

The rise of joseph stalin assignment

[History](#)



The rise of Joseph Stalin. Joseph Stalin was the authoritarian leader of the Soviet Union for 31 years between 1922 and his death in 1953. During this time, he revolutionized the Russian economy with a combination of rapid industrialization and centralized economic collectivism, reforms that in some instances caused massive devastation in rural parts of the country (including the famine of 1932-1933, in which up to mm people starved to death).

A hugely controversial figure on the global political stage, Stalin carried out ruthless purges of the Soviet military, political and Judicial classes (Applicable, 2004), ending political opponents to work in work camps (or gulags) in Siberia from which few ever returned. He also led Russia into a non-aggression pact with Germany's Adole Hitler that lasted until Hitler's spectacular miscalculation in June 1941 when the German army attempted to invade the Soviet Union.

Upon Stalin's death in 1953, he was simultaneously one of the most revered and feared political leaders in modern times, and the influence of his shadow remains strong in Russia even today. Before the Russian revolution of 1917, Stalin was a Bolshevik operative in the Caucasus, organizing resistance against the Tsar. This earned him the respect and trust of Vladimir Lenin, who invited Stalin to join the highest levels of Bolshevik power, although others - including Leon Trotsky - subsequently criticized the brutality of Stalin and his troops while suppressing counter-revolutionary insurgents in Poland and Ukraine.

By 1921, Stalin had been asked by Lenin to help secure his power base against a perceived threat from Trotsky, culminating in Linen's victory at the

Tenth Party Congress later that year. As a reward for his help, Stalin was appointed by Lenin to become General Secretary of the party, and following Lenin's first stroke in 1922 it was Stalin, more than any other party member, who became the link between Lenin and the rest of the world. However, the relationship between Stalin and Lenin grew strained, and by the time of Lenin's death in 1924 the two men were on bitter terms.

Stalin, meanwhile, had formed an alliance with Lev Keener and Gregory Zinoviev, in an attempt to out-manuever Trotsky, with the latter angling (like Stalin) to replace Lenin as leader of Russia. Lenin had foreseen the potential for conflict following his own death, and had attempted to set in place a system that would prevent the party being weakened by in-fighting. These efforts were cut short by his sharp deterioration in health between 1922 and 1924, which effectively allowed Stalin to take control in the developing vacuum of power.

Although Lenin had been fiercely critical of Trotsky by this point, there is evidence to suggest that he saw him as a preferable alternative to Stalin, and that had he lived longer Lenin might have engineered a situation in which Trotsky possibly supported by Keener and Zinoviev, would have assumed power in the place of Stalin (Monitored, 2008). However, Stalin took advantage of Lenin's weakness in order to firmly establish his own dominance. Stalin ultimately grew to distrust most of those around him.

Paranoid, he had taken to sleeping in a different room each night in order to confuse would-be assassins, and he set about working to remove not only Trotsky but also his former allies Keener and Zinoviev from the party.

Forming a new alliance, this time with Nikolai Bukharin, Stalin worked to reduce party support for Zinoviev and Kamenev, and called for a new policy of consolidating the communist ideology in current Soviet tastes rather than attempting to expand the empire to new territories (Fifes, 2008).

This new policy was directly opposed by Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev, who formed the United Opposition party in an attempt to destabilize Stalin.

Although influential, the United Opposition group was never able to cause serious damage to Stalin, who ultimately was able to force all three men to sign letters of submission to his own authority. By 1927, Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev had been ejected from the party due to their disloyalty to Stalin, although only Trotsky remained permanently outside the party, moving to Mexico where, in 1940, he was eventually assassinated by an operative working for Stalin.

Stalin went on to create a cult of personality in the Soviet Union, focused on both himself and Lenin. Some historians have described the cult surrounding Stalin as one of the most perfect ever devised, certainly on such a massive scale, and among his efforts was a significant rewriting of Russian history that aimed to establish him as a much more important player during the revolution than had been the case (although he had certainly been influential).

This personality cult was one of the main reasons for the division between Stalin and Trotsky, with the latter believing that Stalin was not only turning his back on Lenin's philosophy but was using Lenin's name to do so. After his death, his successor Nikita Khrushchev argued that Stalin's cult of

personality was contrary to the spirit of Marxism-Leninism and had gone too far towards the elevation of Stalin to the role of a virtual superhuman.

By the time of his death, Stalin has by some estimations become just as tyrannical a figure as the Tsar he had helped to overthrow (Service, 2010), and was certainly a very different leader from his predecessor Lenin. He successfully purged all opposition, even going so far as to have his great enemy Trotsky assassinated on the other side of the world. To some, Stalin was a paranoid egomaniac, and there is certainly evidence to support such a view.

However, others argue that in the dangerous world of twentieth century Russian politics this was the only way in which any figure could survive (Monitored, 2003), an argument that omits to mention that it was Stalin himself who helped to create such a world. Modern Russia is still strongly influenced by Stalin, with leaders such as Yelling and Putting frequently held up to be compared to their most notorious predecessor.