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THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

By 1789, France was bankrupt and politically paralyzed. All of Europe buzzed with talk of revolution. Perhaps it came first to France because its rulers were more worn out and despised than others. Poor old bumbling King George III of England was proclaimed a tyrant by the Americans, but he paled in comparison with the monarchs on the Continent. Americans demanded no taxation without representation when no European nation even had a Parliament.

The *Ancien Regime* was making progress in many ways. It abolished torture and advanced towards free enterprise. King Louis XVI was committed to reform, and many aspects of government saw vast improvements during his reign. Unfortunately, French nobles blocked many of his reforms, and he was the victim of a cyclical agrarian depression in 1787-1789 that led to food shortages.

Antoine Barnave (1763-1791), authored the *Jacobin Manifesto* in 1788. In January of 1789, Abbe Sieyes—a clergyman who coined the term 'sociology'—followed that up with the pamphlet *What is the Third Estate?* The 'Third Estate' refers to the common people of France. Abbe Sieyes wrote that they were "Everything. And what has it become until the present time? Nothing. And what does it demand? To become something."

In April of 1789, the 576 members of the Third Estate signed the "Tennis Court Oath," a formal declaration against the French Monarchy. That same month, the fruits of an exceptionally harsh winter came to bear. The lower classes of Paris lacked work, and they lacked food. The bankrupt government was in no position to alleviate their suffering. Angry crowds destroyed several bureaucratic buildings. In response, French soldiers killed 300 citizens in an attempt to maintain order.

In June of 1789, the Third Estate declared itself the sole National Assembly. Many nobles and clergymen were initially on their side—not realizing their ultimate fate. Pandemonium ensued. Paris exploded—it became a notorious playground for sexual debauchery with live sex shows enhancing political meetings.

By July, Paris was lost to the king after revolutionaries raided an armory, confiscated 30,000 muskets, and stormed the royal fortress—the Bastille.

The successful storming of the Bastille triggered an orgy of attacks on 40,000 jails in France, freeing nearly all criminals in the country to create mayhem. Castles and Abbeys were burned to the ground. Highways were now ruled by bandits. Peasants committed atrocities

around the country, attacking clergymen and successful people. Most of the nobility of France fled the country.

Hatred was mounting and spread among the members of the Assembly. They wanted to save the world from ignorance. They wanted to lift up the poor, oppressed, common man by killing any who might outdo him. Yet the men of 1789 backed off their original aim of giving the vote to all as they realized that ignorant and illiterate men and women without property could not be trusted to keep their fingers out of the national till.

The Church of France was enormous and rich. It employed 130,000 clerics. Except for the Capuchins, who were very poor, monks lived comfortable lives like gentlemen with even a month's holiday each year. The revolutionaries all agreed that the monks had to go.

The new regime was broke, so they summarily confiscated the vast holdings of the Church, which they declared State property, and used it to back new paper currency. Eventually, they issued more notes than the value of all the property they had stolen from the Church, which naturally resulted in rampant inflation.

Catholicism was not unpopular in and of itself. At first, it was assumed it would continue as a State Church. But the revolution quickly changed its initial focus on kings and nobles to a revolt against the clergy as a whole and against Christ. Tithes were prohibited by law, and the concept of Christendom was dissolved.

Soon municipalities were being run by anti-clericals with scores to settle. The new Assembly of 1791 was comprised almost completely by Atheists, and it moved quickly to ban monastic vows and destroy monasteries. In 1792, a decree was issued that ordered the deportation of any priest denounced by 20 'active' citizens. One prison massacre saw 3 bishops and 220 priests slaughtered. A new method of execution was invented, drowning priests bound in pairs, dubbed "de-Christianization by immersion." This was the first full frontal attack on Christ since the Roman Empire.

