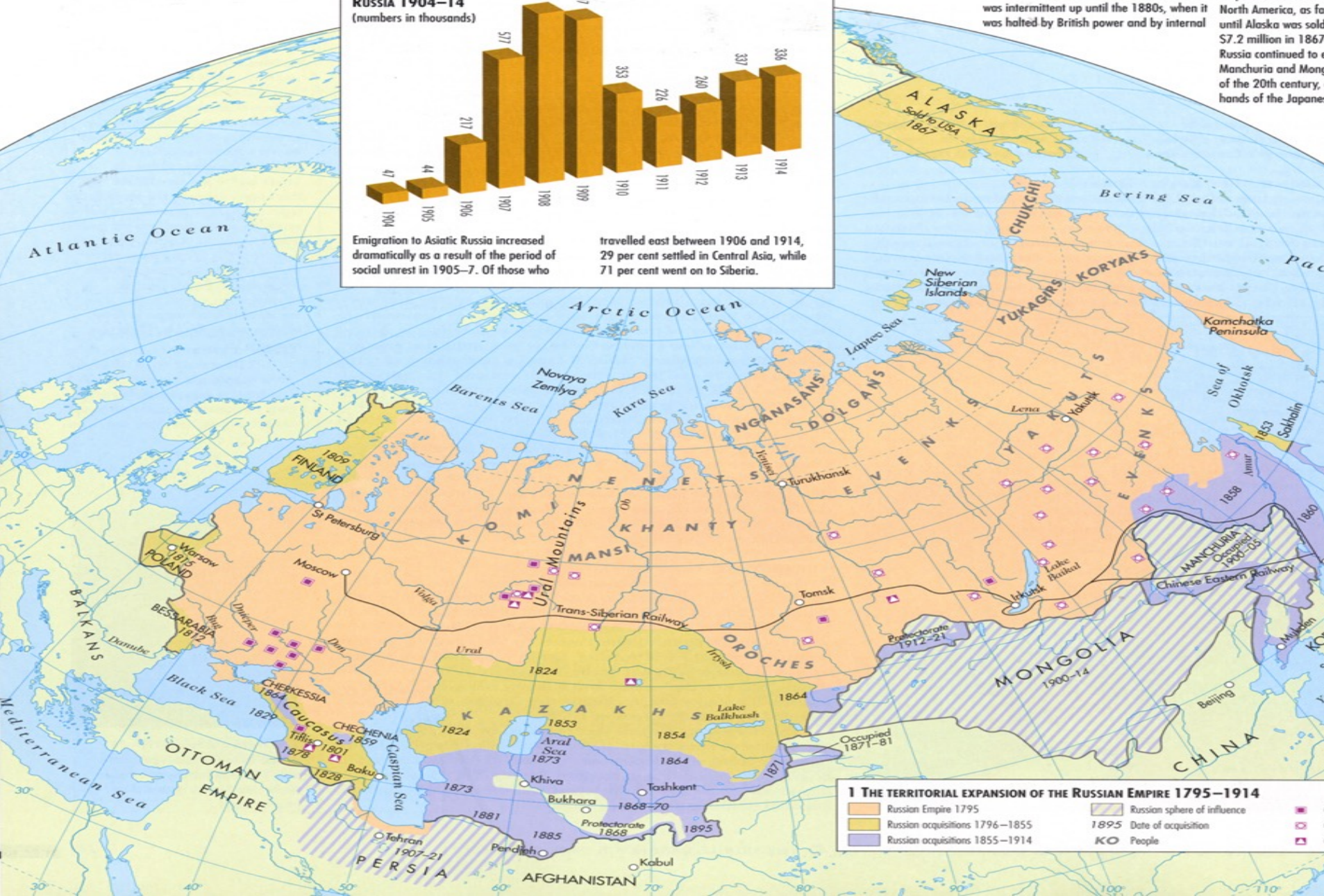


Between 1795 and 1914 Russia sought to expand its territory in all possible directions but met with resistance from Austria, Britain and France when it threatened their interests in the Balkans in the 1850s. Expansion to the south and east was intermittent up until the 1880s, when it was halted by British power and by internal

financial difficulties. The Russian Empire extended even to North America, as far as Alaska, which was sold to the USA in 1867. Russia continued to expand to Manchuria and Mongolia in the 20th century, despite the hands of the Japanese.

