

Russia and Japan:
Industrialization Outside
the West


EQs: How did industrialization efforts impact Japan and Russia and in what different ways? What are the parallels and differences in modernization in each nation?

Chapter Summary

- #1: Russia and Japan were able to largely repel Imperialism but both were still influenced in ways by Europe/foreign influences
- #2: By the end of the 19th century, each had launched industrial efforts and joined the imperialist scramble
- #3: Industrialization, however, impacted each differently
 - Russia was hit by rebellion and Revolution
 - Japan pulled away from the rest of Asia and interacted with the West to develop while maintaining its identity

Russia Before Reform

- Napoleon tried his best to invade Russia in 1812 but failed... this cause an instant backlash against the previous Westernization policies of Peter and Catherine
- The Conservative nobles pulled back into isolation in order to strengthen the stranglehold over the serfs
- In 1825, a group of western-liking army officers led the Decembrist Revolt to overthrow the new Czar, Nicholas I...it was repressed and as a result, Nicholas put a stranglehold on freedoms, limiting schools, the press, and creating a secret police (precursor to the KGB)



Russia Before Reform Continued

- Thanks to this despotic repression, Russia avoided the spread of other revolutions that impacted Europe (1830, 1848, 1849)
- Russia did continue to pressure the Ottomans and other neighbors (Poland and Sweden) for territorial gains



The Peasant Question in Russia

- Since Russia shunned Westernization at the beginning of the 19th C, Russia fell behind economically...serfdom agricultural was still the dominant economic force
- Russian landlords increased pressure on the peasantry to produce more grain for export
- The disadvantages of being primarily agricultural were exposed by Russia's loss of the Crimean War in 1856...the Ottomans were actually helped by the French and British to defeat the Russians



- As a result, the new Czar, Alexander II began reforms to solve the serfdom question...many believed free labor would create higher agricultural profits while others, in parallel to ending slavery in America, just plainly wished to end serfdom for its abuses or to prevent a future serf uprising/rebellion
- None the less, the Czar's motives were strictly to protect the continued interests of the aristocracy and not to improve anyone's lives
- Russian serfs were emancipated in 1861...they gained some land but no political freedoms...they were still "tied" to the land until they could afford to pay for it...most never could afford to pay for land, since taxes were kept high
- All this did was drive people to move to cities, away from the farms causing a decline in agricultural output...worse yet, the population began to grow



Reform and Industrialization



- Alexander II was forced to make further reforms...
- he improved law codes and created zemstvoes (councils) to rule over local legal matters...they helped to give political experience to the rising middle class, but they ended up having no say in national matters
- Military and education were reformed, leading to improved defense and a highly literate society that began to absorb Western philosophy and ideology
- A move towards industrialization was also part of Alexander's reforms... but state support was necessary to build up industry since Russia had very little capital and NO middle class to tax

- One big expansion project was the Trans Siberian Railway started in the 1870s...it reached the Pacific by the 1880s...it connected import newly found resources (coal and iron ore) and central Russian farms to the West...new factories popped up in cities
- Count Sergei Witte (1892-1903) created measures to protect Russia's industries, including passing high tariffs, an improved banking system and encouraging western investment
- By 1900, half of Russian industry was foreign owned and drove the government into debt... though ranked highly in competitive industrial markets (4th in steel production, 2nd in oil production), Russia's workforce was largely STILL poor and largely exploited



The Road to Revolution



- Reforms were nice, but they did not succeed in satisfying the masses...Cultural nationalism developed (Ukrainian, Belarus, Caucasus) and led to regional divisions...Peasants had it no better...many suffered from famine, high taxes, redemption payments (debt)
- Educated Russians, business peoples and professionals also were dissatisfied...many formed a radical intelligentsia seeking immediate social change...student groups as well formed, impatient with the czar's s-l-o-w reforms and political restrictions

- Many in the intelligentsia remained agitated and switched to radicalism (terrorism)...anarchists emerged in opposition to czarist rule and they hoped to unite the peasantry under their banner...when this failed, anarchists in Russia resorted to widespread terrorist action
- By the end of the 1870s, Alexander II began to withdraw his reform ideas, fearing that his changes were only hurting the political climate...he resorted to police brutality and greater censorship as a result...in 1881, after many failed attempts, Alexander II was assassinated
- His successors (Alexander III and Nicholas II) continued industrialization but also continued brutal war...each suppressed individual freedoms and even resorted to pogroms, mass executions of Russian Jews

The Road to Revolution

- Meanwhile...Marxist ideology began to enter Russia through the intelligentsia
- The most widely known was Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (aka Vladimir Lenin)... he argued Marx's idea that a proletariat was emerging in Russia and must seek revolution against the state
- The Bolsheviks (majority party) rallied the working class with radical Marxist ideology, held strikes, purported peasant grievances...All the while, the czar and the conservatives continued the oppression of peasants the emerging working class



