

## The Role of Russian Writers and Intellectuals in the 1905 Revolution in Russia

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### Abstract

**Objectives:** The main objective of this study is to examine the crucial role that Russian writers and intellectuals played in catalyzing the 1905 Revolution in Russia. Specifically, the study sought to analyze how their literary works, philosophical ideas, and political writings challenged Tsarist autocracy, depicted the suffering of the masses, and inspired opposition movements. The study aimed to highlight the defiant writings that contributed to the rise of political figures and the eventual overthrow of the repressive regime.

**Methods:** The historical narrative and analytical methods were employed, conducting a comparative analysis of prominent works by renowned authors such as Tolstoy, Gorky, and Chekhov. This analysis focused on their depiction of social discontent, class struggles, and the decline of the aristocratic system.

**Results:** The findings revealed that the writings of Russian intellectuals played a pivotal role in spreading revolutionary ideas, challenging autocracy, and inspiring opposition movements. Their literary works, philosophical discussions, and political pamphlets resonated with the discontented masses, fostering a spirit of resistance against the oppressive Tsarist regime. The study highlighted Anton Chekhov's play "The Cherry Orchard," which symbolically reflected the aristocracy's resistance to change through its rich symbolism and detailed character portrayals.

**Conclusions:** Although the Tsarist regime was not overthrown, the 1905 Revolution paved the way for subsequent transformations. The study concluded that the writings of Russian intellectuals awakened political consciousness and laid the groundwork for the 1917 Revolution. Their literary contributions expanded the rhetorical space, facilitating societal change. The study emphasized the immense power of the written word in the struggle against Tsarist tyranny.

**Keywords:** 1905 revolution, Tsarist regime, Lenin, Chekhov, the Cherry Orchard.

### دور الأدباء والمفكرين الروس في ثورة عام 1905 في روسيا

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### ملخص

الأهداف: الهدف الرئيسي من هذه الدراسة هو فحص الدور الأساسي الذي لعبه الكتاب والمثقفون الروس في تحفيز ثورة عام 1905 في روسيا. على وجه التحديد، سعت الدراسة إلى تحليل كيف تحدثت أعمالهم الأدبية وأفكارهم الفلسفية وكتاباتهم السياسية الأوتوقراطية القيصرية، وكيف صورت معاناة الجماهير، وألهمت حركات المعارضة. هدفت الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على الكتابات المتحدية التي ساهمت في بروز الشخصيات السياسية والإطاحة النهائية بالنظام القمعي.

المنهجية: استخدم الباحث الأسلوب السرد التاريخي والأسلوب التحليلي، وقام بإجراء تحليل مقارن للأعمال البارزة لكتاب مشهورين مثل تولستوي، غوركي، وتشيفخوف، لفحص تصويرهم للسخط الاجتماعي، وصراعات الطبقات، وتراجع النظام الأرستقراطي.

النتائج: كشفت النتائج أن كتابات المثقفين الروس لعبت دوراً محورياً في نشر الأفكار الثورية، وتحدي الأوتوقراطية، وإلهام حركات المعارضة. وقد تردد صدق أعمالهم الأدبية، ومعالجاتهم الفلسفية، وكتاباتهم السياسية لدى الجماهير الساخطة، مما عزز روح المقاومة ضد النظام القيصري القمعي. وأبرزت الدراسة مسرحية أنطون تشيفخوف "بستان الكرز"، التي عكست بشكل رمزي مقاومة الأرستقراطية للتغيير من خلال رموزها الغنية وتصويرها الدقيق للشخصيات.

الخلاصة: رغم عدم إسقاط النظام القيصري، مهدت ثورة 1905 الطريق للتحويلات اللاحقة. خلصت الدراسة إلى أن كتابات المثقفين الروس أيقظت الوعي السياسي، ووضعت الأسس لثورة 1917. وقد وسعت مساهماتهم الأدبية الفضاء الخطابي، مسهلة بذلك التغيير المجتمعي. وأكدت الدراسة على القوة الهائلة للكلمة المكتوبة في النضال ضد الطغيان القيصري.

الكلمات الدالة: ثورة 1905، النظام القيصري، لينين، تشيفخوف، بستان الكرز.



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## INTRODUCTION

Russia, the largest country in Europe, extends from Eastern Europe to Manchuria, Korea, and China. Despite its vast expanse, Russia did not possess overseas colonies. The Russian Revolution of 1905 marked a pivotal moment in the history of the Russian Empire, driven by economic and political factors. It crucially influenced the ideas and writings of Russian intellectuals. This study explores the extent to which the literary works of Russian writers posed a threat to the Russian autocracy, addressed the suffering of the Russian people, and reflected the lives and hardships of workers and peasants before the revolution. Additionally, it examines the role of minorities in Tsarist Russia during these events.