Russian Revolution 1917



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The Wars

- The Wars expose structural strengths and weaknesses at a large scale.
- Russia is the largest country in the world with over 6.6 million square miles and eleven time zones.
- Its size and manpower advantage suffered serious setbacks during the Crimean War of 1854-1856. The Russo-Japanese Naval War of 1904-1905 also hurt the Russian pride. The Great War proved fatal for its centuries-old, archaic, and stubborn power structure.

Geopolitical Russia

- Russia had not always been a dismal story. The Czar Alexander I had chased Napoleon back to Paris in 1814. One of Leo Tolstoy's characters in *War and Peace* cherished him.

“:...Russia alone must save Europe. Our gracious sovereign recognizes his high vocation and will be true to it. That is the one thing I have faith in! Our good and wonderful sovereign has to perform the noblest role on earth, and he is so virtuous and noble that God will not forsake him. He will fulfill his vocation and crush the hydra of revolution, which has become more terrible than ever in the person of this murderer and villain! ... I ask you who can we rely on? England with their commercial spirit will not and cannot understand the emperor Alexander's loftiness of soul. The English have not understood and cannot understand the self-abnegation of our emperor who wants nothing for himself, but only desires the good of mankind.”

Leo Tolstoy, War and Peace

Geopolitical Russia

- Russia had also viewed the Ottomans' contraction in the Balkans with satisfaction. Greece had been independent since 1829. The Serbian Kingdom had won independence from the Ottoman in 1878. After the Ottoman-Russian War of 1878, Bulgaria and Rumania ended the Ottoman control. Ottomans retained sovereignty over Bosnia-Herzegovina, but the Great Powers entrusted Austria-Hungary with its de facto control.
- In 1908, Austria-Hungary formally annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina to the Hapsburg Empire.
- The Serbs only begrudgingly accepted the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Geopolitical Russia

- We learned last week that the assassination of the Archduke and his consort led to the Great War which we later named as World War I.
- We also learned about the July Demands. In brief, the July Demands were intrusive but essentially sought guarantees to stop any anti-Hapsburg activity and allow their officials to investigate such activities that they determined as nefarious. Serbian response failed to satisfy the Hapsburg Empire.
- The biggest irony of the Great War could be that an incident in the Balkans sparked it but then the focus shifted to Western Europe and the Middle East.

Geopolitical Russia

- Why was the Archduke there? The Hapsburg Army held its training exercises for 1914 in Bosnia, beginning June 25. He was there as the Inspector General on the closing, June 28.
- June 28 for the Serbs marked a tragic turning point in their history. In 1389, the Turks defeated the Serbs at the Battle of Kosovo, subjugating an independent Serbia. The Serbs viewed a Hapsburg parade on Vidov Dan as another provocation.
- There were two attempts on the Archduke's life that day. He survived the one in the morning as the bomb thrown at her car deflected but the second attack, within an hour, with a revolver, killed him and his wife.

Geopolitical Russia

- The assassins were Serbs. Austrians suspected Serbian complicity and made the July Demands. They had evidence that the Serbian army had supplied them with arms, and a Serbian organization trained and smuggled them across the border.
- Austria presented the demands on July 23 and declared the war on July 28.
- The Serbs survived the first attack but in 1915, a joint German-Austrian campaign subdued them.

Russia at War

- Czar Nicholas II hoped that the Balkan War would help overcome domestic divisions within Russia, strengthen his regime, and improve Russia's international stature.
- The Czar was disappointed with what happened next. This massive conflagration compounded Russia's internal discord and revealed how far Russia had fallen behind other powers to the West.
- The Great War devastated Russia militarily and brought the Romanov dynasty, like the Hapsburgs, the Germans, and the Ottomans crashing down.

Russo-Japanese War 1904-1905

- Russian society had been experiencing industrialization, particularly since the 1880s, but without essential political and social reforms.
- Long-simmering discontent made Russia ripe for violent upheaval. The Russian regime resisted change throughout the 19th century and refused to adapt to the liberalizing movements that swept most of Europe.
- The Czar ruled autocratically relying on the nobility the church the army and the bureaucracy without allowing a hint of political participation.

