

Socialism in Russia



"In 1917, Russia was unable to supply its soldiers in the field or feed its people at home. A strong desire for an end to Czarist misrule, for bread, and peace led to riots which in turn led to revolution. A moderate revolution in March of 1917 was followed by a more radical revolution in November of 1917."

2.1 The age of social change

The French Revolution opened up the possibility of creating a dramatic change in the way in which society was structured. In many parts of the world including Europe and Asia, new ideas about individual rights and who controlled social power began to be discussed.

Not everyone in Europe, however, wanted a complete transformation of society. Responses varied from those who accepted that some change was necessary but wished for a gradual shift, to those who wanted to restructure society radically. Some were 'conservatives', others were 'liberals' or 'radicals'. Through the revolution in Russia, socialism became one of the most significant and powerful ideas to shape society in the twentieth century.

(a) Liberals, radicals and conservatives

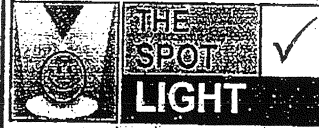
Liberals looked to change society, wanted a nation which tolerated all religions. At this time European states usually discriminated in favour of one religion or another. Liberals also opposed the uncontrolled power of dynastic rulers. They wanted to safeguard the rights of individuals against governments. They argued for a representative, elected parliamentary government, subject to laws interpreted by a well-trained judiciary that was independent of rulers and officials. However, they were not 'democrats'. They did not believe in universal adult franchise, that is, the right of every citizen to vote. They felt men of property mainly should have the right to vote. They also did not want right to the vote for women.

Radicals wanted a nation in which government was based on the majority of a country's population. Many supported women's suffragette movements. They opposed the privileges of great landowners and wealthy factory owners. They were not against the existence of private property but disliked concentration of property in the hands of a few.

Conservatives were opposed to radicals and liberals. After the French Revolution, however, even conservatives had opened their minds to the need for change. By the nineteenth century, they accepted that some change was inevitable but believed that the past had to be respected and change had to be brought about through a slow process.



Fig.1 Lenin



Lenin and his second in command, Trotsky, took Russia out of the war by accepting a harsh peace treaty from the Germans and created the Red Army, which defeated the Bolsheviks' internal enemies and began more than 70 years of communist rule in Russia.



The assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, by Serb nationalists in June 1914 was the immediate spark that led to the First World War.

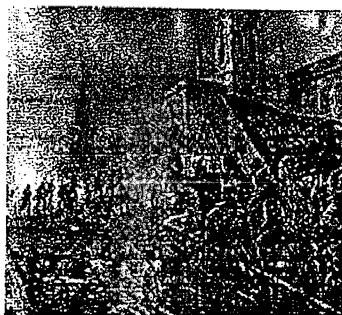


Fig.2 Revolutionaries in Russia



St. Petersburg is a city in the European part of Russia which is the 2nd largest Russian city and located at the head of the Gulf of Finland which was former capital of Russia.

(b) Industrial society and social change

During this time, new cities came up, new industrialised regions developed, railways expanded and the Industrial Revolution occurred.

Industrialisation brought men, women and children to factories. Work hours were often long and wages were poor. Unemployment was common, particularly during times of low demand for industrial goods. Housing and sanitation were problems since towns were growing rapidly. Liberals and radicals searched for solutions to these issues.

Liberals and radicals themselves were often property owners and employers. Having made their wealth through trade or industrial ventures, they felt that such effort should be encouraged - that its benefits would be achieved if the workforce in the economy was healthy and citizens were educated. Opposed to the privileges the old aristocracy had by birth, they firmly believed in the value of individual effort, labour and enterprise. If freedom of individuals was ensured, if the poor could labour, and those with capital could operate without restraint, they believed that societies would develop. Some nationalists, liberals and radicals wanted revolutions to put an end to the kind of governments established in Europe in 1815. In France, Italy, Germany and Russia, they became revolutionaries and worked to overthrow existing monarchs. After 1815, Giuseppe Mazzini, an Italian nationalist, conspired with others to achieve this in Italy. Nationalists elsewhere - including India - read his writings.



Fig.3 The London poor in the mid-nineteenth century as seen by a contemporary.

(c) The coming of socialism to Europe

By the mid - nineteenth century in Europe, socialism was a well-known body of ideas that attracted widespread attention.

Socialists were against private property, and saw it as the root of all social ills of the time. They believed that if society as a whole rather than single individuals controlled property, more attention would be paid to collective social interests. Socialists wanted this change and campaigned for it.

Socialists had different visions of the future. Robert Owen (1771-1858), a leading English manufacturer, sought to build a cooperative community called New Harmony in Indiana (USA). In France, for instance, Louis Blanc (1813-1882) wanted the government to encourage cooperatives and replace capitalist enterprises. These cooperatives were to be associations of people who produced goods together and divided the profits according to the work done by members.

Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) added other ideas to this body of arguments. Marx argued that industrial society was 'capitalist'. Capitalists owned the capital invested in factories, and the profit of capitalists was produced by workers. The conditions of workers could not improve as long as this profit was accumulated by private capitalists. Workers had to overthrow capitalism and the rule of private property. Marx believed that to free themselves from capitalist exploitation, workers had to construct a radically socialist society where all property was socially controlled. This would be a communist society. He was convinced that workers would triumph in their conflict with capitalists. A communist society was the natural society of the future.

(d) Support for socialism

By the 1870s, socialist ideas spread through Europe. To coordinate their efforts, socialists formed an international body - namely, the Second International.