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Analyze the influence of Russian literature on the 1905 Revolution.
- Investigate the depiction of ordinary citizen's lives and the oppressive nature of the Russian Empire in literary works.
- Examine the portrayal of aristocratic life and its resistance to change.
- Evaluate how literature inspired the masses to demand social and political change.
- Understand the broader implications of literary contributions to the revolutionary movements.

This study employs a comparative analysis of works by prominent Russian authors. Leo Tolstoy's (*Anna Karenina*) (1878) does not directly depict a revolutionary movement. However, the societal context of the novel reflects the nascent stirrings of new radicalism challenging the established order. Discontented educated youth begin advocating for change, subtly suggesting the undercurrents of social unrest (Su, 2020). In contrast, Maxim Gorky's (*Mother*) (1906) adopts a stark realist approach, portraying the abysmal living and working conditions within a factory settlement. The daily lives of the working class are characterized by hardship, backbreaking labor, pervasive poverty, and rampant alcoholism (Akhter, 2016). These stark literary images served to resonate with the growing discontent among the working masses, potentially inspiring calls for social reform.

Anton Chekhov's play (*The Cherry Orchard*) provides insights into the aristocracy's resistance to change through the character of Ranevskaya, the orchard owner, who laments, "If only I could free myself from the heavy burden on my chest and shoulders, if only I could forget my past!" This metaphor suggests her desire to shed her aristocratic past and start anew (Burdina, 2001). Meanwhile, her young daughter optimistically remarks, "The sun has already risen; it's not cold. Look, dear mother: beautiful trees! And the air! The masked birds are singing!" This imagery signifies the beginning of a new era as the old aristocratic order fades away.

This study's significance lies in the fact that, unlike most revolutions that received global support, the 1905 Revolution remained confined within Tsarist Russia due to its imperial ambitions in the Near East, China, Japan, and Korea. These ambitions led to the Russo-Japanese War in February 1904, with Britain supporting Japan to counter Russian military power (1985). (صالح، عبد الكريم، و السامرائي). Rosa Luxemburg observed in her 1919 essay that revolutions are not merely military victories but "a series of defeats" that help ideas garner popular support. (Luxemburg, 1919). This research examines how prominent Russian writers, philosophers, and intellectuals contributed to the revolutionary upheaval of 1905. Drawing on contemporary analyses by Plekhanov, Tolstoy, Gorky, Dostoevsky, and others, as well as Lenin's writings, the study analyzes how their criticism of Tsarist despotism and visions for reform inspired workers, students, and peasants. The study argues that while the 1905 Revolution did not immediately transform Russia into a constitutional democracy, the writings of these intellectuals were instrumental in awakening political consciousness and laying the groundwork for the 1917 Revolution (نوار و جمال الدين، 1999).

The study is structured into four sections:

1. The historical events preceding the revolution.
2. Economic Conditions Preceding 1905.
3. Social and Cultural Conditions in Russia Prior to the 1905 Revolution.
4. The Role of Russian Writers and Intellectuals in Catalyzing Social Change.

The study concludes with the establishment of the Duma<sup>1</sup> in 1905, which was dissolved by the Tsar in 1907. The Russian Revolution of 1905 marked a crucial moment in the political, constitutional, and social development of the nation, significantly

spurring the contributions of philosophers and writers. Alongside the economic and social conditions, radical philosophies inspired future revolutionary movements. Their legacy ultimately provided fertile ground for the transformative revolution of 1917, demonstrating that the pen, the sword, and the word were equally powerful in the Russian revolutions.

### **I. Historical Events Preceding the Revolution**

The Russian Revolution of 1905 was a wave of political unrest that swept across the Russian Empire. Some of this unrest was directed against the government, while part of it was due to social and economic conditions. This revolution led to the establishment of a limited constitutional monarchy, the Imperial Russian Duma, a multi-party system, and the Russian Constitution of 1906.

According to Sydney Harcave (an American historian specializing in Russian affairs) and others who have written on this topic, several issues within Russian society contributed to the revolution (Harcave, 1970):

1. Peasants: The largest factor hindering the development of constitutional life in Russia was the peasantry. The general populace was represented by peasants who were in a state of misery, poverty, and lack of education, making them unprepared to participate in the nation's development. They expected only minimal improvements in their income. Their passivity was exacerbated by the fact that the regions were governed by nobles known for their despotism, rendering peasants nearly serfs. Moreover, the church only supported them by promoting patience and acceptance of the status quo (نوار و جمال الدين، 1999). Recently liberated peasants had very few rights and were not allowed to sell or mortgage their allotted lands (Marefa.org).

