

14. Analyse the causes and immediate consequences (up to 1921) of the October 1917 Russian Revolution.

There are a wide variety of factors that influenced the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. Consequently, this revolution also had drastic outcomes in the short term. In terms of the revolution itself, the revolution was due to the crushing and unstable of circumstance in Russia coupled with Bolshevik ideology and methodology led to the successful coup on October 25th. This also had short term ramifications, primarily the impact of War Communism and the Civil War which were a direct result of the nature of the revolution as not a mass movement, but an armed one. In judging this there are two major historical opinions that point to the factors behind the revolution, paying attention either to the liberal or revisionist nature of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917.

The circumstances in which Russia found herself in directly after the abdication of the tsar in March 1917 were largely responsible for the conditions which allowed the Bolsheviks to stage their revolution. Considering that despite Petrograd swelling from 2 million to 2.65 million in population even though there was a 50% reduction in food production throughout due to the impact of war. Furthermore, there is the importance of the impact of World War I, and the failed policies of the Provisional Government. Whilst the crowd had chanted 'God Save the Tsar' in August 1914 at the Winter Palace after the War had broken out, the attitude towards the war had spurred much discontent as evidenced by over 900 strikes. Furthermore, the Provisional Government under Kerensky decided to launch a massive offensive in June of 1917 which resulted in a million dead and numerous desertions. The returning soldiers, along with hungry industrial workers, provided the right ears for Bolshevik rhetoric to fall upon. However, whilst the circumstance leading up to the Revolution was important for creating a sense of radicalism and desperation, it is important to

give credit to Lenin and the Bolsheviks of being able to therefore articulate and capitalise upon this discontent.

The Bolshevik ideology that Lenin proposed upon his German sponsored return in April 1917 was crucial to the cause of the Revolution. The historian Darby notes how ‘Lenin was able to articulate the discontent of the industrial class, and in doing so was able to manipulate the circumstance to his own cause.’ This is certainly a justified assertion. When Lenin made his speech of the April Thesis he outlined the ‘Peace Bread Land’ slogan designed to appeal to all sectors affected by the failings of the Provisional Government. However this alone is not the only important part, in the thesis Lenin outlined a fiercely anti-Provisional Government rhetoric espousing ‘down with the Provisional Government for the inevitable rise to of the proletariat dictatorship!’ In doing so Lenin made the Bolsheviks the only party with significant bearing to oppose the Provisional Government, at a time when the larger Social Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks were pushing for support of their policies. Also, the Provisional Government was continually undermined by its dual authority with the Soviets, and example of this being Order Number 1, whereby troops were ordered by the Soviets to form soldier committees and orders from the Provisional had to be approved by the Soviet first. This saw a surge in Bolshevik numbers from 10,000 to 50,000 by the first week of July as the offensive failed. This influx in membership was crucial, for it allowed Trotsky, new member of the Bolsheviks in July, to utilise these men into the efficient force of the Red Army. Whilst the Bolshevik ideology, which was a response to the circumstance, allowed them to gain support and numbers, it must be noted ideology was not in itself a crucial factor. Even Trotsky remarked that ‘the people love bread, not Marxism’ illustrating that despite the revolutionary rhetoric, it would take the organisation an cohesion of the Bolsheviks to achieve power. This is especially so when the nature of the Revolution, as a well planned and carefully executed coup is taken account. This is best evidenced by how after the coup, the Bolsheviks were crushed 18 million to 10 million voted in

November by the Revolutionaries. This demonstrates that despite the importance of ideology, it is another factor, such as the methodology of the Bolsheviks which explain their success.

The methodology of Bolsheviks would prove to be the most important factor in the success of the October Revolution. The historian Lee takes a differing stance to Darby in that he believes 'the compositional element of the Bolsheviks ensured a decisive victory, but not a well loved regime.' The aptitude of such a statement can not be underestimated. For instance, in August as Kornilov rapidly approached with this army, the Bolshevik tactic of controlling the Soviets, in which they had over half of the 500 seats, proved crucial as they were able to shut down the trains and halt Kornilov with the Red Army. The Kornilov affair saw a sharp increase in Bolshevik membership to 200,000. This demonstrates the efficiency of the Bolsheviks and the Red Army. This would therefore prove crucial. Once Trotsky had convinced his 'heroic brothers' on October 10 to vote in favour of the Revolution, the preparations and precision of the operation saw the Bolsheviks effortlessly sieze control of the Winter Palace by the 25th with no more than two dozen casualties. This demonstrates the importance of the Bolshevik organisation, and why it was the most important factor. However, despite the low death toll of siezing power, the immediadte aftermath and the keeping of power would require much more brutality.

