



The Terror

From the Republic to the Dictatorship



Fourth and final lesson on the French Revolution

The "Public Health Committee" establishes the dictatorship

September 1793: Robespierre, incited by the Sansculottis, suspends the Constitution of 1791 and establishes a dictatorship, which he himself calls "Terror".

It was a bloodbath, which led to the beheading of all those who were considered enemies of the revolution. In ten months 10,000 people were executed.





Changing the calendar

- 1) Vendémiaire = Harvester (September)
- 2) Brumaire = Brumaio (October)
- 3) Frimaire = Frimaio (November)
- 4) Nivose = Snowfield (December)
- 5) Pluviose = Rainy (January)
- 6) Suckers = Windy (February)
- 7) Germinal = Germinal (March)
- 8) Floréal = Floral (April)
- 9) Prairial = Pratile (May)
- 10) Messidor = Messidoro (June)
- 11) Thermidor = Thermidor (July)
- 12) Fructidor = Fruttidoro (August)

The calendar of the revolution started, as the first day of the year, from 22 September, because on that day, in 1792, France became a republic. The year zero was 1792.

It remained in force until 1806, then it was abolished.

The "Terror" saves France

The Vendée revolt was quelled. Robespierre's generals went so far as to massacre the civilian population; in all 117,000 people died.

By the end of 1793, the civil war was over and all foreign armies, which had tried to invade France, had been driven out. But at what price?





The fall by Robespierre

The revolution back in the hands
of the bourgeois

In 1794, Robespierre passed even more restrictive laws. His violent attitude, his constant recourse to the guillotine ended up worrying even his allies.

When his dear friend Marat is killed by treason, his blind fury is unleashed and anyone suspected of treason is guillotined.

On the night between 27 and 28 July, a group of representatives of different parties captured him along with 20 of his collaborators. They are all guillotined. It was the "Thermidor coup".



The new Constitution

The authors of the conspiracy formed a new government and, in August 1795, approved a new Constitution.

France remains a republic, but not all citizens enjoy the same rights under the law. For example, only those who have a higher income can vote.

After the voting, the powers are divided as follows:

LEGISLATIVE POWER
Entrusted to an Assembly

EXECUTIVE POWER
Entrusted to a Directory
(so called because it is made up of five Directors, chosen from among the Elders)