

Re-Appraising Revolution and Change in International Politics: A Case Study of America Revolution 1776, French Revolution 1789 and Russian Revolution 1917

Oluwatobi Babatunde Njoaguani¹, Rosemary Oyinlola Popoola²

Abstract: Change and continuity are characteristics of human history. Strategic change in any society has significant impacts that becomes reference points for similar transformation in the near future. Fundamentally, the numerous internal upheavals that characterized North Africa and Middle East that culminated in a change of government in these countries has raised fundamental question about subject of change and revolution. Such questions include: is every change a revolution and does every revolution culminate in a change? What are the distinguishing features of change and the significance of such change for contemporary international politics? Using secondary data derived from books, and journals, the paper therefore examines the revolution and change in international politics drawing from historical examples of America and France Revolution. Also, noting the causes and implications of these of revolution on International Relations. It also seeks to distinguish between socio-political upheaval and internal disruptions that may culminate in change from revolution, that is, a vital change that affects institution, structure and value system of a society. The paper recommends a cautious use of the term revolution from change of government.

Keywords: change; revolution and internal disturbance; international politics

1. Introduction

Revolution has been a major feature of politics for centuries. The ideologies that back up revolution together with their fore runners, successes and failures have fashioned the history of many nations (Richards, 2004, 1). The concept of revolution has received colossal amount of consideration, both from the general

¹ Lecturer, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Covenant University, Ota, Address: Center Cir, Ota, Nigeria, Tel.: +2348087309304, E-mail: oluwatobi.babatunde@covenantuniversity.edu.ng.

² Lecturer, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Covenant University, Ota, Address: Center Cir, Ota, Nigeria, Tel.: +2348087309304, Corresponding author: rosemary.popoola@covenantuniversity.edu.ng.

public and academic scholars (Saylor, 2014, p. 1). However, the Arab spring has posed a fundamental challenge to the theories of revolution and social movement in International Relations. Specifically, the revolutionary episodes, the outcome of those processes that culminated in the revolution and its consequences for both national and international level have challenged theoretical models of causes and consequence of change in international relation (Dupont, Cédric & Passy, 2011, pp. 4-5). There have been controversies on how to name the event in Middle East and North Africa as some continually argue that the Arab spring was only a change of regime rather than a revolution. It is against this background that the paper seeks to examine the American, French and Russian revolutions to situate the concept of revolution beyond the popular usage. Examining historical examples of revolution becomes significant as Richards, 2004 observed that revolution is best understood in historical terms and revolutionaries themselves often have a historical perspective hoping to learn useful lessons from the past or find answers to questions they may have about the realities they are faced with (Richards, 2004, p. 2)

The paper is divided into three parts. The first part examines the causes of change and revolution using: Ted Robert Gurr and Denton E. Morrison's theory of relative deprivation. Part two explores the case studies. Part three explores the difference between the three revolutions (American Revolution 1776, French Revolution 1789 and Russian Revolution 1917).

2. Theoretical Discourse

There are diverse theories and models that explain the origins, causes, and processes of revolution. Numerous theories and models have emerged which provide explanation as to why a revolution occurs. Studies on revolution explore diverse aspect of revolution, some focus on the role of masses, individuals and institutions. It is important to note that while several of these studies provide some level of understanding of revolution, none explains a trend peculiar to all aspects of a revolution (Magstadt, 2014, p. 391).

It is the lack of this that has made Ted Gurr's Frustration aggression theory relevant for understanding revolution. This is because all revolutions draw on frustration of the masses, individual, institution or classes (Saylor, 2014, pp. 2-3).