2. Minorities: The Russian Empire was troubled by the presence of several minorities that played a role in stirring internal and external problems. Finnish Catholics in the north and Polish Catholics in the west despised the Russian Orthodox rule. Additionally, there were sizable Caucasian, Turkish, and Mongolian minorities that were unable to mount a significant counter-movement. These minorities had their regions where they congregated. Jews, on the other hand, were spread throughout cities, possessed considerable wealth, and were predominantly involved in trade. They played a significant role in Russia's external and economic relations (نوار و جمال الدين، 1999).

3. Working class: Following the industrial advancement in Russia, workers became relatively more numerous in the cities. The industrial movement entered Russia during the reign of Alexander III and intensified under Nicholas II, especially after 1895. Significant exploitation of coal and iron occurred in Ukraine and the Urals, while oil fields in the Caucasus along the shores of the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea were also heavily utilized. Factories were established in Kyiv and Moscow, leading to an increase in the export of goods from Russian ports. Iron production rose annually to three million tons between 1881 and 1904, while coal production increased from three million to eighteen million tons annually during the same period. Additionally, the number of machines doubled (سلمان، تاريخ اوروبا الحديث من الثورة الفرنسية الى الحرب (نوار و جمال الدين، 1999); العالمية الاولى 1914-1789، 2010).

Consequently, workers were in a worse condition than peasants regarding the social, health, and nutritional problems they faced in the cities. These issues weighed heavily on them without eliciting a response from the royal court or the

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<sup>1</sup> The Duma: It functioned as an advisory body to the Senate. The legislative powers of the Duma were curtailed even before its convening, as the upper council—the Senate, which represented the highest bureaucratic authority in Russia and had half of its members appointed by the Tsar—had been granted many rights that restricted the activities of the Duma. The Senate acted as a protective shield for autocracy, preventing the Duma from becoming too radical. (صالح، عبد الكريم، و السامرائي، 1985)، p.352.

government. The Russian government was focused on fostering industrial progress in the country; however, it did not reconsider the system of governance, which was incompatible with the development and outcomes of such industrial progress (نوار و جمال الدين، 1999).

4. Military mutiny: In 1903, following alarm over Japan's control of the Chinese coast, Russia requested China to extend a railway through Manchuria and took control of Port Arthur, fortifying it and connecting it to the Trans-Siberian Railway. The Japanese, dismayed by the increasing Russian influence in the Far East, prepared for war (برون، 2014). In February 1904, Japan declared war on Russia, launching a surprise attack on the Russian fleet in the Baltic Sea. Upon reaching the Korea Strait, the fleet was annihilated by Admiral Togo, the Japanese fleet commander. The war exhausted both nations. (سلمان، تاريخ اوروبا الحديث من الثورة الفرنسية الى الحرب العالمية الاولى 1789-1914، 2010)؛ (صالح، عبد الكريم، و السامرائي، 1985).

The conflict ended with U.S. President Roosevelt mediating peace negotiations, leading to the Treaty of Portsmouth in September. The treaty recognized Japan's influence over Korea, which became part of the Japanese Empire in 1910, and stipulated that Russia and Japan relinquish control of Manchuria, with Russia ceding Port Arthur to Japan (برون، 2014).

The war had significant repercussions. Reports of the devastating Russian defeat by Japan, with 270,000 Russian casualties and the near-total destruction of the Russian fleet, weakened Russia's international standing (صالح، عبد الكريم، و السامرائي، 1985). This defeat deeply impacted the Russian populace and liberal circles, convincing many that autocracy and corrupt governance were responsible for Russia's disgrace. This realization led to military dissent, as discontented soldiers returning from the defeat faced inadequate salaries and widespread chaos (صالح، عبد الكريم، و السامرائي، 1985).

5. University students: During the latter half of the 19th century, the Russian Empire witnessed a modest expansion of educational opportunities, as evidenced by the proliferation of secondary schools and universities. However, when compared to the vast expanse of the empire, its massive population, and the diversity of its ethnicities and languages, this growth remained relatively limited. This educational disparity contributed to a heightened awareness among university students, who, emboldened by a relaxation of institutional discipline, found themselves increasingly captivated by burgeoning radical ideologies (نوار و جمال الدين، 1999).

All these factors came together to create the political and social environment that eventually led to the outbreak of the 1905 revolution in Russia. This revolution was the first of its kind and did not fully achieve its goals, but it was an important step towards change and reform in Russia.

