

# [Comparing alexander ii and alexander iii essay sample](https://assignbuster.com/comparing-alexander-ii-and-alexander-iii-essay-sample/)

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Compare and contrast the social and economic policies of Alexander II (1855-81) and Alexander III (1881-94) of Russia. Alexander II and Alexander III were both Tsars of Russia and they both believed in the divine will to rule the people. However Alexander II is said to be more liberal than Alexander III though they were both conservative in one way or the other in their social and economic policies because they both wanted to remain with the power over the people. Alexander II was more relaxed in his polices ‘’Great Reformer’’ and Alexander III was more strict ‘’great reactionary’’. After the defeat in the Crimean defeat Alexander II introduced very many reforms in Russia because he had seen how backward Russia was and how all the other countries had left it behind while when Alexander III came into power he was devastated that his dad was murdered and he wanted to make the terrorists pay therefore he reversed all the reforms.

Alexander II after the defeat in Crimea it came to the realisation that Russia was very backward and it needed to get modernised in the fastest way possible with the best measures therefore he put relaxation on the censorship and the government now offered more liberal education, universities were given much greater autonomy in their affairs hence lectures on European law and philosophy, liberal professors were allowed. On top of this, poor students did not have to pay school fees, this university education system was not only providing economic and academic purpose it was also staging the promotion of political instability while Alexander III when he came into power he reintroduced censorship and schools and universities were closed making education to come under the control of the government and therefore the tuition fees were raised to exclude th lower-class students from attending primary and secondary schools.

Alexander II‘ s first social reforms was in 1861 emancipating the serfs with the need to modify Russia and get rid of its old social structures which made them free they could own land, move freely in Russia, marry whomever they wanted, use the law courts and also start to set up their own businesses however the serfs were supposed to pay redemption taxes over a certain period of time to the government that made them very poor and also some of the household serfs did not receive land while Alexander III scared the people of Russia with his conservative ways that serfdom would be re-introduced and in 1893, he gave more power to the mir, banning peasants from leaving the mir and with this he strengthened the power of the mir over an individual. Alexander II gave poor ignored people more freedom while Alexander III took away their freedom. Alexander II was more of a forgiving Tsar which made him very social when he forgave a revolutionary group when he came to power and did not execute them while Alexander III was more of a less forgiving Tsar as when he immediately got into power he executed Sofia and the other revolution lists that had assassinated his father.

Therefore Alexander II was a more lenient and tolerant Tsar while Alexander III was more of a harsh and action taking Tsar. During Alexander II reign he concentrated on exposing Russia to the outside world therefore he built a railway line. During this period too there was some though very little reform in the government’s taxation policies which still was a heavy burden for the peasants because they still had to pay poll tax which was increased by 80% during his reign while Alexander III abolished the poll tax and also created the peasant’s land bank in 1882 to help them purchase land. Therefore Alexander III had better economic policies than Alexander II. He focused on improving the economy of the peasants while Alexander II’s policies placed the heavy burden on the peasants who did not have a lot economically and therefore this would drain them and they would remain poor. In addition to this Alexander III offered protection to the workers and he also offered better working conditions for the women and the youth.

Alexander III had anti-Semitism and Russification policies where there was suppression of national minorities harshly and worst of all were the Jews were constantly faced with programs and oppression. During his reign the state encouraged violence towards the Jewish population as a way to divert popular discontent that had been slowly spreading in Europe. Whereas Alexander II did not have anti-Semitism policies through he was born very nationalistic and therefore also agreed with Russification. In conclusion, they both had a bit different economic and social policies though Alexander II can be argued to be liberal in his policies. Putting into consideration the period of time and how Russia politics under the Tsars was organised Alexander II did something very different from all the Tsars that Russia had ever had. His policies gave the people more power than they had ever had though he also still wanted to keep control of everything and after his first assassination failed attack he stopped being too liberal. While Alexander III seems to be a more strict leader that gave the people no voice and reversed all the reforms hence the reactor.