

How many revolutions?



What is a revolution?

a process

a turning full circle

an event?

How many revolutions?

from many to one

Other revolutions, counter revolutions

emigration

“federalism” in Lyon

the West



It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...

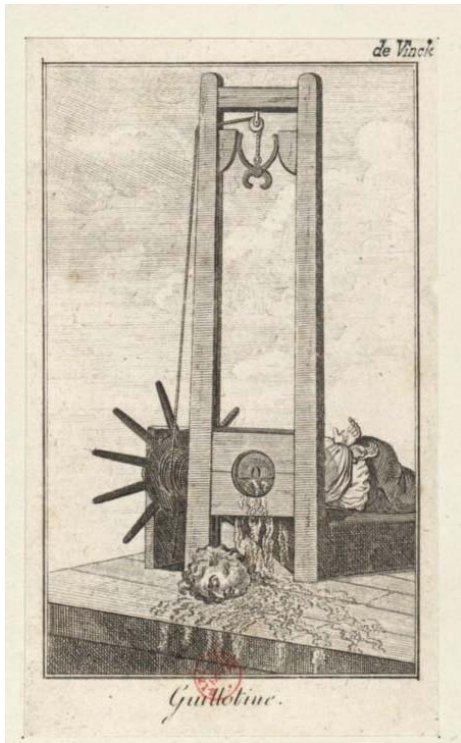
Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859).

The plan is to divide France into some number of *départements*; some think there should be 70, others say 80, others want 120, 125, 203, etc. etc. Each department will be an administrative center, with a legal court and even a diocese, and will be the unit of election for the National Assembly. That is, if a rival plan isn't chosen, which would allow each municipality to send directly its own representative.

Thomas Lindet, writing to municipal officials in his hometown, November 6, 1789.



What is a revolution? an on-going process, not a single event



Revolution as on-going process, not a single event

Encyclopædia Britannica;

OR, A

DICTIONARY

OF

ARTS and SCIENCES,

COMPILED UPON A NEW PLAN.

IN WHICH

The different SCIENCES and ARTS are digested into
distinct Treatises or Systems;

AND

The various TECHNICAL TERMS, &c. are explained as they occur
in the order of the Alphabet.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY COPPERPLATES.

By a SOCIETY of GENTLEMEN in SCOTLAND.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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MDCCLXXI.

REVOLUTION

In politics, *revolution* signifies a grand change or turn in government. In which sense, the [word] “revolution” is used, [primarily], for the great turn of affairs in England in 1688, when King James II abdicated the throne, and the prince and princess of Orange were declared king and queen of England.

The *revolution* of a planet, or a comet, around the sun is nothing but its course from any point of its orbit until its return to the same.

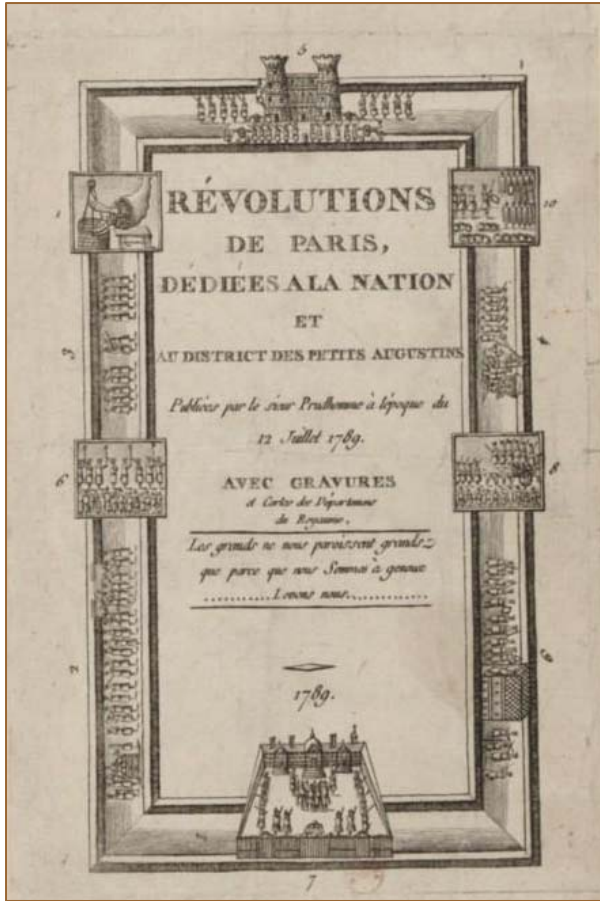
See ASTRONOMY.

