

Russia 1924-1945 [Revision Cascade]

Roles and achievements of Trotsky	Pravda	As editor of Pravda, Trotsky was a great Communist thinker who defined the nature of the Communist state in Russia; he developed a form of Communism called 'Trotskyism'
	November Revolution	As leader of the Red Guards, Trotsky led the November Revolution
	Treaty of Brest-Litovsk	As Commissar for Foreign Affairs, it was Trotsky who made the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany
	Red Army and Red Terror	Trotsky brilliantly organised the Red Army (he personally led the defeat of Yudenich at Petrograd) and the Red Terror which won the Civil War
	NEP	Although he ruthlessly defeated the Kronstadt Mutiny in 1921, Trotsky realised that things had to change, and it was Trotsky who devised the NEP
Trotsky: background facts	Revolutionary Military Committee	As head of the Revolutionary Military Committee, he had organised the November coup
	Commissar for Foreign Affairs	As Commissar for Foreign Affairs, he had negotiated the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
	Commissar for War	As Commissar for War, he had formed the Red Army, organised the CHEKA, won the civil war and put down the Kronstadt rebellion
	World revolution	Trotsky believed in 'world revolution', encouraging Communists in other countries to rebel
	13th Party Conference	He was Jewish, had been a Menshevik (and at the 13th Party Conference in 1924, he and his 46 main supporters were marked for 'political annihilation')
Trotsky: weaknesses and mistakes	Malaria	Trotsky had malaria, and had to go to the Black Sea to recover just as Lenin died in 1924; this gave Stalin an advantage
	Lenin's Funeral	Stalin organised Lenin's funeral; he told Trotsky the wrong date, so Trotsky missed it – this made Trotsky look bad and Stalin, who was chief mourner, look loyal
	Trotsky's personal failings	Trotsky was arrogant and dictatorial; he was also Jewish, and had been a Menshevik
	13th Party Conference	Trotsky supported Lenin's Testament, but instead, at the 13th Party Conference in 1924, he and his 46 main supporters were marked for 'political annihilation'
	World revolution	Trotsky believed in 'world revolution', encouraging Communists in other countries to rebel – many Communists believed it would bring disaster
Stalin: background facts	Party activist	He had been a Bolshevik since 1905 – he had issued the very first edition of Pravda; he had twice been imprisoned in Siberia BUT may have been a tsarist informer
	Commissar for Nationalities, 1917	In 1917, he was made Commissar for Nationalities (with the task of destroying the national identity of the different races); he was ruthlessness and brutal
	"Comrade Card-index", 1922	As General Secretary of the Communist Party, he appointed the top Party officials (the 5000 nomenklatura) who appointed the 20,000 apparatchiki (party officials)
	Popularity	He was genial, pleasant and liked a laugh – this made him popular
	Socialism in one country	Stalin argued for 'Socialism in one country' – establishing Russia first, and going for world revolution later

Stalin and Lenin's death, 1924	Lenin's illness, 1924	Lenin died in 1924; during his final illness, he had been cared for by Stalin
	Lenin's Testament	Lenin wrote a Testament supporting Trotsky and warning against giving Stalin power
	Lenin's funeral	Stalin organised Lenin's funeral; he told Trotsky the wrong date, so Trotsky missed it – this made Trotsky look bad and Stalin, who was chief mourner, look loyal
	Lenin's ideas	Stalin pretended to be a follower of Lenin's ideas; he wrote a book on Lenin's ideas which made him popular
	Lenin Levy	Stalin organised the enrolment of hundreds of thousands of new members (the 'Lenin Levy'); they accepted Stalin as the leader
The struggle for power: facts	Trotsky supported Lenin's Testament, 1924	Trotsky forced the Politburo to discuss Lenin's Testament; he wanted Stalin expelled from the Politburo, but Stalin was saved by Kamenev and Zinoviev
	Trotsky was defeated, 1925	Stalin formed an alliance (the troika) with Kamenev and Zinoviev; they forced Trotsky to resign as Commissar for War and dismissed his 46 supporters
	Kamenev and Zinoviev were expelled, 1927	Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev formed the 'United Opposition', but Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky helped Stalin expelled them and 1500 supporters
	Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky denounced, 1929	At the 16th Party Conference, Stalin turned against the NEP; when Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky opposed him, he denounced them as 'deviationists'
	Trotsky was murdered, 1940	Trotsky was exiled in 1929, sentenced to death in a Show Trial in 1936, and was finally murdered in Mexico by a NKVD agent in 1940
Why Stalin won: causes	'Comrade Card-index', 1922	As General Secretary of the Communist Party, he appointed the top Party officials (the 5000 nomenklatura) who appointed the 20,000 apparatchiki (party officials)
	Popularity	He was genial, pleasant and liked a laugh – this made him popular
	Socialism in one country	Stalin argued for 'Socialism in one country' – in Russia first, world revolution later
	Political strategy	Stalin formed alliances first with Kamenev and Zinoviev (the troika) then with Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky – and then turned against them
	Stalin was ruthless	e.g. as Commissar for Nationalities/telling Trotsky the wrong date for the funeral/exile and murder of Trotsky
Stalin's rise to power: milestones	'Comrade Card-index', 1922	As General Secretary of the Communist Party, he appointed the top Party officials (the 5000 nomenklatura) who appointed the 20,000 apparatchiki (party officials)
	Constitutional Law, 1923	Set up the USSR and ensured the 'Council of People's Commissars' (Sovnarkom) – was controlled by the Communist Party's ruling cabinet (the Politburo)
	Vozhd, 1929	By his 50th birthday, in December 1929, Stalin had defeated all his rivals and was celebrated as the new vozhd (leader)
	Ryutin's Appeal to all Bolsheviks, 1932	Ryutin wrote An Appeal to all Bolsheviks calling for the return of the NEP, the end of collectivisation and 'the elimination of Stalin'
	17th Party Congress, 1934	Opposition to Stalin arose – he was sacked as General Secretary, and Kirov (the Leningrad Party leader) was more popular

