The Russia Revolution, or
How Not to Make a Revolution
Part I: A Modified Billington Typology

Historical Problem: How to industrialize while introducing democratic institutions?

Historiographical Problem: How successful was Russia in doing so by 1914?

I. Emphasize on Long-Term Causes (1825–1914)

A. Social

1. Demographic
2. Society of Privilege
3. Russification of Subject Nationalities
4. Persecution of Jews

B. Economic

1. Agricultural Country
2. Beginnings of Industrialization
3. Semi-Colonial Status
4. Deprivation

C. Political

1. Open Repression (“Bloody Sunday”; Father George Gapon)
2. Failure in War
   a. Crimean War 1854–55
   b. Russo-Japanese War 1904–05
3. Perception of Leadership as Vacillating (October Manifesto, 1905)
4. Mixed Success of Reform Measures
   a. Sergei Witte (1849–1915)
   b. Peter A. Stolypin (1862–1911)
5. Rationalization of Government (Konstantin Pobedonostsev)

D. Intellectual

1. Weak Liberal Parties (Constitutional Democrats [Kadets])
2. “Revolutionary” Groups: Socialist Revolutionaries [SRs]; Social Democrats
3. Appeal of Extremist Solutions (the “strong leader” [vozhd’])
4. Myth of Revolutionary Tradition and the Okhrana (Russian secret police)
   a. Decembrists [1825];
   b. assassinations of Alexander II [1881] and V. K. Plehve [1904]);
   c. execution of A. I. Ulianov [1886])
   d. Apis
II. Conspiratorial Theories  (1914–Feb. 1917)

A. Rasputin, German Plots, Alexander Protopopov, and the Masons

B. Immediate Causes of February Revolution
   1. Political—belief tsar was incompetent
   2. Economic—food shortages; prices soared
   3. Social—peasants wanted nobles’ fertile lands and woodlands

III. Spontaneity and Accident (Feb. 1917–Oct. 1917)

A. “Dual Power”
   1. Provisional Government (A. F. Kerenskii [1881–1971]) — had the authority
   2. Petrograd Soviet of Workers and Soldiers — had the power

B. Return of V. I. Lenin (1870–1924)
   1. April Theses
   2. Bolshevik Slogans
      a. “All Power to the Soviets”
      b. “Peace, Bread, and Land”
   3. Smolnyi Institute; Liteinyi Bridge

IV. “Heroic” and Inevitable (October 1917–1924)

A. Reasons for Bolshevik Success
   1. Organization
      a. Democratic Centralism
      b. Red Army—Leon Trotsky (1879–1940)
   2. Central Position
   3. Unifying Ideology
   4. Ruthless Use of Terror (Red Guards)
   5. Pragmatic Leadership
      a. Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
      b. New Economic Policy