Ted Gurr, 1970 opines that the popular perception of injustice, whether true or false, fuels the fire of revolution. Put differently, revolution is stirred by

debilitating economic hardship, economic stagnation and decline, excessive debt and high cost associated with fighting internal wars, exacerbated by governmental leaders increasingly perceived as inept: unable to exercise effective authority: incapable of stabilizing the economy: powerless to ensure domestic order: weak and irresolute in the face of external threats (Magstadt, 2006, p. 390). Thus, revolution occur when, the established government come to be perceived as illegitimate by nearly everyone, including the elites, and loses its rights to rule. Similarly, the theory of relative deprivation suggests that as people anticipation for economic improvement rises, they may be frustrated by their government's inability to satisfy them. As the gap between economic expectations and their fulfillment by the political system widens, so does the degree of frustration, which will likely to occur in condition of absolute poverty (Adas, Schwartz & Gilbert, 2007, p. 623)

The theory stresses that revolution is most likely to occur during a period of economic advancement that either reverses or proceeds too slowly to match the people's rising aspiration for a better life (Toma & Gorman, 1990, pp. 232-233). The theory of relative deprivation is further supported by Marxist theory of class warfare. Karl Marx declared inequality in wealth to be the ultimate cause of all revolution (Magstadt, 2006, p. 299). According to Marx, revolution is synonymous with class warfare and invariably stems from pervasive injustice. As economic distance between the wealthy capitalist and impoverish workers increases so does the possibility of a revolution. It is in view of this that the paper examines the American Revolution of 1776, French Revolution 1789 and Russian Revolution 1917 as revolutions stirred by frustration that culminated in changes that have both immediate relevance to those society and remain reference point for present discourse of revolution.

3. Case Study One: The American Revolution

The American Revolution began a process of change when the colonies rejected the oppressive, discriminatory and exploitative overlord-ship of the British (Greene, 1973, p. 1). The reaction against British rule culminated in the 1776 Declaration of Independence and by 1783; it had metamorphosed to a nation of 13 former colonies (Washington, Congress Drafts George, 1968, 3, 13). The remote cause of the American war of independence is the idea of America enlightenment that espouses such concepts of liberalism, democracy, republicanism, and religious

tolerance. Significant writers and philosophers of the time upheld these ideas some of who include John Locke and Thomas Paine. Similarly, the founding fathers America strongly believed and revered the ideas of enlightenment (Uslu, 2009, pp. 183-185)

However, the immediate cause of the revolution was rooted in British victories in French and Indian war that had been cheaply acquired. Victory in the French and Indian wars brought Britain vast new territories and new problems (Fisher, 2008, p. 856). Britain had to cope with war debts and the handling of the recently acquired territories (Ritchie, 1999, p. 44). To cater for a growing demand in newly acquired territory, the British crown imposed stiff trade restrictions, the colonies were forbidden to start factories which might contend with the industries in the mother countries, they were compelled to ship their exports in British vessel manned by colonial crews (Fisher, 2008, p. 857)

Furthermore, exacerbating the consequence of the retributive trade restrictions on the colonies were the draconian laws that further heightened the frustration of the colonies and validated their desire for change. In 1764, Parliament enacted the Sugar Act and in 1751 the parliament also enacted the Currency Act (Morgan, 1949; Smith, 1985). It is important to note that the restriction that the Sugar and Currency Act place on the commerce of the colonies further intensify their resentment towards the British crown. Subsequently, the British enacted the Quartering Acts, which required British soldiers to be housed at the expense of residents in certain areas.

Similarly, in 1765 the Stamp Act was enacted that required all official documents, newspapers, almanacs, pamphlets and decks of playing cards have the stamps (Fisher, 2008, p. 859). In 1767, the Parliament passed the Townshend Acts, which placed a tax on a number of essential goods including paper, glass, and tea (Mcneese, 2005). In 1774, The Quebec act that extended Quebec's boundaries to the Ohio River, shutting out the claims of the 13 colonies was passed. These controversial laws with their negative consequences impact not only on the trade of the colonies but also the overall living standard of the colonies.

In addition, the colonies were angered not only by the laws but also by the level at which the British crown was enforcing the law. This led to numerous acts of revolt significant among which were the boycotting British good (Fisher 2008, 859). It is significant to note that following the growing discontent in the colony the British government responded by passing more punitive Acts which has been referred to as

the Intolerable Acts, which further darkened colony opinion towards British rule (Chambers, 2014; Wasi, 2012).

