

Comparative analysis of the French, British, and American revolutions and their role in shaping contemporary democratic ideas and institutions

Oleg Opanasenko*¹ 

¹ Mykola Gogol State University of Nizhyn, Nizhyn, Ukraine

Abstract. A comparative analysis of the French, American, and British revolutions is relevant for understanding the origins and evolution of contemporary democratic ideas and institutions. The purpose of the study was to conduct a comprehensive comparative analysis of these revolutions to identify their common and distinctive features, and to determine their role in the development of democratic principles. The study used a set of methods, in particular, comparative historical, institutional, comparative typological and historical genetic, which helped to carry out a comprehensive comparative analysis of revolutions and determine their role in the development of democratic ideas and institutions. The results of the study showed that despite significant differences in socio-economic and political conditions, the French, American, and British revolutions were based on a common ideological foundation – the ideas of the Enlightenment and the concept of natural law. These revolutionary events played a key role in establishing the fundamental principles of freedom, equality, and popular sovereignty, which later became the cornerstones of the contemporary democratic paradigm. Revolutions made a significant contribution to the establishment of liberal democratic values, contributed to the development and institutionalisation of representative democracy, parliamentarism, and laid solid foundations for the consolidation of the principles of constitutionalism and the rule of law. Comparative analysis revealed that each of the three revolutions offered its own unique model of political structure, due to specific national traditions and historical circumstances. These models later became prototypes and a source of inspiration for the development of contemporary democratic systems in different countries of the world, their adaptation and synthesis in accordance with local socio-cultural contexts. The results of the study are of theoretical importance for deepening understanding of the historical origins and evolution of democratic ideas and institutions, and practical value for improving strategies for democratic development, political reform, and optimisation of training courses in political science, history, theory of state, and law

Keywords: educational ideas; liberal and democratic values; constitutionalism; institutional changes; political modernisation; principles of freedom and equality

INTRODUCTION

The French, American, and British revolutions are key historical events that have had a significant impact on the development of contemporary democratic ideas and institutions. The relevance of the research topic is conditioned by the need for an in-depth investigation of the historical origins of modern democracy and the role of revolutionary events in its establishment. Understanding the common patterns and differences between the French, American, and British revolutions can contribute to a better understanding of the essence of democratic processes and institutions, and provide valuable lessons for democratic development.

The analysis of the scientific literature indicates a significant attention of researchers to the study of certain aspects of the French, American, and British revolutions. In particular, the evolution and typology of revolutions, and their role in political change was considered by L. Grinin (2022), the researcher analysed different types of revolutions and their impact on the transformation of society, but did not pay enough attention to a comparative analysis of the impact of these three revolutions on the development of democratic ideas and institutions. The American Revolution in the context of the development of contemporary constitutionalism and the protection of human rights was

Suggested Citation:

Opanasenko, O. (2025). Comparative analysis of the French, British, and American revolutions and their role in shaping contemporary democratic ideas and institutions. *Journal of Global Political Transformations*, 1(1), 42-55. doi: 10.67524/verus1/1.2025.42.

*Corresponding author



investigated by G. Stourzh (2020). The researcher studied key constitutional documents and ideas that emerged during the American Revolution, but did not conduct a comparative analysis with other revolutions.

The role of local institutions and civil society in the development of a modern state in the context of multi-level democracy was analysed by J.M. Sellers *et al.* (2020). The researchers analysed the interaction between different levels of government and the participation of citizens in political processes, but did not pay attention to the impact of revolutions on these processes. The influence of the military revolution on political change and the emergence of democracy and autocracy in early modern Europe was studied by B. Downing (2020). The researchers considered the transformation of political regimes under the influence of changes in the military sphere, but did not analyse the role of specific revolutions in the establishment of democratic institutions.

The French Revolution of 1787-1804, its causes, course, and consequences were analysed in detail by P.M. Jones (2021). The researcher examined the key events and ideas of the French Revolution, its impact on the development of French society. Constitutionalism in the American Revolution, its features and significance for the development of the American political system was examined by G.S. Wood (2021). The researcher analysed the ideas and documents that established the basis of the American Constitution, but did not make a systematic comparison with other revolutions in terms of their impact on democratic processes.

Despite a significant amount of research devoted to certain aspects of these revolutions, their comparative analysis remains fragmentary and does not always include the full range of their impact on the development of democracy. One of the key challenges is the diversity of the historical, cultural, and socio-political contexts in which these revolutions took place. This makes it difficult to identify common patterns and differences between them and assess their role in shaping democratic ideas and institutions. In addition, there are difficulties in defining and operationalising the concept of “democratic ideas and institutions”, which can lead to different interpretations and conclusions. Another problem was the need to consider the long-term consequences and impact of these revolutions on the further development of democracy. This requires not only an analysis of the immediate results of revolutions, but also a study of their role in shaping political culture, civil society and democratic traditions in the respective countries and regions. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of the French, American, and British revolutions in shaping democratic ideas and institutions through their comparative analysis. To achieve this goal, the following tasks were set:

1. To analyse the historical context, background, and causes of each of the three revolutions to better understand their features and similarities.

2. To investigate the key ideas, principles, and values that were put forward and implemented during these

revolutions, and to assess their impact on the development of democratic thought.

3. To compare the constitutional, institutional, and legal changes that occurred as a result of each of the revolutions, and determine their role in the development of contemporary democratic systems.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological basis of the research was the fundamental principles of historicism, objectivity, and consistency, which provided a scientifically based and comprehensive approach to the study of revolutionary processes in their dynamics, development, and relationship with the broad socio-political and socio-cultural context of the era. Compliance with the principle of historicism allowed considering each of the revolutions as a unique historical phenomenon due to the specific circumstances of its time, and also identifying their general patterns and trends. The principle of objectivity led to an unbiased and balanced analysis of revolutionary events, avoiding ideological biases and anachronistic assessments. The application of a systematic approach helped to understand revolutions as integral and interrelated phenomena that cover various spheres of public life and have a complex impact on further historical development.

An important role in the study was played by the use of the comparative historical method, which identified common features and differences of the French, American, and British revolutions, to trace universal patterns and specific features of their course. The comparative historical method identified typologically similar and distinctive characteristics of revolutions, determined the degree of their radicality, the scale of social transformations, and the impact on the further development of democratic institutions. The institutional approach was used to investigate the political and legal consequences of revolutions, in particular, the transformation of the system of state power, the establishment of the principles of constitutionalism, the division of power, and parliamentarism. The historical and genetic method was used to identify the origins and evolution of the democratic ideas of the Enlightenment, and to trace the connection between the revolutionary principles of freedom, equality, popular sovereignty and contemporary liberal democratic values. The comparative typological method was used to identify common models of political structure that were established as a result of revolutions in France (centralised republic), the United States (presidential federal republic), and Great Britain (parliamentary constitutional monarchy). The use of this method determined the typological features of political regimes established as a result of revolutionary upheavals.

The material basis consisted of fundamental historical, political, legal, and historiographical studies devoted to the French, American, and British revolutions, and the development of democratic institutions and constitutionalism. The analysis of the French Revolution was based on the research by L. Hunt (2004), R. Koekkoek (2020),

P.M. Jones (2021), D. von Güttner (2021), G. Gill (2023). The American Revolution – R. Middlekauff (2007), P. Maier (2008; 2012), R. Allison (2011), C. Green (2020), G.S. Wood (2021); the British Revolution – L.G. Schworer (1981), J. Morrill (1992), P.D. Halliday (2012), J.M. Collins (2020), D. Brown (2020), T. Venning (2023). The theoretical basis for the comparative analysis of revolutionary processes and democratic transformations was formed by G. Lawson (2019), S. Berman (2019), J. DeFronzo (2021), M.E. Fischer (2021) and L. Grinin (2022). These sources formed the conceptual and factual basis for studying the causes of revolutions, their political and legal consequences, and their impact on the development of contemporary democratic ideas and institutions.