Workers in England and Germany began forming associations to fight for better living and working conditions. They set up funds to help members in times of distress and demanded a reduction of working hours and the right to vote. In Germany, these associations worked closely with the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and helped it win parliamentary seats, formed a Labour Party in Britain and a Socialist Party in France. Socialists never succeeded in forming a government in Europe.

2.2 The Russian Revolution

Socialists took over the government in Russia through the October Revolution of 1917. The fall of monarchy in February 1917 and the events of October are normally called the Russian Revolution.

(a) The Russian Empire in 1914

In 1914, Tsar Nicholas II ruled Russia and its empire, a vast area which stretched to the Pacific and comprised today's Central Asian states, as well as Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The majority religion was Russian Orthodox, but the empire also included Catholics, Protestants, Muslims and Buddhists.

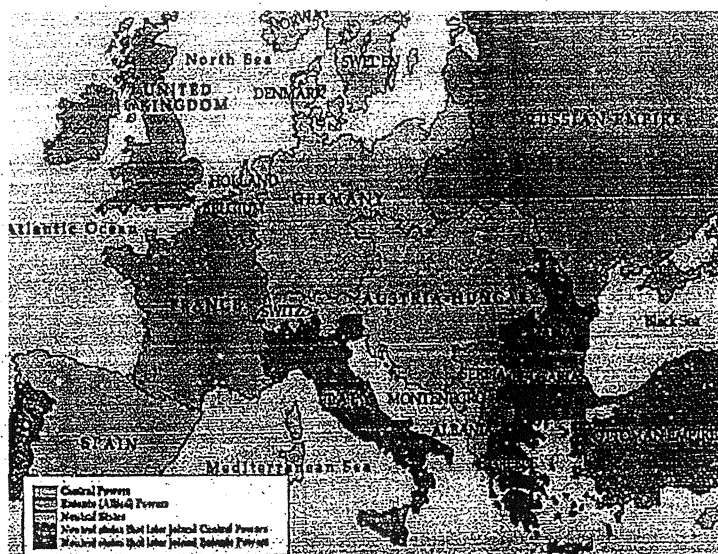


Fig.5 Europe in 1914.

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Bolshevik means "majority" Adolf Hitler (who despised Communists), Joseph Goebbels and other Nazi leaders used the term Bolshevik in reference to the worldwide revolutionary movement coordinated by the Soviet Union.

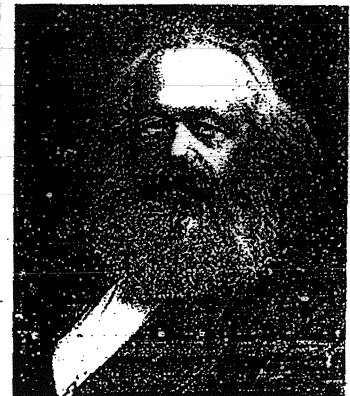


Fig.4 Karl Marx

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The 1917 Russian Revolution, which overthrew three centuries of tsarist rule, had its roots in Marxist beliefs. The revolution's leader, Vladimir Lenin, built his new proletarian government based on his interpretation of Marxist thought, turning Karl Marx into an internationally famous figure more than 30 years after his death.

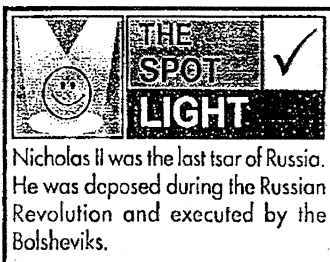
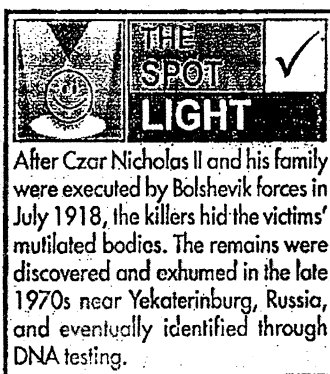


Fig.6 Czar Nicholas II



CHECK YOUR LEARNING 2.1

1. Categorise the responses that emerged in Europe after Russian Revolution
2. What is the significance of Russian Revolution ?

(b) Economy and society

The vast majority of Russia's people were agriculturists. 85 per cent population earned their living from agriculture. This proportion was higher than in most European countries. Cultivators produced for the market as well as for their own needs and Russia was a major exporter of grain. Industry was found in pockets. Prominent industrial areas were St Petersburg and Moscow. Craftsmen undertook much of the production, but large factories existed alongside craft workshops. Many factories were set up in the 1890s. By the 1900s, in some areas factory workers and craftsmen were almost equal in number.

Most industry was the private property of industrialists. Government supervised large factories to ensure minimum wages and limited hours of work. But factory inspectors could not prevent rules being broken.

Workers were a divided social group. Some had strong links with the villages from which they came. Others had settled in cities permanently. Workers were divided by skill. Women made up 31 per cent of the factory labour force by 1914, but they were paid less than men (between half and three-quarters of a man's wage). Divisions among workers showed themselves in dress and manners too. Some workers formed associations to help members in times of unemployment or financial hardship but such associations were few.

Despite divisions, workers did unite to strike work (stop work) when they disagreed with employers about dismissals or work conditions. These strikes took place frequently in the textile industry during 1896-1897, and in the metal industry during 1902.

