designed to silence dissent, are known as the Reign of Terror.
    - The terror lasted from the autumn of 1793 to the midsummer of 1794.

- **The Republic Defended**
  - The Committee of Public Safety
    - This group was established to carry out the executive duties of the government.
    - Many of the members were radical republicans and they worked in cooperation with the *sans-culottes* of Paris.
  - The *Levee en Masse*
In early June 1793, the ***sans-culottes*** invaded the Convention and successfully demanded the expulsion of the Girondist members.

As a result, the Mountain and those with radical ideas dominated the Convention.

Lazare Carnot, a member of the Convention in charge of the military, announced *a levée en masse*, a military conscription for all males.

On September 29, 1793, the Convention established a ceiling on prices much to the liking of the ***sans-culottes***.

**The Republic of Virtue and Robespierre’s Justification of Terror**

- The Convention and Committee of Public Safety transform France into “a republic of virtue.”
  - Civic virtue—derived from the Rousseau’s ideas expressed in the *Social Contract*—the sacrifice of one’s self and one’s interest for the goof of the republic.
  - Streets were renamed with egalitarian vocabulary of the enlightenment.
  - Republican dress—modeled after the ***sans-culottes***—became the fashion of the period.

- The Committee of Public Safety carried out terror by claiming it was for the public good.
  - Maximilien Robespierre (1758-1794) was the dominant figure in the Committee.
    - He is a very controversial character in history
    - Read his address to the Convention in early 1794 on page 617 in textbook

**Repression of the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women**

- Women’s society
  - Founded by Pauline Leon and Claire Lacombe
  - Illustrates the political consciousness of women during the revolution.
  - They frequented the bleachers of the Convention to hear the debates
  - Became increasingly radical and demanded stricter control of bread prices and other commodities, and even brawled with working market women whom they thought to be insufficiently revolutionary
  - Demanded to wear the *cockade* that male citizens usually wore in their hats

- Jacobins in the Convention react to the women’s society
  - Feared the turmoil caused by women’s clubs and banned them
  - Jacobins believed the women’s society opposed many of their economic policies.
  - They used Rousseau’s language of “separate spheres” to justify the ban.
  - Women were excluded from the army and the galleries of the Convention.

- Olympe de Gouges
  - Author of the *Declaration of Rights of Women* and opposed the terrors
  - Guillotined in November 1793

**De-Christianization**

- New calendar to replace the Christian calendar
  - The calendar was dated from the first day of the birth of the French Republic
  - Twelve months with thirty days named for the seasons and climate
  - In November 1793, the Convention decreed that the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris was to be called a “temple of reason”

- Systematic destruction of churches, the persecution of Christians, and the slaughter of many clergymen and nuns followed

- Robespierre believed de-Christianization to be necessary as it would erode loyalty to the republic

**Revolutionary Tribunals**

- Convention established revolutionary tribunals in the summer of 1793 with the task of putting “enemies of the republic” on trial
  - “Enemies” included the following kinds of people:
    - Those who might aid other European powers
    - Those who endanger republican virtue
    - Good republicans who opposed the dominant faction of the government
  - Significance of the guillotine
• considered a human form of execution
• equality in life and death
  ▪ victims of the terror
    • Marie Antionette, other members of the royal family, and many aristocrats who were executed in October 1793
    • Girondist who had been popular in the Legislative Assembly were next
      ▪ peasants who were considered counterrevolutionary were executed
      ▪ several hundred people, including many priests, were tied to rafts and drowned in the river Loire

• The End of the Terror
  ▪ Revolutionaries turn against themselves
    ▪ Robespierre executes many political leaders
      ▪ On March 24, 1794 he secured the execution of certain extreme sans-culottes leaders known as enrages.
      ▪ He turned against members of the Convention, like Jacques Danton, who was a popular figure in revolutionary France.
        ▪ Danton and others were accused of being insufficiently militant on the war, profiting from the revolution, and rejecting the link between politics and moral virtue.
        ▪ Danton was executed in April 1794.
      ▪ On June 10, Robespierre secured the passage of the Law of 22 Prairial
        ▪ this permitted the revolutionary tribunal to convict suspects without hearing substantial evidence against them
  ▪ Fall of Robespierre
    ▪ “Cult of the Supreme Being”
      ▪ a deistic cult established by Robespierre which reflected Rousseau’s vision of a civic religion.
      ▪ a bit abstract for the masses
    ▪ Robespierre’s arrest and execution
      ▪ After making a hostile speech in which he insisted that members of the government were plotting against him, members of the Convention had him arrested on July 27.
      ▪ The next day, he and 80 of his supporters were executed.
    ▪ The Convention convinced the people of Paris that Robespierre had sought dictatorial powers and he was viewed as an internal enemy to the revolution.

Section Eight: The Thermidorian Reaction

• Section Overview
  ▪ The Convention used the execution of Robespierre as an opportunity to wrestle power back from the Committee of Public Safety.
    ▪ terror ended soon thereafter but over 25,000 people had already been executed
  ▪ Thermidorian Reaction
    ▪ Robespierre was executed on 9 Thermidor so the subsequent events are collectively known as the “Thermidorian Reaction.”
      ▪ machinery of terror was destroyed
      ▪ establishment of a new constitutional regime as it was believed that the revolution had grown too radical
      ▪ sans-culottes leadership was replaced by generally wealthy middle-class and professional people
      ▪ Girondist who were imprisoned or in hiding were invited to return to their seats
• the notorious Law of 22 Prairial was abolished
• Paris Jacobin Club was closed
• In Lyons, Toulon, and Marseilles, so called “bands of Jesus” dragged suspected terrorists from prison and murdered them

**Establishment of the Directory**
- A new Constitution was written which created a legislature with two houses: Council of Elders and the lower Council of 500
  - Council of Elders
    - men over 40 who were either husbands or widowers
  - Lower Council of 500
    - men of at least 30 years who were either single or marries
    - the executive body was to be a five-person Directory who the Elders would select from a list submitted by the lower council of 500
  - Property qualifications limited who could vote but an enormous group of small landholders were now granted access to civic life

**Removal of the Sans-Culottes from Political Life**
- With the war effort succeeding, the Convention severed its ties with the *sans-culottes*
- The Convention lifted price regulations and the price of food rose sharply causing the worse bread shortage in the period during the winter of 1794-1795.
- A royalist uprising turned against the Convention on October 5, 1795, but the government turned its artillery—led by Napoleon Bonaparte—against the royalists and dispersed the crowd.
- Treaties of Basel in March and June 1795
  - Peace was made with Prussia and Spain
- Conspiracies against the Directory
  - Spring 1796, Gracchus Babeuf led the Conspiracy of Equals
    - He and his followers called for more radical democracy and more equality of property.
- Challenges for the Directory
  - narrow franchise of the constitution
  - the Two-Thirds Law
    - which enabled members to maintain their seats for prolonged periods of time
  - Catholic royalist revival
  - Suppression of the *sans-culottes*