Russo-Japanese War 1904-1905

- The rising number of the middle and working classes in cities such as Moscow and Saint Petersburg resented archaic governance style.
- Frustrated Russian intellectuals turned to revolutionary doctrines and even terrorism to promote rapid change.
- In this atmosphere of domestic tension, a turning point came with the embarrassing defeat of the Czar's army and Navy by Japan in the 1904 to 1905 Russo-Japanese War. The liberal and radical groups reinforced their calls for for reform.

The Oppressive Czar

- On January 22, 1905, thousands of workers gathered in front of the Czar's palace in Saint Petersburg. They chanted slogans to express their plight while reaffirming their respect for the existing power structure, singing God save the Czar. The Czar's troops fired on them killing and wounding hundreds of women, men, and children. The Russian Bloody Sunday further frustrated the masses.
- Oppressive at home, the Russo-Japanese war embarrassed the Czar.

The Wars

- For the Russo-Japanese War, Russia sent its Baltic Fleet in October 1904 to reinforce its positions at Port Arthur which the Japanese had successfully attacked in 1904.
- The Baltic Fleet was a formidable armada. Its long journey of some 18,000 nautical miles, allowed the Japanese to monitor its progress through the Indian Ocean.
- The armada reached the China Sea in early May and proceeded to Vladivostok via the Tsushima Strait. Admiral Togō Heihachirō's fleet tracked and waited for it. On May 27, as the Russian Fleet approached Tsushima, he attacked and sunk two-thirds of the Russian Fleet and captured six ships. Four reached Vladivostok, and six took refuge in neutral ports.