In the countryside, peasants cultivated most of the land. But the nobility, the crown and the Orthodox Church owned large properties. But except in a few cases they had no respect for the nobility. Peasants wanted the land of the nobles to be given to them. Frequently, they refused to pay rent and even murdered landlords. In 1902, this occurred on a large scale in south Russia. And in 1905, such incidents took place all over Russia. Peasants pooled their land together periodically and their commune (mir) divided it according to the needs of individual families.

(c) Socialism in Russia

All political parties were illegal in Russia before 1914. The Russian Social Democratic Workers Party was founded in 1898 by socialists who respected Marx's ideas. However, because of government policing, it had to operate as an illegal organisation. It set up a newspaper, mobilised workers and organised strikes.

Socialists were active in the countryside through the late nineteenth century. They formed the Socialist Revolutionary Party in 1900. Social Democrats disagreed with Socialist Revolutionaries about peasants. Lenin felt that peasants were not one united group. Some were poor and others rich, some worked as labourers while others were capitalists who employed workers, they could not all be part of a socialist movement.

The party was divided over the strategy of organisation. Vladimir Lenin (who led the Bolshevik group) thought that in a repressive society like Tsarist Russia the party should be disciplined and should control the number and quality of its members. Others (Mensheviks) thought that the party should be open to all (as in Germany).

(d) A Turbulent Time: The 1905 Revolution

Russia was an autocracy. Tsar was not subject to parliament. Liberals in Russia campaigned to end this state of affairs. They were supported in the empire by nationalists (in Poland for instance) and in Muslim-dominated areas by jadidists who wanted modernised Islam to lead their societies.

In the year 1904, prices of essential goods rose so quickly that real wages declined by 20 per cent. When four members of the Assembly of Russian Workers, which had been formed in 1904, were dismissed at the Putilov Iron Works, there was a call for industrial action. Over 110,000 workers in St Petersburg went on strike demanding a reduction in the working day to eight hours, an increase in wages and improvement in working conditions.

When the procession of workers led by Father Gapon reached the Winter Palace it was attacked by the police and the Cossacks. Over 100 workers were killed and about 300 wounded. The incident, known as Bloody Sunday, started a series of events that became known as the 1905 Revolution. Lawyers, doctors, engineers and other middle-class workers established the Union of Unions and demanded a constituent assembly.

During the 1905 Revolution, the Tsar allowed the creation of an elected consultative Parliament or Duma. The Tsar dismissed the first Duma within 75 days and the re-elected second Duma within three months. He did not want any questioning of his authority or any reduction in his power. He changed the voting laws and packed the third Duma with conservative politicians. Liberals and revolutionaries were kept out.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS 21

1. Conservative, Radicals, Liberals.
2. Establishment of a social state.

(e) The First World War and the Russian Empire

In 1914 Russia, the first world war was initially popular and people rallied around Tsar Nicholas II. As the war continued, though, the Tsar refused to consult the main parties in the Duma. Support was thin. The Tsarina Alexandra's German origins and poor advisers, especially a monk called Rasputin, made the autocracy unpopular.

Russia's armies lost badly in Germany and Austria between 1914 and 1916. There were over 7 million casualties by 1917. As they retreated, the Russian army destroyed crops and buildings to prevent the enemy from being able to live off the land. The destruction of crops and buildings led to over 3 million refugees in Russia. The war also had a severe impact on industry. Industrial equipment disintegrated more rapidly in Russia than elsewhere in Europe. By 1916, railway lines began to break down. There were labour shortages and small workshops producing essentials were shut down. For the people in the cities, bread and flour became scarce. By the winter of 1916, riots at bread shops were common.

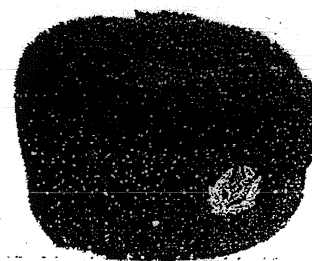
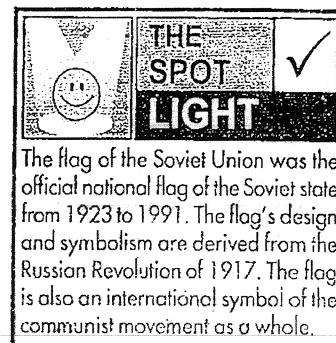
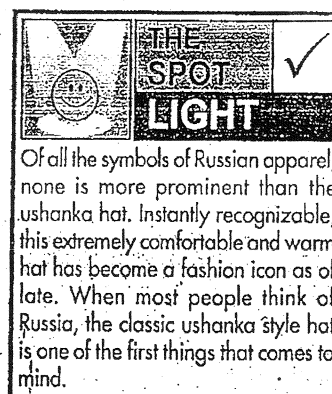


Fig.7 Soviet Hat



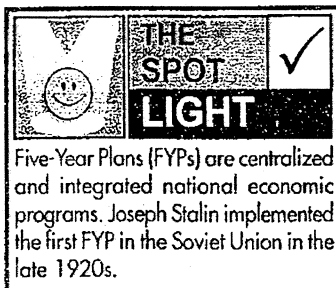
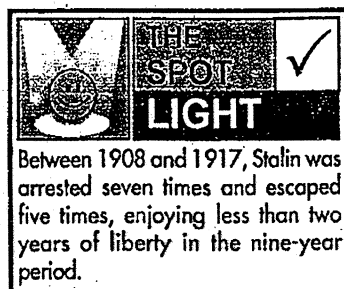


Fig.8 Stalin



CHECK YOUR LEARNING 2.2

1. List the names of two advocates of cooperative regimes during Russian revolution.
2. Into which two political groups was the Russian Socialist Democratic Labour Party divided in 1898?

