

Stalin's impact on russian history



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Joseph Stalin's impact was immense (when compared to that of Vladimir Lenin) in Russian history. This is due to the variety of policies, events, and actions that took place during his time in power. But alas, the impacts of Mr. Stalin and not all positive, there are many negative impacts as well. Stalin was an idol and a god-like figure to some Russians after he gained power and became the leader of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and during his reign he was able to have a large positive impact on Russia. Russia was a nation that was not a modernized to the caliber that they should have been which became highly apparent with the loss of the Russo-Japanese War which ignited the drive for industrialization. The Five-Years Plan (which replaced Lenin's New Economy Policy) was a policy implemented by Stalin that fulfilled the Russian desire for modernization. Through the Five-Years Plan Russia was able to build factories and accomplish engineering feats (such as dams) with in very short time period which largely increased Russia's industrial output. These huge leaps and bounds in industrialization put Russia in the same position as Western Europe which allowed Russia to contend with the other nations on equal footing (or close to it) during World War II. Due to Stalin's political and modernization efforts before World War II this put Russia in an excellent position for the start of WWII. Russia entered WWII and they were able to push back German forces at Stalingrad and they were able to get Japan to unconditionally surrender; they were a key player of the Allies. Through these actions Russia was able to gain global recognition in the United Nations and emerge as a global superpower after the war. Stalin was able to successfully establish Russia as a force to be reckoned with and overcame the daunting odds against Russia's modernization and establishment in the political world. But alas,

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Stalin was just a mere human and not every action that he took was beneficial to Russia, some actions were the complete opposite; some actions had some major negative impacts. In order to keep and completely maintain control Stalin saw it as necessary to purge all those who might stand against him hence, the Great Purge. The Great Purge was a large scale attempt to decimate the ranks of the party and eliminate all potential opposition to his rule; the terror spread throughout Soviet society, resulting millions of executions and millions more placed in labor camps (the Gulags). This action resulted in a loss of Russian population and a loss of trained officers leaving only the young and inexperienced officers (example is the invasion of Finland in 1939, with a poor performance on the Russian side). Even though Stalin spurred the modernization of Russia and it was a great success it did come with a price. The government's forced collectivization of agriculture lead to famines and the deaths of millions. Also the conditions caused by modernization were terrible: wages fell, poor housing, absurd discipline (fired or imprisoned if late to work) and an overarching theme of lack of human rights. Some of the actions that Stalin took left a ginormous impact on Russia but not for the right reasons. Though the strides Stalin made for Russia were great they often came at a great price. But the impacts that Stalin had were immense for both positive and negative reasons. Stalin's impact on Russian history was much greater than Lenin's due to the variety of events that occurred during his rule which allowed Stalin to permanently leave his mark on Russia.