
From: The Modern World Global History since 1760 Course Team <noreply@coursera.org>
Sent: Monday, January 28, 2013 3:41 AM
To: jeepproject@yahoo.com
Subject: Starting Week 3

Dear jeffrey epstein,

Dear class,

The material for Week 3 is now posted.

If you are just joining the class, or are falling behind, remember that the weekly quizzes remain open. The later you complete them, there is a modest discount on the possible score. But the scoring system builds in some hedroom. Anyone who works their way through all 14 weeks of quizzes and gets the majority of the questions right will have well earned our Statement of Accomplishment and (perhaps more important) an enriched understanding of how the world got to be the way it is today.

A lot of enrichment is apparent in the discussion forums. In Week Two, for instance, a recurrent question is, as one student put it: Who is revolting against whom?

Well, that answer changes. You start with a context in which aristocrats are rebelling against the king, with the aristocrats invoking ideas of liberty against tyranny. In the American case, it is essential to understand that the rebellious Americans — many of them representing their colonies' version of an aristocracy -- resent the role of a Parliament in London that is not their constituted body. In effect, they are feeling ruled by the British aristocracy and appealing to the King. Independence comes when some conclude the King has become part of the problem, not part of the solution.

Then, in America and in France, what begins as an upper-class movement resistant of royal assertion (with the King often the one claiming to act on behalf of the whole nation) becomes, when mobilized into action, something else. The ideas have a power and logic that keeps spreading in a society where the authority of all kinds has been growing more diffuse (the points in 2.1). An Estates General turns into a National Constituent Assembly — the Third Estate effectively seceding from the other two and asserting itself. A National Constituent Assembly turns into a National Convention. And so on.

And that argument spreads back again from France back to the United States of America, where the 1790s were dominated by a bitter political and cultural argument about the social inclusiveness of their new republic. Federalists accused Republicans of being "democrats" (at that time a term of abuse, a synonym for mob rule). Republicans accused Federalists of being "monarchists," trying to restore aristocratic tyranny with its fiscal-military state.

So what began as one kind of revolt morphed into another, giving birth to huge and lasting arguments about who should be "citizens," what "liberty" means, and what methods government should use in relation to traditional ways of life.

You'll see this 'who is revolting against whom' problem come up again in Week 3, especially in the presentation about Latin America. The answer may sometimes surprise you.

Last point: And what are they revolting against? Not necessarily against a strong ruler, or in favor of "democracy" as we understand that term in our generation. First Consul Bonaparte, the man on horseback for the French republic, was still widely seen as a revolutionary hero. Because many thought he was the necessary dictator in the fight against ...

I'll just stop there and let the presentations for Week 3 pick up the story=

Best wishes,

Philip Zelikow

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