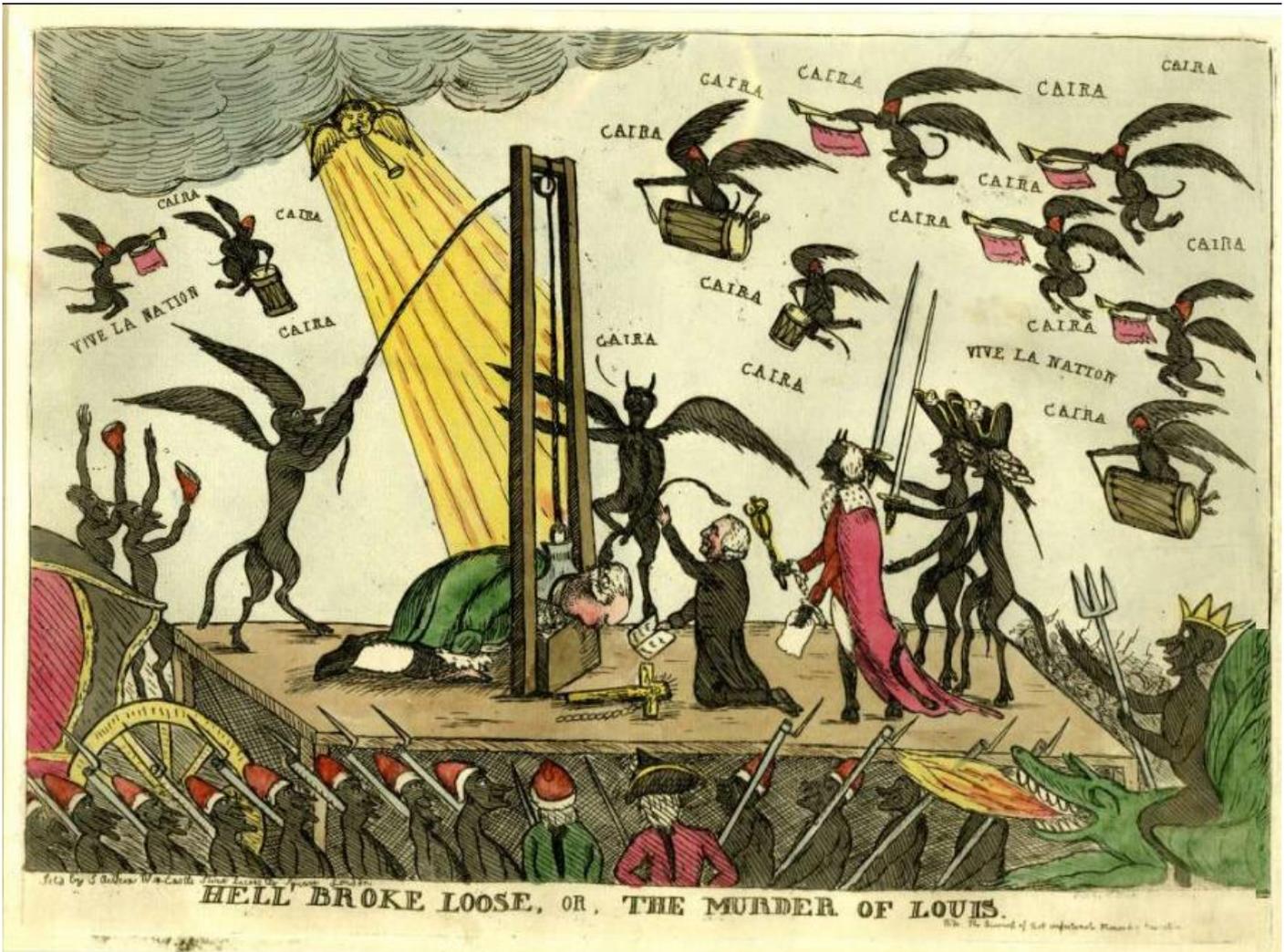


DOCUMENT : *Hell broke loose or the Murder of Louis* (Engraving by William Dent, 1793, January 25th).



A) Introduce the document

1) Identify the document (nature, origin, author, historical context). (2 pts)

B) Comment on the document:

2) Describe the document as carefully as possible: (3 pts)

- What do the devils represent?
- Why is the guillotine given such importance?
- How is the King represented?

3) Show that Louis XVI is depicted as a victim, a martyr even, in the document. (2 pts)

4) Explain how the title of the picture emphasises this aspect. (2 pts)

C) Conclude

5) How is the French Revolution seen here? (1 pt)

Hell broke loose : l'enfer s'est déchaîné

GET READY FOR THE EXAM

DOCUMENT : *Hell broke loose or the Murder of Louis* (Engraving by William Dent, 1793, January 25th).

A) 1) This document is an hand-coloured etching published by William Dent, only four days after the execution of Louis XVI, on January 21, 1793. It shows the execution of Louis XVI, King of France by guillotine as citizen Louis Capet. Louis XVI (August 23, 1754 - January 21, 1793) was King of France from 1774, when he was not yet 20 years old, until his deposition in 1792. The government was deeply in debt and resentment to ""despotic"" monarchy was on the rise. The success of the American Revolution and the financial crisis occurring in France during his reign were contributing factors to the French Revolution, which abolished the absolute monarchy in France and proclaimed a constitutional monarchy in 1791. Louis XVI enjoyed popularity among the masses, but his indecisiveness and conservatism led some to view him as a symbol of the perceived tyranny of the "Ancien Régime". Suspended and arrested as part of the insurrection of 1792, he was tried by the National Convention, found guilty of high treason, and executed by guillotine on January 21, 1793 as a desacralized French citizen known as "Citizen Louis Capet", bringing to an end more than a thousand years of French monarchy. Louis XVI is the only King of France ever to be executed.

B) 2) It is a Satire on the execution of Louis XVI; the king kneeling under the guillotine operated by two winged devils; Abbé Edgeworth kneeling in front of him, with crucifix and prayer's book; angel playing trumpet among clouds surrounded by devils flying above (representing the French revolutionaries); army of sans-culottes (all devils) holding bayonets in the foreground. The scaffold placed at the center of the etching highlights the barbary and the violence of the Terror (1793-1794). The only two persons who are not dehumanized (=represented as devils) are the king and the priest: all the others have lost their heart, their reason, and have already joined hell (they have felt into violence, barbary).

3) Louis XVI is kneeling under the guillotine, surrounded by devils (fear, darkness, hell), as a victim. The angel playing trumpet seems to call him to paradise, as a martyr, an innocent and "pure" being surrounded by horrid creatures. He seems to pray (crucifix) and to be blessed by the priest.

4) Hell broke loose: sacred symbols are destroyed, the fire on the foreground, the dragon (hell again = flames of hell)

The "Murder" of Louis : there's no justice (reinforced by the judge represented as a devil). The use of "Louis" = as a citizen, killed by the devils.

C) 5) Devils stand on the platform as well as fly overhead, suggesting that the beheading of Louis, with its disrespect for the monarchy, has resulted in anarchy in France. The French Revolution, and especially the Terror (1793-1794) is seen as a demoniac, cruel and satanic period which led to the unfair execution of Louis XVI. Obviously, this engraving is an anti-revolutionary piece of art.