2.3 The February Revolution in Petrograd

In the winter of 1917, conditions in the capital, Petrograd, were grim. The workers' quarters and factories were located on the right bank of the River Neva. On the left bank were the fashionable areas, the Winter Palace, and official buildings, including the palace where the Duma met. In February 1917, food shortages were deeply felt in the workers' quarters. The winter was very cold - there had been exceptional frost and heavy snow.

On 22nd February, a lockout took place at a factory on the right bank. The next day, workers in fifty factories called a strike in sympathy. In many factories, women led the way to strikes. This came to be called the International Women's Day. Demonstrating workers crossed from the factory quarters to the centre of the capital. As the fashionable quarters and official buildings were surrounded by workers, the government imposed a curfew.

On Sunday, 25th February, the government suspended the Duma. Politicians spoke out against the measure. Demonstrators returned in force to the streets of the left bank on the 26th. On the 27th, the Police Headquarters were ransacked. The government tried to control the situation and called out the cavalry once again; however, the cavalry refused to fire on the demonstrators. An officer was shot at the barracks of a regiment and three other regiments mutinied, voting to join the striking workers. By that evening, soldiers and striking workers had gathered to form a 'soviet' or 'council' in the same building as the Duma met. This was the Petrograd Soviet.

Military commanders advised the Tsar to abdicate. He followed their advice and abdicated on 2nd March. Soviet leaders and Duma leaders formed a Provisional Government to run the country. Russia's future would be decided by a constituent assembly, elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage. Petrograd had led the February Revolution that brought down the monarchy in February 1917.

(a) After February

Army officials, landowners and industrialists were influential in the Provisional Government. 'Soviets', like the Petrograd Soviet, were set up everywhere, though no common system of election was followed.

In April 1917, the Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin returned to Russia from his exile. He and the Bolsheviks had opposed the war since 1914. Now he felt it was time for soviets to take over power. He declared that the war be brought to a close, land be transferred to the peasants, and banks be nationalised. These three demands were Lenin's 'April Theses'. He also argued that the Bolshevik Party rename itself the Communist Party to indicate its new radical aims.

Through the summer the workers' movement spread. In industrial areas, factory committees were formed which began questioning the way industrialists ran their factories. Trade unions grew in number. Soldiers' committees were formed in the army. In June, about 500 Soviets sent representatives to an All Russian Congress of Soviets. As the Provisional Government saw its power reduce and Bolshevik influence grow, it decided to take stern measures against the spreading discontent. Popular demonstrations staged by the Bolsheviks in July 1917 were sternly repressed. Many Bolshevik leaders had to go into hiding or flee. Socialist Revolutionary leaders pressed for a redistribution of land. Encouraged by the Socialist Revolutionaries, peasants seized land between July and September 1917.

(b) The Revolution of October 1917.

As the conflict between the Provisional Government and the Bolsheviks grew, Lenin feared the Provisional Government would set up a dictatorship. On 16 October 1917, Lenin persuaded the Petrograd Soviet and the Bolshevik Party to agree to a socialist seizure of power. A Military Revolutionary Committee was appointed by the Soviet under Leon Trotskii to organise the seizure. The date of the event was kept a secret. The uprising began on 24 October. Sensing trouble, Prime Minister Kerenskii had left the city to summon troops. At dawn, military men loyal to the government seized the buildings of two Bolshevik newspapers. Pro-government troops were sent to take over telephone and telegraph offices and protect the Winter Palace. In a swift response, the Military Revolutionary Committee ordered its supporters to seize government offices and arrest ministers. Late in the day, a ship shelled the Winter Palace. Other vessels sailed down the Neva and took over various military points. By nightfall, the city was under the committee's control and the ministers had surrendered. At a meeting of the All Russian Congress of Soviets in Petrograd, the majority approved the Bolshevik action. By December, the Bolsheviks controlled the Moscow - Petrograd area.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS 2.2

1. Robert Owen and Louis Blanc.
2. Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

2.4 What changed after October?

The Bolsheviks were totally opposed to private property. Most industry and banks were nationalised in November 1917. Land was declared social property and peasants were allowed to seize the land of the nobility. In cities, Bolsheviks enforced the partition of large houses according to family requirements, banned the old titles of aristocracy, new uniforms were designed for the army and officials, following a clothing competition organised in 1918 - when the Soviet hat (budeonovka) was chosen.

The Bolshevik Party was renamed the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik). In November 1917, Bolsheviks conducted the elections to the Constituent Assembly, but failed to gain majority support. In January 1918, the Assembly rejected Bolshevik measures and Lenin dismissed the Assembly. In March 1918, despite opposition by their political allies, the Bolsheviks made peace.

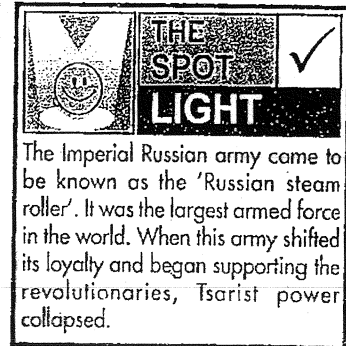
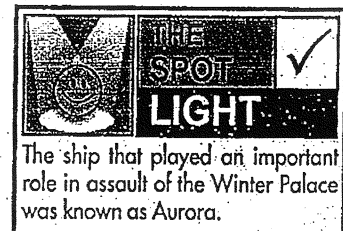


Fig.9 Russian soldiers during First World War.