RESULTS

Historical background, causes, and course of revolutions

The French Revolution of 1789-1799 was a turning point in the history of not only France, but the entire Europe. Its background was the deep socio-economic and political contradictions that accumulated over the centuries of the absolutist monarchy (Wolfreys & Haynes, 2020). France remained a country with powerful feudal remnants, where privileged classes – the nobility and clergy – retained their tax immunities and dominated political life (Ritchie, 2020). The country was experiencing a severe financial crisis caused by its involvement in the American War of Independence, mismanagement, and the wastefulness of the court (Burke, 2022). Educational ideas, which gained popularity among the educated part of society, undermined the ideological foundations of absolutism and called for the establishment of a republic, ensuring the rights and freedoms of citizens.

The immediate causes of the revolution were the discontent of the Third Estate (the bourgeoisie, peasants, and artisans) with their lack of rights and their desire for reform. The Third Estate, which made up the vast majority of French society, was deprived of political rights and burdened with feudal duties in favour of privileged classes – the nobility and clergy. It was the Third Estate that produced the bulk of the national wealth and paid the biggest share of taxes, which caused outrage and demands for fair representation in government bodies (Blackman, 2019).

The convocation of the Estates General by King Louis XVI in May 1789, for the first time in 175 years, to address financial problems became a catalyst for the revolutionary events. The French monarchy found itself on the brink of bankruptcy as a result of the court's excessive spending, its involvement in the American War of Independence, and an inefficient tax system. Louis XVI hoped that representatives of the estates would agree to the introduction of new taxes and loans, but instead faced demands for radical socio-political transformations (von Güttner, 2021).

The refusal of the Third Estate to submit to the old voting order, according to which the privileged estates had an advantage, led to a political crisis and the proclamation of the National Assembly. In accordance with feudal tradition,

at meetings of the Estates General, each estate had one vote, regardless of the number of representatives. This meant that the nobility and clergy could block any decisions of the Third Estate. Deputies of the Third Estate, led by Mirabeau and Syes, declared that they represent 96% of the French nation, and declared themselves the National Assembly, which has the right to pass laws by a majority vote (Dunn, 2008).

The course of the revolution was rapid and dramatic. On July 14, 1789, the Paris rebels stormed the Bastille, a symbol of absolutism and royal despotism. This medieval prison fortress embodied the arbitrariness of monarchical power, and its fall marked the beginning of revolutionary changes in French society (Lüsebrink & Reichardt, 1997). The National Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, which consolidated the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity. This document became a programmatic manifesto of the French Revolution, incorporating the main ideas of the Enlightenment about natural human rights, popular sovereignty, and the social contract (Koekkoek, 2020).

The estate system was abolished, and a constitutional monarchy was introduced with the restriction of the King's power. However, attempts by Louis XVI and his supporters to suppress the revolution led to the overthrow of the monarchy and the proclamation of a republic in September 1792. Louis XVI secretly called on European monarchies to intervene against revolutionary France, which gave rise to radical forces to accuse him of treason and execute him in January 1793 (Jones, 2021).

The radicalisation of the revolution reached its peak during the Jacobin dictatorship of 1793-1794, which was accompanied by mass terror, executions of "enemies of the revolution", and state intervention in the economy. The Jacobins, led by Robespierre, sought to build a republic of virtue based on the principles of democracy, social equality, and revolutionary patriotism. To combat internal and external counter-revolution, they resorted to extraordinary measures, including mass arrests, show trials, and guillotine executions (Gill, 2023). The Thermidorian Coup of 1794 led to the downfall of the Jacobins and the establishment of the more moderate regime of the Directory. The new government abandoned the policy of terror and revolutionary experiments in the economy, but failed to ensure stability and public confidence in the face of prolonged wars with European monarchies (Jones, 2021).

The American Revolution of 1775-1783 led to the independence of thirteen British colonies in North America and the establishment of the United States. Its prerequisites were the growth of self-awareness of the colonists, their desire for self-government and protection of their rights, and contradictions in the economic interests of the mother country and colonies. During the 18th century, the population of the colonies grew rapidly, and local trade, agriculture, and industry developed. However, the colonies remained in a state of political and economic dependence on the United Kingdom, which restricted their rights to self-government and free trade (Middlekauff, 2007).

Britain sought to strengthen control over the colonies, restrict their trade, and increase tax revenues. After winning the Seven Years' War of 1756-1763, the British government found itself in a state of financial crisis and was seeking new sources of revenue. Parliament began introducing new taxes and fees for the colonies, including the Sugar Act of 1764 and the Stamp Duty Act of 1765. These laws caused outrage among colonists who felt that they violated their rights as British subjects and were imposed without their consent (Allison, 2011).

The reasons for the revolution were attempts by the British Parliament to impose new taxes and fees on the colonies without their consent. The stamp duty act of 1765, which imposed a tax on printed materials, documents and playing cards, sparked a wave of protests and boycotts of British goods. The colonists argued that they could not be taxed by a parliament in which they did not have representation. Under pressure from protests, parliament abolished stamp duty, but declared its right to impose taxes on colonies (Miao, 2021). The Tea Act of 1773, which granted the East India Company a monopoly on tea imports to the colonies, led to a protest in Boston known as the "Boston Tea Party". On 16 December 1773, a group of colonists disguised as Native Americans boarded British ships in Boston Harbour and threw 342 crates of tea overboard. This action was a symbolic challenge to the British authorities and the monopoly of the East India Company (Siri, 2012).

The colonists demanded representation in parliament and compliance with the principle of "No taxation without representation", but the British government refused to make concessions. Prime Minister Lord North and King George III insisted on the colonies' unconditional submission to imperial authority. In response to the "Boston Tea Party", Parliament passed the "Intolerable Acts", which closed the port of Boston, restricted the self-government of the colony of Massachusetts, and allowed those suspected of sedition to be sent to Britain to stand trial (Mair, 2012). The course of the revolution began with armed clashes between colonists and British troops at Lexington and Concord in April 1775. A colonist militia known as the Minutemen resisted attempts by British troops to confiscate weapons and ammunition. These clashes marked the beginning of hostilities and forced the colonists to prepare for a long struggle against the mother country (Blackstone, 2023). The Continental Army was established, led by George Washington, who by then had gained credibility as a member of the Seven Years' War and a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses. Under his command, the Continental Army, despite its lack of experience, resources, and discipline, managed to resist the British regular troops and win decisive victories (Bowers, 2019).

On July 4, 1776, the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia adopted the Declaration of Independence, which proclaimed the creation of a new state – the United States of America. The Declaration, written by Thomas Jefferson, proclaimed the colonies' independence from Great Britain and established the principles of popular sovereignty,

equal rights for citizens, and the right to rise up against despotic rule. It became a manifesto of the American Revolution and a model for future anti-colonial movements (Mair, 2008). The War of Independence lasted until 1783 and ended with the victory of the Americans due to the support of France and Spain. The decisive moment came with the surrender of General Cornwallis' British army following the Battle of Yorktown in 1781. The French fleet blockaded Chesapeake Bay, preventing the arrival of British reinforcements, and the combined American-French army forced the British to surrender (Allison, 2011).

The Paris Peace Treaty of 1783 recognised the independence of the United States and established the borders of the new state. The United States received territory up to Mississippi in the West, the Great Lakes in the North, and Florida in the South. The treaty also guaranteed Americans the right to fish off the coast of Canada and settled debt and compensation issues for loyalists (Allison, 2011). In 1787, the US Constitution was adopted, which consolidated the republican system, the federal system, and the principles of the separation of powers. The Constitution created a strong federal government with an extensive system of checks and balances, and ensured the supremacy of federal law over state law. The Bill of Rights of 1791 supplemented the Constitution with guarantees of civil liberties and protection from arbitrariness of the authorities (Green, 2020).