The 1936 Constitution: facts	The Communist Party	The Communist Party was 'the leading core of all organisations' – i.e. the Communist Politburo was more powerful than the Sovnarkom (Council of People's Commissars')
	Stalin the Vozhd	Stalin held all power – he was First Secretary of the Communist Party, Chairman of the Politburo and Chairman of the Sovnarkom (the 'Council of People's Commissars')
	Freedoms and rights	The Constitution gave the vote to everyone over 18, freedom of speech, and the right to work, healthcare, housing and education; "the only fully democratic constitution in the world"
	Opposition was banned	Since all parties were banned except the Communist Party, none of the promises in the 1936 Constitution affected the Communist control over the government
	Direct voting	The new constitution introduced 'direct voting' for government members; this reduced the power of the local Communist parties
How did Stalin reinforce his dictatorship: ways	Constitution of 1936	It guaranteed freedom, but banned opposition parties, reinforced Stalin's control of government, and reduced the powers of local parties by direct voting
	The Great Terror	Including the Gulag and NKVD; called the Yezhovshchina after Nikolai Yezhov (nicknamed 'the Bloody Dwarf') who organised it
	The Purges	Stalin's opponents were purged from the Politburo, the Party and the Red Army
	Propaganda	Including the 'cult of personality' and constant praise for Stalin and Communism
	Censorship	All writers were controlled by the government censorship department Glavlit; history was re-written
The Purges: causes	Civil War atrocities	Some historians think that the brutality of the Civil War made the Bolsheviks particularly ruthless in power
	Kirov's challenge to Stalin	Opposition to Stalin arose at the 17th Party Congress – he was sacked as General Secretary, and Kirov (the Leningrad Party leader) was more popular
	Kirov was shot	Although, historians suggest Kirov was shot on Stalin's orders, Stalin used it as an excuse to order mass arrests
	Stalin's bloodlust	Stalin had always been ruthless (e.g. as Commissar for Nationalities); some historians believe he was paranoid (he personally approved lists of executions)
	The danger from Germany	Stalin argued that the USSR had ten years to prepare for an invasion by Nazi Germany, and that it had to make itself strong at all costs
The Purges: facts	Leningrad Party, 1934	Kirov's supporters in the Leningrad Party were arrested
	Politburo	7 out of 8 of Stalin's 1934 Politburo were eliminated
	Party Congress, 1935	Party activists was purged (including 1108 out of 1966 delegates to the Party Congress)
	Red Army, 1937	The Red Army commander and 81 out of 103 generals and admirals were purged
	Communist Party	About a million Party members were expelled or arrested

