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Estimate the influence of French Revolution on English Society and Political thought:

Introduction:

The French Revolution was a period of social and political upheaval which began in 1789 and ended in 1799 with the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. Caused by social inequality and economic hardships, the revolution also had impacts on the British society, economy, and political thought. The effects on English society included strengthening of conservatism, rise of radical democratic ideas, trade disruption, and rioting.

Causes of the French Revolution:

1- Social inequality in France:

The French society was divided into nobility, clergy, and commoners.

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clergy and the nobility collected taxes and wielded political influence while the commoners were exploited.

2- Economic Hardships:

National debt of France had grown due to wars, and because of unequal taxation, the burden fell mainly on the poor.

3- Role of Philosophers:

Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Rousseau talked about popular sovereignty, equality, and rights. This led people to question absolute monarchy.

Influence of the French Revolution on English Society:

i- Political Influence:

1- Strengthening of conservatism:

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Edmund Burke in his book "Reflections on the Revolution in France 1790" advocated for gradual reforms against the radical change in France.

2-Rise of Radical Democratic Ideals:

Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man 1791-92" was a direct response to Burke. He argued for parliamentary reform, political equality, and popular sovereignty.

3-Spread of Political Awareness Among Masses:

Debates between figures such as Burke and Paine took place through widely circulated pamphlets, books, and newspapers. This significantly improved the political literacy of the English people.

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4- Enactment of Laws to Suppress Rebellion:

Alexander by the spread of radical ideas Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger enacted laws to curb rebellion. The laws included suspension of Habeas Corpus 1794, the seditious meetings Act 1795, and the Treasonable Practices Act 1795.

ii- Economic Impacts:

Economic Impacts of the French Revolution on English Society

Disruption of Trade Routes and Rising Inflation

Industrial Growth Due to Military Demands

Increased National Debt and Taxation

1- Disruption of Trade Routes and Rising Inflation:

European trade routes were disrupted due to the imperialist

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France after the revolution. This led to rise of food and grain prices in Britain.

2-Industrial Growth due to Military Demands:

The wars with France after the revolution increased the demand of iron, textiles, and ships. This drastically grew industries.

3-Increased Debt and Taxation:

Due to wars, the national debt and taxes in Britain increased. This raised debates about public finance and welfare.

iii-Social Impacts:

1-USE OF SPIES TO MONITOR Radical societies:

The English government deployed spy networks to monitor radical societies, such as the

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London Corresponding Society.

2- Press censorship and Prosecution:

Press was censored and radical publishers—including Thomas Paine and his sympathizers—were prosecuted.

3- Widespread unemployment:

The disruption of trade, returning soldiers, and mechanization of industries led to widespread unemployment in Britain.

4- Spread of Propaganda and Loyalist Literature:

The government sponsored and encouraged patriotic propaganda and loyalist literature to foster national unity and counter radicalism due to the French Revolution.

Conclusion:

The French Revolution was

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a decade long period of political and social instability in France. However, it also had numerous social, economic and political impacts on Britain.