The British revolution of the mid-17th century, also known as the English Revolution or Civil War, led to the temporary overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of the republic. It was precipitated by disputes between the King and Parliament over the extent of royal power, religious conflicts between Anglicans, Puritans, and Catholics, and socio-economic changes linked to the development of capitalist relations. During the first half of the 17th century, a new gentry class and bourgeoisie were formed in England, interested in limiting absolutism and protecting their economic interests. The spread of puritanism has led to an increase in religious opposition to the official Anglican Church and the policies of Stewart monarchs (Morrill, 1992).

The revolution was sparked by King Charles I's attempts to establish an absolute monarchy and do without Parliament. Charles I, who succeeded to the throne in 1625, sought to follow the example of continental monarchs and rule without restrictions from Parliament. The introduction of the Ship Money tax in 1634 without the consent of Parliament caused public outrage and the Hampden trial. John Hampden, a member of Parliament for Buckinghamshire, refused to pay the tax, considering it illegal and unjustified. Although the court ruled in favour of the crown, Hampden's case set a precedent for challenging royal arbitrariness (Keen & Slemrod, 2021). The conflict between the King and Parliament escalated after the Long Parliament was convened in 1640. This Parliament, convened by Charles I amidst a political crisis and a war with Scotland, demanded that the king curtail his powers. In particular, the Parliament sought the abolition of illegal taxes, the

dismissal of royal advisers and ministers, guarantees of the inviolability of deputies, and the regular convocation of Parliament. These requirements were set out in the document “Grand Remonstrance”, adopted by Parliament in 1641 (Collins, 2020).

The execution of the King’s adviser, the Earl of Strafford, on charges of treason was the point of no return in the King’s confrontation with Parliament. Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, was one of Charles I’s closest associates and embodied his absolutist aspirations. Parliament accused Strafford of abusing power, violating the laws of the kingdom, and planning to send an Irish army to England to suppress the opposition. Under pressure from Parliament and the London mob, Charles I was forced to sign the bill of attainder against Strafford, effectively sentencing him to death in May 1641 (Gallo, 2022).

The course of the revolution began with a civil war between Royalists (supporters of the King) and Parliamentarians (supporters of Parliament) in 1642. The reason for the outbreak of war was the attempt of Charles I to arrest the leaders of the parliamentary opposition in January 1642. A failed arrest attempt forced the king to leave London and begin assembling a royalist army. The major battles of the Civil War took place at Edgehill (1642), Marston Moor (1644), and Naseby (1645), where the parliamentary forces led by Oliver Cromwell and his “New Model Army” achieved victory (Hobson, 2020).

The war ended with the defeat of the Royalists and the execution of Charles I in January 1649 on charges of treason, violation of parliamentary privileges, and the introduction of illegal taxes. The King’s execution was preceded by a trial organised by parliament, which adopted a special act establishing the High Court of Justice. Charles I refused to recognise the legitimacy of this court and did not take the opportunity to acquit himself. The execution of the monarch by a parliamentary verdict was an unprecedented event in English history and shocked the European public (Hobson, 2020).

After the execution of Charles I, a republic was proclaimed under the name “English Commonwealth”. The monarchy and the House of Lords were abolished, and real power was concentrated in the hands of Oliver Cromwell, leader of the Parliamentary army, and his allies in the Independent Party. Cromwell led a military campaign against the Royalists in Ireland and Scotland, brutally suppressing their resistance. The established Republican regime relied on the army, censorship, and extraordinary

courts, which angered both Royalists and radical Puritans (Brown, 2020).

The establishment of Cromwell’s Protectorate in December 1653 marked the end of the revolution and the transition to a sole dictatorship. Cromwell dissolved the remnants of the Long Parliament and passed the “instrument of government” constitution, which gave him the title of Lord Protector with extensive powers. The Protectorate regime relied on censorship, repression of the opposition, and restrictions on civil liberties. The Protectorate’s foreign policy was aimed at strengthening English power and fighting competitors at sea – Holland and Spain (Brown, 2020).

After Cromwell’s death in 1658, the Republican regime was unable to retain power in the face of political instability and economic crisis. General George Monk, the commander of troops in Scotland, called for the restoration of the monarchy and the convocation of a new parliament. In 1660, Charles II Stuart, the son of the executed King, returned to the English throne, marking the restoration of the monarchy. Despite Charles II’s attempts to strengthen royal power, Parliament retained its influence and passed a number of acts aimed at limiting absolutism (Venning, 2023).

The so-called Glorious Revolution of 1688 finally consolidated the principles of constitutional monarchy and the rule of Parliament, limiting the power of the King and passing the bill of rights. The reason for the revolution was an attempt by King James II, who belonged to the Catholic Stuart dynasty, to strengthen his power and change religious policy in favour of Catholics. The parliamentary opposition, led by William of Orange, Stadtholder of the Netherlands and son-in-law of James II, landed in England and forced the King to abdicate. William III of Orange and his wife Mary II Stuart were proclaimed the new monarchs, having agreed to the terms set out by Parliament in the Bill of Rights. This document forbade the King to suspend laws, collect taxes, and maintain the army without the consent of Parliament, guaranteed freedom of election and speech in Parliament, and declared the independence of the judiciary (Schwoerer, 1981). The Bill of Rights was one of the cornerstones of the British constitutional monarchy.

A comparative analysis of the French, American, and British revolutions reveals both common features and significant differences between them. Table 1 compares key aspects of these revolutions, including time frames, prerequisites, causes, slogans, results, leaders, documents, the presence of terror, and major changes that occurred during the revolutionary events.

Table 1. Comparison of revolutions

Criteria	French Revolution	American Revolution	British revolution
Time	1789-1799	1775-1783	1642-1660
Background	Feudal remnants, financial crisis, the impact of the Enlightenment	Colonial dependence, economic contradictions with the mother country	Conflict between the King and Parliament, religious contradictions
Reasons	Discontent of the Third Estate, convocation of the Estates-General	Laws on stamp duty and tea, the lack of representation in parliament	Attempts to establish absolutism, Ship Money, the Hampden case
Slogans	Liberty, equality, fraternity	Life, freedom, the pursuit of happiness	Freedom from royal arbitrariness, parliamentary rights

Table 1. Continued

Criteria	French Revolution	American Revolution	British revolution
Result	Overthrow of the monarchy, the republic, Napoleon's empire	Independence from Great Britain, the establishment of the United States	Temporary overthrow of the monarchy, republic, constitutional monarchy
Leaders	Lafayette, Mirabeau, Robespierre, Napoleon	Washington, Jefferson, Adams	Cromwell, Fairfax, Pym
Documents	Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and the Constitutions of 1791, 1793, and 1795	Declaration of Independence, US Constitution	Grand Remonstrance, the Bill of Rights 1689
Terror	Jacobin terror, mass executions	Absent	Absent
Changes	Abolition of estates, agrarian reform, metric system	Republican form of government, federal structure	Establishment of a republic, restriction of royal power, strengthening of Parliament

Source: compiled by the author

Thus, a comparative analysis of the French, American, and British revolutions allowed identifying both common features and significant differences between them. All three revolutions were caused by the crisis of the old order, dissatisfaction with the existing system of government, and the desire for change. They were based on the ideas of Enlightenment, natural human rights, and social contract. Each of the revolutions had its own specific causes, goals, and features of the course. The French Revolution was the most radical and bloody, leading to the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of the republic, but ended with the rise of Napoleon's imperial power. The American Revolution aimed to achieve independence from Great Britain and assert republican principles of government, as reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution. The British Revolution was the first in chronological terms and the most limited in its consequences, leading to the temporary establishment of a republic and eventually the establishment of a constitutional monarchy and the supremacy of Parliament. Despite all the differences, these three revolutions were important milestones on the way to consolidating the ideas of democracy, human rights, and civil liberties, laying the foundations for the contemporary political system in Europe and America.