## II. Economic Conditions Preceding 1905

Towards the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Russian government implemented various measures to strengthen the nation's role in the global economy. These measures included stimulating economic growth through industrial development, improving public finances, stabilizing the ruble by introducing the gold standard, implementing protectionist policies, and expanding transport infrastructure (Khaustova, 2013). Consequently, Russia experienced rapid industrialization, with growth rates significantly higher than the national economy's average. Between 1885 and 1913, the industrial production growth rate reached 5.72%, and in the 1890s, it even reached 8.03% (Khaustova, 2013).

During this period, Russia held one of the leading positions globally in terms of industrial development pace. For instance, the average annual growth rate of industrial production in Russia was higher than in the United States (5.26%), the United Kingdom (2.11%), and Germany (4.49%), but lower than in Sweden (6.17%). Manufacturing began to develop rapidly, particularly in the European part of Russia, with numerous factories established in regions like Moscow, Donbas, the Volga region, and St. Petersburg. The most intensively developed branches were metallurgy, textile industry, and construction (Khaustova, 2013).

The expansion of the railway network played a crucial role in fostering economic growth and regional specialization. Between 1893 and 1902, over 27,000 kilometers of railways were constructed, bringing the total length to over 55,000 kilometers. The construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway, initiated in 1891 and largely completed at the beginning of the

20th century, further contributed to the country's industrial development (Khaustova, 2013).

Despite these modernization efforts, the Russian economy faced significant challenges and crises. The financial crisis of 1899-1902 interrupted the rapid industrialization of the 1890s, triggered by a reduction in foreign capital inflow into government bonds and industrial enterprise securities. The banking sector was among the first to be affected, with bank shares experiencing a steep decline of 45.4% between the peak in February 1899 and the trough in 1901 (Lychakov, 2019).

While authorities intervened with a massive rescue package, the crisis impacted heavy industry, which consisted of manufacturing, mining, and chemical industries. According to the Ministry of Finance, in the 1890s, the supply of heavy industrial products consistently lagged behind demand. In 1900, supply outpaced demand for the first time, leading to a recession in heavy industry in 1901-02, with declines in output value (7.7%) and revenues (6.8%). However, light industry, including textile, paper, and ceramic industries, remained unaffected (Lychakov, 2019).

Approximately 85% of the Russian population depended on agriculture for their livelihood, with the majority living in villages and relying on farming (Encyclopaedia, 2023). Land ownership was concentrated in the hands of nobles and the church, leading to significant wealth and land disparities. The poorest peasants and workers endured difficult living conditions, often working as agricultural laborers for the nobility (Encyclopaedia, 2023). This economic and social system perpetuated inequality and increased dissatisfaction among the lower classes.

In the industrial sector, working conditions were harsh, with workdays sometimes extending up to 15 hours. Workers often lived in overcrowded communal housing, divided into social groups, and women, who constituted 31% of the factory workforce, were paid less than their male counterparts (Encyclopaedia, 2023). These factors, combined with low wages and the government's failure to address economic grievances, contributed to escalating social tensions and widespread dissatisfaction among the working class.

The period preceding the 1905 revolution witnessed a significant rise in workers' strikes, as laborers protested against employers with radical economic demands and sought the recognition of trade unions (2020، صديق). Difficult working conditions and low wages led to increased social unrest, further fueled by an autocratic regime perceived as disconnected from the populace's plight (2020، صديق).

Russia's involvement in costly wars further strained the economy. The Crimean War<sup>2</sup> (1853-1856) pitted France, Britain, and the Ottoman Empire against Russia, resulting in significant losses and financial burdens (Metz, 1995). The Russo-Ottoman War<sup>3</sup> (1877-1878), initiated in response to Ottoman suppression of uprisings in Bulgaria and threats to Serbia, also imposed heavy economic costs (Metz, 1995). Additionally, the defeat by Japan in the Russo-Japanese War<sup>4</sup> (1904-1905), culminating in the Treaty of Portsmouth<sup>5</sup> and the relinquishment of vast territories to Japan, resulted in approximately 270,000 Russian military casualties, further destabilizing the nation (Mason, 2014); و (صالح، عبد الكريم، 1985، السامرائي).

