

The Russian Revolution 1917

What was the Russian Revolution and did it change the world?





Russia in 1917 was a very backward country with over 150million people living there, mostly poor peasants.

Tsar Nicholas II



Tsar Nicholas II had ruled Russia since 1894 until 1905, he was an autocrat (Totally in control of the government). If people rioted he sent the Cossacks (soldiers) to attack them.

Nicholas also had a secret police spy network tracking down anyone anti the Romanov government. They were sent to prison camps in the cold Siberian snow.

What do we mean by the term autocrat?

How did Tsar Nicholas deal with his enemies?



The Romanov Family

Revolution 1905:

In 1905 there was the first Russian Revolution. Tsar Nicholas II was forced to accept a parliament (representing the people). This parliament was called a Duma. The Tsar still made all the decisions and if the Duma disagreed he simply sent them away.

Think back to Charles I's Civil War, or the French Revolution – are there any similarities here?



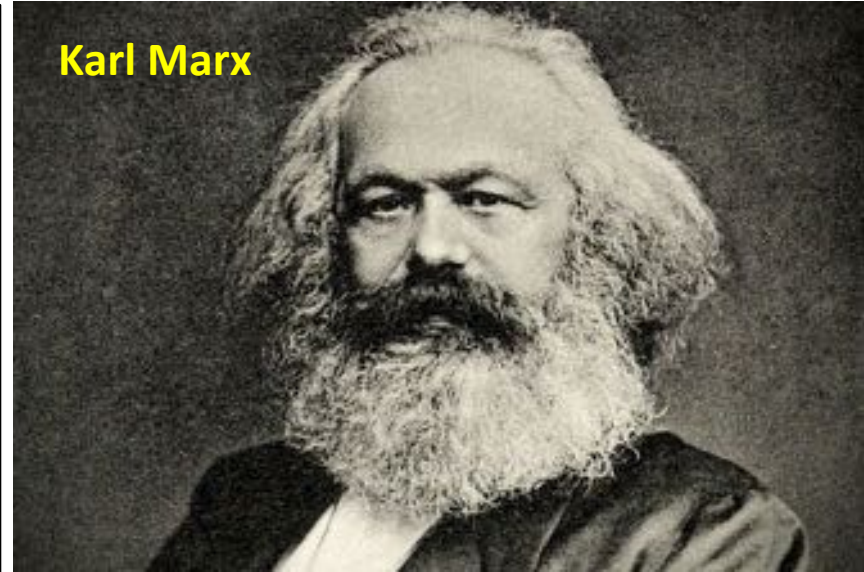
Some have said this 1905 Revolution was a warning and “dress rehearsal” for the main Revolution of 1917...

Why were there tensions in Russia?

Karl Marx was a writer in Russia and he said that the middle classes (**bourgeois**) were too powerful and rich. They were getting richer while the workers making them richer were getting poorer.

Marx said it was time for the **Proletariat** (workers) to rebel and take power for themselves. They would abolish private ownership and make sure everyone held the things in common. This is why they were called **communists**.

Karl Marx



People who agree with Marx are called **Marxists** or **Communists**

Why was there a Revolution in 1905?

The most extreme group of Communists in Russia were a group called the **Bolsheviks** led by a man called Vladimir **Lenin**.



Who was Rasputin, the 'mad monk'

Nicholas and his son Alexis had haemophilia. The only man who could stop the bleeding was a holy man called Rasputin.

Rasputin was infamous for having lots of wild relations with many women, often at the same time!

While Nicholas was away fighting in WWI, he left his wife Alexandra in charge of the government. Rasputin became her chief advisor.

The Tsarina sacked anyone who criticised Rasputin, she said he was her only friend.

The Russian nobility believed Rasputin had too much power and must be stopped...



On 29th December 1916, some Russian nobles decided to murder Rasputin. They invited him to a party offering him cakes and wine (both poisoned with cyanide). Instead of shouting out and dying, Rasputin grew tired and asked for some tea!

One of the nobles pulled out a gun and shot him, yet he still didn't die! He leapt to his feet, attacked them and ran out of the house. Rasputin had always said he could not be killed as he was protected by God, the nobles started to believe it.

Rasputin was chased and shot again and had his head beaten in. They threw his body into the freezing river and floated away. At last the 'mad monk' was dead!

...When his body was found, his lungs were full of water meaning he was still breathing in the water!!!



Worker's poverty:

Families were sharing rooms that were damp, dirty, cockroaches and bugs.



The Duma:

By 1917 Russia was clearly losing the war. The Duma talked openly about getting rid of the Tsar as he just wouldn't listen to them.

Bloody Sunday 1905:

A crowd of poor went to beg the Tsar to help them thinking he cared about them but instead he ordered the Cossacks to shoot them killing 1000.

Causes of the 1917 Revolution

Strikes March 1917:

The winter of 1916-17 was very harsh. There was no food, fuel and high unemployment. The workers went on strike. The Cossacks this time refused to follow orders and shoot the peasants. The strikes became riots! The Tsar was forced to **abdicate**

Impact of WWI:

Most of the population were deeply angry, openly complaining about the effects WWI was having on them

Rasputin:

Many people believed Rasputin was controlling the Tsar and Tsarina like puppets. They hated Rasputin!



On a new page, create this mind map of the causes of the Revolution



Bolshevik leader Lenin, who had escaped Russia fearing the Tsar's secret police returned promising the people 'Peace, Bread and Land'.

The **Red Guards** (the Bolshevik army) attacked the new Provisional Government for continuing the war which added to the hardships of the poor.

In November 1917, the Red Guards captured the important buildings in Petrograd. This was organised by the new Bolshevik army leader **Trotsky**. Russia was now a Communist country.



Following the Revolution, Russia withdrew from WWI leaving the Triple Entente much weakened. In the years to come Britain, France and America tried to destroy the Revolution and restore the Monarchy. The Tsar and his family were imprisoned, and then killed. By 1922, the Bolsheviks were in charge of Russia!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODyts0L-qIE>