However, it is pertinent to note that these series of event will not have resulted into war but for the obstinacy of King George III. H.A Fisher, 2008 opined that King George was inflexible in view of the violent outcry occasioned by intolerable Act, given that the most ordinary prudence counseled their abandonment and the surrender of any prospect of supplies from the colonies other than those which might be freely voted by the colonial assemblies (Fisher, 2008, p. 859). It is significant to note that the leadership ineptitude of King III in handling the colonial crisis and the fervor of the growing discontent in the colony were made favorable to the colony by the dissenting opinion among influential British political elite. For instance, three greatest British statesmen of the time: Lord Chatham, Edmund Burke and Charles Fox were opposed to the coercion of the colonies and were supported by the substantial section of the middle class (Reich, 1997, pp. 44-45; Fisher, 2008, p. 862)). This dissenting voices among the British forces inspire the revolutionary and was worsened by the growing indiscipline and ill-preparedness of the British legislator (Fisher, 2008, p. 862).

Nevertheless, the zenith of the development that will culminate in the American revolution was the internationalization of the growing discontentment of British rule in America marked by the entry of France and Spain into the war thereby internationalizing the revolution (Faragher, Buhle, Czitrom, & Armitage, 2012).

By 1774, the colonists convened a continental congress in Philadelphia and spoke for the American people against the “foreign power” of Great Britain. In April 1775, conflict between British troops and colonist in Massachusetts triggered a war, the congress in Philadelphia proclaimed the American goals in the declaration of independence, signed on July 4, 1776 asserting government by consent of the governed and rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The American Revolution lasted until 1783 and resulted in victory and independent for the colonies (Mathews & Platt, 2001, p. 454).

4. Significance of American Revolution 1776

The American Revolution has several significance. Firstly, the success of the revolution brought scorn to those loyal to the Crown. It marked the beginning of the end of monarchy. The stability of monarchical absolutism was further shaken.

In other words, it was a preview of coming catastrophe that will end the reign of monarchy and drastically reduce her influence on the world. American colonists became the instigation of the modern world's first successful anti-colonial revolution. The American revolutionary war created a model for what became known as wars of liberation, not merely because it was a revolution, but because it seemed ideal to the revolutionaries to introduce a new phase in the political evolution of mankind and therefore to be touched with universal significance (Magstadt, 2014, p. 440). Secondly, the constitutional writing process culminated in the creation of popular government, or government by majority rule, at a time when the people of Europe were still largely subject to the autocratic rule of monarchs (Magstadt, 2006, p. 441).

Thirdly, it is important to note that the opening paragraph of the text of the American declaration of human rights has become the opening text of several constitutions, the foundation for modern human right pursuit and declaration of independence of Honduras (1821), Mexico (1821), Nicaragua (1821), Peru (1821), Bolivia (1825), Uruguay (1825) (Armitage 2005, 12-13) Additionally, the American revolution of 1776 was one of the last in a series of conflicts over colonial control of the new world, conflict that had wracked England and France throughout the eighteenth century. It also became one of the first crises of the old regime at home (Coffin & Stacey 2005, p. 501). Lastly, the American Revolution and subsequent independence laid the foundation that will bring America in the latter century to a status that is at par with its former colonial master.

5. Case Study Two: French Revolution

One of the most important events of European history in the 18th century was the French Revolution. This event affected social values and political systems first in France, then Europe, and finally throughout the world (Hobsbawm, 2010, p. 1).

The fundamental cause of French revolution was a revolt of the French people against absolute monarchy, class privilege, extravagance of the French monarch, the unjust privileges enjoyed by the nobility and higher clergy, and the disconnect of the growing middle class in society (Appadorai, 1979, p. 230). France had an absolute monarchy under Louis XVI. Under Louis, most people were denied basic rights and any say in government (Fisher, 2008, p. 879). Monarchical absolutism was established on the divine rights of kings. The essential of the theory the divine

rights are: monarchy is divinely ordained institution, hereditary rights are indefeasible: kings are accountable to God alone: the non-resistance and passive obedience are enjoined by God (Nicholson, 2002,). Monarchical rule was accompanied by social-economic inequality. There was also the tyranny of a privileged minority over an extremely disadvantage majority (Fisher 2008, 878). France was divided along three social classes: The clergy were the First Estate; the titled nobility were the Second Estate; and the Third Estate was made up of the rest of society including the bourgeoisie (middle class), poor city workers, and rural peasants (the largest group). These classes were very rigid, and a person could not move from one class to another, since the family into which a person was born primarily determined the levels. (Coffin & Stacey, 2005, p. 502, Noble et alli., 2006, p. 611)