Encyclopaedia Britannica (first edition, 1771)



What is a revolution? Eighteenth-century definition

Prudhomme and the revolutions of Paris



“Only excessive misery and the progress of enlightenment can bring about a revolution in a people that has already grown old in the degradation of servitude.”

“Introduction to the Revolution,”
Révolutions de Paris, January 1790.

The Revolutions of Paris, Dedicated to the Nation and to the District of the Little Augustins

“The great only look great because we are on our knees” (1789).

from many revolutions to one

One Revolution, not many, means:
disagreements become threats

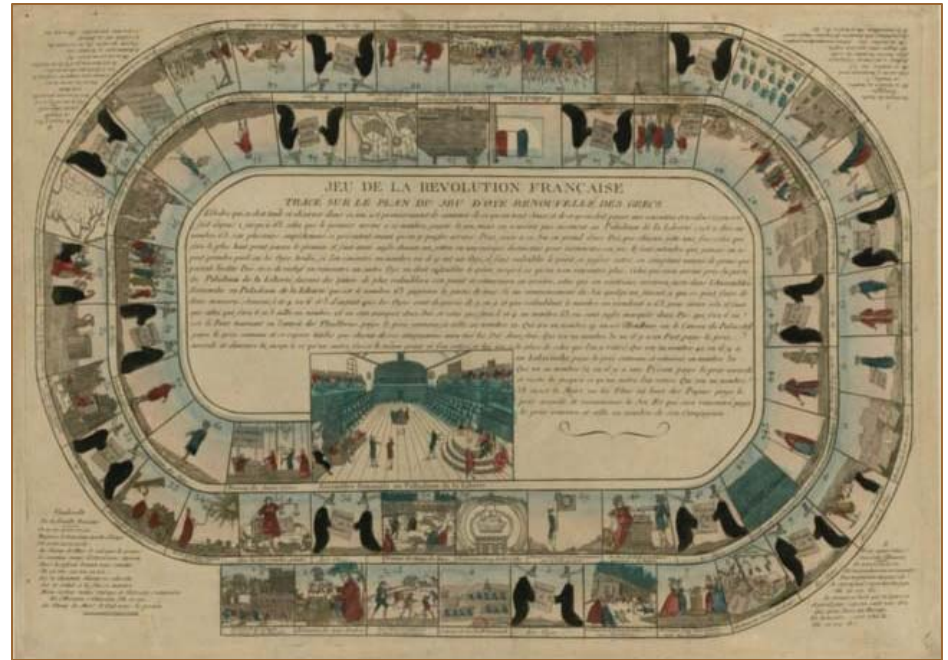
more revolution, or counter revolution?

one element of political success =
being able to make a coherent story

Other Revolutions, counter revolutions
emigration

“federalism”—in Lyon, Marseilles, Toulon

the Vendée and the West



Game of the French Revolution (1791?)

Social breakdown of emigration based on sample of 97,545 (14.6% women)

Clergy	25.2%
Nobility	16.8%
Third Estate	58 %
<i>of which</i>	
“upper middle”	11.1%
workers	14.3%
peasants	19.4%



Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, *Self Portrait in Rome*, 1790

Laws defining emigration and its punishment

9 July 1791	émigrés “invited” to return; those that don’t are to pay triple taxes
9 Nov. 1791	death penalty for those who conspire against France or take up arms against France (<i>law vetoed by Louis XVI</i>)
9 Feb. 1792	émigré property sequestered
17 July 1792	émigré property to be sold as <i>biens nationaux</i>
24 Nov. 1792	returned émigrés ordered to leave France within a week
28 March 1793	émigrés declared “legally dead”
4 brumaire IV (26 Oct. 1795)	political amnesty law does <i>not</i> include émigrés
9 frimaire VI (29 Nov. 1797)	all ex-nobles to be considered “foreign” and banned from political office holding