The economic conditions preceding the 1905 revolution in Russia were marked by both positive and negative developments. While industrialization and modernization efforts were underway, the economy faced significant challenges, including financial crises, social inequalities, and the economic strain of military conflicts. The combination of economic

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<sup>2</sup> The Crimean War (1853-1856) represented an anomalous geopolitical event in the 19th century. It stood as the sole pan-European conflict between the Napoleonic Wars and World War I, as well as the only instance wherein the Ottoman Empire achieved victory over Russia, out of their ten military engagements from 1678 to 1917. Uniquely, it witnessed the formation of an alliance between Britain, France, and the Ottoman Empire against Russian aggression. (Badem, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> The Russo - Ottoman War of 1877-1878 was the last war of the nineteenth century in between Russia and Turkey and it was ended by the triumph of Russia. There are ones who claimed that this war was the beginning of the end of it. The war affected the economy in a bad manner. (Tanriverdi, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> The Russo-Japanese War began in February 1904 and lasted for 18 months until it was brought to a close in August 1905 at the Portsmouth Peace Conference. (The Russo-Japanese War). The 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War was the first major conflict of the twentieth century and a turning point in the balance of power in East Asia. In the short term, Russia's defeat helped precipitate the 1905 Russian Revolution and the 1917 October Revolution. (Mainardi, 2019-2020).

<sup>5</sup> The Portsmouth Treaty of 1905 marked the end of the Russo-Japanese War and inaugurated 40 years of Japanese imperial rule on the Asian continent. It involved territorial transfers from Russia to Japan, which the United States endorsed at the time as a way to balance the ambitions and antagonisms between the two powers in Northeast Asia. (Esthus, 1990).

hardship, entrenched social inequalities, and ineffective governance contributed to widespread dissatisfaction and unrest, ultimately setting the stage for the revolutionary upheaval of 1905.

### III. Social and Cultural Conditions in Russia Prior to the 1905 Revolution

The social and cultural conditions in Russia prior to the 1905 revolution were extremely turbulent, as the country was suffering from social, political, and economic problems. The political system in Russia was characterized by absolute monarchy, and the Tsar ruled with an iron fist, while the people suffered from poverty, hunger, and disease. This created a huge class divide in Russian society, where the nobility enjoyed wealth and luxury and owned most of the wealth and land, while on the other hand, the peasants suffered under difficult conditions and oppression from the government. The vast majority of landowners whether conservatives or liberals, remained strangers to the people who lived amongst them, and who enjoyed their work, (Petrunkevitch, 1918).

Individual liberties were limited in Russia, and the government exercised censorship and repression over the press, media, artistic, and cultural expression. It practiced suppression over any political or social activity it considered dangerous to the stability of the ruling regime. The intellectual class consisting of writers, artists, and thinkers suffered from the government's restrictions on freedom of expression and creativity.

There was also discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities. The Russian Empire suffered from the existence of a number of minorities that had potential to stir up domestic and foreign problems – the Catholic Finns in the north and the Catholic Poles in the west hated Russian Orthodox rule and placed great hopes on Russia's defeat in order to ease the grip on them, while the Caucasian, Turkic, and Mongolic minorities were relatively large in number but culturally backward and unable to mobilize. As for the Jews they, were spread across cities and owned wealth with most of them being traders and had a role in Russia's economic relations abroad (نوار و جمال الدين، 1999), so freedom of expression was limited.

This ultimately resulted in millions of people taking to the streets demanding freedom and democracy. This move was a result of dire living conditions and the tragic circumstances the people were suffering from. As a result, social and political reforms were undertaken to introduce change into Russia's system of rule. These were the “October Manifestations – so Tsar Nicholas II issued the “October Manifesto” in which he promised civil liberties (such as freedom of speech) and an elected parliament (the Duma) that would impose limits on the absolute powers of the Russian Tsar, along with a Constitution that took effect (“The Basic Laws of 1906”).

The bloody events that took place during the St. Petersburg worker's strike, which was attended by 150,000 workers and coincided from 22 January 1905, sparked a strike movement in Moscow, Riga, Tiflis, Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, Lithuania, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Central Asia. The number of strikers during the first three months of 1905 was more than eight hundred thousand people. These strikes were supported by students, intellectuals, doctors, engineers, and teachers. Peasant revolts also took place across most of the Russian countryside – peasants burned down landowner's mansions and possessions, and some naval vessels in the Black Sea mutinied. The Tsar's uncle was assassinated in Moscow.<sup>6</sup> (صالح، عبد الكريم، و السامرائي، 1985).

### IV. The Role of Russian Writers and intellectuals in Catalyzing Social Change

In the late 19th century, the scope of education in the Russian Empire expanded significantly. Secondary schools and universities proliferated, though their growth did not keep pace with the empire's vast geographical expanse and its diverse, multilingual, and multi-ethnic population.