The role of revolutions in the development of democracy and contemporary democratic ideas and institutions

The French, American, and British revolutions played a key role in shaping and asserting the democratic principles that later became the basis for the development of democratic systems. These revolutions contributed to the establishment of democracy, the expansion of representation, the development of a system of rights and freedoms of citizens, and the establishment of constitutionalism and the rule of law. The French Revolution was a powerful impetus for the development of the ideas of popular sovereignty and representative democracy. The creation of the National Assembly, which declared itself representatives of the French nation, marked the transition from an absolutist monarchy to a new form of government based on the will of the people (Hunt, 2004). The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789 declared that the source of all power

is the nation, and the law is the expression of the universal will. The introduction of universal suffrage for men during the radical phase of the revolution, although short-lived, was an important step towards increasing political participation and equality of citizens (Jones, 2021).

The American Revolution established a republican form of government based on the principles of popular sovereignty, representation, and federalism. The 1776 Declaration of Independence proclaimed that governments derive their powers from the consent of the governed, and that the people have the right to alter or abolish a government if it becomes destructive of their rights. The US Constitution of 1787 established a federal republic with a division of power between the national government and the states, and a system of representation through elected bodies – Congress and the President (Maier, 2008).

The British revolution, although it did not lead to the establishment of a republic, significantly strengthened the role of Parliament as a representative body and limited the power of the monarch. Even before the revolution, the English Parliament gradually expanded its powers, in particular, through the right to control taxation and spending. The conflict between Charles I and parliament, which led to the Civil War, was caused precisely by the question of the limits of royal power and the prerogatives of Parliament (Keen & Slemrod, 2021). The victory of the parliamentary forces and the execution of the King in 1649 marked the triumph of the idea of popular sovereignty, albeit in a limited form. After the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the principle of the regular convocation of Parliament, and its control over finances were legally consolidated (Schwoerer, 1981).

The French Revolution made a significant contribution to the development of the concept of human rights and civil liberties. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789 proclaimed the inalienable human rights to freedom, property, security, and resistance to oppression. It also established the principle of equality of all citizens before the law and abolished class privileges (Koekkoek, 2020). Although these principles were not always respected during the revolution, especially during the Jacobin terror, the Declaration itself became a model for subsequent generations of human rights activists.

The American Revolution and the US Constitution provided a powerful impetus for the development of civil liberties. The Bill of Rights, passed in 1791 as the first ten amendments to the Constitution, guaranteed fundamental freedoms such as freedom of speech, press, assembly, religion, the right to a fair trial, and protection from unjustified searches. These rights were considered natural and inalienable, which the government should protect, not restrict. Although in practice these freedoms have not always been extended to everyone, especially slaves and indigenous peoples, the very principle of constitutional protection of human rights has become an important asset of American democracy (Wood, 2021).

The British revolution, although less well known for its contribution to the development of human rights, still took important steps in this direction. The Habeas Corpus Act of 1679 established the principle of protecting personal freedom from arbitrary arrest and unjustified imprisonment (Halliday, 2012). The Bill of Rights of 1689, passed after the Glorious Revolution, guaranteed freedom of speech in parliament, banned cruel and unusual punishments, and limited the monarch's power to appoint and dismiss judges (Schwoerer, 1981). These documents laid the foundation for the development of British civil liberties and the rule of law in the following centuries.

The French Revolution contributed to the establishment of the principles of constitutionalism and separation of powers. The constitutions of 1791, 1793, and 1795, although different in content and duration, established written rules for the organisation of public power and the relationships between its branches (Jones, 2021). They also consolidated certain rights and freedoms of citizens, albeit with varying degrees of guarantees. The principle of the separation of powers into legislative, executive and judicial branches, drawn from the ideas of Montesquieu, became a key element of the French constitutional system (Vile, 2012). Although these principles were not always

followed in practice, especially in the context of the revolutionary dictatorship and the Napoleonic empire, the very idea of constitutional restriction of power became an important asset of the revolution.

The American Revolution created a unique model of constitutionalism based on the principle of the supremacy of the Constitution as the highest law of the country. The US Constitution of 1787 established clear limits on the powers of the federal government and states, a system of checks and balances between branches of government, and a mechanism for amending the Constitution (Galie *et al.*, 2020). An important element of the American model was judicial control over the constitutionality of laws, first applied by the Supreme Court in *Marbury v. Madison* in 1803 (White, 2024). This practice allowed the judiciary to interpret the Constitution and protect citizens' rights from encroachments by the legislative and executive branches.

The British Revolution, although did not create a written constitution in the contemporary sense, helped to limit the arbitrariness of the monarch and establish the rule of law. The Petition of Right of 1628 and the Bill of Rights of 1689 established the principle of the inviolability of private property and prohibited the King from levying taxes without the consent of Parliament. They also guaranteed the independence of the judiciary from the influence of the monarch and the protection of citizens from illegal arrests and punishments (Schwoerer, 1981). These documents, together with common law and constitutional customs, formed the unwritten constitution of Great Britain, based on the principles of parliamentary sovereignty and the rule of law. The French, American, and British revolutions made a significant contribution to the development and establishment of democratic principles. Table 2 compares the impact of these revolutions on key aspects of democratic development, in particular, democracy and representation, citizens' rights and freedoms, constitutionalism, and the rule of law.

Table 2. Comparison of the impact of revolutions on the development of democracy

Criteria	French Revolution	American Revolution	British revolution
Democracy and representation	National Assembly, universal suffrage for men	Republicanism, federalism, elected authorities	Strengthening the role of Parliament, regular elections
Rights and freedoms of citizens	Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, equality before the law	The Bill of Rights: freedom of speech, of the press, of religion, and of assembly	Habeas Corpus Act, freedom of speech in Parliament, prohibition of cruel punishments
Constitutionalism and the rule of law	Written constitutions, separation of powers	Constitution as the highest law, judicial control	Limiting the arbitrariness of the monarch, independence of the courts, unwritten constitution

Source: compiled by the author

Thus, the French, American, and British revolutions made significant contributions to the development and affirmation of democratic principles such as democracy, representation, human rights, constitutionalism, and the rule of law. Despite the differences in historical conditions and currents, these revolutions laid the foundations for the development of contemporary democratic systems and became a model for subsequent generations of fighters for

freedom and democracy. The French, American, and British revolutions played a key role in shaping contemporary democratic ideas and institutions. These revolutions helped to establish liberal-democratic values, foster the development of representative democracy and parliamentary government, lay the foundations for the rule of law and constitutionalism, and influence the subsequent development of democratic movements and revolutions in other countries.

The French Revolution put forward the slogans “Liberty, equality, fraternity”, which became the quintessence of liberal democratic values. Liberty was understood as liberation from feudal fetters and absolutist power, ensuring natural human rights (Koekkoek, 2020). Equality provided for the abolition of class privileges and equality of all before the law. Fraternity symbolised the idea of national unity and solidarity. These values are reflected in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789 and subsequent constitutions (Jones, 2021).

