

Man of steel: a synopsis of joseph stalin

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In the wake of World War II, Western Europe in ruins, there stood one leader strong and fearless. Joseph Stalin, the mustachioed leader of the USSR, continued to solidify his place in history as one of the greatest and most intimidating men of all time.

From his childhood of poverty in Georgia to his rise to power, the story of Stalin's story is still to this day one of the most interesting life stories in history. The child, born Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili, went through a terrible childhood, joined a political revolution under Vladimir Lenin, and finally conquered the USSR. His life story had him face many challenges as he tried to rule the Soviet Union. From overcoming a case of small pox as a young child to fending off the Nazi regime the "Man of Steel" has beaten the odds time and again. In these pages is just a small history lesson about the man who changed history in Russian and the world. The story of Joseph Stalin starts, like many powerful leaders, with a terrible childhood.

He was born into poverty in Georgia and was the only child in his house to survive. "He was the only son remaining to [his mother] after the death in infancy of two elder brothers... or perhaps three, for it is typical of the Stalin saga that even so elementary a point should remain in doubt: the mother herself is quoted as giving conflicting reports on the number of her children" (Hingley 3). In Stalin's youth, his father was very abusive. Often in a drunken rage, his father would come home and beat him without reason. Stalin would grow to hate his father very much, sometimes showing it in a physical manner. "He once threw a knife at [his father], and had to be hidden from the drunkard's wrath by neighbors" (Hingley 3).

Eventually his father took a job making shoes miles away from him and his mother finally giving them a small amount of peace. After years of being ruled by corrupt Czars, Russia was forming a revolution and was preparing to take their land back. Among these revolutionaries was a youthful Stalin. In the Russian Orthodox seminary school his mother sent him to, he was expelled for reading socialist propoganda. “ He was expelled from the seminary for reading radical literature” (Death).

After many years of participating his own socialist movement he ended up in a Siberian prison, only to escape and continue his quest. This was not the only time he would be in Siberia and it would not be the only time he would escape. After he first fled the jail, however, he would go on to meet with Vladimir Lenin for the first time at a conference for the socialist party of the Bolsheviks in Finland. Lenin, at the time, was thought of like a godsend for Russia, but for Stalin, Lenin was just normal. “ How great was my disappointment to see a most ordinary looking man, below average height, in no way distinguishable from ordinary mortals” (Death). Nevertheless Stalin still believed in what Lenin stood for, and when WW I brought an end to the Czar Stalin was given a job in the new system.

As Commissar of Nationalities, Stalin began his political career. It is here that Stalin begins his rise to power. Lenin was dead by January of 1924. He suffered many strokes, but he managed to make it known that Stalin was not to be trusted with power. This was to no avail however, and Stalin slowly rose to power, killing off his old colleagues. He faced many challenges, but given his history with hardship, he was ready.

Early on in the beginning of WW II Stalin signed a “ non-aggression pact” with Germany, but the powerful Adolf Hitler foolishly broke this. In fact at the time it was viewed as a good idea, by the Russian people, to sign the pact. “ The signing in Moscow’s Kremlin on the night of August 23-24 of the Nazi-Communist ‘ Non-Aggression’ Pact was a diplomatic demarche literally world-shattering” (Man). As the forces of the Nazi army moved further into Russia things were looking bleak for Stalin. Then the always forgotten ally to the Russian people showed up.

Winter blasted the Nazi army and Stalin’s people held out. This was only one of many challenging times ahead for the now idolized Stalin. After the war things began to escalate into threats of war between the United States, now empowered with the atomic bomb, and the USSR. Stalin had to look into the face of possible death and not blink. The soviets were trying to develop their own nuclear weapon.

“ On 23 September 1949 the world learnt that the Soviet Union had at last exploded her first nuclear device” (Hingley 398). It’s name was Joe I and it was the start to a massive arms race between the US and the Soviets. This was just the start of the Cold War. The USSR would not get out of this war until the 1980’s, long after Stalin’s death. There is too much about the Cold War to explain in this one paper, but this becomes the largest crisis Stalin had to deal with.

This “ war” would eventually become Stalin’s life. Stalin died in 1953. Joseph Stalin was a great leader, but he was a horrible man. He killed many and felt no remorse. Many even believe that he killed his wife, but that was never

confirmed. His triumphs usually came at a cost to others, but this is what made him a strong leader.

He worried only for his nations well being. So when people say that he was evil, they should remember he mostly only killed or jailed people who threatened the USSR. The name Stalin will live in the history books along with the names of Hitler and Napoleon, but what he did was rule with an iron fist and patience. Works Cited “ Death In The Kremlin: Killer of the Masses.” TIME.

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” TIME. 01-01-1940: n. page. Web.