Further aggravating an already tyrannical regime was the financial crisis that engulfed the old regime (Fisher, 2008, p. 880). The absolutist regime was suffering because of a combination of crises. Externally, France was seen as a weak and ineffectual power. By the late 1780s, the country was losing diplomatic influence rapidly in Central Europe, having already lost its major overseas territories in North America and India a generation earlier (Andress, 2002).

By the late 1780s, the government with its lavish court and expensive wars spent more money than it earned (deficit spending) (Kropotkin, 2009, p. 179; Magstadt, 2006, pp. 380-382). As conditions worsened, demands for reform increased. In 1789, Louis XVI finally called the Estates General, a body made up of representatives of all three estates, into session not summoned since 1614. Nonetheless, the inability to reach a consensus made the third Estate declare a constituent assembly, comprising of the poor, depraved, disadvantage and disgruntled who vowed to write a new constitution for France (Kropotkin, 2009, p. 62).

Adding to the growing discontent and frustration of the masses and aiding the growing process towards French revolution was the enlightenment ideals (Maza, 2013, p. 44). The enlightenment was a fuel to a growing fire. Enlightenment writers and thinkers like Rousseau and John Locke are significant in this regard. Enlightenment thinkers criticized France's absolute monarch and the tax burden on the Third Estate and many of the intellectual writers of the time also called for democratic reforms (Birn & Birn, 2006; Eileen 2012, p. 101).

The climax of the growing discontent and reaction of the masses to their plight and specifically the lack of bread led to mass protest and eventually the seizure of the Bastille by the working class people (Fisher 2008, 883). Subsequently, fighting broke out in cities and countryside. In a period known as the Great Fear, peasants attacked nobles and destroyed their homes. Series of event followed climax in September 1792 with the execution of King Louis XVI. The National Assembly abolished the privileges of the First and Second Estates and adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. It was based partly on the Declaration of Independence and contained many Enlightenment ideas (Campbell, 2013, p. 10).

Thus, French revolution was a culmination of numerous events that can be categorized into the following stages: The first stage was characterized by a financial crisis caused mainly by the extravagant lifestyle of the monarch and his wife; the second stage was the upheaval at Versailles; the third stage was the discontentment and eventual rise of the third estate; the fourth was storming of Bastille which among others led to the drafting of constitution, the fifth stage was the radical stage which was the stage of terror and revolt and finally, the rise of Napoleon (Adas, Schwartz & Gilbert, 2007, pp. 632-624).

6. Significance of French Revolution 1789

French revolution is germane to France's immediate and contemporary relevance in world politics in the following ways: First and foremost, Monarchical absolutism received a death –blow at the end of the eighteenth century from the French revolution (1789). By 1791, the assembly had written a constitution. It set up a limited monarchy and a representative assembly. Similarly, the French revolution was to serve as inspiration to other significant revolution in Europe all through the century and beyond. Secondly, as Appadorai, 1979 noted, the French revolution marked a watershed in the rise of modern democracy and nationalist fervor. Put differently, the one hundred and twenty five years between the French revolution (1789) and outbreak of the Great War (1914) are remarkable in the history of government for two developments. First, it marked the rise of democracy and rise of nationalism. Nationalism mean that people everywhere shall be free to choose their own form of government and to manage their affairs in their own way. The French revolution brought about a revival of the nationalist sentiment in three ways, first, the Napoleonic wars which followed after the revolution aroused and

inflamed the national spirit in the French, united and inspired by the sense that they were a people with a mission. Secondly, Napoleon made conscious appeals to the national sentiment not only in France but also in Poland and in Italy. And above all, the struggle for liberation from French yoke in Spain, Austria, Germany and Russia gave the nationalism intensity such as it had never known before and made the cause of national freedom appear the most sacred of causes (Appadorai, 1979, p. 231).