The Great Terror: facts	Nikolai Yezhov	The Terror was led by Nikolai Yezhov (nicknamed 'the Bloody Dwarf') and enforced by the secret police (OGPU/NKVD)
	Gulag	The Gulag was a system of labour camps in Siberia; in 1937, 1 million people were imprisoned in the Gulag; there were 790,000 executions
	Kulaks	5 million kulaks were 'eliminated'
	Russification	National dress and customs were forbidden, and both the Christian and Muslim religions were persecuted; 5 million Ukrainians starved, 1933–34
	Show trials	Public show trials of disgraced Bolsheviks (e.g. Zinoviev and Kamenev, 1936, and Bukharin, Rykov, 1938) for improbable crimes, which they admitted
The Great Terror: consequences	Informers and apparatchiks	Informers denounced their neighbours to get a flat; loyal 'apparatchiks' (party officials) got the best jobs, flats, etc.
	Stalin was undisputed leader	Stalin was constantly praised and applauded (he wasn't there, but the NKVD were)
	Everyone wore a 'smiling mask'	An atmosphere of fear and intimidation – children informed on parents; Tomsky committed suicide rather than face a show trial
	Russification	Russification destroyed national identity and attacked religion
	Weakened the Army	Some historians have suggested that Stalin's Purges of the generals weakened the army – hence Hitler's spectacular victories when he invaded in 1941
The cult of personality: features	Statues, paintings and banners	Statues, paintings and banners everywhere bore his face; every home had a picture
	Places named after Stalin	Towns (e.g. Stalingrad), roads and buildings were named after him
	Literature in his honour	Poems and books were written in his honour
	Stalin was almost worshipped	He was regarded as almost divine; it was said (e.g.) that he caused spring to come
	Constant praise and applause	He was afforded constant praise and applause
Censorship: features	Glavlit	The Censorship Department, Glavlit, had 70,000 employees
	Union of Soviet Writers	All writers had to be members of the Union of Soviet Writers
	Attacking Capitalism	The media had to attack Western capitalism and religion
	'Bourgeois pseudo-science'	Subjects like genetics and sociology were forbidden as 'bourgeois pseudo-science'
	Communist stories	Novelists had to write Communist stories with a happy ending
Propaganda: facts	Cult of personality	The media had to glorify Stalin
	Supporting communism	The media had to celebrate communism, and encourage hard work (e.g. Stakhanov) and informing on traitors
	'Socialist realism' in art	All art had to follow the rules of 'Socialist realism', celebrating the proletariat
	History was re-written	History was changed to make Stalin look more important; new pages were written and pasted into textbooks to 'write out' disgraced leaders from history
	Children were indoctrinated	Children were taught that Stalin was the Great Leader; they were encouraged to love Stalin more than their parents, and to inform on them

Stalin's economic changes: causes	The New Economic Policy was failing	By 1929, the New Economic Policy had only increased production to the 1913 level; the NEP was not improving things quickly enough
	'Scissor Crisis'	Prices of agricultural produce were falling, but the price of industrial goods was rising; this was impoverishing the countryside
	Agriculture was backward	Not enough food was being produced for the towns (there was a shortfall of 20 million tonnes of grain); Russia needed cash crops to export
	NEPmen and kulaks	The rich NEPmen and kulaks – capitalists selling at a profit – were hateful to Communists
	The danger from Germany	Stalin argued that the USSR had ten years to prepare for an invasion by Nazi Germany, but was 50–100 years behind the West
Collectivisation: aims	Kolkhoz	All the farms in the village were joined together into one collective (kolkhoz)
	Government targets	Farming was run by government officials to meet government targets
	Production for the towns	90% of production was taken by the government
	Motor Tractor Stations	Every kolkhoz was supposed to have a Motor Tractor Station (= modernisation)
	Eliminate the kulaks	Collectivisation gave Stalin an excuse to eliminate the hateful kulaks
Collectivisation: the process	Failed first attempt, 1929	Stalin ordered that peasants' farms had to be united into collectives (kolkhoz); there was opposition and he was forced to stop
	Kolkhoz restarted, 1931	Stalin restarted collectivisation and seized grain by force
	Peasant resistance, 1932	More resistance; the peasants killed their animals and burned their crops
	War on the Kulaks, 1933	Stalin blamed the kulaks and declared war on them; 5 million were sent to the Gulag
	250,000 kolkhoz, 1939	90% of peasants lived on one of 250,000 kolkhoz or 4000 state farms
Collectivisation: the results	250,000 kolkhoz	By 1939, 90% of peasants lived on one of 250,000 kolkhoz or 4000 state farms
	Increased grain production	In 1937, 97 million tonnes of grain were produced (compared with 73 million in 1928) plus cash crops for export
	Peasants migrated to the towns	17 million peasants left the countryside to work in the towns, 1928–1937
	Reduced livestock	The number of animals fell, 1928–1937 (cattle from 70 million to 50 million; sheep from 150 million to 66 million)
	Famine in the Ukraine	Agricultural production fell; there was a famine in the Ukraine 1933–34 (5 million people died)
Industrialisation: the Five-Year Plans	GOSPLAN	GOSPLAN (the state planning agency) drew up plans; targets were set for every industry, region, mine and factory, foreman and worker.
	Three 5-Year Plans, 1928–37	The First (1928) and Second (1933) Plans concentrated on heavy industry; the consumer goods promised by the Third (1937) never happened because of the war
	Young 'pioneers'	Young 'pioneers' with Communist zeal started the projects
	Foreign experts	Foreign experts and engineers were called in
	Slave labour	For projects such as dams or canals, slave labour from the Gulag was used