The American Revolution proclaimed the inalienable human rights to life, freedom, and the pursuit of happiness. The Declaration of Independence of 1776, written by Thomas Jefferson, stated that all people are created equal and are endowed by the God with certain inalienable rights, including the right to life, freedom, and the pursuit of happiness. This idea, based on John Locke’s theory of natural rights, became the cornerstone of American political philosophy and constitutionalism (Morrill, 1992). The US Constitution, adopted in 1787, and the Bill of Rights, ratified in 1791, guaranteed the protection of individual freedoms, equality before the law, and freedom of speech, of the press, of religion, and of assembly. The US Constitution was the first written constitution in the modern sense that clearly defined the powers of the federal government and the rights of states. The Bill of Rights, consisting of the first ten amendments to the Constitution, consolidated basic civil liberties and became a model for many other countries (Maier, 2008). The American model of liberal democracy, based on the principles of constitutionalism, federalism, power sharing, and civil liberties, has become a model for many countries around the world that have sought to build a democratic society.

The British Revolution established the right to resist tyranny and the inviolability of the individual. The Petition of Right of 1628, passed by the English Parliament, condemned the practice of imprisonment without trial and restricted the monarch’s powers. This document was an important step in the fight against royal absolutism and the establishment of the rule of law (Schwoerer, 1981). The Habeas Corpus Act of 1679 established the principle of presumption of innocence and protection against unlawful arrests. This law required the courts to issue a Habeas Corpus Act requiring the detainee to be brought to court to verify the legality of his arrest. The Habeas Corpus Act was one of the cornerstones of the British legal system and provided protection of personal freedom from the arbitrariness of the authorities (Halliday, 2012). The Bill of Rights of 1689, passed after the Glorious Revolution, proclaimed freedom of speech in parliament, banned harsh punishments, and established the supremacy of Parliament over the monarch. This document limited the King’s power, prohibiting him from suspending laws, imposing taxes, and maintaining the army without the consent of Parliament. The Bill of Rights became the foundation of the British constitutional monarchy and consolidated the principles of parliamentary sovereignty and the separation of powers

(Schwoerer, 1981). These documents laid the foundations for a British constitutional monarchy based on the rule of law, parliamentary control over the executive branch, and respect for individual rights.

The French Revolution contributed to the establishment of the principles of representative democracy through the creation of elected authorities. The National Assembly formed during the revolution proclaimed itself representatives of the French nation and bearers of popular sovereignty. They abolished feudal privileges, proclaimed the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and began drafting a new Constitution (Jones, 2021). The Constitution of 1791 introduced a constitutional monarchy in France with an elected legislative body – the Legislative Assembly. This Constitution limited the power of the king by granting legislative powers to a unicameral parliament elected based on property qualification. Although suffrage was limited, the very principle of representative government was an important step towards democratisation (Jones, 2021).

The Constitution of 1793, adopted at the height of the revolution, did not last long, established universal suffrage for men and proclaimed the principle of direct democracy. This radical Constitution abolished the property qualification, introduced national elections and referendums, and granted social rights such as the right to work, education, and social assistance. Although it was not implemented, the 1793 Constitution became a symbol of revolutionary aspirations for democracy and social justice (Jones, 2021). The American Revolution created a model of a federal republic with a developed system of representative authorities. The US Constitution of 1787 introduced a bicameral Congress consisting of the Senate and House of Representatives. The Senate represented the interests of the states, with two senators from each state elected by the state legislature. The House of Representatives was formed through direct elections based on proportional representation from each state (Maier, 2008). The legislative power of Congress, which had the power to make laws, declare war, regulate trade, and impose taxes, was balanced with the executive power of the president, who was elected by indirect voting through the electoral college, and the judiciary, headed by the Supreme Court, whose members were appointed by the president with the consent of the Senate. This system of checks and balances, based on the ideas of Montesquieu and Locke, was designed to prevent the usurpation of power and to ensure a balance between the branches of government (Maier, 2008). The American model of a federal republic with a division of power and representative government has become a classic model of the constitutional structure of democratic states and a role model in many countries of the world.

The British revolution strengthened the role of Parliament as a representative body of government and contributed to the development of Parliamentarism. Even before the revolution, the English Parliament gradually expanded its powers, in particular, in matters of taxation and control over the expenses of the crown. Since the Magna Carta of

1215, English monarchs have been forced to accept restrictions on their power and recognise the right of Parliament to participate in the legislative process and the establishment of taxes (Gibbs, 2023). During the revolution, Parliament became the centre of opposition to the King's absolutist claims and the scene of political struggle. The conflict between Charles I and Parliament, which refused to provide the King with funds for a war with Scotland without concessions on his part, led to a civil war. The victory of parliamentary forces in the Civil War of 1642-1651 under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell led to the execution of King Charles I on charges of treason and the establishment of a republic (Schwoerer, 1981). The restoration of the monarchy in 1660 took place on the terms of the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688, which finally established the supremacy of Parliament over the monarch. The bill of rights of 1689, passed by parliament after the abdication of James II, established the principle of regular convocation of Parliament, its control over taxation, and freedom of parliamentary debate. The monarch could no longer suspend laws, impose taxes, or maintain an army without the consent of Parliament (Venning, 2023). Subsequently, a system of party-parliamentary government developed in the United Kingdom, with the House of Commons playing a leading role and the Cabinet being accountable to it. During the 18th century, the principle of forming a government of representatives of the party that had a majority in the House of Commons was established. The Prime Minister, who headed the cabinet, had to secure the support of the parliamentary majority. Thus, the executive branch became derived from the legislative branch and controlled by it (Schwoerer, 1981). The British revolution laid the foundations for parliamentary democracy and inspired similar processes in other European countries.

The French Revolution laid the foundations for the concept of a state governed by the rule of law through the adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen and written constitutions. The Declaration of 1789, adopted by the National Assembly, proclaimed the inalienable human rights to freedom, property, security, and resistance to oppression. It also established the principles of the rule of law, the distribution of power, and responsibility of officials. According to the Declaration, the law was to be an expression of the common will, and all citizens were to be equal before it. No person could be charged, arrested, or imprisoned in any other way than in cases defined by law (Kaczor, 2023). The constitutions of 1791, 1793, and 1795, adopted at different stages of the revolution, despite their differences, were based on the ideas of popular sovereignty, representative rule, and legality. They proclaimed the French people to be the sole source of authority, established a system of separation of powers between the legislative, executive and judicial branches, and guaranteed the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens (Jones, 2021). Although in practice these principles were often violated during revolutionary upheavals, terror, and wars, the very idea of constitutional restriction

of power and subordination of the state to the law became an integral part of the French political tradition and influenced the constitutional development of other countries.

The American Revolution created one of the first written constitutions in the modern sense, which consolidated the principles of constitutionalism and the rule of law. The US Constitution, drafted and ratified in 1787-1788, established the federal structure of the state, a clear division of power into legislative (Congress), executive (President) and judicial (Supreme Court) branches, and a system of checks and balances between them. Legislative power was limited to the list of powers delegated to Congress, while other powers remained with states or people (Maier, 2008). The Bill of Rights of 1791, consisting of the first ten amendments to the Constitution, supplemented it with guarantees of personal rights and freedoms of citizens. He defended freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, the right to bear arms, the inviolability of the person and private property, the presumption of innocence, the right to a fair trial, etc. (Wood, 2021). Therefore, the US Constitution has become not only a means of organising the state, but also a guarantor of human rights and limiting the power of the state over the individual. The principle of judicial control over the constitutionality of laws, first applied by the US Supreme Court in *Marbury v. Madison* in 1803, allowed the judiciary to protect the Constitution from encroachments by other branches of government. The Supreme Court has recognised the right to interpret the Constitution and invalidate congressional laws that contradict it. This established the supremacy of the Constitution as the highest law of the country and laid the foundations for the development of constitutional control in other countries (White, 2024).