Hobsbawm, 2010 observed that France provided the vocabulary and the issues of liberal and radical-democratic politics for most of the world. In other words, France provided the first great example, the concept and the vocabulary of nationalism. France provided the codes of law, the model of scientific and technical organization, the metric system of measurement for most countries (Hobsbawm, 2010, p. 53). Significantly, the French revolution entrenched popular sovereignty. Sovereignty was no longer vested in the monarchy but in the people. Thirdly, the spirit and letter has become replicated in almost all constitution of the all democratic government around the globe. Also, the words in the declaration of the rights of man has drawn up by the revolutionaries (1789) states that “men are born and always continue, free and equal in respect of their rights” and continue to be the rallying point for Liberation struggle. The code of Napoleon embodied this principle and where it was set up- in the Netherlands, in the west German states, in part of Poland, in Switzerland In Italy- it exerted the same leveling influence that it had in France and ever since 1789, the ideal of equality has been at work emancipating and elevating the hitherto unfree and downtrodden, order of society and removing civil, religious and racial disabilities from disqualified classes in the state. (Appadorai, 1979, pp. 230-231).

Finally, Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen Written in 1789 continues to serve as fundamental objective and directive principle of state policy. It states among other things that all men have natural rights and affirms that the job of government is to protect the natural rights of the people. Also the French revolution proved a more radical project; though it did not necessarily begin that way. It became immeasurably more costly- protracted, complex, and violent. It aroused much greater hopes and consequently, in many cases, bitter disillusionment. It raises issues that would not be settled for half a century (Coffin & Stacey 2005, p. 502)

7. The Russian Revolution 1917

The problems that led to Russian revolution had been developing for generations. The numerous events that characterized the period between 1774 and 1882 laid the groundwork for latter event that will destroy the vestige of absolute monarchy in Russian. Simply stated, the Russian revolution was long in the making. Series of event laid the foundation for the revolution that was going to shake the foundation of Russian monarchy and these events include: 1774 Pugatchev Rebellion of Cossacks and peasants, 1825 Dekabrist (Decembrist) uprising against czarism led by liberal officers, publication of Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, establishment of Peasant reform in 1861 with the abolition of serfdom in Russia. 1864, the International (first international organization of socialist workers) established by Marx and others, the publication of Paris Commune and the Plekhanov first pamphlet in 1882 which introduces Marxian socialism into Russia (Trotsky, 1930). These events laid the groundwork upon which subsequent even will build on .In addition to these aforementioned event was the Russian defeat in the Russo-Japanese War (1905), Bloody Sunday (the massacre of unarmed protestors outside the palace,) upheaval of 1905, devastation of World War I exacerbated by high casualties, economic ruin, widespread hunger and the March Revolution in 1917, in which soldiers who were brought in for crowd control ultimately joined labor activists (Nafziger & Lindert 2012, p. 5)

However, even though these events were prior to Russian revolution of 1917, they present a crack in the czarist regime. The Russian Revolution has been dated to November 1917 (October 1917 on the Russian calendar). The immediate cause of revolution lay in the autocratic rule of the monarchy. At the beginning of 20th century Russia was the last major power of Europe in which the monarch was an autocrat (Wade, 2005, p. 1).

For hundreds of years, autocratic, hereditary rulers known as Czars had led the Russian people with parsimonious approach to politics and economic growth. The Russian czars were known for their strict application of authority, which often made them unpopular with the people, even though occasionally people were able to change the czar through assassination (McNeese, 2005, p. 239).

The long years of repression, oppression of the monarchy has created discontent between the people and monarch often repress by force, killing and other forms of brutality. The despotism of the monarchy and leadership ineptitude was exacerbated by the death of Alexander III which led to the emergence of Tsar

Nicholas II as the czar of Russian after the death of his father. The newly enthroned leader could not fit into the gap created by the death of his father. More so, his administration was corrupt, the masses were poor and illiterate, and the educated classes were completely divorced from them (Wade, 2005, pp. 1-2).