Industrialisation: results	Heavy industry, 1928 & 1933	The First (1928) and Second (1933) 5-Year Plans concentrated on heavy industry
	Third 5-Year Plan, 1937	The Third 5-Year Plan (1937) promised consumer goods and better housing; it never happened – because of the war, later targets were changed to armaments
	Increased production, 1928–1937	Increased production 1928–1937 (e.g. coal production increased four-fold, electricity seven-fold); by 1940, the USSR was the world's second-biggest economy
	Magnitogorsk	Towns grew, including new industrial centres such as Magnitogorsk
	Dnieper Dam and Belomor Canal	Achievements such as the Moscow underground, Dnieper Dam and the Belomor Canal
Industrialisation: working conditions	Terrible cost in human lives	Appalling conditions and a terrible cost in human lives (especially the kulaks) – e.g. some 100,000 people died building the Belomor Canal
	Atmosphere of terror	Atmosphere of terror – workers were bombarded with propaganda, posters, slogans and radio broadcasts lazy workers were punished, even shot
	Stakhanovites	Pressure to work harder; medals were awarded for 'Stakhanovites'
	Wages and conditions worsened	Wages and conditions worsened
	Increase of alcoholism and crime	There was an increase of alcoholism and crime as workers tried to escape the pressure
Industrialisation: social consequences	Education and 87% literacy	Free universities and training schemes – all children received free state education; literacy had increased to 87% by 1939
	Free health care	Free health care – by 1940, the USSR had more doctors per person than Britain
	Poor industrial housing	Industrial housing was overcrowded and rundown
	Famine	There were food shortages as agricultural production fell; there was a famine in the Ukraine 1933–34 (5 million people died)
	Shortages of consumer goods	There were great shortages of consumer goods, especially in the mid-1930s
Industrialisation: political consequences	Cult of Stalin	The successes were celebrated in Soviet propaganda to reinforce the cult of Stalin
	International prestige	By 1940, the USSR was the world's second-biggest economy and there was NO unemployment – this compared favourably to the Depression in the West
	Inequality and privilege	Higher wages for teachers, engineers, skilled workers, managers and apparatchiks; all pretence of Communist equality was abandoned
	The Great Terror	Slave labour from the Gulag was used for projects such as dams or canals; it was part of the Great Terror
	War on the Kulaks	Stalin declared war on the kulaks; 5 million were sent to the Gulag and used on the construction project
Life in Stalin's Russia: working conditions	Terrible cost in human lives	Appalling conditions and a terrible cost in human lives (especially the kulaks) – e.g. some 100,000 people died building the Belomor Canal
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Women in Stalin's Russia	Creches were provided	Creches were provided so that women could go to work
	Universities and doctors	Treated as equal to men – sent to universities/became doctors
	40% of industrial workforce	By 1937, 40% of industrial workers and 72% of health workers were women
	Divorce and abortion prevented	Divorce was made more difficult and abortion abolished
	Child-bearing encouraged	Medals were awarded to women who had more than ten children
Education	Love of Stalin	Children were taught that Stalin was the Great Leader; they were encouraged to love Stalin more than their parents, and to inform on them
	History was changed	History was changed so that Stalin looked more important than he had been, and so that his opponents 'disappeared'
	Maths, Science and Technology	Discipline was strict, with an emphasis on Maths, Science and Technology
	'Bourgeois pseudo-science'	Subjects like genetics and sociology were forbidden as 'bourgeois pseudo-science'
	Communist youth organisations	Children had to join Communist youth organisations such as the Octobrists (8-10 year-olds), Pioneers (10-16) and Komsomol (19-23)
Different groups in Stalin's Russia	The elite prospered	e.g. higher wages and perks such as better housing, holidays and special shops, for teachers, engineers, skilled workers and apparatchiks
	Peasants suffered	e.g. they had none of the benefits of the industrial workers (e.g. electricity), and collectivisation caused famines
	The kulaks were 'liquidated'	Stalin blamed the kulaks for the resistance to collectivisation and declared war on them; 5 million were sent to the Gulag
	Nationalities were destroyed	e.g. Russian became the language of government, national dress and customs were forbidden; 5 million Ukrainians were allowed to starve, 1933–1934
	Religion was persecuted	e.g. churches were destroyed and priests sent to the Gulag
Stalin's successes: facts	Second-biggest economy	By 1940, the USSR was the world's second-biggest economy and there was NO unemployment – this compared favourably to the Depression in the West
	Increased grain production	In 1937, 97 million tonnes of grain were produced (compared with 73 million in 1928) plus cash crops for export
	Magnitogorsk	Towns grew, including new industrial centres such as Magnitogorsk
	Dnieper Dam and Belomor Canal	Achievements such as the Moscow underground, Dnieper Dam and the Belomor Canal
	Some social successes	e.g. the role of women, free education, improved literacy, free health care (by 1940, the USSR had more doctors per person than Britain)