The Revolution of 1905

- Russia was doing so well adding territory at the end of the 19th C that they continued into the 20th C... however, the glory was not to last
- In 1904, Russia went after Manchurian and Korean territory, which was already under the influence of rising power Japan...the Russo-Japanese War broke out...and...RUSSIA LOST
- The result of this loss in 1905...WIDESPREAD protest and insurrection by the Marxists, peasants, workers, EVERYONE that wasn't in the government essentially
- Repression by the czarist government did not work well, so they tried reforms...Piotr Stolypin wooed the people with the creation of a duma (legislature/parliament), greater freedom from debt for peasants and repressions, AND ability to buy and sell land
- The goal was to distract the peasantry from the notion of radical Marxism...if worked and many became kulaks (aggressive business entrepreneurs)
- Eventually, there was failure since the working class was not addressed...strikes continued...the duma was stripped of powers and became worthless and Nicholas II continued to hold on to autocratic power



Japan – The End of the Tokugawa Shogunate



- In the first half of the 19th C, the shogunate continued its central bureaucracy and alliances with daimyo and samurai BUT had financial problems...its taxes were agriculture based and continuing to pay the samurai for their loyalty was becoming difficult
- Outside forces began to transform Japan...they became more secular...Neo-Confucianism grew popular among upper classes and spread to ordinary people...schools called terakoya opened teaching Confucian ideas in reading and writing...this led to tensions with traditional shinto believers
- Another minority group, the Dutch Studies, emerged from the trade in Nagasaki...in 1720 a ban on Western literature was lifted and as a result schools of Dutch studies emerged to teach Western ideas...Western scientific ideas spread...a rejection of Chinese knowledge emerged
- These influences led to lively debate on how Japan should change...many entrepreneurs began manufacture in rural areas in the south, yet Japan was still limited by backwards feudal agriculture...this would lead to a further desire for change

Challenging Isolation

- Many feared potential/eventual outside threats to Japanese isolation...one book even called for the creation of a strong navy to protect Japan's waters
- July, 1853 – American Commodore Matthew Perry arrived with his fleet in Edo Bay and threatened to "bomb the crap" out of Tokyo if the Japanese did not open for trade...the threat was real!
- In 1854, Perry returned and treaties were signed formally opening Japan to trade with foreign powers...European nations also followed suit and opened similar treaty agreements
- The shogunate had no choice, and many had already grown impatient with the strict policy of isolation



Challenging Isolation - Results

- On the flip side, many daimyo were opposed to change...soon many samurai began to rebel against change...many attacked foreigners, even murdering a British official...westerners retaliated by bombarding feudal forts
- Outright Civil War broke out in Japan in 1866 as samurai armed themselves with Western implements
- Eventually, in 1868, reformers declared the new Emperor Mutsuhito (Meiji) the supreme ruler...he managed to quell the rebellions, end the war and effectively end the power of the shogun...for the first time in over 1000 years, the emperor became the supreme leader in Japan




The Meiji Reforms

- Abolish feudalism...replace daimyos with prefects (regional rulers)...centralize the bureaucracy
- Samurai were sent abroad as ambassadors to study Western ideas
- Between 1873 and 1876 Meiji officials instituted a major social revolution...the samurai class was abolished...taxes were converted to a monetary base
- Many samurai became instantly poor as a result and another rebellion ensued (The Last Samurai)...it was quickly suppressed

The Meiji Reforms

- Some samurai took advantage to change...Iwasaki Yataro created the Mitsubishi company and began to expand railroad and steamship lines in Japan
- Many other former samurai found their way into political careers...the Meiji adopted parliamentary ideas from Britain and civil service exams from China...a constitution in 1889 created a Diet modeled after the German lower house of representatives...it had some power, mostly budgetary, but the emperor continued to wield the greater powers in Japan
- This led to most of the power and influence falling into the hands of about 5% of Japan's wealthy men...these were the business entrepreneurs known as zaibatsu



**Japan's Industrial Revolution:
A Summary**

- Military strengthening was the early hallmark of industrialization
- The Meiji government focused efforts on raising financial capital, building railroads, shipping lines to Japan's other islands, eliminating internal tariffs, and land reform to increase food production
- Government control was central to industrial growth, mainly to help keep foreign interventions in check
- And again, private entrepreneurs (zaibatsu) like Yataro and Shibusawa Eiichi became important in accumulating financial capital and developing fledgling industries
- However, Japan was still largely dependant on the West for resources (coal and machinery), export sales and world economic conditions

Impacts of Industry: Summary



- Many laborers were underpaid
- Population growth skyrocketed
- Universal education was introduced, stressing science and technology
- Many Japanese copied Western fashion
- Still, many traditional values were retained (religion, family values, social respect)
- Women remained largely subordinate to the home and respectful to men
- IMPORTANTLY, Japan started to become imperial, fighting a war with China (Sino-Japanese War 1894-1895) for control of Korea and the aforementioned Russo-Japanese War (resulted in Japan gaining influence over Manchuria)