The British revolution, despite the lack of a written Constitution, contributed to the establishment of the principles of the rule of law and the restriction of royal arbitrariness. A petition on the law of 1628, passed by Parliament, condemned the practice of arbitrary arrests and incarceration without trial, forced soldiers to stand in the homes of civilians, and the introduction of martial law in peacetime. It obliged the King to comply with the laws and not violate the rights and freedoms of his subjects (Halliday, 2012). The Habeas Corpus Act of 1679 established the right of a person detained on suspicion of having committed an offence to request a court order to verify the lawfulness of detention (*habeas corpus*). The court had to deal with the detainee's case quickly and either release the culprit or transfer them to a court of appropriate jurisdiction. This act has become an important guarantee of personal freedom and protection from illegal incarceration (Halliday, 2012).

The Bill of Rights of 1689, passed by Parliament after the Glorious Revolution, limited the power of the monarch, forbidding him to stop the operation of laws, collect taxes and maintain the army in peacetime without the consent of Parliament. It also proclaimed freedom of parliamentary elections, freedom of parliamentary debate, and banned cruel and unusual punishments (Schwoerer, 1981). The Act

of Settlement of 1701 established new rules for succession to the throne, excluding Catholics from the line of succession. It also guaranteed the independence of judges, who were henceforth appointed for life, not at the discretion of the monarch, and could only be removed on the recommendation of both houses of Parliament. The Act consolidated the principle of ministers' accountability to Parliament by prohibiting the monarch from pardoning a minister who had been convicted by Parliament (Daly, 2020). These constitutional acts, along with common law and parliamentary precedents, formed a unique British model of an unwritten constitution based on the principles of the rule of law, parliamentary sovereignty, independence of the courts, and executive accountability. Despite the lack of a single document, the British constitution evolved within the legal tradition and became a model for the legal systems of many countries around the world.

The French Revolution had a huge impact on the further development of democratic and national liberation movements in Europe and the world. The ideas of freedom, equality and popular sovereignty put forward during the revolution inspired participants in the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 in France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, and the Austrian Empire. These revolutions, known as the "Spring of Nations", were directed against absolutist regimes and aimed at establishing constitutional government, national liberation, and unification. Although most of them were defeated, they contributed to the spread of democratic and liberal ideas and paved the way for future changes (Sperber, 2005). The Paris Commune of 1871 was the first attempt to establish socialist democracy and a kind of prologue to the revolutions of the 20th century. The rebellious workers and artisans of Paris proclaimed the creation of a self-governing commune based on the principles of direct democracy, electability, and recall of all officials, equality and solidarity. The commune lasted only 72 days and was brutally suppressed by government forces, but left a memory as the first attempt at workers' self-government and became a symbol of the revolutionary struggle for the socialist and communist movements (Merriman, 2014).

The French Revolution also contributed to the spread of nationalism and the idea of the right of nations to self-determination. The proclamation of the French nation as a community of free and equal citizens, united by a common will and shared interests, challenged the traditional dynastic states and legitimised the aspirations of oppressed nations to establish their own nation states. This affected the national liberation movements in Latin America, where the Creoles, influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment

and the experience of the United States and France, began to struggle for independence from the Spanish and Portuguese crowns. In the Balkans, Serbian, Greek, and Bulgarian rebels tried to win freedom from Ottoman rule. In Ukraine, the ideas of freedom and equality inspired figures of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius and the Ukrainian People's Republic. In Poland, the memory of the Constitution of 3 May 1791 and the Kościuszko Uprising fuelled the national liberation struggle throughout the 19th century (Hobsbawm, 1992). Thus, the French Revolution gave a powerful impetus to the development of national movements and the struggle for state independence in Europe and the world.

The American Revolution had a significant impact on the development of democratic and national liberation movements in the Western Hemisphere. The successful struggle of the North American colonies for independence from Great Britain became a model for the colonial peoples of Latin America. The wars of independence in Venezuela, Colombia, Argentina, Chile, Peru, and Mexico in the first quarter of the 19th century led to the creation of independent republics modelled on the United States (Racine, 2010). The ideas of federalism, republicanism and constitutionalism, which drew on the experience of the American Revolution, were incorporated into the constitutional drafts of San Martín, Bolívar, O'Higgins and other leaders of the Latin American revolutions (Adelman, 2006).

The British Revolution had a less immediate but equally important impact on the development of democratic institutions and movements. The establishment of a constitutional monarchy and the supremacy of Parliament in Britain became a model for many European countries in the 19th century. The British model of gradual reform of the electoral system and the expansion of suffrage during the Chartist movement of the 1830s and 1840s and the reforms of 1832, 1867, and 1884 was adopted by many countries in Europe and the British Commonwealth (Lang, 1999). The British experience of peaceful evolution from an aristocratic to a democratic political system was an alternative to the revolutionary path demonstrated by France.

A comparative analysis of the French, American and British revolutions demonstrates their key role in shaping modern democratic ideas and institutions (Table 3). Despite the differences in socio-economic and political conditions, these revolutions were based on common ideas of Enlightenment and natural law, proclaiming the principles of freedom, equality, and self-government of the people. They contributed to the establishment of liberal democratic values, the development of representative democracy and parliamentarism, the rule of law, and constitutionalism.

Table 3. Comparison of the role of revolutions in the development of democratic ideas and institutions

Criteria	French Revolution	American Revolution	British revolution
Liberal and democratic values	Liberty, equality, fraternity	Life, freedom, the pursuit of happiness	Right to resist tyranny, inviolability of the individual
Representative democracy and parliamentarism	National assembly, universal suffrage	Congress, bicameral parliament	Strengthening the role of the House of Commons and the Cabinet

Table 3. Continued

Criteria	French Revolution	American Revolution	British revolution
Rule of law and constitutionalism	Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, written constitutions	US Constitution, Bill of Rights, judicial review	Habeas Corpus Act, Bill of Rights, rule of law
Influence on further democratic movements and revolutions	Revolutions of 1830 and 1848, Paris Commune, national liberation movements	Wars of independence in Latin America, constitutionalism	Chartist movement, electoral law reforms, spread of the British model

Source: compiled by the author

The revolutionary experience of France, the United States, and Britain became a source of inspiration for democratic and national liberation movements in various parts of the world during the 19th and 20th centuries. Each of these revolutions offered its own model of political structure, which corresponded to national traditions and historical circumstances. The French Revolution emphasised the ideas of popular sovereignty, a centralised republic, and radical social transformation. The American Revolution embodied the principles of federalism, constitutionalism, and liberal democracy. The British Revolution combined the traditions of parliamentarism with the ideas of a limited monarchy and progressive reform. These models have become the basis for the development of contemporary democratic systems around the world, their adaptation and synthesis in various national contexts.

DISCUSSION

The comparative analysis of the French, American, and British revolutions and their role in shaping modern democratic ideas and institutions presented in this study made a significant contribution to contemporary scientific discourse. The results clearly demonstrate that despite the differences in socio-economic and political conditions, these revolutions had a common ideological basis in the ideas of Enlightenment and natural law, asserting the principles of freedom, equality and popular sovereignty.

When comparing these findings with the results of other studies, it is worth noting, first and foremost, the conceptual consensus regarding the assessment of revolutions as key milestones on the path to the establishment of democracy. In particular, J. DeFronzo (2021) also considered the French, American, and British revolutions as turning points that laid the foundations of the contemporary democratic system. The researcher thoroughly analysed the prerequisites, course, and consequences of these revolutions, tracing their impact on the transformation of political institutions and public relations. Conclusions of J. DeFronzo revealed significant coincidences with the results of this study regarding the defining role of Enlightenment ideas as the ideological basis of revolutions. Both papers emphasised the key importance of educational concepts of natural human rights, social contract, and popular sovereignty for legitimising revolutionary transformations and laying the foundations for representative government. J. DeFronzo paid more attention to the analysis of the socio-economic prerequisites for revolutionary upheavals, in particular, the growth of contradictions between

feudal remnants and capitalist relations, the aggravation of antagonism between the Third Estate and the privileged strata. Instead, the present study focused primarily on the political dimension of transformation, highlighting in detail institutional changes, the restructuring of the power system, and the adoption of new principles of legitimacy. Therefore, despite the commonality of fundamental assessments, these papers differ somewhat in the placement of accents and the subject field of analysis.