Educational institutions were primarily concentrated in major cities, especially in the capital, St. Petersburg. In several large urban centers, emerging intellectual movements gained societal influence. The number of teachers and the circulation of newspapers increased, despite existing restrictions, and the dissemination of printed books contributed to the formation

<sup>6</sup> On February 17, 1905, Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich Romanov, brother of the late Russian Emperor Alexander III and uncle to the reigning Tsar Nicholas II, was assassinated in Moscow. He was leaving the Kremlin when Ivan Platonovich Kaliaev, a member of the Combat Organization of the Socialist Revolutionary Party (SR), threw a bomb at the Grand Duke's carriage. (Paré, 2023)

of an educated public opinion. Russia produced notable figures who played pivotal roles in shaping intellectual discourse. Modern intellectual currents, particularly those of moderate or extreme critical socialist thought, gained traction among intellectuals. This intellectual ferment contributed to a growing readiness among the populace, led by these intellectuals, to consider revolutionary action against the government (نوار و جمال الدين، 1999).

Among the key figures that directly and indirectly impacted and sparked the flames of revolution against the Tsarist regime were:

**Nikolai Chernyshevsky** (1828-1889) was a Russian radical democrat and revolutionary philosopher whose writings significantly influenced the Nihilist movement as well as subsequent Russian revolutionaries. His seminal work, the novel "What Is to Be Done?" published in 1863, presented a socialist utopian vision for Russia based on cooperatives, thus inspiring many future revolutionaries (MURPHY, 2016); (Young, 2012).

Chernyshevsky's philosophical ideas were rooted in materialism and utilitarianism. He advocated for the primacy of physical existence coupled with the importance of individual pleasure and self-interest in shaping moral and ethical principles. This rational egoism posited that individuals should prioritize their own well-being in conjunction with that of society as a whole, rather than adhering to abstract moral standards (Zulaikha, 2020).

The novel "What Is to Be Done?" showcases Chernyshevsky's ideas in action. The story revolves around Vera Pavlovna, who establishes a sewing workshop embodying cooperative socialism. This portrayal of a practical, fulfilling, and largely happy love serves as a counterpoint to Turgenev's "Fathers and Sons," which Chernyshevsky perceived as a dastardly caricature of Dobrolyubov, a fellow radical and close friend (MURPHY, 2016).

Chernyshevsky's work also addressed the role of literature in society. He believed that a good artist should present or solve a problem within society rather than merely reflecting reality passively or neutrally. This understanding of literature's weighty role led him to criticize Turgenev's depiction of nihilism as a product of "sheer caprice, habituation, or inertia," something with no enduring foundation in human life (Zulaikha, 2020).

**Pyotr Lavrovich Lavrov** (1823-1900) was a prominent Russian theorist, philosopher, publicist, revolutionary, sociologist, and historian who significantly influenced the development of socialist thought in Russia. His work, particularly his famous "Historical Letters" (1868-1869), played a crucial role in introducing socialist ideas to Russia and shaping the country's revolutionary movement (Pipes, 1990); (Rosenberg, 1974).

In "Historical Letters," Lavrov emphasized the importance of direct action in bringing about change, arguing that ideas alone were insufficient. He criticized the Russian intelligentsia of his time for being rich in ideological ideas but lacking in practical application (Lavrov, 1868-1869). This critique resonated deeply with the Russian youth, who were beginning to develop a consciousness of the need for revolution.

Lavrov's emphasis on linking ideas to direct action profoundly influenced the Russian revolutionary movement. His ideas were particularly influential in the development of the Narodnik movement, which sought to bring about social change through direct action and the involvement of the masses (From "Lenin, Vladimir Ilich.", 2001). Lavrov's critique of the Russian intelligentsia also highlighted the need for a more practical and engaged approach to social change, which was a key aspect of the Narodnik philosophy.

Lavrov's work had a lasting impact on Russian intellectual and political history. His emphasis on the importance of direct action and his critique of the Russian intelligentsia's lack of practical engagement with social issues helped shape the development of socialist thought in Russia and influenced the country's revolutionary movements throughout the late 19th

and early 20th centuries.

**Vladimir Lenin** (1870-1924) was the founder of the Bolshevik Party, leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution, and the first head of the Soviet state. He was deeply influenced by earlier radical philosophers like Nikolai Chernyshevsky and Georgi Plekhanov, and Lenin's revolutionary writings built upon their works (Vladimir Lenin and Communist Revolution, 2007).

In his 1902 work "What Is to Be Done?", Lenin drew inspiration from Chernyshevsky's novel of the same name to argue that the working class would not arrive at class consciousness automatically; rather, they needed to be led by a vanguard party of professional revolutionaries (Lenin, 1902); (Vladimir Lenin). This idea became a core part of Leninism. Lenin further developed his theories in other influential texts, such as "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution" (1905), which outlined the Bolshevik strategy for the 1917 revolution (Vladimir Lenin).