The immediate consequences up to 1921 of the Revolution had a significant impact. The Bolsheviks were not a mass party with large support, they were a 300,000 man organisation which had simply siezed power and had to do much to keep it. After the Bolsheviks were crushed in the voting in November, Lenin ordered the infantile Constituent Assembly to be forcibly closed in January 1918. Trotsky is noted to have said to Lenin that 'we must trample on the ideals of democracy for our socialist revolution.' From here Lenin had to rapidly carry out his promises of 'Peace Bread and

Land.' Trotsky signed Brest Litvosk with Germany despite losing Russia 33% of its population and a huge portion of its industrial capability. Furthermore, Lenin made the Land and Factory Decrees in March and May of 1918, which effectively legalised the factory and land seizures that had been carried out by workers and peasants.

However, the major consequence of the Revolution would be the Civil War it sparked soon after. In 1919 the Bolsheviks were able to put their unity, cohesion and efficiency to the test with attacks by Denikin in March and Yudenich in the later end of the year, the civil war was bloody with 650,000 White Soldiers dieing. The Civil War also had the consequence of bringing in support from Western Powers, which would have later impacts in Potsdam 1945 and the outbreak of the Cold War as it fed Stalin's paranoia. This also had an immediate impact on foreign relations, with the Los Angeles Times in July of 1920 publishing a poster of an evil looking man labelled as 'Bolshevism' breaking the door labelled as 'civilisation' signalling the beginning of the East West Rivalry. In order to win the Civil War, Lenin had to use 'the crushing power of socialist revolution so destroy the bourgeois capitalist dogs.' This necessitated War Communism, which saw the Red Army take 70% of shoes and 60% of food from peasantry and urban workers and the complete nationalisation of industry in order to win. The impact of this was severe, with 7.5 million dieing as a direct result of the draconian policy and led to a 33% decline in urban population. Finally, the consequence of this would therefore be the revolt by the Kronstadt sailors in March which required 20,000 Red Guards to put down and forced Lenin into the realisation that 'the elixir of socialist medicine was perhaps too hastily applied.' Overall the immediate consequence of the October Revolution was a bloody civil war and the beginning of the creation of the totalitarian state.

The causes for the October Revolution rest heavily on the unity and precision of the Bolsheviks. Despite the importance of ideology, and the circumstance in which it was bred from for gaining support, the nature of the Revolution, as an armed coup, demonstrates the importance of the

Bolshevik Red Army and its organisation. However such a revolution, a seizure of power would ofcourse have the immediate consequence of the evils of Civil War, War Communism as well as the first elementary steps to the socialising of Russia. It is within these immediate years after the revolution that the seeds for the Cold War would be also shown demonstrating that the short term consequences of a small and well conducted revolution would one day have far reaching implications.

17. Compare and contrast the foreign policies of Hitler and Mussolini between 1933 and 1943.

The foreign policies of Hitler and Mussolini seem at the first superficial glance, to be similar due to their Right-Wing nature and how history has consigned Mussolini alongside Hitler as the war hungry fascists of the 20th century. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Hitler, as the rabid Nationalist Socialist had for the most part, a coherent identifiable and clear goal of Lebensraum, domination, and inevitable racial warfare. Mussolini was a Fascist in every sense, embodying the essence of Fascism's reactionary nature which saw Mussolini haphazardly and inconsistently apply foreign policy as to how it suited him. Overall, despite relatively aggressive foreign policies, the nature of these policies is drastically different.

In understanding the foreign policy and their differences, it is first important to establish the overarching ideology that drove both these men. Both Hitler and Mussolini were ardent and radical nationalists, as demonstrated by the Beerhall Putsch in November of 1923 and Mussolini's March on Rome in October of the same year. Both professed nationalist love and a desire to 'make Italy like Rome again,' and 'return Germany to her rightful place in the sun.' However, the differences began to emerge. Hitler's ideology was not fascism, but his brand of Nazism, it had clear goals.

Contrastingly the motives spurring Mussolini were dependent on circumstance and how much press appeal it could give him. This is reflected in the foreign policies. Hitler had a clearly developed foreign policy as early as 1924 as he wrote *Mein Kampf*. Indeed Hitler's policies operated through the paradigm of inevitable conflict, racial warfare, and the need for Lebensraum for his beloved Germanic people. Contrastingly, Mussolini oscillated widely between a North African Empire and delusions of world domination. This difference in radicalism is also demonstrated by how the regimes dealt with the Catholic Church. The relentless Hitler continually sought to undermine the Catholic Church despite signing a Concordat in 1933 whereas the Concordat of 1929 with Italian

regime was a massive compromise that is unthinkable to the Nazi Germans. A further example of this underlying differences is the Nazi unbending stance on Aryan supremacy where as Mussolini went from denouncing racism in 1933 'as the barbaric thought of those who think they need a certain blood to be proud Italians' to 'the Italian man is a race distinct and superior like no other' in 1938 as Hitler and Mussolini drew closer. From this understanding of the variance in Mussolini's ideology, it becomes evident how the foreign policies could often be similar, and suddenly change.