M.E. Fischer (2021) offered a comparative analysis of the processes of development of democratic regimes, considering revolutions as the starting point of their emergence. The researcher compared political transformations in different countries of the world, highlighting common patterns and specific features of democratisation. In this case, M.E. Fischer highlighted the analysis of the French, American, and British revolutions as key events that marked the beginning of the establishment of contemporary democratic institutions and practices. The researcher noted the defining role of these revolutions in the delegitimisation of absolutist regimes, the political emancipation of the Third Estate, the restriction of the power of the monarch, the establishment of the principles of power distribution and constitutionalism. These findings showed a clear conceptual affinity with the results of this study, which also treats revolutions as crucial milestones on the way to the establishment of representative democracy and the rule of law. However, M.E. Fischer focused more on a comparative analysis of the institutional design of post-revolutionary democracies, highlighting in detail the common and distinctive features in the organisation of electoral systems, parliamentarism, checks, and balances in different countries. On the other hand, this study delved somewhat less into a comparative analysis of the institutional design of democracies, but rather emphasised the commonality of ideological foundations and driving forces of revolutions themselves. Therefore, despite the proximity of the conclusions, studies differ somewhat in the focus of comparative analysis – if M.E. Fischer focused more on the post-revolutionary institutionalisation of democracy, the current research mainly highlighted the ideological origins and dynamics of revolutionary transformations.

A thorough study by J.I. Israel (2019) offered a more critical look at the legacy of the Enlightenment and its impact on revolutionary processes. The researcher conducted a large-scale analysis of the philosophical foundations, political ideas, and socio-cultural context of the age of reason, tracing their influence on the revolutionary events

of the late 18th century. J.I. Israel put forward a bold thesis about the ambiguity and inconsistency of the influence of educational ideology on socio-political transformations. According to the researcher, despite the unquestioningly emancipatory pathos of the educational ideas of freedom, equality, and progress, their radical implementation during the French Revolution paradoxically turned into an escalation of violence, the establishment of a Jacobin dictatorship and, in general, a deviation from the liberal and constitutional project of moderate Enlightenment. Più Grande Casino, revolutionary terror and Napoleon's imperial ambitions were regarded by J.I. Israel as disappointing results of an attempt to uncompromisingly implement an educational utopia by means of political radicalism. This rather contradictory concept to a certain extent calls into question the unequivocally approving assessment of the role of revolutions in the processes of democratisation, which can be traced in the present study. However, it is worth noting that the critical optics of J.I. Israel focused almost exclusively on the case of the French Revolution, while tangential analysis of the American and British revolutions was virtually nonexistent. Instead, this paper offered a more balanced and comparative view of revolutionary events, treating all three revolutions as equally significant factors in establishing the contemporary democratic paradigm. Consequently, whilst J.I. Israel's warnings about the ambiguity of the revolutionary legacy undoubtedly merit attention, they are not sufficiently substantiated within the broader comparative context presented in this study.

A valuable contribution to the discussion about the impact of revolutions on the development of democracy was the paper by S. Berman (2019). The researcher provided a panoramic overview of political transformations in Europe from absolutism to the present, considering the French Revolution as a turning point in the transition to new forms of political structure. Noting its role in proclaiming the principles of freedom and equality, S. Berman emphasised the contradictory nature of the revolution that turned into Jacobin terror and Napoleon's authoritarianism. This interpretation complements the more unambiguous assessments of the French Revolution presented in this study. Similarly, analysing the British revolution as an example of the gradual evolution towards democracy through the limitations of royal power, S. Berman offered an alternative vision of ways of democratisation, different from the revolutionary paradigm.

G. Lawson's (2019) theoretical model appeared to be extremely helpful for understanding the nature of revolutions. The researcher offered a structural and functional scheme for analysing revolutionary processes, which covers the pre-revolutionary situation, revolutionary scraping, post-revolutionary stabilisation, and consolidation of the new regime. The application of this model to the French, American, and British revolutions allowed identifying both universal patterns and specific features of each case. Conclusions of G. Lawson were in tune with the conclusions of this study regarding the crucial importance of

the ideological factor in the mobilisation of the revolutionary masses. The researcher focused more on the structural prerequisites and dynamics of the deployment of revolutions, while the present study focused on their political and institutional consequences.

A systematic understanding of the role of social movements in the processes of political transformation was proposed by S. Tarrow (2022). The researcher considered the French and American revolutions as large-scale examples of collective action that led to a radical change in the social system. S. Tarrow reported the defining role of the masses as the driving force behind revolutions and the consolidation of new forms of political organisation. These observations correlate with the findings of this study regarding the key importance of broad civic participation in revolutionary events. However, if S. Tarrow focused on highlighting the organisational aspects of collective action, this paper offered a broader conceptualisation of revolutions as turning points on the road to democracy.

A significant contribution to the conceptualisation of the problem of democracy and difference was offered by the collection edited by S. Benhabib (2021). Researchers analysed the challenges posed to democratic theory and practice by issues of identity, citizenship, and inclusion in the context of the growing diversity of contemporary societies. Although the collection did not directly focus on the analysis of revolutions, its conceptual framework seemed extremely heuristic for understanding the legacy of the French, American, and British revolutions in the context of asserting the principles of freedom and equality. The revolutionary transformations analysed in detail in this study laid the foundations for a contemporary model of citizenship based on the ideas of universal human rights and democratic participation. As the authors of the collection rightly pointed out, this model was historically shaped within the context of homogeneous national communities and did not always consider dimensions of difference and inclusion. Reflecting on the legacy of the revolution through the lens of the inclusion and representation of diverse identities is therefore an important step towards a more inclusive vision of democracy.

CONCLUSIONS

The study involved a comprehensive comparative analysis of the French, American, and British revolutions, identification of their common features and differences, and determination of their role in the development of contemporary democratic ideas and institutions. As a result of investigating the historical prerequisites, causes and course of each of the revolutions, it was established that they were caused by the crisis of the old order, dissatisfaction with the existing system of government, and the desire for change. The French Revolution was caused by the deep socio-economic and political contradictions of the absolutist monarchy; the American Revolution – by colonial dependence and economic contradictions with the mother country; and the British Revolution – by the conflict between the King and Parliament, and religious disputes.

The analysis of key ideas and principles put forward during the revolutions showed that they are based on the ideas of the Enlightenment and natural law. All three revolutions proclaimed the principles of freedom, equality, and popular sovereignty, albeit with different accents. The French Revolution championed the slogans “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”; the American Revolution championed the inalienable human rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and the British Revolution championed the right to resist tyranny and the right to personal liberty. Revolutions also promoted the ideas of human rights, representative government, and constitutionalism.

A comparison of the constitutional and institutional changes that occurred as a result of revolutions allowed assessing their impact on the development of democracy. The French Revolution established the principles of popular sovereignty, republicanism and radical social reform; the American Revolution established a republican form of government, federalism, and a system of checks and balances; and the British Revolution established the supremacy of Parliament and a constitutional monarchy. All three revolutions laid the foundations for representative democracy, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights, albeit with varying degrees of success and duration. The study convincingly proved the defining role of the French, American, and British revolutions in the development of contemporary democratic ideas and institutions. They became a model for subsequent democratic movements and revolutions, contributed to the establishment of liberal democratic values, the development of parliamentarism and constitutionalism. Each of the revolutions offered its own model of political structure, which corresponded to

national traditions and historical circumstances. These models have become the basis for the development of contemporary democratic systems around the world and their adaptation and synthesis in various national contexts.

