I have made a few changes to next week’s readings and I am still translating some texts; they will all be on the website by late Friday.

My office hours are Tuesdays, 2:00-3:15 or you can make an appointment to see me some other time; please do come tell me about yourself and how I can help you to do better in this course.

Papers will be returned in discussion class.

Proclamation, City of Aix, on procedures for breaking large assignats and getting smaller ones (31 January 1792).
The French Revolution—when was it?

NATIONAL (Constituent) ASSEMBLY

June 20, 1789   Tennis Court Oath
July 14, 1789   Storming of the Bastille
Aug. 4, 1789    “Abolition of Privilege”
Oct. 5, 1789    women’s march on Versailles

early 1790      first Church lands (*biens nationaux*) sold
July 12, 1790   civil constitution of the Clergy
July 14, 1790   Festival of Federation

*more than a year passes*

Sept. 30, 1791   final meeting of Constituent Assembly

LEGISLATIVE (National) ASSEMBLY

Oct. 1, 1791    first meeting of Legislative Assembly

Aug. 10, 1792   monarchy abolished

NATIONAL CONVENTION

Sept. 22, 1792   Republic declared

Why does it take so long?
Why did it take so long to write a constitution?

- easier to agree on some principles (“abolish privilege”) than to implement them
- the more decisions that get made, the more people disagree with them

*All of Old Regime France was structured by “privilege” (private law); there were no common, shared, or public laws; abolishing privilege ends up meaning they have to do everything “from scratch.”*

What kind of constitution are they writing?

- constitutional/parliamentary monarchy—division of powers between an executive branch (the King and his ministers) and a legislative branch (a one-house assembly)
- protects property (including slave owning in the colonies)
- voting or holding office depends on owning a certain amount of property or earning above a certain amount in income
- abolishes “imaginary” crimes such as heresy and witchcraft
Who are “the revolutionaries”?

Deputies in the National Assembly*:
- 75% came from towns (> 2000 people); but overall for France, only 18%
- average age: 46 (but younger men were the dominant voices)
- “First Estate” representatives: 75% parish priests
- “Second Estate”: 4 princes, 16 dukes, 83 marquis, 104 counts, 28 barons
  >70% had titles, whereas only 4% of overall nobility did;
  50% lived in Paris for most of the year; 80% had been in the military
- “Third Estate”: 218 judges, 181 lawyers, 39 notaries or other royal officials;

Newspaper editors:
- Jacques Pierre Brissot, Le Patriote français
- Camille Desmoulins, Révolutions de France et Brabant
- Jean-Paul Marat, L’Ami du peuple

Ordinary people participating in neighborhood political clubs or committees.

Within the National Assembly, 16 deputies each of whom made > 300 speeches.

1. Armand Gaston Camus (b. 1740), canon lawyer, Paris; 605 speeches, often as spokesman for the Pensions or “National Domains” committee; also served as Assembly’s archivist and the first National Archivist of France

2. Baron d’André (b. 1759), counselor in parlement of Aix; 497 speeches; spoke on organization of new judicial system, encouraging international trade, how the Assembly functioned, etc.

4. Honoré Gabriel Riquetti de Mirabeau, Count (1749-1791); “man of letters” who had been jailed for debts, abduction and adultery; 439 speeches – known for rousing oratory;

15. Jean-Siffrein Maury (b. 1746), abbé, member of Académie Française led protest against nationalization of Church property, clerical oath, new taxation system
Marie Joseph Paul Roch Yves Gilbert Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, b. 1757

one of wealthiest men in France; elected to Second Estate

French commander in U.S. war

July 15, 1789, appointed commander of Paris National Guard

Lafayette at the Festival of Federation
July 14, 1790
In other words, many “revolutionaries” were pillars of the Old Regime.

Why didn’t France become a stable constitutional monarchy?

“Louis XVI, Restorer of French Liberty” (upholstery fabric, c.1790); Art Institute of Chicago.

Louis XVI on a coin (1792).
Debt, Deficit, and the Costs of Revolution

*biens nationaux* (national properties)
8-10% of property in France estimated to be far greater

Nov. 1789 Church properties put “at disposal” of the nation

spring 1790 first sales of *biens* at auction

Time gathers ashes from the Altar of the Fatherland where the papers and parchments of privilege are still smoldering; Time marks the foreheads of Bishops, Princes, and nobles with ashes and says “Ashes to ashes, dust to dust”
Civil Constitution of the Clergy (decree voted July, 12 1790)

parish priests all paid by the state

State becomes responsible for poor relief, nursing, education

bishops to be elected by all active citizens (including Protestants and Jews)

all members of the clergy have to take oath of loyalty to the Nation

March 1791 condemned by Pope

May 1791 priests who refuse to take oath can still preach, but have to find their own buildings, pay own expenses, etc.

“I swear to uphold the Constitution with all my power”

divisive issues: the status of the clergy
The Event: the “Flight to Varennes” (June 20, 1791)

“The King has abandoned not just the nobility, the clergy, and the whole right side of the Assembly to the fury of the mobs, but he has also abandoned his friends, his servants, and his ministers. Such conduct is atrocious.”

[former Marquis de] Ferrieres, letter to his wife, June 1791.

June 20     royal family flees Paris; caught near the border
June 25     royal family returns to Paris; king’s power provisionally suspended
July 16     after days of debate, Assembly decides:
            the person of the king is inviolable
            the royal family had been victims of a plot (they were “abducted”)
            Louis to regain full power when he ratifies the new Constitution