*Mer
Jaune*

Mer du Japon

CORÉE

Base
japonaise

Dispersion

Détroit
de Tsushima

JAPON

Honshu

Shikoku

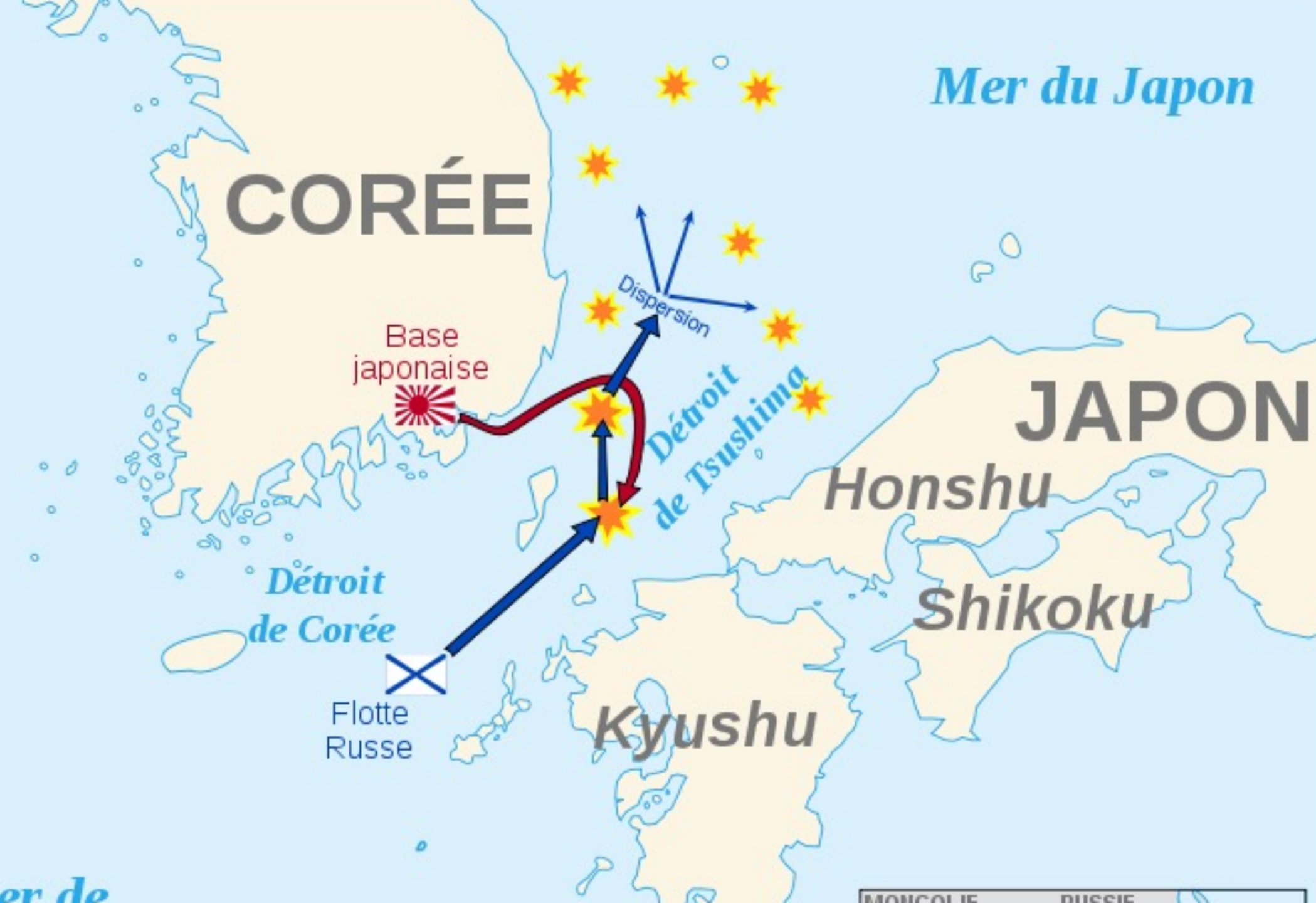
Détroit
de Corée

Flotte
Russe

Kyushu

Mer de

MONGOLIE RUSSIE





The Wars

- Growing resentment at home deepened because of the disaster in the Pacific.
- Oil historian, Daniel Yergin emphasizes the discontent spreading away from the political power centers to the new centers of economic activity in a rapidly industrializing state. He offers the example of Baku in Carcasses.
- In 1904, oil workers in Baku went on strike and won a collective labor agreement. They went on a strike again in solidarity with the victims of Bloody Sunday.

The Wars

- In October 1905, Tatars burnt the oil wells. Burning Baku oil wells, Yergin says, was for the first time a violent upheaval had interrupted the flow of oil, threatening to make a vast investment worthless (Yergin, *The Prize*, p 131).
- Yergin also highlights the oil region's role in laying down the foundations of the October Revolution. Baku became a revolutionary hotbed on the Caspian. Hidden in the Tatar quarter was a large cellar, the home of Nina, the name given to the secret printing operation.

The Wars

- The exiled revolutionaries smuggled their paper Iskra from Europe via Persia.
- Nina printed it and the oil industry's distribution network offered a vehicle for clandestinely distributing these materials country-wide.
- The Baku alumni included a young Georgian, a former seminarian, and son of a shoemaker named Joseph Djugashvili, code-named Koba, the Turkish for indomitable.
- History will know him a little later as Joseph Stalin.

The Discontent Spreads

- By October 1905, the discontent spread and resulted in a ten-day strike with two different consequences. First, it paralyzed the country. Second, it led to the rise of the soviets, the councils of workers in the urban centers. Several incidents of public outrage shook the government. Sailors mutinied on the battleship Potemkin in the Black Sea as did soldiers in the army. Several incidents of the peasants' revolt in the countryside also occurred in which they attacked wealthy landowners. Several officials were assassinated.

The Czar Regain Control

- One reason the Czar failed to suppress the agitated populace was that the Russo-Japanese war had pinned down many military personnel thousands of miles away.
- Under this pressure, Nicholas II yielded. He promised civil liberties, a popularly elected Duma, and the legalization of unions.
- Once the Russian troops from the Far East returned, the repressive tactics resumed to restore order by 1907. The Czar and his advisers reduced the Duma to a nondemocratically elected body.

