

Question: French Revolution failed to achieve what it intended to achieve. Do you agree?

Answer : It is undeniable that in course of the French Revolution the gulf between promises and performance remained to be unbridged but still its significance cannot be undermined.

French Revolution started with lofty democratic slogan of liberty, equality and fraternity but very soon it drifted from its course. Then firstly it fell a prey to Jacobian terror as a result of which the revolution started to devour its own children and finally the revolution was hijacked by a military Junta under Napoleon. Even in Europe what was offered in the name of the revolution was nothing but merely the ideas of the revolution.

But in spite of the limitations mentioned above we cannot underrate the extent of change brought by the revolution. In France, feudalism became a thing of the past. Declaration of Rights of Men and citizen reflected the spirit of General will of Rousseau. There started an era of popular participation in politics. Outside of France, in Europe, the revolutionary ideals of liberalism and nationalism worked as formidable forces of change. Even the Vienna order succumbed to these ideals which resurfaced in course of the revolutions of 1830s and those of 1848. Last but not the least, the unification of Italy and that of Germany was the victory of revolutionary ideas.

Therefore, we can say that although French Revolution achieved less than but not far less than what it had intended to achieve.

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