One great manifestation of injustice that pervaded the czarist regime was the undue privileges enjoy by the nobility while the poorer classes experienced higher rents on the taxes increases, the nobility were exempted from taxes and all other hardship that characterized the daily life of the peasant (Nafziger and Lindert 2012, p. 5). The growing frustration of the masses was worsened by economic hardship that characterized the aftermath of the First World War which led to widespread suffering, poor working conditions, low wages, and emergence of revolutionary movements (Moss, Walter, Janice Terry, & Jiu-Hwa Upshur, 1990, pp. 139-141). The people that were far hit were the peasant. The poor masses in Russian had a least one thing in common-they lived hard scrabble lives as poor peasant and at the beginning of the twentieth century, majority of the population of Russian were peasants living on the vast rural lands of their underdeveloped country (Wade, 2005, p. 4).

It is however important to note that the repression of the masses will not have been possible without the structure that make the oppression possible. This structure was the land systems that allow few landowners to exert control economic control over majority of the masses that constitute the serfs under a crude land system that allow the latter to work on land in exchange for few reward (Wade, 2005, p. 6). For hundreds of years, Russian peasants had lived as serfs, obligated to work the land owned by someone else. They were viewed by the aristocracy as little more than animals, creature almost impossible to mistreat. They were sometimes actually used as beasts of burden, carrying heavy loads along Russian's poor system of roads where carts and wagon often broke down (McNeese, 2005, p. 234).

More so, there was the heavy taxation of the already tense population as the period coincides with the development of capitalism with the goal of profit. The railway administrator raised investment and expansion capital through heavy taxation and by taking out large loans from foreign investors and many of these taxes were levied on the peasant class (Skocpol, 1979). Often, Russian industrialist, railroad builders and other business received extraordinary cooperation from the Russian government in support of the expansion and growth they delivered to the country's economy (Parsa, 2000, pp. 34-37). This collaboration between the states and

capitalism laid the seed of discontent and mistrust that will further intensify the drive to change the political order.

Besides, the autocracy of the monarchy and the impoverishment of the masses, the support of Russian in diaspora provided more fervor for the growing discontent. Put differently, the emergence of a broad based collection of intelligentsia who added fervor to the growing tension in Russian (Wade, 2005, pp. 19-20). This group included many professionals, such as university professors, lawyers, doctors, even businessmen who favoured serious change from the old rule pattern of czarist leaders. These dissidents favoured the formation of political parties in Russia, as well as free elections and a parliamentary legislature with genuine power (McNeese, 2005, p. 237). Another significant factor in the eventuality of the revolution was the role of intellectual writing that were oppose to the monarchy. Among the most influential revolutionary writers in Russia was a fiery and brilliant political agitator named Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, who became popularly known as Lenin. His writings were extensive and he produced a multitude of pamphlets, political tract and social essays which were fundamentally to the eventuality of the revolution (McNeese, 2005, p. 244).

However, the apogee of the numerous events that characterize the eventuality of the revolution was the blood massacre of peaceful protester. On January 22 1905 in what became known as Bloody Sunday, the palace guards deliberately opened fire on the crowd at the distance of less than twenty yards, the crowd faced a contemptuous fire and pandemonium engulf the entire capital making the bloody Sunday another major crack in the czarist regime that will later led to the collapse of the regime (Richard, 2004, p. 39).

The climax of the event occur on march 8, 1917, when a group of female workers began demonstrating in the streets of Petrograd against poor living conditions in the city while calling for bread and peace. Thousands of workers soon joined, creating a mass of street protests over the next two days, more street demonstration led to violence as protesting workers and revolutionaries from across the city stormed government building police station (Trotsky, 1930, p. 32). From March to October, a provisional government, headed by Kerensky and consisting of the choicest of Russian Liberalism functioned (Richard, 2004, p. 42). In October came the second stage of the Russian Revolution when the Bolshevik headed by Lenin captured power and established a socialist state. Subsequently, farmland was distributed among farmers, and factories are given to workers. Russia pulls out of

World War I, signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, conceding much land to Germany, Nicholas II, his wife and five children are executed, thus marking the end of Czarist rule (Moss, Walter, Janice Terry & Jiu-Hwa Upshur, 1990, pp. 143-144)

8. Differences between the French, American and Russian Revolution

Although there is a great mark of similarities between the American, French and Russian revolution. A fundamental similarities given that the three revolutions marked a total change from an old order to a new one, yet, there still exists great difference between them. Wright 1967 observed that, the American Revolution was marked by a rare economy of violence when compared to other revolution such as the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution (cited in Magstadt, 2006, p. 441). Also, the leaders of the America Revolution were not purged or murdered, as so many instigators of later revolution would be. To the contrary the military chief Washington became the first president of the republic and retired at his own choice the author of the revolutionary manifesto (Jefferson was its first secretary of state (Magstadt, 2006, p. 441).

