

Ayisha Adekanmbi

Professor O'Hara

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Research & Writing 18: What if? Alternate History

This spread of culture and views from merchants weakened European hierarchies and allowed them to penetrate the European cultural frame and frame of elites. Differing from its European counterparts England possessed the government form of central government; this was made up of Anglo-Saxon institutions with Norman rule. From this England had a strong central state and formal authority with components of strong social divisions and informal governance. This produced a legal system of common law and formed the basis of private property rights which equaled power. In this system, the royal authority had to abide by the laws of the land, and the rule of the king had to be advised by barons. From this came the birth of parliaments; a faction in which kings could seek the advice and consent of political classes in the kingdom. In this system initiatives like war and taxes had to have parliament's approval. As a result of the state being centralized in terms of social aspects no hereditary class divisions formed; this meant that the English aristocracy was always open to people from different backgrounds.

In this society, social relationships were influenced by merchant capitalists as overseas trade began to expand. The cultural frame of this society was heavily influenced by the legal values set in place by the government system. The right to political speech and rights associated with owning property was of utmost importance in England. The right to political speech

confronted many cultural issues such as religion, scientific ideas, and the legitimacy of political speech for the workforce. The dominant screen image of the divide was present in England; as males had the more public role in society; while women were seen in the background.

The French System suffered stresses between new and old elites over tax exemptions and legal privileges; this differs from England's central government as the parliament was created to create a sort of checks and balances. A key Aspect of the French system is that all political decision-making was left in the king's hands, but in turn, expected all classes to contribute via means of taxation to support the state. This dramatically differs from England's system of having Kings obey the law of the land and seek parliament and barons out before imposing taxation. Loss of cultural legitimacy was present in French culture as the sexual affairs of monarchs caused outcry; which led to ideas of enlightenment influencing culture and ideologies. In contrast to England's system, the French system was reserved only for the nobility and was very exclusive. Like England's system Women were found in the background with more restrictions; while men were the public face and workers/providers in this cultural system.

Concerning the alternate history of France conquering and invading England; I believe the world would look very different today. Upon King Louis invading England, we would certainly see a catholic monarch on the throne; which would make Catholicism the dominant religion on the European peninsula as well as the North American peninsula; with Christianity meeting opposition and maybe persecution in the early years of conquering. I believe we would not have the same influences of parliament and government that we have today; In the U.S. we would most likely adopt the same government system as France; which includes having a

president, Prime minister, and ministers. I also believe that France conquering England would delay the industrial revolution for some years.

Works Cited

1998. Print. Morillo, Stephen. *Frameworks of World History: Networks, Hierarchies, Culture*. 1st ed., vol. 2. pg 555-574