How powerful was Stalin by 1941?	Vozhd	Stalin was First Secretary of the Communist Party, Chairman of the Politburo and Chairman of the Sovnarkom.
	Constitutional Law (1923)	Ensured the 'Council of People's Commissars' (Sovnarkom) – was controlled by the Communist Party's ruling cabinet (the Politburo)
	Constitution of 1936	It guaranteed freedom, but banned opposition parties, reinforced Stalin's control of government, and reduced the powers of local parties by direct voting
	The Great Terror	Including the Gulag and NKVD; called the Yezhovshchina after Nikolai Yezhov who organised it; Stalin's opponents were purged from the Politburo, the Party and the Red Army
	The cult of Stalin	Including the cult of personality, manipulation of education, censorship and propaganda
Soviet foreign policy before 1941	World Revolution	Initially, the Bolsheviks tried to provoke world revolution; there were communist uprisings in Germany, Italy, Hungary and the Baltic States 1919-24
	Socialism in One Country	Defeat of the 1919-24 uprisings, and defeat in the war with Poland, convinced Stalin that the USSR was not strong enough
	Maxim Litvinov	From 1930, Maxim Litvinov, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, negotiated non-aggression pacts with Poland, the Baltic States, France and China.
	The USSR joined the League of Nations, 1934	Stalin hoped it would restrain Hitler's aggressive foreign policy; he believed that war with the Nazis was inevitable
	Nazi-Soviet Pact, 1939	When it was clear that the League was powerless, and that Britain and France were just going to appease Hitler, Stalin made the Nazi-Soviet Pact
Events of the Great Patriotic War	Operation Barbarossa, 1941	The Nazis launch Operation Barbarossa – the invasion of the USSR – taking Stalin by surprise. By December the Nazis had conquered huge areas of Russia, but had failed to take Leningrad and Moscow..
	Battle Stalingrad, 1942-43	The Nazi Sixth Army was stopped at the battle Stalingrad and eliminated
	Battle of Kursk, July-Aug 1943	Nazis defeated at the Battle of Kursk – the largest tank battle in history
	Nazis driven out of Russia, 1944	The Nazis were driven out of Russia
	Capture of Berlin, 2 May 1945	The Soviets captured Berlin
Why the USSR won	Propaganda	The Sovinformburo appealed to the nationalism, communism AND religion of the Soviet peoples
	Economy	The entire economy: was devoted to supplying the army. 1,500 factories were moved to the Urals and central Asia. Labour was mobilised: military discipline/ holidays abolished
	Natural factors	Russia's huge size and 'General Winter', along with the Soviets' 'scorched earth' tactics.
	Red Army	Draconian discipline, amazing heroism. 800,000 women recruited PLUS helped by huge amounts of foreign aid
	Stalin's leadership?	ALL decisions had to go through Stalin and he insisted on 'Not A Step Back' (Order No. 227), whatever the cost. Millions of Soviet soldiers died as a result, notably in the final attack on Berlin.

Results of the Great Patriotic War	Death	26 million Soviet citizens died from overwork and malnutrition, enemy action, or fighting in the Red Army.
	Destruction	Industry and agriculture ruined. 70,000 villages, 100,000 kolkhozy and 40,000 miles of railway track destroyed. Nearly 5 million houses destroyed; 25 million home
	Cold War	After 1945, Soviet forces stayed in the countries of eastern Europe as a 'cordon sanitaire' protecting the Soviet Union ... this was the cause of the Cold War.
	Orthodox Church	Its support for the war effort led to its being given greater toleration
	Remembrance	Victory Day is still one of the most important public holidays for Russian citizens.