

Russian revolution and french revolution both share similarities and differences



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It is important to discuss the Russian Revolution of 1905 as it was one of the reasons the 1917 Revolution sparked. In 1905 the Russian government was in a state of conflict and instability and therefore caused numerous uprisings at the time, the main one being called “ Bloody Sunday”. Bloody Sunday was a mass killing of Russian workers who were marching to present the Russian Czar at the time, Nicholas II, with a petition “ demanding the summoning of an assembly based on universal suffrage, land reform and an eight-hour day” (Briggs and Clavin, 137). The march was a peaceful one but the imperial guards shot into the crowd to disperse this mass-driven protest, this was the fire that lit the match and the Russian Revolution of 1905 began.

This revolution caused a change with the governmental system. They adapted an assembly which was called the “ State Duma of the Russian Empire” which limited the power of Czar Nicholas II but he still retained his hierarchy in a set of his own laws which he issued himself called the “ Fundamental Laws”. Although he still retained his power the new legislative government that was created did have some say in affairs but was still in a lower category than the Czar. The Russian people were still unhappy with this and therefore this type of government only lasted until 1917 when the second Russian Revolution took place.

This governmental collapse was not the only cause of the Russian Revolution of 1917; the First World War also had a major impact economically instead of politically. The Ottoman Empire also known as Turkey played a key role in the economic situation of Russia. When the Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers in World War I; it blocked off key trade routes to the Russians. They could not provide supplies to military such as guns,

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ammunition, fuel and food because they could no longer deliver key supplies and their economy suffered in the process. This led to an inflation of money and the peasants grew angrier because of the high prices of items such as food and also the increase in food shortages. In addition working conditions did not improve either which in turn led to an increasing amount of protest in the years before that led up to the Revolution of 1917. This essentially caused certain insecurity among the peasant population throughout the Russian Empire. People began to recognize that Czar Nicholas II autocracy government was harming the political, economical, and cultural will of the people of Russia. The continuation of the Russian Revolution was inevitable as long as Czar Nicholas II was still in power.

As an outcome, in the February Revolution of 1917 Czar Nicholas II was obligated to abdicate after his own imperial guards turned against him in protest to his ineffectiveness of solving the Russian Empire's economic and social issues. The State Duma of the Russian Empire began to take over the Russian governmental front after the fall of Czar Nicholas II. But again this system was not perfect; it sprang into a Dual power between two main factions the Bolsheviks or Lenin's communist (Red), and the Anti-Bolsheviks (white) which was composed of the groups who were against communism such as the imperialist, conservatives, and nationalist. This clash of opposites created an unavoidable civil war between the two groups. It was a bloody war with millions upon millions killed and much money spent on both sides. After four years Lenin's communist party eventually prevails over the Anti-Bolsheviks. Lenin becomes the chairman of the new communist government which marks the end of the Russian Revolution of 1917.

The French Revolution of 1789 was one of mass chaos. Very similar to Russia, one of the causes of the French Revolution was that the economy was struggling dramatically especially with produce. Feeding the people became an issue, due to an unfortunate string of terrible harvests, which in turn forced food to take a steep rise up in price. The lack in of capital, as well as the rise of Great Britain was another economic cause of the revolution. The French were facing a financial crisis with billions in debt to pay. This was partially due to the involvement in the American Revolutionary War. The other part of why France was in a great deal of debt was because Britain was for the most part was in main control of the commercial market. Stimulating money for the economy proved too difficult to overcome and like the Russians, the revolutionary step was inevitable.

Also like the Russians, the French government was in a series of governmental collapses with causes spanning from social class hierarchy to absolutism monarchy. The Estates-General was one major cause of the French Revolution. The French had a designated a three level class system in which the clergy members were on top of the hierarchy (First Estate), the nobility or bourgeoisie were set in middle (Second Estate), and the rest of France completed the bottom level (Third Estate). They were brought together by King Louis XVI to figure out how to recover from the financial disaster they were in. The situation just got worst because there was a conflict of ideas between the three classes, especially a clash between the upper two classes and the bottom class and therefore they could not successfully come to terms with each other. Due to this, the National Assembly was created by the Third Estate to discuss the issues themselves

but eventually members of nobility as well as clergy members would come to join them. This was mainly due to the large majority amount of Third Estate members.

The French Revolution did not stop there. Very much like the Russian Revolution, the French realized that King Louis XVI was doing nothing to solve the financial crisis as well as high taxation and so the General Estates held a mass revolt against the King which came to be known as “ The Storming of the Bastille”. Which was a key point in this revolution; it was at this time that the Roman Catholic Church started to lose its power to the people. The people were aiming to start a constitution to possibly end the revolution, but the constitution failed much like Russian Duma because it was a sharing of power between the King and Assembly which caused them to be at odds with each other.

The Reign of Terror also played a key role in the French Revolution. Much like the Russian Civil war between the red and white, there was a conflict between the liberal Girondins and the radical Jacobins. Each side killed each other by executions instead of an all out civil war between the two competing factions. This was a direct effect of the poor governmental system that the French had. The Constitution of 1795 was created which made the French government a bicameral legislature which the people could now be equally represented and their aims could become accomplished, but again this constitution was not perfect and only lasted four years. In 1804 the great Napoleon became the new emperor of France which marked the end of the French Revolution.

In conclusion, the Russian Revolution and the French Revolution are similar in numerous ways. The Russian Revolution contained difficulty from a political, social, and economic stand point making it especially similar to French Revolution. This has created key points in European history making these two Revolutions especially unforgettable.