The War Takes its Toll

- The discontentment continued. In the months before the outbreak of World War, Russian cities faced multiple strikes.
- The war gave the Czar a pretext to ban strikes and suspend the Duma.
- Germans scored several victories on the Russian front. The Russian leadership, transportation facilities, supplies, and armaments simply could not withstand the demands of Total War.
- Moreover, many non-Russian subjects living within the empire became more interested in establishing their independent states than supporting the war effort.

A Fatal Error

- Nicholas II made a fatal mistake in August 1915. He decided to personally command the army. The people held him directly responsible for the war failures.
- The aristocrats specifically disapproved of the influence Grigori Rasputin (1871-1916) exercised over Tsarina Alexandra because of her hemophiliac son. They murdered him in 1916.

The Women Power

- In 1917, the working women marked International Women's Day on March 8. They decided to be in the vanguard of the anti-government protest.
- Industrialization had increased their role in the labor force. In Petrograd, they were more than half of the labor force and suffered from long hours, low wages, shortages of staples like bread, and rising prices. On March 8, ten thousand of them mobilized and marched into Petrograd chanting anti-war, anti-inflation, and anti-government slogans.
- Instead of suppressing the protest, the troops joined the women protestors.
- On March 12, Duma organized a provisional government and three days later the last of the Romanov Czars abdicated.

A Provisional Government

- The provisional government included members of Russian liberal elite. They hoped that Russia would move toward constitutional parliamentary democracy.
- The provisional government enacted into law civil liberties, religious freedom, equality before the law, and union rights. They also promised more fundamental social reforms in the constitution.

A Provisional Government

- The provisional government, however, encountered three challenges:
- First, the Soviets had turned into the political organizations of workers, soldiers, and radical intellectuals. The provisional government had to share power with them, particularly the strong Petrograd Soviet. The Soviets favored socialist self-rule and stood against the upper classes represented by the provisional government.

A Provisional Government

- Second, the Soviets had no enthusiasm for the continuation of Russia's draining involvement in World War 1. On March 14, they issued Order Number One to stipulate that military officers would be democratically elected by soldiers and that military decisions would be democratically made. The government's war efforts collapsed.
- Third, neither the government nor the Soviets controlled the peasants, eighty percent of the population. The peasants began to seize land and hoard food for themselves, worsening supplies in urban areas. Soldiers began to desert the front to make land claims of their own.

Kerensky Government

- In May, a moderate socialist, Alexander Kerensky (1881-1970) replaced the liberal provisional government.
- Kerensky faced another challenge, the radicals returning from the West. Lenin was one of them.
- The Czarist oppression had pushed many radicals to safer locations in the West.

Enters Lenin

- Lenin led the most influential of these groups, a group of Marxist revolutionaries, the Social Democrats, particularly their minority faction the Bolsheviks. Lenin was the revolutionary name of Vladimir Ilych Ulyanov (1870- 1924).
- Marxism had become influential among some Russian intellectuals, revolutionaries, and groups critical of Russia's czarist autocracy. In 1898, Russian Marxists formed the Social Democratic Party. Lenin was among its leaders. When they had to flee the country, they held a conference in London in 1903 where the radical Bolshevik wing of the party under Lenin split from the more moderate Mensheviks. Lenin kept it alive during his seventeen years of exile in Switzerland.

Enters Lenin

- In April 1917, the German government secretly transported Lenin to a Baltic port from which he made his way to Russia.
- Back home, Lenin opposed the post-Czarist power structure and unfurled slogans such as Peace to the Army, Land to the Peasants, Ownership of Factories to the Workers, and All Power to the Soviets.
- Lenin argued for a socialist revolution and as part of the struggle to get there, urged his followers to gain control over the Soviets, particularly the powerful Petrograd Soviet.

Lenin's Strategy

- Lenin laid down three principles for the Bolsheviks' organization.
- First, the party should be an elite, highly trained group of dedicated Marxist revolutionaries capable of instructing and leading the masses. The party must constantly purge the disloyal ideas or people.
- Second, the socialist revolution must include besides the industrial working class in Russia, as Marx wanted, the poor and hungry peasants to stage a broader socialist revolution that, he hoped, would sweep through other European countries.
- Three, the party should firmly oppose participation in the war which Lenin considered a product of imperialist rivalries and a continuing civil war among capitalists.