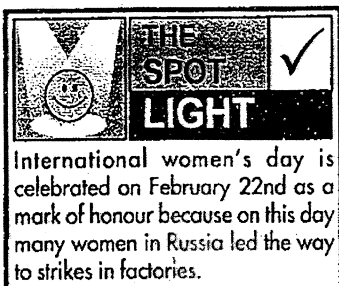
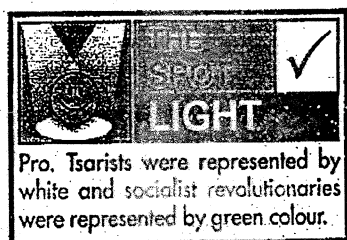


Fig.10 Peasant women being gathered to work in the large collective farms.



with Germany at Brest Litovsk. The Bolsheviks became the only party to participate in the elections to the All Russian Congress of Soviets, which became the Parliament of the country. Russia became a one-party state. Trade unions were kept under party control. The secret police (called the Cheka first, and later OGPU and NKVD) punished those who criticised the Bolsheviks. Many became disillusioned because of the censorship the Party encouraged.

(a) The Civil War

Non-Bolshevik socialists, liberals and supporters of autocracy condemned the Bolshevik uprising. Their leaders moved to south Russia and organised troops to fight the Bolsheviks (the 'reds'). During 1918 and 1919, the 'greens' (Socialist Revolutionaries) and 'whites' (pro-Tsarists) controlled most of the Russian empire. They were backed by foreign forces who were worried at the growth of socialism in Russia. As these troops and the Bolsheviks fought a civil war, looting, banditry and famine became common.

Supporters of private property among 'whites' took harsh steps with peasants who had seized land. Such actions led to the loss of popular support for the non-Bolsheviks. By January 1920, the Bolsheviks controlled most of the former Russian empire. They succeeded due to cooperation with non-Russian nationalities and Muslim jadidists. In Khiva, in Central Asia, Bolshevik brutally massacred local nationalists in the name of defending socialism. In this situation, many were confused about what the Bolshevik government represented.

Partly to remedy this, most non-Russian nationalities were given political autonomy in the Soviet Union (USSR) - the state the Bolsheviks created from the Russian empire in December 1922. But since this was combined with unpopular policies like the harsh discouragement of nomadism - attempts to win over different nationalities were only partly successful.

(b) Making a socialist society

During the civil war, the Bolsheviks kept industries and banks nationalised. They permitted peasants to cultivate the land that had been socialised. Bolsheviks used confiscated land to demonstrate what collective work could be. A process of centralised planning was introduced. Officials assessed how the economy could work and set targets for a five-year period. The government fixed all prices to promote industrial growth during the first two 'Plans'. Centralised planning led to economic growth. Industrial production increased. New factory cities came into being. However, rapid construction led to poor working conditions.

An extended schooling system developed, and arrangements were made for factory workers and peasants to enter universities. Crèches were established in factories for the children of women workers. Cheap public health care was provided. Model living quarters were set up for workers. The effect of all this was uneven, though, since government resources were limited.

(c) **Stalinism and Collectivisation**

The period of the early Planned Economy was linked to the disasters of the collectivisation of agriculture. By 1927-28, the towns were facing acute problem of grain supplies.

The government fixed prices at which grain must be sold, but the peasants refused to sell their grain to government buyers at these prices.

Stalin introduced firm emergency measures. In 1928, Party members toured the grain-producing areas, supervising enforced grain collections, and raiding 'kulaks' - the name for well-to-do peasants. As shortages continued, the decision was taken to collectivise farms. It was argued that grain shortages were partly due to the small size of holdings. To develop modern farms, and run them along industrial lines with machinery, it was necessary to 'eliminate kulaks', take away land from peasants, and establish state-controlled large farms.

From 1929, the Party forced all peasants to cultivate in collective farms (kolkhoz). The bulk of land and implements were transferred to the ownership of collective farms. Peasants worked on the land, and the kolkhoz profit was shared. Those who resisted collectivisation were severely punished. Many were deported and exiled. Stalin's government allowed some independent cultivation, but treated such cultivators unsympathetically. The bad harvests of 1930-1933 led to one of the most devastating famines in Soviet history when over 4 million died.

Many within the Party criticised the confusion in industrial production under the Planned Economy and the consequences of collectivisation. Stalin and his sympathisers charged these critics with conspiracy against socialism. Accusations were made throughout the country, and by 1939, over 2 million were in prisons or labour camps. Most were innocent of the crimes, but no one spoke for them. A large number were forced to make false confessions under torture and were executed - several among them were talented professionals.

2.5 The global influence of the Russian Revolution and the USSR

The possibility of a workers' state fired people's imagination across the world. In many countries, communist parties were formed - like the Communist Party of Great Britain. Many non-Russians from outside the USSR participated in the Conference of the Peoples of the East (1920) and the Bolshevik-founded Comintern. By the time of the outbreak of the Second World War, the USSR had given socialism a global face and world stature.

Yet by the 1950s it was acknowledged within the country that the style of government in the USSR was not in keeping with the ideals of the Russian Revolution. A backward country had become a great power. But it had denied the essential freedoms to its citizens and carried out its developmental projects through repressive policies. By the end of the twentieth century, the international reputation of the USSR as a socialist country had declined though it was recognised that socialist ideals still enjoyed respect among its people.

