

Tsarist & Communist Russia



From Autocracy To Revolution: Part II “Modernization”

Russia's Modernization

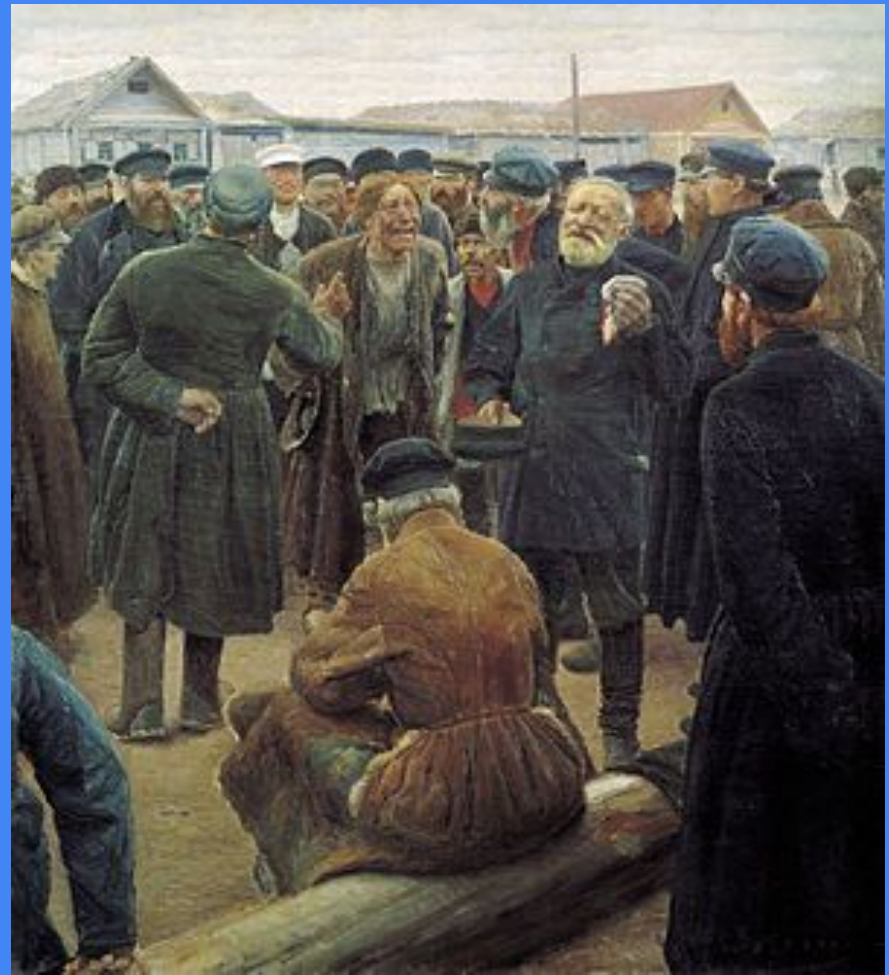
Peasants

- 1800s to the 20th century Russia was a country of peasants
 - Industrially and technologically backward
 - Made their military weak
 - Terrible loss of the Crimean War 1854-55
 - Convinced Tsar to begin a program of economic and political modernization.



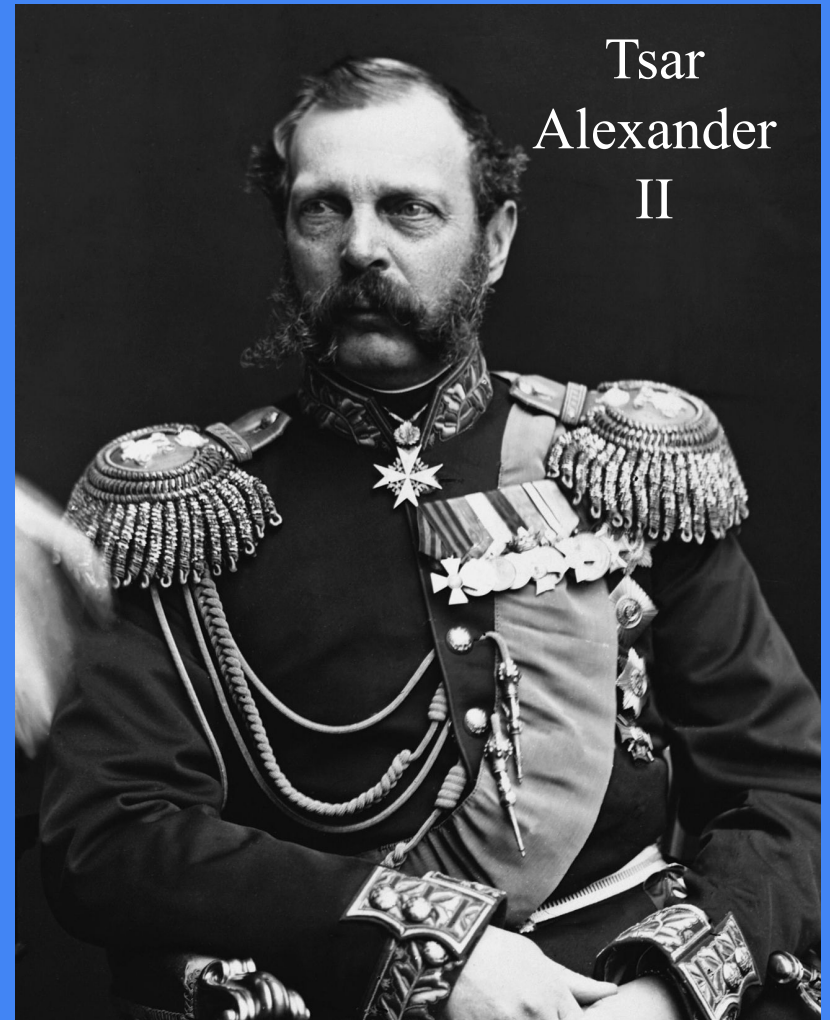
1st Step of Modernization:

