

# [Decline and fall of romanovs essay](https://assignbuster.com/decline-and-fall-of-romanovs-essay/)

The Decline and Fall of the Romanov Dynasty was directly impacted buy social, economic and political issues and grievances throughout the 19th and 20th century. Political Issues included the autocratic rulership, revolutionary trend, the political ineptitude of Tsar Nicholas II and the problems that arose from these. Social issues included effect of political rule and repression, …. TBC The autocratic rule that dominated the 300 year old dynasty was also a key factor in its destruction; the social unrest, clamour for political reform, backwardness of the Russian economy and the lack of reforms were all created by the Tsarist regime.

The Romanov family ruled with an iron fist and used brutal violence to control its subjects. The repressive policies such as Russification and lack of effective reforms prevented the modernisation of the social and political aspects of the nation. Autocratic rulers promoted the feudalistic style class system which created extreme poverty in the lower classes and gave the people no political power. The introduction of ideas of liberty and an elected government into Russian society, contributed to the creation of revolutionary groups that aimed to overthrow the autocratic rulers and establish more liberal governments.

This was first seen with the attempted political coup of the Decembrists that ultimately failed, however they were significant as the introduced a revolutionary trend and liberal views to the people. With the introduction of liberal views and equality, the people began to show their anger and frustration, caused by the Romanovs, through protests and revolutions, of which ultimately ended the Romanov Dynasty. The style of autocratic rulership is a key factor that impacted the fall of the Romanovs primarily because of the social issues it created.

The autocratic rulership and repressive policies promoted the feudalistic style class system and prevented societal advancements throughout Russia. The world was entering a period of social enlightenment with civil rights and equality becoming a major concern, however the treatment of its citizens was not a priority of the Russia autocrats. The societal structure consisted of: the nobility who comprised of around 1% of the population, the small but growing working class and the peasants who consisted 90% of the population.

The nobility lived in extreme and owned around 25% of all Russian land, the working class were poor had horrific living and working conditions while the peasantry lived in even more desolate conditions and faced starvation everyday. This created great unrest which lead to events such as the 1905 revolution and the mass workers strikes and protests. The working class, who were of growing importance and size, joined together to form the first Soviets or unions, these Soviets gained strength while the industries grew and were lead by the Bolsheviks; the revolutionary group that overthrew the Romanovs.

The societal structure was a key factor that lead to the people of Russia wanting political reforms and thus a critical social issue that contributed to the downfall of the Romanovs. The importance of the societal structure is reflected through the effect it had on the people and their actions to achieve liberty and equality. The Tsar Nicholas II was a strong believer in autocracy but lacked the strength and competence in all social, political, economic and military matters to manage such a large and diverse nation.

He was a young ruler and through his inability to address the problems of Russia he was the last. His stubborn nature meant that he was reluctant to make concessions to the people and his lack of reforms contributed to widespread social unrest and poor political poor decision making and leadership also lead the disastrous outcomes of key events. One such was his handling of the Russo – Japanese War, of which he predicted to be short and victorious that would stabilise his authority, in turn almost destroyed the nation and the Romanovs.

The war was disastrous conducted, the Russian army may have been huge, but the Japanese were a disciplined force that scattered the Russian’s forces. The war lead caused massive food shortages back in the city which lead to starvation almost destroyed Russia’s already fragile agriculture and industrial base. This created social unrest and anger aimed at the incompetence of the Tsar which contributed to Bloody Sunday and the 1905 revolution. The political ineptitude of Tsar Nicholas II was one of the most significant political factors with social effects that contributed to the decline and fall of the Romanov Dynasty.

Bloody Sunday and the 1905 Revolution were catalysts for critical political events and the changing social attitudes of the people. Bloody Sunday, the massacre of hundreds of peaceful protestors had a key social impact as it forever tainted the image of the Tsar from the “ little father” to “ bloody Nicholas,” while also damaging the international prestige and relations with other countries. The massacre lost the Tsar the support of thousands and thousands of people and contributed to the growth in power held by revolutionary groups.

The pent up anger that had been suppressed exploded after Bloody Sunday in waves of rebellion known as the 1905 Revolution. The 1905 revolution was an politically significant as it showed the power of the people and lead to the introduction of the October Manifesto, a declaration of universal civil rights, and the creation of an elected parliament called the Duma. This was the most important political reform during the reign of Nicholas II and was not given willingly.

The legality of political parties gave the people a legitimate group to rally behind and thus promoted the rapid growth of the revolutionary bodies. The political and social effects of Bloody Sunday and the 1905 revolution set the basis for further revolutions and the eventual destruction of the Romanovs. The Russian economy was unstable and treacherous; relied on primitive agriculture and a volatile industrial base, and had significant effects on the Russian society and ability on functioning of the nation.

The extreme poverty and constricting government policies prevent economic growth throughout agriculture and industries. However the government did attempt to speed up industrialisation by borrowing millions of roubles from European banks and creating incentives for foreign businesses. However this only contributed to unrest as the growing working class protested their poor working conditions. The agricultural system was also very backward, mainly because of the poverty that the peasants lived in, with primitive agricultural techniques.

The dependence of the economy and industries had severe economic effects during social unrest and wars. Any combination of factors that halted or damaged these industries lead to widespread food and good shortages, hundreds of people losing jobs or livelihoods and thus the breakdown of an economy. This was also worsened by the lacking transport system, as goods could not be moved efficiently and effectively this meant that much needed supplies could not be delivered to places necessary (this ad very severe effects during the war time). The fragile structure of the economy had severe effects on the nation and was a contributing factor to the destruction of the Romanov Dynasty. World War 1 was the deciding factor on the downfall of the Romanovs that had huge social and economic effects on the nation. The war began in a time of great social unrest and once again rallied patriotic support behind the Tsar, however this war was so disastrous that it tore the nation apart.

The Russian military comprised of over 6 million men, however the economy could not support such a large force and thus the military was ill equipped and undisciplined. The poor organisation and the lacking military leadership throughout the war cost of millions of Russian soldiers their lives, particularly at the Battles of Tannenburg and Masurin Lakes. This created anger at the war effort and when the Tsar took the position of Commander and Chief all blame was then directed at him. Back in the cities German – Princess Alexandra had been left to control the nation.

Alexandra’s poor leadership and the people’s hatred of all things German lead to social unrest and rioting, her dismissal and restructuring of key political officials also created great confusion and disorder. Particularly the food and good shortages throughout the cities caused by the war effort lead to mass food strikes and riots. Rasputin’s interference of governmental affairs further worsened the view of the Royal Family to the point where revolutionary trends flared up and began to tear the nation apart. Alexandra’s response that there was no concern as the problem had been caused by “ high school girls” and thus the Tsar took no action.

The rioting began outside bakeries and was met by violent retaliation, this lead to mass demonstrations. By January 1917 the army, people and government had deserted the Tsar and all chaos broke loose. The organised provisional government and the senior military officials demanded the abdication of the Tsar and he relented. This was the end of the Romanov Dynasty; it was not an organised revolution but a result of extreme cold, food shortages and a spontaneous reaction to violence push the people into revolution.

This is why WW1 and the extent of effects it caused was the deciding event that caused the fall of the Romanovs. The fall of the Romanov Dynasty was caused by the fatal combination of social, political and economic issues. It was the mixture of poor political leadership, social unrest and a failing economy that contributed to the decline and fall of the Romanovs. This is why it should be seen that the social, political and economic factors had an equal impact on the downfall of the Romanovs.