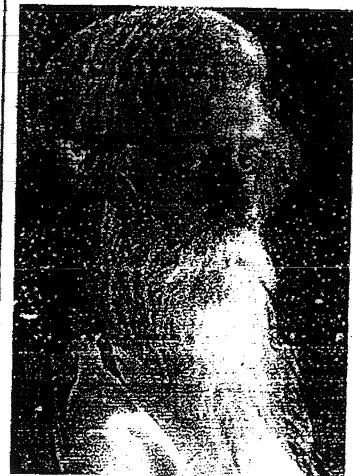
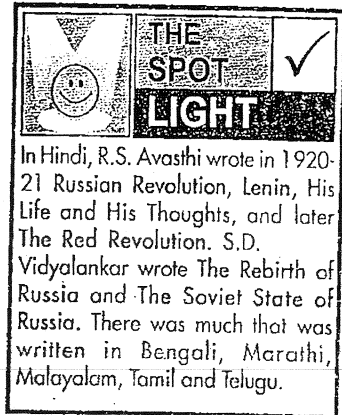
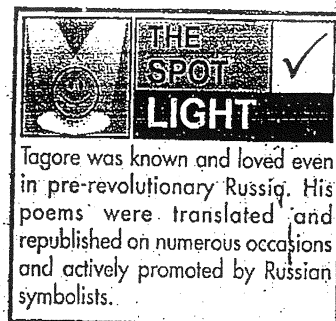


Fig.11 Rabindranath Tagore



IMPORTANT TERMS

1. **BOLSHEVIKS**

The majority group of the Russian Social Democratic labour Party led by Lenin based on the ideology of Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels.

2. **MENSHEVIKS**

The minority group of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party formed in 1898. They favoured a parliamentary model of Government like that of Britain and France.

3. **SERFDOM**

Russian type of feudalism under which peasants worked for the landlourd in exchange for food but low wages were paid.

4. **JADIDISTS**

Muslim reformers within the Russian empire.

5. **DEPORTED**

Forcibly removed from one's own country.

6. **SUFFRAGETTE MOVEMENT**

A movement to give women the right to vote.

EXERCISE # 1

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Multiple choice questions

1. Which among the following groups was against any kind of political or social change?
(1) nationalists (2) conservatives
(3) liberals (4) radicals
2. Industrialisation did not lead to which of the following problems?
(1) poor wages
(2) long hours of work
(3) liberalism
(4) development of new industrialised regions
3. The people who wanted to put an immediate end to the existing governments in Europe (in 1815) were called :
(1) nationalists (2) liberals
(3) revolutionaries (4) radicals
4. Karl Marx wanted workers to overthrow :
(1) capitalism
(2) rule of private property
(3) accumulation of profits by capitalists
(4) radicals
5. To coordinate the efforts of socialists all over Europe, an international body was formed in Europe (in 1889) called the :
(1) Second International
(2) Commune
(3) Labour Party
(4) Social Democratic Party
6. Which of these statements is/are correct about Europe after the French Revolution?
(1) Suddenly it seemed possible to change the aristocratic society of the 18th century.
(2) However not everyone wanted a complete transformation of society.
(3) Some wanted gradual shift, while others wanted complete change of society.
(4) All the above
7. The majority religion of Russia was but the empire also included.....
(1) Russian Orthodox Church, grown out of Greek Orthodox Church
(2) Russian Orthodox Church
(3) Catholics, Protestants, Muslims and Buddhists
(4) Both (2) and (3)
8. According to the views held by the people of Europe regarding social change, they came to be called
(1) liberals (2) radicals
(3) conservatives (4) all the above
9. Which of the following factors made autocracy unpopular in Russia?
(1) The German origin of the Tsarina Alexandra
(2) Poor advisors like the Monk Rasputin
(3) The huge cost of fighting in the World War I
(4) Both (1) and (2)
10. What were the demands made by the workers in St. Petersburg who went on a strike?
(1) Reduction of working time to eight hours
(2) Increase in wages
(3) Improvement in working conditions
(4) All the above
11. The procession of workers to the Winter Palace was attacked by the police killing 100 workers. This incident is called
(1) Black Sunday (2) Bloody Sunday
(3) Rebellious Sunday (4) Unlucky Sunday
12. What was 'Duma'?
(1) Parliament (2) Court
(3) Trade Union (4) Group of Nobles
13. Why did the Tsar dismiss the first Duma within 75 days of its election?
(1) Because it was incapable of taking good decisions
(2) Because the Tsar did not want anyone to question his authority
(3) The term of first Duma was of 75 days only
(4) None of the above
14. When did Lenin return to Russia from his exile?
(1) March 1917 (2) April 1917
(3) August 1917 (4) July 1918
15. Who started 'Collectivisation Programme' in Russia?
(1) Lenin (2) Karl Marx
(3) Rasputin (4) Stalin
16. In the context of Russia, what was 'KULAK'?
(1) A collective Farm (2) A Russian Church
(3) Well-to-do Peasants (4) Landless Labourers
17. Which one of the following refers to the meaning of the word 'Soviet'?
(1) An autonomous organisation of Russia
(2) Security Police
(3) Duma
(4) A revolutionary organisation
18. From 1929 Stalin promoted Kolkhoz. What were Kolkhoz?
(1) Large scale industries
(2) Small scale industries
(3) Collective farms
(4) None of the above
19. How many people were killed in the famines of 1930-33?
(1) 2 Million (2) 3 Million
(3) 4 Million (4) 6 Million

20. By the time of the outbreak of the....., the USSR had given socialism a global face and world stature.

- (1) First World War (2) Second World War
(3) Vietnam War (4) None of these

Match the following Columns

1.