Between 1933 and the earlier part of 1938 many differences emerged between the two dictator's foreign policies. In 1933 Hitler had taken control of Germany with the Enabling Act in March and other such totalitarian measures and by August of 1934 was Fuhrer after Hindenburg's death. In 1935 Hitler had the Sudetenland returned to Germany by plebiscite. This moderate pathway is comparable to the ways in which Mussolini had reached out to Britain and France in order to gain territorial concessions in North Africa, a moderate and diplomatic stance. However 1936 marked a departure in similarities, with Hitler remilitarising the Rhineland to no objections from the British or the French. This is in contrast to Mussolini, who alarmed by the growth of Germany, tried to form the Stresa Front in 1935 in order to create a stable Europe in which 'Italy would not be the maiden, but a sister' and to be able to better conduct his North African Empire. This illustrates an underlying difference between the two.

Whilst Hitler desired to take Europe for Lebensraum, Mussolini desired a stable and peaceful Europe so he could engage in his own empire building to 'return Italy to the glory of Rome.' In 1935 and 1936 Mussolini aggressively forays into Abyssinia, which is similar to the aggressive tenures Hitler made at Czechoslovakia, the difference however is one was Empire building and the other was 'reclaiming' lost German territory. This demonstrates that there were overall expansionist

aims of Mussolini and Hitler, however the application was far different. As the 1930's progressed, similarities and differences again began to emerge. The Dolfuss Putsch by Austrian Nazis in 1936 alarmed Mussolini as he had considerable interests in Austria. This resulted in Mussolini stationing 28,000 troops on the border with Austria ready to move at a moments notice. This again shows Mussolini's distaste for European expansionism and illustrates another contrast between the twos' foreign policy. However, as Italy was expelled for holding a similarly aggressive foreign policy to Germany from the League of Nations after the invasion of Abyssinia, the goals and therefore the foreign policies of both Hitler and Mussolini began to take on similar trends again. In effect, Mussolini was now forced by his isolation and trade sanctions to sign the Rome-Berlin Axis in 1937 which resulted in Italy making 23% of its exports and 43% of its imports with Germany. This shift also resulted in both Hitler and Mussolini becoming international fascist interventionists as seen by the support for Franco in the Spanish Civil War between 1936 and 1939. This demonstrates how Mussolini now shifted from Empire building to falling in line with Hitler's European expansionism.

Both Mussolini and Hitler would become far more aligned in foreign policy soon after. When Hitler originally forayed into Austria Mussolini was alarmed, however Anschluss with Austria in 1938 happened with Mussolini's full blessing, again signalling a comparable foreign policy. This was also evident at the Munich Conference in September in which Mussolini endorsed Hitler's aggression. When the Pact of Steel was signed in May of 1939 Hitler said to Mussolini 'we are now binded in brotherhood.' The Pact detailed a mutual aid in the outbreak of war. Even though Mussolini would inform Hitler that 'simply put Adolf, I can not be ready until 1941.' This underlines a subtle difference however. Despite both now engaging in European expansionism, Mussolini's reluctance and distaste for European conquest was evident as he only declared war on France once he was assured of the Wehrmacht's victory and France's surrender. Despite being allied there was still an element of difference spurring from the radical ideology of Nazism and the

more moderate nature of Italian Fascism. This would be seen throughout the war as Germany zealously applied herself whilst Italy launched half hearted campaigns in North Africa, and often became more of a hindrance than an asset in the Second World War. This remained apparent well into 1943 and the US invasion of Italy from the south.

The foreign policies of Hitler and Mussolini were often mistakenly lumped together. However, the underlying nature of Fascism compared to Nazism bred a far greater reluctance on the part of Mussolini to take part in Hitler's full scale European war. The alliance was one bred out of Mussolini's isolation and overarching similarities due to their Right-Wing origins. Even to the last moments, Mussolini's Italy never had a foreign policy operating the radical paradigm as that of Germany and despite the similarities, they were fundamentally different.

14. To what extent was nationalism the major factor behind the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914.

Nationalism played an integral part in the formation of alliances and hostilities in Europe, however as why the war broke out precisely in August of 1914, this was reliant on many coincidental factors aligning at precisely the same time. Nationalism played a key role in the change in German foreign policy from 1890 onwards following Wilhelm's dismissal of Bismarck. Nationalism did affect the outbreak of the War in that it influenced the pan-Slavic nationalist movements. However it was traditional power politics, or Bismarck's realpolitik system, that led to the ensuing hostilities as a result of the various wars and crises and arms build ups that characterised the early 1900's. However though, it was circumstance that saw Russia and Germany refusing to back down in the July crisis that explain why the war broke out in August of 1914 exactly, as opposed to any other time.

