

Chapter Twenty One Terms

Jacobins:

The Jacobins were a political club in France during the late eighteenth century. After the National Assembly disbanded, the younger and more radical Jacobins were granted power in the Legislative Assembly. They had control over France during the revolution after this period. The two rival factions of the Jacobin Club were the slightly less radical Girondin and the radical Mountain. Jacques-Pierre Brissot was the leader of the Girondin while Robespierre and Danton were the leaders of the Mountain. Marat, while not a direct member, is still associated with the Mountain due to his radical call for blood. France's radicalism and threat to feudalism and the monarchy led to Austria (Leopold II) and Prussia (Frederick William II) issuing the Declaration of Pillnitz, which stated that the nations would invade if the situation became too dangerous. The radical Jacobins soon prompted war with numerous European nations. The Mountain eventually gained control and the revolution turned even more radical; over forty-thousand died during the Reign of Terror. The Jacobins are important because they symbolized radicalism during the French Revolution and showed the split among the people. War with Austria and Prussia also occurred because of them and violence against the French people was condoned under them.

The Girondin:

The Girondin were the less radical group created by Jacques-Pierre Brissot and belonged to the Jacobin Club in late eighteenth century France. They first gained political control with the creation of the Legislative Assembly. Many were arrested by members of the Mountain, however, and later executed. The Girondin are important because they showed that not everyone was incredibly radical and showed the political split in the Jacobin Club.

The Reign of Terror:

The Reign of Terror was an event occurring during the French Revolution in the late eighteenth century. Under Robespierre and the Mountain, over forty thousand people were executed by guillotine. Even Danton and other radicals were targeted, ending with Robespierre himself. The Mountain used this terror to control the people and subdue those who would usually disagree with their radical policies. This also worked to unify the French and spur nationalism. The Reign of Terror is important because it symbolized the radicalism during this time and also united the French. The use of price controls and the use of terror to create submission and nationalism was also important.

Sans-Culottes:

The sans-culottes were individuals from the working class of France in the late seventeenth century. They demanded radical action to be taken, as they wished to have the means to afford food for their families. After the Mountain began to support them, the sans-culottes greatly influenced the radical revolution. After the creation of the Committee of Public Safety, the revolution became even bloodier. The Reign of Terror was a time in which blood was called for and over forty thousand perished. Price controls were also put in effect and advocated by the sans-culottes along with social equality for all. The sans-culottes are important because they were a symbol of a bottom-up revolution that was influenced by the lower classes and also symbolized the French people leading the way.

Robespierre:

Maximilien Robespierre was a French Jacobin and member of the Mountain in the late eighteenth century. As the French Revolution continued, Robespierre became more and more radical. A prominent member in the radical Committee of Public Safety, Robespierre called for blood during the Reign of Terror. The Reign of Terror united France and brought the people together as those who resisted were executed. Robespierre was executed by guillotine after he became too radical for his colleagues, thus ending the Reign of Terror. Robespierre is important because of his use of terror to unite France and for the fact that his extreme radicalism took the revolution too far and actually led to the end of the radical part of the French Revolution.

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Napoleon:

Napoleon was a great French general during the late eighteenth century who transformed Europe. Known for his Italian campaign and his rather unsuccessful campaign in Egypt, he was a respected military leader. After the Directory collapsed following the Brumaire coup, Napoleon became the Consul of France. A victory against Austria in the Battle of Marengo cemented his influence. His Concordat of 1801 allowed Catholics to worship freely once again while allowing the state to appoint church offices. The Napoleonic Code, basically France's version of common law, set precedents and included clearly written and understood laws. The idea of equality before the law was greatly supported by the people. Women were also given the right to divorce, however declined in influence overall. As finances looked up and a national bank was created, wealthy individuals who had fled during the revolution returned to France. While attempting to invade England and hurt the British, the French plans were halted by Briton Lord Nelson, whose new strategy left Napoleon to focus on other plans within the continent. After a victory at Austerlitz, Napoleon rewrote the map and consolidated the Holy Roman Empire into the German Empire, soon to become the Confederation of the Rhine. He ended feudalism wherever his armies went and also seated relatives on the thrones of Italy and Spain (in some cases taking his last name to show their allegiance to him). Napoleon made a grave mistake, however, after attempting to invade Russia due to a violated treaty. 600,000 Frenchmen took Moscow, however a fire in winter forced them to retreat home. Tzar Alexander I's men managed to strike a deadly blow and only 20,000 men made it home alive. The Allied capture of Paris in 1814 forced him to abdicate and Louis XVIII took over; Napoleon did come back during the Hundred Days but a defeat at the Battle of Waterloo prevented him from retaining power again. Napoleon is important because of his influential Napoleonic Code and for his reorganization of the German Confederation. He also got rid of feudalism in some areas and European nationalism occurred not only in his own nation but in the nations opposing him as well.