The reign of terror in the french revolution

The Reign of Terror spread itself throughout the war by creating inner conflict within the elements of the French Revolution, which consisted of religious movements, uprisings, and developments with much fervour. Taking cues from different historical facets and literatures, it can be said that the reign of terror is the product of rebellion which resulted from disparities in social and political backgrounds. When the Revolution headed to the divergence from facts and moral integrity, the nation shifted from its compliance with the law and moved toward varying principles.

The Reign of Terror was not the course of the aberration itself, but was rather the effect of the symbolic conflict between the Revolution and Ancien Regime. During the Reign of Terror, sovereign authority was not fully exercised and led to fall of the west and south to civil war.[1] It was in this phase that the Revolution was disrupted and broke down. The Revolution was intensified by disorder within the rebellion, as well as by a republic which was breaking down due to external pressure and crumbling from internal conflict; it was at its peak with the occurrence of war, inflation, violence, sabotage, hunger and oppression.[2]

The Revolution had its collection of noble figures who deeply translated to the ' energized' society of French gearing up for any kind of uprising. A notable figure which history detailed was Charlotte Corday.[3] Her description said that she was a Republican before the Revolution and had never desired for any kind of energy, until the radical shift within the Revolution happened. Corday wanted to see the republic flourish (Schama 730). It was showed that the ills of Revolution Fever had withered the noble pursuit of the nation and resulted to the Vendee War (March-December

1793). This war caused the finite terror of the people and made them confront their won risks and obtain salvation through any kinds of civil disturbances. It was stated that the Vendee War the bloodiest and longest symbolic conflict prior to the revolt against the dictatorship of Paris which happened on June-July 1793 (Furet et al. 165).

The scuffle between the Revolution and Ancient Regime was divided into two: one composed of soldiers carrying the flag of the republic and the other composed of peasants from the Vendee population who lifted the banner of God and king. This antagonistic set-up for the revolt sprouted from the negation to conscription and the terror that overshadowed the entire nation. The testimony of the the Ancient Regime was neglected by the Revolution that did not listen to other voices, and instead, divulged its movement from the right track to the crooked one. The arrival of resistance, sidetracked by methods of monarchy, aroused every battle in the countryside. The revolt had turned into insurrection in which the resistance had became a geographical conflict grounded on quadrilateral band consisting of the " generalites" Poitiers and Tours (referring to the nomenclature of the ancient regime) (Furet et al. 165).

The reign of terror was an integral part of the Revolution because this was the solid basis for violence. It was implied by the history that the Revolution mostly moved by the " military Vendee," had slipped entirely from the control and jurisdiction of Paris for several months and had not been an area morally at odds with the rest of republic in 1789 (Furet et al. 166). This notion explained why terror was an effect of violence. In explicating the relationship among reign of terror, violence, and the Revolution, it could be

stated that the chain started with the aberration of the Revolution in which it drifted away from the right track.

With the existence of aberration, violence penetrated within regions causing internal and external conflicts ranging from the differing views on morals, ethics, politics and society. Such external and internal conflicts, in turn, paved the way for the reign of terror to sink in. With this terror came the want for freedom from violence and fulfilment of each wishes. Then, this course led to war and divisions in the entire nation.

The very gap between the republic and its representation in politics is what allows the variation in a large society to declare its singular voice (Bates 138). This gap often results to error that manifests itself throughout the longstanding history of the Revolution. The government creates and preserves a space for national unity, a space that is also meant to protect a country as much as possible from that so-called error that penned out the translation of imminent identity into a firm decision and will of the republic (Bates 138). This political logic was an aberration in a broad sense interpreted using the term " terror."

In this kind of interpretation, the Revolution tried to erase that gap between the people of France and state. It has been said that the Jacobin dictatorship declared an extreme transparency between the state and French men which in reality, interpreted that the ' people' were pulled out from the reality itself to rhetorical figure because the only way absolute transparency could be ensured was by eliminating the relationship between the two discordant entities which were the state and the nation (Bates 138).

The complete establishment of the political power could only be achieved through dissolving one of entities and in the case of the Revolution, people of France were displaced through oppression and violence. In applying the subject of terror, the government became the people and any traces of opposition to the state, both external and internal, as tagged as enemy (qtd. in Bates, 139).

It was true that revolutionary violence was not limited to the basis of terror alone. Apart from the relationship established among violence, terror and war, what identified the violence of the terror from the past facets of the Revolution was its systematic nature and the constructed fact that the state had instituted it (Bates 139). In the earliest periods of the Revolution, it was evident that the there was a need for specific discipline aiming to the development of stability which was the main goal of political leaders.

The search for discipline had encompassed radical inassurance and instabilities brought by violence. In the late periods of the Revolution, it was viewed that monopoly was a specific discipline which politicians used to control radical violence. As the state permitted Revolution, terror may imply that it tried to erase the gap between people and the state by reigning over revolutionary violence into the state and monopolizing it (Bates 139).

