French Revolution vs. the Russian Revolution

[Name of the Writer]

[Name of the Institution]

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Revolutions rarely happen in the current world. However, history presents some unforgettable revolutions like the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution. These revolutions played an influential role in transforming the states. Somehow, two of the revolutions; French Revolution and Russian Revolution share common reasons. The history reflects that both of the nations were suffering in the hands of poor rulers and declining economic situations in the country1. Prior to revolution, people on both sides were starving for food that later on forced the people of both countries to come out of their houses and bring a revolution. The French Revolution is older than the Russian Revolution. It took place in the 18th century and before the Russian Revolution, there was a failed prerevolutionary attempt in 1905[[1]](#footnote-1). Both of revolution aimed at changing the destiny of the country.

Secondly, a massive killing took place during two of the revolutions. French people from the low-income class and middle class came out to kill Marie Antoinette, the queen of France2. However, both King and Queen were executed later. At the same time, in Russia Tsar Nicolas and his whole family members were killed1. Many other government officials were also killed during the revolution. The bourgeoisie of France was continuously ignored by the king Louise XVI. The same thing was happening in Russia, Tsar hated the middle class and he named them as Dumas. The killing of the Royal Family in Russia was more ferocious in comparison to the France[[2]](#footnote-2). The economic gap was increasing in both of the countries over different time periods.

When the revolution started rulers in both countries rely on their power, for that they imposed harsh rules in order to deal with the uprising tensions in their countries. They even tried to impose emergencies on the working class but they did not stop. However, the results for both revolutions were different. France took steps towards democracy whereas Russia favored communism as a source of rule. Moreover, when dig deeper the internal factors for revolutions in both countries were different. In Russia, the poor performance of government led to catastrophic loss of the Russian Army in World War I2. Therefore, World War I is considered as a major cause of the Russian Revolution. However, there is no evidence of the war that can be considered a cause of the French Revolution.

Furthermore, in the Russian Revolution, the soldiers took a side on the general public. During the parade when officers ordered them to shoot the public they disobeyed, instead they shot those officers. This indicates the army has also wanted a change in the system. One nation fought for free-living whereas the other nation fought for equal provision of resources to live equally[[3]](#footnote-3). Moreover, in comparison to the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution was more intense and radical in terms of provision of women and family rights[[4]](#footnote-4). Similarly, both revolutions played in favor of two of the countries. France got its victory in the form of removal of corrupt authorities whereas Russia got a New Economic Policy from Lenin4. This new policy led to the recovery of economy of the country.

In conclusion, both revolutions played a significant role in transforming the social, political and economic structure of the country. When two of the revolutions are studied comparatively, on a few grounds both show some similarities. However, there are some variations based on the causes, results, and choice of the people. In short, after the revolution, France chose democracy to be the ideal form whereas Russia showed interest in Communism. The working class from both of the countries took lead in bringing a change to the country. In short, revolutions brought positive results for Russia and France each.

# End Notes

1. Luxemburg, Rosa. The Russian Revolution, and Leninism or Marxism? University of Michigan Press, 1961.
2. Mayer, Arno J. The furies: violence and terror in the French and Russian Revolutions. Princeton University Press, 2013
3. Stone, Bailey. The Anatomy of Revolution Revisited: A Comparative Analysis of England, France, and Russia. Cambridge University Press, 2014.
4. Skocpol, Theda, and Skocpol Theda. States and social revolutions: A comparative analysis of France, Russia, and China. Cambridge University Press, 1979.

1. Luxemburg, Rosa. The Russian Revolution, and Leninism or Marxism? University of Michigan Press, 1961. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Mayer, Arno J. The furies: violence and terror in the French and Russian Revolutions. Princeton University Press, 2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Stone, Bailey. The Anatomy of Revolution Revisited: A Comparative Analysis of England, France, and Russia. Cambridge University Press, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Skocpol, Theda, and Skocpol Theda. States and social revolutions: A comparative analysis of France, Russia, and China. Cambridge University Press, 1979. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)