	Column I		Column II
(A)	Autonomy	(i)	Name for well to do peasants.
(B)	Deported	(ii)	Forced to live away from one's own country.
(C)	Jadists	(iii)	A movement to give women right to vote.
(D)	Suffragette movement	(iv)	Muslim reformers within Russian empire.
(E)	Exiled	(v)	Forcibly removed from one's own country.
(F)	Kulaks	(vi)	The right to govern themselves.

True or false

1. Liberals opposed the uncontrolled power of dynastic rulers. They wanted to safeguard the rights of individuals against governments.
2. Liberals and radicals themselves were often peasants and artisans.
3. Socialists were against public property, and saw it as the root of all social ills of the time.
4. The majority religion was Russian Orthodox, but the empire also included Catholics, Protestants, Muslims and Buddhists.

5. During the 1915 Revolution, the Tsar allowed creation of an elected consultative Parliament, the Duma.
6. As the conflict between the Provisional Government and the Bolsheviks grew, Krensky feared the Provisional Government would set up a dictatorship.

7. In Khiva, in Central Asia, Bolshevik brutally massacred local nationalists in the name of defending socialism.
8. From 1929, the Party forced all peasants to cultivate in collective farms (kolkhoz).

Fill in the blanks

1. When the.....ordered land redistribution, the Russian army began to break up.
2. In.....a war broke out between two European allies.
3. The fall of monarchy in February 1917 and the events of October are normally called.....
4. Workers in.....went on strike demanding a reduction in the working day to 8 hours.
5. By 1905 socialists and trade unions formed a Labour Party in.....and Socialist Party in.....
6. Robert Owen, sought to build a cooperative community called.....in Indiana (USA).
7. Marx argued that industrial society was.....
8. On.....government suspended the Duma.

ANSWER KEY

Multiple choice questions

Q no	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ans.	2	3	3	1	1	4	4	4	4	4
Q no	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Ans.	2	1	2	2	4	3	4	3	3	2

Match the column

1. A → (vi), B → (v), C → (vi), D → (iii), E → (ii), F → (i)

True or false

1. True 2. False 3. False 4. True 5. False 6. False 7. True 8. True

Fill in the blanks

1. Bolsheviks 2. 1914 3. Russian revolution 4. St. Petersburg
5. Britain, France 6. New Harmony 7. Capitalist 8. 25th February

EXERCISE # 2**SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT****Short answer type questions**

1. Mention the two stages of the Russian Revolution.
2. Why did Russia withdraw from the First World War ?
3. Who founded the Bolshevik Party ? What was the main aim of the party ?
4. Mention the main difference between the policies of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.
5. Mention two consequences of Russian Revolution in Russia.
6. Which event in Russian History is known as Bloody Sunday ?
7. Why was Kerenski's government unpopular ? Give two reasons.
8. Mention two aims under which Stalin started the Five year plans in U.S.S.R.
9. Examine the reasons for the success of socialist economy in post revolution Russia.

Long answer type questions

1. What measures did the Bolsheviks take to establish a communist state ?

2. Who was Lenin ? Describe his role in the Russian Revolution of 1917.
3. Describe the autocratic nature of the rule of Tsar Nicholas II which brought Russia on the verge of revolution.
4. Describe the condition of the Russian workers and farmers on the eve of the Russian Revolution in Russia.
5. Describe the immediate consequences of the Russian Revolution in Russia.
6. Describe the four major demands of the Russian revolutionaries before the Russian Revolution of 1917.
7. Describe the international consequences of the Russian Revolution.
8. Describe the events that were responsible for the Russian Revolution of 1905. Mention two important effects of the Revolution.
9. Write short notes on the following
 - (a) The New Economic Policy of Lenin.
 - (b) Stalin's attempt to improve the Soviet Economy.

NCERT QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS

1. What were the social, economic and political conditions in Russia before 1905?

Ans. The social, economic and political conditions in Russia, before 1905 was quite backward. Social inequality was very prominent among the working class. Workers were divided on the basis of their occupation. Workers whose jobs needed skill and training considered themselves on a higher plane than the untrained worker. Workers had strong links to the villages they came from and this also caused a social divide among workers. Economically Russia was going through a very difficult period. The population had doubled and the economic conditions turned from bad to worse. The government introduced new programmes of industrialization which created employment. This Industrialization did not help the workers who were exploited and their living condition only worsened. Compared to other European nations, Russia was politically backward, during the thirteenth century. All political parties were illegal in Russia before 1914. The Russian peasants formed the Socialist Revolutionary Party in 1900, but as they were not a united group they were not considered to be part of a socialist movement.

2. In what ways was the working population in Russia different from other countries in Europe, before 1917?

Ans. The working population in European countries were a more united lot than the those in Russia. Workers in England and Germany formed associations and fought for better living and working conditions. Funds were set up by these Associations to help workers in distress. The workers in European countries were united in their demand for reduction of working hours and the right to vote. Workers association also supported political parties and ultimately formed political parties themselves. The Labour Party in Britain and a Socialist Party in France are examples of political parties formed by socialists and trade unionists. In total contrast to the working population in Europe the Russian workers were not united. Workers were divided on the basis of their occupation. Workers whose jobs needed skill and training considered themselves on a higher plane than the untrained workers. Workers had strong links to the villages they came from and this also caused a social divide among workers. Workers' associations rose dramatically in Russia also, as in Europe. They demanded reduced working hours and higher wages. The workers were suppressed by the government.

