

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/revolution-and-terror/>

In a discussion about a book focused on the themes of revolution and terror, the author, Graham, shares his motivations for writing. He expresses a longstanding intrigue with revolutions as moments of significant political, economic, and social transformation, often driven by high ideals that paradoxically lead to widespread suffering and internal terror.

Graham outlines three distinct types of terror associated with revolutions:

1. **Revolutionary Terror:** This video occurs when a new regime uses terror against its political opponents, often during its early years post-seizure of power.
2. **Transformational Terror:** This video is employed to achieve socioeconomic changes, as there is usually substantial opposition from those negatively affected by these transformations.
3. **Inverted Terror:** This video involves factions within the regime turning against each other, using terror to eliminate rivals, often fueled by paranoia about potential enemies within and outside the regime.

He references key examples, including the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions, demonstrating how these types of terror manifested during and after their respective upheavals. While the former revolutions faced substantial opposition, leading to the necessity of terror to maintain control, the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe did not, as communist regimes largely dissipated without significant resistance, thereby rendering terror unnecessary.

Graham hopes readers will glean an understanding that revolution can bring about positive change and does not inherently lead to terror or regime self-destruction. He advocates for the view that revolutions can create avenues for more reasonable and democratic societies, although he acknowledges the complex, often violent histories associated with them.