The need to limit and control violence was an aspect that consumed the totality of revolutionary consciousness. Such need aroused the issue on the amibiguity regarding resistance and order. It was inculcated that the defining " disorder" in the revolutionary context was a vexing task, knowing that Revolution itself was a disordering event (Bates 145).

Sociologist Auguste Comte had his own historical justification on Revolution in his work Cours de Philosophie Positive. He said that the " absence of any sound political philosophy makes it easy to imagine what empirical temptation must have determined such an aberration."(qtd. in Aron 306). It was prominent Comte's writings that he was being assertive of anachronism of war and he was able to focus on the contradictory views between the modern society and the military and warlike phenomenon: " All truly philosophical minds must readily acknowledge with complete intellectual and moral satisfaction that the age has finally come in which serious and lasting war must utterly disappear among the elite of humanity" (qtd. in Aron 133). Comte was able to reiterate that the philosophical minds of the politicians who shaped the Revolution had drifted from its established principles and resorted to aberration with no logic support but to limit and control violence to the extent of violating even the nation's rights.

Comte went on to explicate more of the philosophy of knowledge in which aberration could be attributed to.

" Sound philosophy…regards all real laws as constructed by us from external materials. Evaluated objectively, their accuracy can never be anything but approximate. But since they are created only for our needs, especially our active needs, these approximations become quite sufficient when they are well established according to the practical requirements which habitually determine appropriate precision. Beyond this principal standard there often remains a normal degree of theoretical freedom." (qtd. in Aron 142)

The quotation above justified the differing philosophies of those who constituted aberration. Comte thought of theoretical freedom as a means to justify why political leaders resorted to aberration that became a conduit for the the reign of terror.

The reign of terror must have been rooted out from the violence which came from the drift from established rules. The integral role of the reign of terror in the Revolution was made stronger with aberration which was a current that shaked the relationship between the nation and the state. History may prove that the strength of violence imposed by the Revolution still lingered on the people of France just like an aftermath of war. The end of the war did not mark the Vendee's reconciliation with the Republic (Furet et al. 169) was stated that the violence that shocked and shaped Vendee is all a matter of national and political imagination in which ancient regime and the Revolution were assembled to argue (Furet et al. 170).

The reign of terror was made complicated when the constructed relationships within the Revolution were deemed in flux. There seemed to be no end to the oppression of the people if there were no establishment of administrative questions that could fix the constitution and allow for sovereign republic. Sovereignty was nowhere in the picture as the search for unity within the nation grew more as a complex problem that was connected to the ambiguity of the term " error of the citizen" from the crime of the counter-revolutionary, for the admission of error by politicians and citizens under the boundaries of revolutionary politics (Bates 140). Revolutionary politics imposed a fundamental gap between the abstract and genuine legitimacy which came from the unity of the nation and any evident

manifestation of sovereignty even if that specified manifestation was a famous act, legislation, executive directives, or emergency measure.

Mentioned in this paper was the scope of error and mistake that ignited violence. It was identified that the Revolution had to scuffle with the overt opponents of the nation and the mistakes which had to be completely eradicated to protect against internal errancy. In this notion, error was a thing that had been philosophized as a possibility which was greatly understood by the most revolutionaries since the existence of the National Assembly. This comprehension opened up politics to render a space where that kind of error would be lessened (Bates 140).

The conceptualized space was visualized by critic Maximilien Robespierre who reconceptualized that space for error reduction situated at the very heart of the politics. But Robespierre only touched the issue on leaving space for error reduction and it was in contrast to the perspectives of other political leaders who envisioned such space as constitutional or institutional one rather than what Robespierre called an internal and moral space (Bates 140).

According to Robespierre, the politics of aberration could be grounded on virtue, not reason, as it was the necessary preparation for insight into the national voice and that the finite terror was based on the desire to construct a space where an important identity might be exuded (140). In addition, the discontinuity was the radical change from established measures to highly moral ones and this decisive shift, according to Robespierre, crucially involved error to revolutionary politics.

The Vendee encounter was a catalyst in structuring France's old society which was mainly inhabited by peasants, priests and nobles that were connected through culture and tradition. When violence was deemed as an insurrection, it starked perceptions in which any acts against the Jacobin dictatorship was identified as disloyalty to tradition. Aberration in this sense was viewed as an enemy of the ancient regime. The Vendee war ennobled the ancient regime by adding essential factors of which its inglorious end would otherwise have deprived it: popular passion and the heroism instigated by resistance (Furet et al. 170).

In conclusion, it was illustrated in this paper that the reign of terror spurred out from aberration politics which was considered as the radical shift from established morals to the ones dictated by people's active needs. The relationship among violence, aberration and terror could be identified through the Vendeer encouter which represented oppression and violation of tradition. It was important to know that reign of terror was the effect of the conflicts brought by violence and disparities in identifying which said greatly attributed to the aberration in the Revolution era.

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