3. Why did the Tsarist autocracy collapse in 1917?

Ans. During the winter of 1917, factory workers faced acute food shortage and extreme cold climate. Dissatisfaction was raging high among the workers. A factory lockout on the right bank of the river Neva, triggered a strike in the month of February, 1917. 50 other factories joined in the strike. In many factories women led the strike. The government tried many measures to contain the strike. Curfew was imposed, the cavalry and police were called out to suppress the workers. The dissatisfied worker could not be contained. On the 27 of February, the Police Head Quarters' were ransacked. The turning point of this revolt was when the government regiments joined the striking workers. They formed the 'Soviet' or 'Council'. The Tsar was advised to abdicate. Thus the February Revolution brought down the monarchy in 1917.

4. Make two lists: one with the main events and the effects of the February Revolution and the other with the main events and effects of the October Revolution. Write a paragraph on who was involved in each, who were the leaders and what was the impact of each on Soviet history.

Ans. February Revolution

1. 22 February: Factory lockout on the right bank.
2. 23 February: Sympathy strike by workers in 50 factories.
3. 24 & 25 : Strikers stage demonstrations. Police called out to suppress the workers.
4. 25 : The government suspends the Duma.
5. 27 : Police Head quarters' ransacked by the workers. Regiments support the workers. Striking workers form the Petrograd soviet.
6. 2 March: The Tsar abdicates. Soviet and Duma leaders form the Provisional Government.

Effects:

1. Army officials, land owners and industrialist became influential.
2. Restriction on public meetings were removed.
3. Trade unions grew in number.

October Revolution

1. 16 October:

Vladimir Lenin, the Bolshevik leader persuades the Petrograd Soviet and the Bolshevik Party to agree to a socialist seizure of power.

- A Military Revolutionary Committee was appointed by the Soviet

2. 24 October :

- The uprising against the Provisional government begins.
- Military Revolutionary Committee seized government offices and arrested ministers.
- The winter palace was shelled.
- Ministers of the Provisional government surrendered.
- The Bolsheviks gained control.

Effects:

1. Industries and banks were nationalised.
2. Russia became an one-party state.

The single party being the Bolshevik Party

During the February Revolution, the factory workers and the Government Regiments played an important role. The workers and the regiments joined together. The major impact of the February Revolution was the down fall of the Russian Monarchy and the establishment of the Petrograd Soviet. Vladimir Lenin, the Bolshevik leader, played a major role during the October revolution. His Bolshevik Party over threw the Provisional Government and gained power. The Russian Communist Party came into existence.

5. What were the main changes brought about by the Bolsheviks immediately after the October Revolution?

Ans. Many changes were brought about by the Bolsheviks after the October Revolution. They were:-

- (i) Banks and Industries were nationalised.
- (ii) Land was declared social property.
- (iii) Peasants seized land from the nobility.
- (iv) Large houses were partitioned according to family requirements.
- (v) Use of old titles by aristocrats was banned.
- (vi) New uniforms were introduced for the army and officials. The famous soviet hat (budenovka) was introduced.

6. Write a few lines to show what you know about:

- | | | |
|-----------------|--|--|
| a. Kulaks | b. The Duma | c. women workers between 1900 and 1930 |
| d. the Liberals | e. Stalin's Collectivisation Programme | |

Ans. Kulaks

Well-to-do peasants were called 'kulaks' during Stalin's leadership. As food shortage continued Stalin decided to introduce the Collectivisation Programme. Under this programme, 'kulaks' were eliminated. That is, land from these well-to-do peasants was forcibly taken and large state controlled farms were established. This was done to modernize farming and increase production.

The Duma

The Duma is an elected consultative Parliament, which was set up during the 1905 Revolution. Though the Duma was accepted by the Tsar, they were constantly dismissed by the Tsar and new ones were set up. After the February Revolution when the Monarchy was overthrown, Duma leaders and Soviet leaders formed a Provisional Government in Russia.

Women workers between 1900 and 1930

Women workers made up 31% of the factory labour in the 1900s. They were paid only half or three quarters of the men's wages. During the February Revolution in 1917, many women worker led the strikes. The condition of the women workers continued to be grim until the 1930s. Slowly conditions improved and crèches were set up in factories for the children of women workers.

The Liberals

After the French Revolution people wanted a transformation in the society. Many groups were formed with this intention. One such group was the 'Liberals'. The Liberals wanted a nation with religious tolerance and individual rights. Though they wanted an elected parliamentary government, they wanted only men of property to have the right to vote. They were against women voting.

Stalin's Collectivisation Programme

By 1927-28 the towns in Soviet Russia were facing an acute problem of grain supplies. Stalin, who was the leader of the party at that time, investigated the causes of this problem and introduced some emergency measures accordingly. Stalin's collectivization programme in 1929 was one of these measures. Under this programme the party forced all farmers to cultivate in collective farms (Kolkhoz). The profit or the produce from a collective farm was shared by the farmers worked on it. However, those farmers who resisted collectivization were severely punished. They did not want to work in collective farms for a variety of reasons. Stalin's government allowed some independent cultivation, but treated such cultivators unsympathetically. In spite of Stalin's collectivization programme, production did not increase immediately. In fact the bad harvests of 1930-33 led to one of the worst famines in the Soviet History.