Kerensky Ousted

- Kerensky remained in control, initially. When the Bolsheviks agitated in July 1917, he unleashed a fresh wave of oppression against them. Lenin had to exile himself again. He went to Finland this time.
- Kerensky had to change his policy and seek the support of the Bolsheviks and the Soviets to abort a coup attempt by General Lavr Kornilov (1870- 1918). He failed because the soldiers refused to attack Petrograd.
- By October, the Bolsheviks under the leadership of Lenin and Leon Trotsky (1879- 1940) finally gained control over the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets. Bolshevik women also became active in the workplace.

November Revolution

- On November 6, Lenin and Trotsky launched a well-organized seizure of power through the Red Guards, workers' militia units. Within hours, they took over crucial control centers and transferred power to the Soviets and Lenin. Trotsky projected the uprising as a defense of the Soviets rather than a Bolshevik offensive.
- On November 7, the Bolsheviks elected Lenin as the head of the new Government. The Soviets throughout Russia endorsed him. The Bolsheviks assumed the name of Communists.



КПРФ

Proletariat of All Countries Unite.

- The Communists took immediate steps to secure the revolution. Here are a few of them:
- A pyramid of people's Soviets or councils replaced the Czarist hierarchy. These councils were elected by universal suffrage but were dominated by relatively few Communist Party members.
- When national elections failed to return a communist majority to the Constituent Assembly, Lenin had armed sailors disperse that elected body.
- Capitalism was abolished outright. A barter system of exchange replaced money because inflation and devaluation had destroyed the value of the ruble.

Proletariat of All Countries Unite.

- Committees of workers, responsible to party commissars, took over management of industry and commerce.
- The government nationalized the land and turned over its management to local peasant committees who then distributed it to individual peasants to be worked by their own labor. All crop surpluses were to be given to the state.
- The state expropriated church lands.
- Enacted laws to establish the legal equality of the sexes, the first Western government to do so.

To Brest-Litovsk

- Lenin immediately opened peace negotiations with Germany and in March 1918 signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Russia lost Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Bessarabia, the Polish provinces, and some of the Transcaucasian territory.
- This was an expensive peace. Russia lost 1/3rd of its European population, 3/4th of its iron, and 9/10th of its coal. Germany also compelled Russia to pay a heavy indemnity.

The Civil War

- Internally, Lenin faced a civil war as some Russian aristocrats and higher army officers rebelled against communism.
- The “White” forces had the support of the French, British, Greek, Polish, Czech, and US troops as well. The Western engagement with the rebels will dominate Russian-Soviet perception for the years to come.

The Civil War

- The Bolshevik government mobilized Russia but encountered some of the challenges that the worsening economy posed.
- The troops, for example, confiscated grain from the peasantry to feed the cities and the army.
- Suppression of any internal opposition began and the secret police force, the Cheka embodied Red Terror to hunt down class enemies and ensure internal conformity to the Bolshevik regime.
- During the civil war, the Bolsheviks also executed the imprisoned Nicholas II and his family, at Yekaterinburg, Russia on July 16, 1918. They apprehended that the White Forces might seize them.

Victory

- Russia lost another four to six million soldiers and civilians during the civil war but finally, the Red Army of Lenin won not only the internal conflict but regained Ukraine as well.
- Several factors helped them win. Above all, the Bolsheviks projected the Whites as a regression to the old oppressive system. Russia showed no preference for such a return.
- The White forces had no unified command structure.
- Revolutionary steps such as the distribution of land to the peasants built up hope and support.

Conclusion

- Russian Revolution emerged out of a chaotic situation. The Czarist Russia had ended serfdom in 1861 and began Industrializing late nineteenth century but failed to pursue reforms that would empower farmers and respond to the urban elites' pressing demand for change.
- Lenin introduced a revolutionary system top-down. Stalin will have a longer imprint on it beginning in 1924. He aggressively pursued top-down change and by the end of the Second World War restored and enhanced the stature of Russia as the USSR, a world power that would continue to challenge capitalism and market economies for seven decades before Gorbachev opened it up to new possibilities and challenges in 1991.