Lenin's conception of the revolutionary party as a disciplined, military-style organization served as an important model for later revolutionary leaders of the 20th century, such as Mao Zedong and Fidel Castro (Vladimir Lenin). His writings also made significant contributions to the development of Marxist theory, particularly in his analysis of imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism (Vladimir Lenin and Communist Revolution, 2007).

Despite his immense impact, Lenin's legacy remains controversial. While he is revered by some as a champion of the working class and a visionary leader, others criticize him for his authoritarian tendencies and the violence that accompanied the Bolshevik seizure of power (Vladimir Lenin). Nonetheless, Lenin's ideas and actions profoundly shaped the course of 20th-century history and continue to be studied and debated by scholars today.

**Anton Chekhov** (1860-1904), the renowned Russian playwright and short story writer, made significant contributions to literature and the social consciousness of late 19th century Russia (A Detailed Examination of Themes in Anton Chekhov's Short Stories, 2023).

Anton Chekhov's plays and short stories, though not overtly political, played a significant role in shaping the social consciousness of late 19th century Russia and contributed to the foundations of the 1905 Revolution (A Detailed Examination of Themes in Anton Chekhov's Short Stories, 2023). His works, such as "The Cherry Orchard," "Uncle Vanya," and "Three Sisters," portrayed the deterioration of the Russian aristocracy and the plight of the emerging middle class in a psychologically complex manner. Chekhov's short stories, like "Ward No. 6" and "The Peasants," focused on the harsh conditions of the poor and oppressed, illuminating the social and economic struggles of ordinary people (A Detailed Examination of Themes in Anton Chekhov's Short Stories, 2023).

Chekhov's approach to social issues was indirect; he believed in depicting life "not as it is, but as it should be" (A Detailed Examination of Themes in Anton Chekhov's Short Stories, 2023). His works contained satirical elements that criticized various aspects of Russian society, including the provincial nobility, bureaucracy, and shortcomings of the upper classes. This satirical lens shed light on some of the issues that contributed to dissatisfaction and fostered calls for reform during the 1905 Revolution (Norwegian Digital Learning Arena NDLA).

"The Cherry Orchard," one of Chekhov's most famous plays, serves as an excellent example of his social commentary. The play revolves around the Ranevskaya family, whose estate, including a cherry orchard, is about to be auctioned off due to their inability to pay the mortgage (A Detailed Examination of Themes in Anton Chekhov's Short Stories, 2023). The play explores themes of social change, the decline of the aristocracy, and the emergence of a new social order. (Yesin,



2000). The cherry orchard itself symbolizes the passing of an era and the need for adaptation to the changing times (Burdina, 2001); (A Detailed Examination of Themes in Anton Chekhov's Short Stories, 2023).

Theatrical metaphors and symbols that embodied the sense of political transformation include:

1. "If only I could take my heavy burden off my breast and shoulders, if I could forget my past!" (Ranevsky)

This metaphor suggests Ranevsky's desire to shed the weight of her aristocratic past and start anew.

2. The cherry orchard itself serves as a metaphor for the fading aristocratic way of life. Madame Ranevskaya laments, "My dead, my gentle, beautiful orchard! My life, my youth, my happiness, good-bye! Good-bye!"

3. "I work my brains to their hardest. I've several remedies, very many, and that really means I've none at all." (Gayev)

This metaphor illustrates the aristocracy's futile efforts to find solutions to their declining fortunes, suggesting their inability to change with the times.

4. "If there's any illness for which people offer many remedies, you may be sure that particular illness is incurable, I think." (Gayev)

Similar to the previous example, this metaphor implies that the aristocracy's decline is an incurable condition, despite their attempts to find remedies.

5. "The sun has risen already; it isn't cold. Look, little mother: what lovely trees! And the air! The starlings are singing!" (Varya)

The imagery of the rising sun, lovely trees, and singing starlings can be seen as a metaphor for the dawning of a new era, as the old aristocratic order represented by the cherry orchard is fading away.

6. Lopakhin's triumphant exclamation, "The cherry orchard is mine now, mine!" and his reference to his ancestors being slaves on the estate underscore the reversal of fortunes and the shift in power dynamics (A Detailed Examination of Themes in Anton Chekhov's Short Stories, 2023).<sup>7</sup>

Chekhov's literary humanism, rather than combative arguments, gently fostered a spirit of reform that contributed to the subsequent revolutions in the early 20th century in Russia. As Lenin noted, "Chekhov depicted the bourgeois universally, and for that reason he is great". Through his psychologically complex portrayals of characters and their struggles, Chekhov evoked compassion and indignation among readers, laying the foundations for social change (A Detailed Examination of Themes in Anton Chekhov's Short Stories, 2023).