Paris soon swelled with a variety of fashionable superstitions—Gnosticism, Paganism, Pantheism, Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism, and Illuminism. Andre Chenier described the *Illumines* as "adapting a whole accumulation of ancient superstitions to the ideas of their sect, preaching liberty and equality like Eleusinian or Ephesian mysteries, translating natural law into an occult doctrine and a mythological jargon."

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THE JACOBINS

The French Revolution accelerated and became increasingly radical until eventually all of the previous political and social order had been swept away. The new rulers of France, the National Convention, got busy, passing 11,250 laws in three years. In 1791, the First French Constitution was written, which includes, as its preamble, *The Declaration of the Rights of Man*.

By this time, the original moderate revolutionaries had been cast aside by radical revolutionaries—as nearly always happen in such movements. This allowed the extremist Jacobins under Robespierre to seize power.

The Jacobins abolished the monarchy altogether; stormed the royal palaces; massacred the King's Swiss Guard; imprisoned the King and his family. There were only 3,000 Jacobins in the beginning, but they were able to take absolute power over twenty-five million people.

Maximilien Robespierre (1758-1794) was a severe man. To the Paris mob he was a hero because he preached the redistribution of wealth. But to any who opposed him he was the devil incarnate. His right-hand-man, Antoine Saint-Just, became known as 'the Archangel of the Terror.'

The Jacobins were militant atheists and all were either lawyers or journalists. Among them were the world's first communists, socialists, and feminists. Their support came from gullible peasants. The Jacobins began by executing their rivals, but having run out of them, they began to kill each other.

In 1792, the French revolutionists made a bold attempt at disorienting the citizenry by abolishing the calendar. After all, the calendar throughout Europe then—and the world today—is based on the Birth of Jesus Christ. We still number our years according to when Christ was born. That is why Atheists in our time work without ceasing to abolish B.C. and A.D., to be replaced not by new numbers but by B.C.E. and C.E. to disavow the Savior of Humanity.

The Jacobins abolished Sundays and seven-day weeks—the week being the only period of time on the calendar that is not related to lunar or solar rotations but only based on a decree by God Himself. Therefore, the godless Jacobins created ten-day weeks.

It was at this time, that many of the peasants who had helped the Jacobins seize power changed their minds and turned against them. The realization crept over them that these people were far worse than their predecessors. These people were the servants of Satan.

The Jacobins responded to these murmurings by sending armed gangs on tour through the French countryside to destroy all churches and press the sons of Catholics into military

service, where they would be 'reeducated.' Thus an Atheist government would force Christian youth to die for it, while the sons of atheists were exempt from military service.

Once Atheism took hold in the minds and hearts of the revolutionaries, the usual violence burst forth. The Church was disestablished, public life de-Christianized, and new secular cults invented. People no longer saw their neighbors as Images of God with eternal souls, but instead as mere animals—such as animals which are routinely slaughtered for the "good" of the community—human bestiality felt no restraint.

Mob rule, riots, and lynchings became commonplace. Heads of formerly successful people were paraded around on pikes by their executioners. Random assaults were made on nobles and priests, and the theft or destruction of their property became routine occurrences. Massacres, slaughters, and assassinations were a daily part of life.

Then came the 'Reign of Terror'—deliberate government policy to not only destroy Christians, but to create an atmosphere of fear so as to squelch all dissent. Tens of thousands of innocent people were fed to the guillotine. The crowded tumbrels carted the condemned through hate-filled streets. People took to spying on and informing on their long-time friends and neighbors.

The men who gained power did not have mature political talent. Two distinct types of ability are needed to govern well—political skill and a grasp of good administration. Political skill is sensing what can be done and how to move others to want it. Perhaps one in twenty men has this ability, but even then most candidates are incapable of administration, which is to keep order when the world tends to disorder.

The petty minds that filled the three successive French assemblies were ill-equipped for the task. They were articulate and great at politicking but unable to resolve great issues or deal with the pressure of emergencies. They wrote and delivered endless speeches and held countless debates. But their product is abstract, diffuse strings of generalities aimed at applause but vague on details except for denouncing their rivals as traitors. They saw stability as treasonous to equality and liberty.