It is worth noting certain limitations of this study. It focused mainly on the political and ideological aspects of revolutions, paying less attention to their socio-economic dimension. The analysis focused on three of the most significant revolutions in Europe and America, leaving out other examples of revolutionary transformations. The study did not aim to provide a detailed analysis of the long-term consequences of the revolutions and their impact on the subsequent development of individual countries and regions. Prospects for further research include the expansion of the geographical scope of comparative analyses of revolutions, an in-depth study of the interplay between revolutionary processes and the evolution of democratic thought, examination of the long-term consequences of revolutions for the development of individual countries and regions, drawing lessons from revolutions for contemporary democratic transformations, and conducting an interdisciplinary analysis of revolutions to create a comprehensive picture of revolutionary processes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

None.

FUNDING

None.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

REFERENCES

- [1] Adelman, J. (2006). *Sovereignty and revolution in the Iberian Atlantic*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- [2] Allison, R. (2011). *The American revolution: A concise history*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [3] Benhabib, S. (Ed.). (2021). *Democracy and difference: Contesting the boundaries of the political*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- [4] Berman, S. (2019). *Democracy and dictatorship in Europe: From the Ancien Régime to the present day*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [5] Blackman, R.H. (2019). *1789: The French revolution begins*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [6] Blackstone, K.E. (2023). *Hardest conflict: Morale in the continental army during the American revolutionary war, 1775-1783*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh.
- [7] Bowers, T.A. (2019). *The life and soul of an army: Discipline and professionalism in George Washington's continental army, 1775-1776*. (Doctoral dissertation, The George Washington University, Washington, USA).
- [8] Brown, D. (2020). Republic. In *Empire and enterprise* (pp. 167-192). Manchester: Manchester University Press. doi: 10.7765/9781526132000.00013.
- [9] Burke, E. (2022). *The end of the old financial regime, 1781-1793*. In T. Jackson (Ed.), *Impunity and capitalism: The afterlives of European financial crises, 1690-1830* (pp. 141-176). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [10] Collins, J.M. (2020). The long parliament and the law of necessity in seventeenth-century England. *Past & Present*, 247(1), 3-35. doi: 10.1093/pastj/gtz053.
- [11] Daly, P. (2020). Judicial independence and accountability in the British constitution. In E. Hirsch Ballin, G. van der Schyff & M. Stremler (Eds.), *European yearbook of constitutional law 2019* (pp. 143-170). The Hague: T.M.C. Asser Press. doi: 10.1007/978-94-6265-359-7_7.
- [12] DeFronzo, J. (2021). *Revolutions and revolutionary movements*. New York: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9781003102649.
- [13] Downing, B. (2020). *The military revolution and political change: Origins of democracy and autocracy in early modern Europe*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- [14] Dunn, S. (2008). *The deaths of Louis XVI: Regicide and the French political imagination*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- [15] Fischer, M.E. (2021). *Establishing democracies*. London: Routledge.
- [16] Galie, P.J., Bopst, C., & Kirschner, B. (2020). *Bills of rights before the bill of rights. Early state constitutions and the American tradition of rights, 1776-1790*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [17] Gallo, J. (2022). *Charles I—dead is better*. Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/items/f4c0c22a-7bb5-49a6-9549-4af4e8992b42>.
- [18] Gibbs, S. (2023). *Lordship, state formation and local authority in late medieval and early modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [19] Gill, G. (2023). *Revolution and terror*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [20] Green, C. (2020). *United/States: A revolutionary history of American statehood*. *Michigan Law Review*, 119(1), 1-69.
- [21] Grinin, L. (2022). Evolution and typology of revolutions. In J.A. Goldstone, L. Grinin & A. Korotayev (Eds.), *Handbook of revolutions in the 21st century: The new waves of revolutions, and the causes and effects of disruptive political change* (pp. 173-200). Cham: Springer International Publishing. doi: 10.1007/978-3-030-86468-2_6.
- [22] Halliday, P.D. (2012). *Habeas corpus: From England to empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- [23] Hobsbawm, E.J. (1992). *Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [24] Hobson, J. (2020). *Charles I's executioners: Civil war, regicide & the Republic*. Barnsley: Pen and Sword History.
- [25] Hunt, L. (2004). *Politics, culture, and class in the French revolution: With a new preface*. London: University of California Press.
- [26] Israel, J.I. (2019). *The Enlightenment that failed: Ideas, revolution, and democratic defeat, 1748-1830*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [27] Jones, P.M. (2021). *The French revolution 1787-1804*. London: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9781003156185.
- [28] Kaczor, C. (2023). The declaration of independence: Inalienable rights, the creator, and the political order. *Nova et Vetera*, 21(1), 249-274. doi: 10.1353/nov.2023.a919156.
- [29] Keen, M., & Slemrod, J. (2021). *Rebellion, rascals, and revenue: Tax follies and wisdom through the ages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- [30] Koekkoek, R. (2020). The kindred spirit tie of congenial principles. In *The citizenship experiment* (pp. 26-56). Leiden: Brill. doi: 10.1163/9789004416451_003.
- [31] Lang, S. (1999). *Parliamentary reform 1785-1928*. London: Routledge.
- [32] Lawson, G. (2019). *Anatomies of revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [33] Lüsebrink, H.J., & Reichardt, R. (1997). *The Bastille: A history of a symbol of despotism and freedom*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- [34] Maier, P. (2008). *The declaration of independence and the constitution of the United States*. New York: Random House Publishing Group.
- [35] Maier, P. (2012). *American scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- [36] Merriman, J. (2014). *Massacre: The life and death of the Paris commune*. London: Hachette UK.
- [37] Miao, M. (2021). *Kindling the flame of revolution*. *The History Teacher*, 55(1), 121-136.
- [38] Middlekauff, R. (2007). *The glorious cause: The American revolution, 1763-1789*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [39] Morrill, J. (1992). The causes of the British civil wars. *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 43(4), 624-633. doi: 10.1017/S0022046900002001.
- [40] Racine, K. (2010). "This England and this now": British cultural and intellectual influence in the Spanish American independence era. *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 90(3), 423-454. doi: 10.1215/00182168-2010-002.
- [41] Ritchie, N. (2020). *French revolution, 1789-1799*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. doi: 10.1093/OBO/9780199846719-0169.
- [42] Schwoerer, L.G. (1981). *The declaration of rights, 1689*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- [43] Sellers, J.M., Lidström, A., & Bae, Y. (2020). *Multilevel democracy: How local institutions and civil society shape the modern state*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [44] Siry, S.E. (2012). Defiance of the patriots: The boston tea party and the making of America – by Benjamin L. Carp. *Historian*, 74(1), 100-101. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-6563.2011.00314_10.x.
- [45] Sperber, J. (2005). *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [46] Stourzh, G. (2020). *The American revolution, modern constitutionalism, and the protection of human rights*. In K. Thompson (Ed.), *Truth and tragedy* (pp. 162-176). London: Routledge.
- [47] Tarrow, S. (2022). *Power in movement*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [48] Venning, T. (2023). *The fall of Cromwell's Republic and the return of the king*. Barnsley: Pen & Sword.
- [49] Vile, M.J.C. (2012). *Constitutionalism and the separation of powers*. Carmel: Liberty Fund.
- [50] von Güttner, D. (2021). *French revolution: The basics*. London: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9781003157748.
- [51] White, C. (2024). *The establishment of the American judicial system through Marbury vs. Madison*. *Tenor of Our Times*, 13(1), article number 16.
- [52] Wolfreys, J., & Haynes, M. (Eds.). (2020). *History and revolution: Refuting revisionism*. London: Verso Books.
- [53] Wood, G.S. (2021). *Power and liberty: Constitutionalism in the American revolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.