Through its rich symbolism, nuanced character portrayals, and linguistic artistry, "The Cherry Orchard" transcends its historical context and achieves a universal resonance. Its exploration of the human condition, the fragility of societal structures, and the inevitability of change render it a timeless work of art that continues to captivate and inspire audiences worldwide (Yesin, 2000). By studying this influential work, we gain invaluable insights into the complexities of societal transformation, the enduring impact of historical forces, and the universal human experience of navigating change and loss.

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<sup>7</sup> (Chekhov, 1904).

Regarding the role of writers and intellectuals in the 1905 Revolution, their artistic contributions intricately depicted the events preceding and following the revolution with utmost detail.

### Discussion

This study highlights the instrumental role played by Russian intellectuals and writers in precipitating the revolutionary upheaval of 1905, a role often overshadowed by other historical narratives. The analysis substantiates its assertions with specific examples, such as Chernyshevsky's novel "What Is to Be Done?" which presented a socialist vision that inspired future revolutionaries, and Lavrov's "Historical Letters" which emphasized direct action, influencing the Narodnik movement's development. These concrete instances underscore how their ideas and writings catalyzed political consciousness and laid the foundations for challenging the Tsarist regime.

Moreover, the research elucidates how Russian literature functioned as a potent vehicle for social critique, with authors adeptly exploring themes of inequality, oppression, and the human condition through their works, resonating with the prevailing discontentment. However, in undertaking comparative analyses across revolutionary periods, potential methodological constraints must be acknowledged, such as navigating diverse socio-political contexts, accessing primary sources, and mitigating subjective biases in interpreting historical catalysts.

Nonetheless, this study cogently demonstrates how the written word wielded immense power, akin to revolutionary slogans and arms, in the struggle against Tsarist tyranny. The intellectual contributions expanded the discursive space, shaped public opinion, and facilitated large-scale transformations, albeit with possible limitations in comprehensively capturing the complex interplay of factors driving such seismic political shifts.

### Conclusion

The 1905 Revolution in Russia, while ultimately suppressed by the Tsarist regime's relentless application of force, represented a pivotal juncture that catalyzed a confluence of transformative forces. These forces coalesced into the successful 1917 Revolutions, which dismantled centuries of imperial rule. The failure to overthrow the autocracy during the 1905 upheaval can be attributed to a multitude of factors:

1. The regime's uncompromising stance and brutal suppression of dissent through violent military force, exemplified by the Bloody Sunday massacre, which eroded its legitimacy but temporarily quelled the opposition.
2. The lack of a unified and coherent revolutionary leadership capable of effectively coordinating and sustaining the mass uprisings, as various factions pursued divergent ideological and tactical approaches.
3. The continued allegiance of the armed forces to the Tsar, despite isolated mutinies, which enabled the regime to suppress the unrest through overwhelming force.
4. The predominantly agrarian and peasant-based society's limited exposure to revolutionary ideologies and the persistence of traditional deference to authority, which hindered the mobilization of a critical mass for sustained revolt.

However, the events of 1905 indelibly imprinted the idea of overthrowing the archaic Tsarist system and establishing a democratic political order based on constitutional principles and an elected parliament. This pivotal period witnessed unprecedented levels of mass mobilization against the state apparatus, facilitated by the dissemination of revolutionary propaganda from prominent intellectuals and thinkers who delegitimized the Tsar's purported divine right to autocratic rule.

The increasing penetration of Marxist philosophies and critiques of capitalist exploitation, espousing a reorganization of society through the empowerment of the proletariat and the inevitability of class struggle, found widespread resonance

among the disgruntled masses experiencing economic immiseration. The flourishing of avant-garde artistic movements, rejecting traditional aesthetic conventions through experimental styles and embracing abstraction as a vehicle to capture the dynamism of modern life, paralleled the broader questioning and repudiation of ossified societal and cultural norms, thus preparing the intellectual terrain for the acceptance of radical visions advocated by revolutionary ideologues.

While the diverse array of ideologies and motivations among the revolutionaries and the broader population involved in the unrest should be acknowledged, the 1905 events provided invaluable experience in agitation, propaganda, and developing strategies to challenge state authority – tactics that would be effectively employed a decade later during the 1917 revolutions.

Therefore, while the 1905 Revolution was eventually subdued through the relentless application of state coercive capacity in the short term, it provided vital lessons that enabled the coalescence and assembly of multifarious political, socio-economic, philosophical, and cultural forces, which proved instrumental to the successful revolutionary upheaval of 1917. The unrest of 1905 represented the harbinger and critical transitional phase in Russia's convoluted revolutionary trajectory towards modernization and the eventual establishment of a radically new societal order.

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