The revolutionaries planned to take children away from their parents so that they could be indoctrinated by the State. The idea emerged of equality as communism imposed by violence, terror and dictatorship. Robespierre led the first efficient police state with agents in the countryside viciously purging thousands of men suspected of being against some part of his plans along with their wives and children. The successful members of society had to flee the country in waves. Still the roster of those beheaded was distinguished, including the chemist Lavoisier and the poet Chenier.

The new regime promoted a Cult of Reason, with a visible goddess who was actually a half-naked whore enthroned on the altar of Notre Dame Cathedral. Robespierre instituted

something he called "Worship of the Supreme Being," by which he meant the worship of Satan.

Also witnessed here is the first appearance of a new archetype: the Jewish revolutionary. But though Jews were involved they were also targeted, especially for their religion. Voltaire said of Jews: "They are a totally ignorant nation who for many years has combined contemptible miserliness and the most revolting superstition with a violent hatred of all those nations which have tolerated them." Diderot added that "The Jews bore all the defects peculiar to an ignorant and superstitious nation." The prominent Atheist revolutionary Baron d'Holbach went further, writing that "The Jews are the enemies of the human race."



The Vendee Uprising

THE VENDEE UPRISING

Christians from the Vendee region—a "Catholic Army of Saints"—rose up against the Atheist government armed with only pitchforks and scythes. What ensued was a civil war of three years that included 21 pitched battles. The Christians actually won about five of these fights.

In 1793, 30,000 armed men, followed by several hundred thousand supporters of all ages, went on a trek toward Normandy. They had been deliberately fed misinformation that the British would be there to help them. Upon arriving at the port of Granville and realizing they had been deceived, they decided to go home. But home was 120 miles away, and by now it was winter. The men were armed, but they lacked warm clothes and food.

Soon enough, the Vendees were attacked. 15,000 died in the streets of Le Mans. They were hunted, robbed, and raped by government forces. Two days before Christmas, the Vendees were trapped near Nantes and genocide was employed. The man who crushed them, General Westermann, wrote to the government: "According to your orders, I have trampled their children beneath our horses' feet; I have massacred their women . . . I do not have a single prisoner . . . I have exterminated them all. The roads are sown with corpses. . . . Christians are arriving all the time to surrender, and we are shooting them non-stop . . . Mercy is not a revolutionary sentiment."

The Vendee region from whence came these Christians was then fell upon by revolutionary troops in 1794. Tens of thousands were shot, guillotined, burned in their barns and in their churches, starved to death in prison, or drowned. The officers of the Atheist government had too many to kill and not enough ammunition. So they took to loading large ships with Christians at night; sinking the ships; and refloating them in the morning to start the 'process' again.

Revolutionary propaganda described the Christians to Parisians as ignorant, superstitious, peasants controlled by evil priests. In fact, in any other European country their devotion to God would have been widely admired. Their religion had been publicly mocked by the revolutionaries; and they had been publicly humiliated and subject to repeated physical assaults. Napoleon would later call these martyrs "giants."

The French Revolution did not achieve any of the significant reformist objectives of 1789. The Jacobins were almost immediately forced to impose economic paternalism. Worse, it inaugurated an era where violence determined the direction of the state more than anything else. You need power to take power, argues historian Simon Schama, and this accounts for much of the horror of the period.

The revolution was not a movement of 'the people' but of a small elite who cared little for the proletariat despite their pronouncements. They certainly used them when necessary—not out of altruism but to achieve their aims. French humankind was proved ready and even eager to send neighbors and associates to the guillotine.

It was not until 1804 that France found stability. It found it in the cult of personality constructed around General Napoleon Bonaparte

Taken from this source due to graphic images of the Reign of Terror art and photographs. <http://james-a-watkins.hubpages.com/hub/The-French-Revolution-Cause-and-Effect.html>