

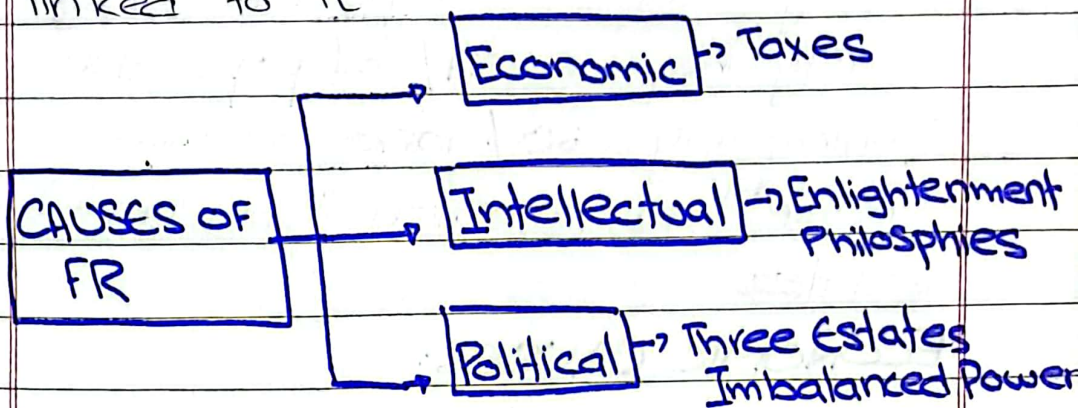
## QUESTION : 2

16/1/25

Critically analyze the socio-political causes & economic causes of French Revolution. To what extent did Revolution achieve its objectives, and how did Napoleon's rise to power reshape these goals?

### CAUSES OF FRENCH REVOLUTION:

French Revolution (1789-1815) marks one of the most prominent events of Europe's history. There are certain reasons linked to it.



### ANCIEN REGIME:

During that era, France was divided into three segments as a society and they were commonly termed the three states.

#### First Estate ~ Clergy:

Church was a powerful institution and clerics possessed undue power.

They were 1% population and owned 10% of the lands. They collected "Tithe" from third estate and were exempted of taxes themselves.

## Second Estate ~ Nobility:

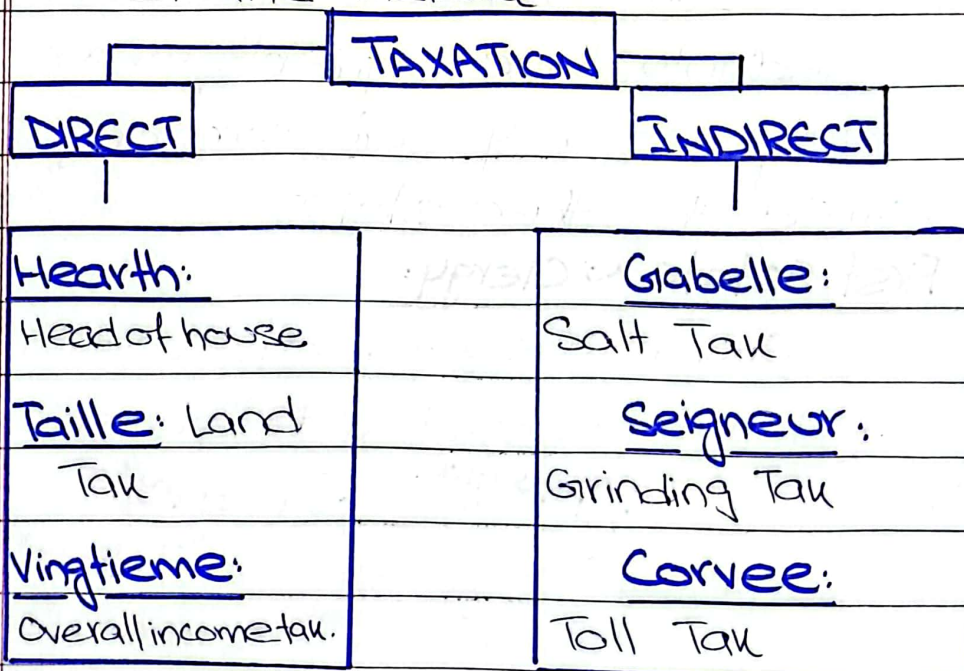
The nobles made up about 2-3% of the population but owned 30% of lands. They enjoyed higher ranks in the military and upper social status.