Nationalism certainly played apart, especially in the pan-Slavic movement in the late 1800's and early 1900's. This is demonstrated by the fighting over Austrian controlled Rumelia in the 1880's and particularly in the Balkan wars in 1907 and 1912-13. Nationalism would also provide the fuse to start the war as the Serbian Black Hand killed the Arch Duke Ferdinand on 28th of June 1914 in Sarajevo. However, whilst nationalism is important in that regard in terms of the power play between the great powers it served much like ideology would in the Cold War. It was used by leaders to justify traditional power politics. Indeed, whilst there was great public outcry in Germany over Britain's producing its first dreadnought in 1898, it would be power politics that saw the dramatic naval build up to 29 British dreadnoughts, 17 German ones, and 602 and 329 in the navy respectively. Likewise, whilst Russia's strong hand in the Baltics can be seen as a nationalistic response to the humiliation of defeat in the Russo-Japanese war in 1905, it can also be seen as good

politics as Nicolas attempted to divert attention away from domestic failings at home. Lastly Austria-Hungary, the prime agitator in the outbreak of the war, was influenced by its own desire to maintain its empire by simply absorbing and pressuring Serbia into submission. This demonstrates that whilst nationalism did play a rhetorical role in the justification of certain policies, it really was simple power politics. However, this may explain why conflicts occur, but why it became a full blown European war was due to other factors such as the buildup and creation of the precarious alliance system.

The creation of the alliance system, which saw Russia join the Entente with Britain and France in 1907 and the Alliance between Austria, Italy and Germany renewed in 1902, drew two distinct camps in Europe and led to tension and friction. Again, nationalism is often attributed with much of the issues, however the first international crisis, as seen in Morocco 1905 when the Kaiser expressed support for their independence, the result of the Algeiras Conference of 1906 demonstrated to Wilhelm that France and Britain would stand by together. This sting to pride would play a national, and personal role in the outbreak of total war. Furthermore, the creation of war plans, such as the Schlieffen Plan and France's Plan 17 perhaps sparked war as all sides knew a rapid execution of their plans was crucial to victory. However it is far too simple to simply say that the allied camps simply went to war over Austria's decision to invade Serbia, it would be a series of circumstances bred from these far reaching events that will demonstrate why war broke out in precisely August of 1914.

The outbreak of a total European war depended on the crucial days of the July crisis, which were influenced by far back reaching events. The historian Seaman states that 'the German Reich only knew power of the simple exercise of it.' This is not entirely true, even though Kaiser certainly agitated the situation by telling the Austrian Ambassador on the 5th of July that 'we will stand by out

old faithful ally in any way.' This 'blank cheque' led to the Austrian government issuing a 10 point treaty to Serbia, requiring all points, such as 'the removal of all forms of anti-Austrian education.' The deadline was the 25th of July. The Serbians accepted all but one of the points, that Austrian officials be allowed to investigate the murders as it 'went against our national constitution.' Nicholas II of Russia immediately contacted his royal cousin Wilhelm to ask that 'for the sake of our friendship, restrain your ally.' Wilhelm simply replied on the 28th of August, as Austria declared full war on Serbia, that 'perhaps Russia should remain a spectator in the Austrian affair with Serbia.' By the 29th however Nicholas II, influenced by nationalistic need to stand strong with the Slavic Serbians and prior humiliations in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, set in place the mobilisation of the Russian Army. On the 30th of July Wilhelm was able to take the moral high ground in telling Nicholas that 'your amassing of troops is a serious threat. The outcome of this now rests on your shoulders.' With events already set in motion, Russia declared war on Austria and the resulting domino effect as Germany declared war on France on the 2nd of August in accordance with the Schlieffen plan. Whilst Nicholas could have remained a bystander, as Wilhelm suggested, prior nationalistic humiliation played a role in his mobilisation of troops, giving Wilhelm the moral justification to ignite the war. This however demonstrates the volatile and coincidental nature of the outbreak of the war in August of 1914 was not due to nationalism itself, as much as it was due to the circumstance around the July Crisis. The role of nationalism is therefore confined to the initial rhetorical justification for the shaping of the alliance system which caused what could have been a localised war into an entirely European one.

Nationalism was certainly not the major factor behind the outbreak of war. Whilst it certainly led to the justification of hostilities in the various build ups of alliances and international crises, it was the nature of the circumstance of the July days that influenced why the war broke out precisely in August of 1914. Nationalism certainly does deserve emphasis, as the scale of war could not have

been achieved had it not been for the alliance system. However it was the affect of timing, with Nicolas mobilising troops in response to the Austrian declaration of war on Serbia, which prompted a widescale European war and its outbreak in August of 1914.