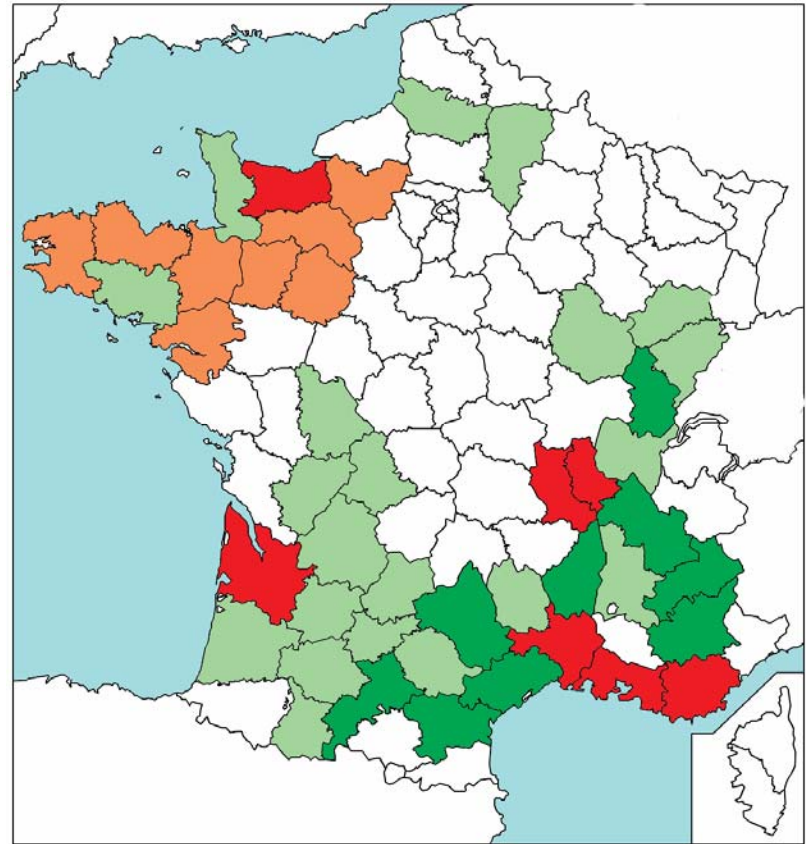
“Federalism” and the French Revolution

“federalists” = label given *by* the Convention to uprisings in many urban areas

politically, means the *opposite* of what it means in US context

red=armed opposition to Convention
orange=support for armed opposition
green=unauthorized formation
of commissions; new electoral
assemblies, etc.

light green=public statements (oral
or printed) disapproving the purge
of the Girondins from the Convention



summer 1793

Revolution in Lyon

second largest city; silk weaving, wholesale trade

severe crisis in luxury trades → massive unemployment

“popular” clubs versus urban elite

March 1793 “girondin” mayor and city council replaced by radicals

June 1793 radicals overthrown
(opposition to heavy taxation
of the richest property owners)
--radicals guillotined

August-October 1793 besieged



Image Credits

1. The entrance staircase of the departmental archives in Lyon; the archives are housed in a former convent; photo RLSpang, autumn 2010.
3. Map adapted from www.hist-geo.co.uk
6. Louis-Marie Prudhomme, *The Revolutions of Paris, Dedicated to the Nation and to the District of the Little Augustins* (1789); photo from gallica.bnf.fr
7. "The Game of the French Revolution" (Paris: Lepine, 1789-1791?); gallica.bnf.fr
8. Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, *Self Portrait in Rome* (1790); oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cms., Uffizi Gallery (Florence, Italy); Image from wikimedia.org
9. map adapted by RLS from www.hist-geo.co.uk; distribution of "federalist" actions as reported by Bill Edmonds, "Federalism' and Urban Revolt in France in 1793," *Journal of Modern History* 55:1 (1983), 22-53.
10. *The Siege of Lyon*; gallica.bnf.fr