## Third Estate ~ Commoners:

Devastated were bourgeoisie who belonged to this segment of the society. They were 97% of population owning only 60% lands and live under heavy taxation from other two estates.

## ECONOMIC CAUSES:

The Third Estate was living under the burden of all sorts of taxes; both direct and indirect.



## Sorrows of Peasants:

People of the third estate worked mainly as peasants and all their earnings went to taxes.

## Decline in Serfdom in France:

People in France still considered themselves better because Louis XVI had ended concept of Serfdom, that prevailed in Austria and Spain.

## Socio-Political Causes:

• Despite such heavy taxes, the third estate had no political rights. It was absurd that 3% of the people decided for 97% of the commoners. The roots of "elite capture" on decision-making and resources are prevalent.

They were mainly well-educated people who had knowledge about their rights. The lack of political identity and centralization of power within monarchs triggered revolution.

The American & British Revolutions also had spill-over effects on Europe.

## Attainment of Objectives by the French Revolutionaries:

The French Revolution was marked by Declaration of National Assembly of France on 17 June 1789. The course of events followed to Tennis Court Oath. The revolutionaries demanded free will acceptance to form the constitution and a unicameral legislature. Under extreme pressure, Louis XVI had to agree to their demands. In the words of David Thompson,

"If nothing else had happened, it was enough to be called a revolution."

The course of revolution saw dawn with Bastille Incident, Tuileries-1 and Versailles. Eventually, on 26 August 1789, revolutionaries passed the "Declaration of Rights of Men and Citizens." France became a constitutional monarchy and

the dark ages of Absolute  
Deistic Monarchies came to an  
end. This event validates that  
the Revolution was much  
successful in attaining its objectives.

This was followed by  
multiple events like the  
**Civil Constitution of Clergy, 1790**  
that in turn curtailed the powers  
of the Church and imposed checks  
on the Clergy. Eventually,  
France translated into a **Republic**  
**on 20 June 1792** reaching the  
peak of revolution post the battle  
of Valmy.

All these incidents depict  
the fulfillment of objectives.

### Napoleon's Rise to Power ~ Reshaping Goals of French Revolution:

Napoleon Bonaparte attained  
power in 1799 by the use of  
force and installing a **coup**  
within a **coup**, ending the system  
of Directory (1795-99).

Napoleonic Regime is

characterized by many battles but his home policies are not in line with objectives of the revolution.

### 1. Establishment of Popular Monarchy:

The entire core value of French revolution crashed under the deistic philosophy of Napoleon. He was a flag-bearer of populism and concentrated powers to himself. It is depicted in his famous saying:

" I saw the crown of France lying on the floor so I picked it up with my sword "

-Napoleon Bonaparte

### 2. National Reconciliation order:

The entire revolution was targeted against Royal Psolanimity but Napoleon gave NRC to the royalists and joined hands with royals, Herendentists etc.

### 3 Restoration of Church Power by Concordat Agreement 1801:

The battle of the revolutionaries was against Nobility and Clergy. Napoleon declared Catholicism as the major religion under the 1801 Concordat Agreement. It was first step to revitalization of powers of the Church.

### 4. Other Policies:

Other significant home policies like educational policies paved way for uniting the people.

Wars and Territorial Settlements served his vested interests.

However, his economic policy - **Continental System** led to decline of Napoleonic Rule and ended once and for all the monarchies in France.

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