Magstadt 2014 observed that the unlike founding fathers of America, Lenin and Bonaparte were not satisfied with becoming dictators, they craved domination of others. This is starkly contrasted with Washington who refused to be treated like royalty, but led with humble moderation (Magstadt, 2014, p. 379). Also, in the French revolution by pairing religion to the old monarchy, Robespierre and the French philosophers did away with Roman Catholicism and brutally disposed of Christianity altogether. In contrast to most of the “God-fearing” founding fathers of America, atheistic Lenin and successors believed in the Communist Manifesto of Marx that claimed “religion is the opiate of the people” (Magstadt, 2014, p. 380) Similarly, The USA remains the strongest nation, even 250 years after its revolt, while the French Republic lasted only 10 years, at which time Bonaparte seized power in 1799, and his revolution ended decisively in 1815 (Nosotro, 2012).

9. Conclusion

Having examined the American, French and Russian revolutions. The following is evident. Firstly, revolution is often triggered by deprivation and sense of frustration with existing order. The America colonies felt deprived and frustrated by the British rule as the masses in France were disenchanted by Monarchy in France.

Secondly, all significant revolution has implications for the immediate environment and the world at large as in the case of the America, French, and Russian revolution. Thirdly, Revolution involves a delinking from the past and an establishment of a new pathway for the future. For instance, the America revolution was a delinking from British rule to connect with her in a new way that is on an equal level rather than master servant relationship. Similarly, the French revolution was a delinking from absolute monarchy to a limited and constitutional monarchy and the Russian revolution was a departure from czarist autocracy to a socialist political order. Thus revolution involves a change not just in leadership but in philosophy and political order of the revolutionary. More so all of the changes and revolution were define as revolutionary only in retrospect thus; it is too early to term the changes in Middle East and North Africa as revolution.

10. References

- Magstadt, Thomas (2006). *Understanding Politics: Ideas, Institutions & Issues* 7th United State: Thomson Wadsworth.
- McNeese, Tim (2005). *Political Revolution of the 18th, 19th, 20th Centuries United State*. Chelsea House Publisher.
- Toma, P.A. & Gorman, R.F. (1991). *International Relations Understanding Global Issues*. United State: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Trotsky, Leon (1930). *Volume One the History of the Russian Revolution* Chris Russell for Marxists Internet Archive.
- Ritchie, Donald (1999). *American History: The Modern Era since 1865*. New York: McGraw- Hill.
- Roy, T. Mathews & Dewitt Platt, F. (2001). *The Western Humanities: The Renaissances to the Present*. Volume II Fourth Edition.
- Coffin, Stacey (2005). *Western Civilization: Their History & Their Culture*. Brief Edition U.S.A: North Company.
- Obi, C.I (2005). *Political and Social Change in Anifwose & Enemu Element of Politics Nigeria*. Sam Iroanusi Publication.
- Carp, Benjamin, L. (2010). *Defiance of the Patriots: The Boston Tea Party and the Making of America*.
- Feldmeth, Greg D. (2004). *American Revolution, U.S. History Resources*, <http://www.polytechnic.org/faculty/gfeldmeth/lec.rev.html> (Revised 24 June 2004).
- Apparadoi, A. (1974). *The Substance of Politics*. New Delhi: Surjeet Publication.

Fisher, H.A.L. (2008). *A History of Europe*. New Delhi: Surjeet Publication.

Wilde, Robert (2012). *Causes of the Russian Revolution, European History*. Retrieved on 15 June from About.com.

Nosotros, Rit (2012). *Compare the differences and similarities between the French, Russian, and American revolutions. Comparative Essay*. Retrieved from on June 15 2012.