- Complete overhaul of system of agricultural production.
- Since the 1500s Serfdom was the system
 - Unjust system
 - Terrible poverty
 - People could be bought and sold by nobility
 - Permission to marry or travel
 - Massive debt
- Serfdom was economically unproductive
- The *Mir* (peasant village assembly) made all decisions



The *Mir* cont.

- All land was collectively owned
- Land allocated according to need
 - Land could be hours from home
 - All work done by hand
 - Wooden tools
 - Faulty irrigation systems
- All profits went to wealthy landowners
 - No incentive to work harder or improve productivity
- Tsar Alexander II issued:
The Emancipation Acts in 1860



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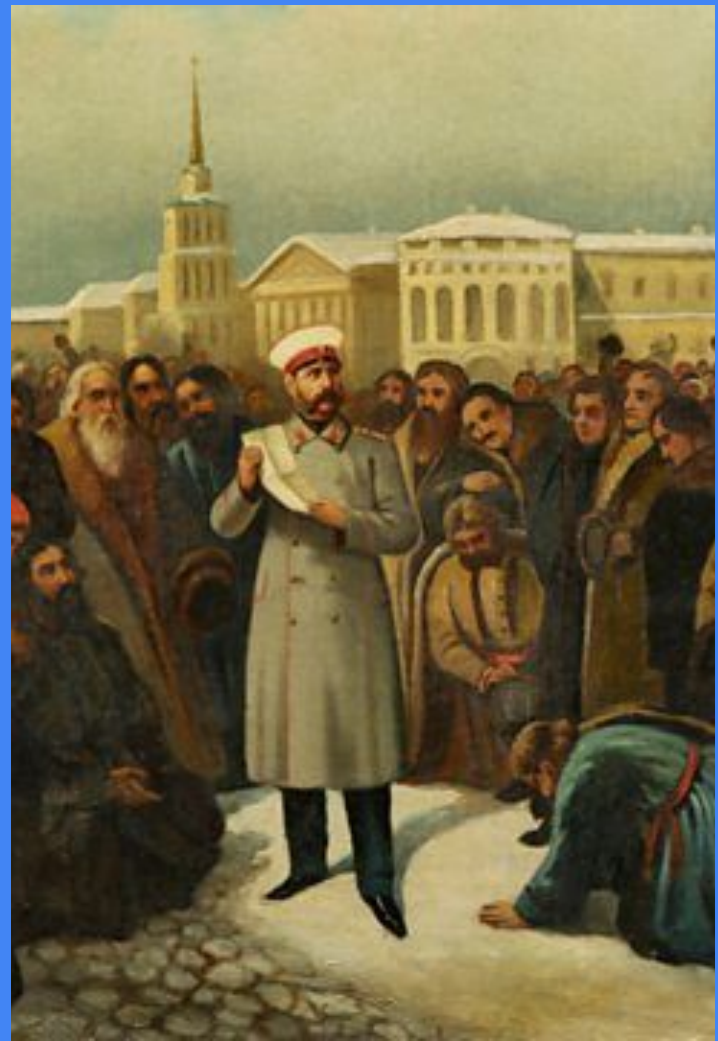
- **Pros:**

- Ended Serfdom
- People free to marry, move, buy and sell property

- Meant to be an incentive for greater productivity

- **Cons:**

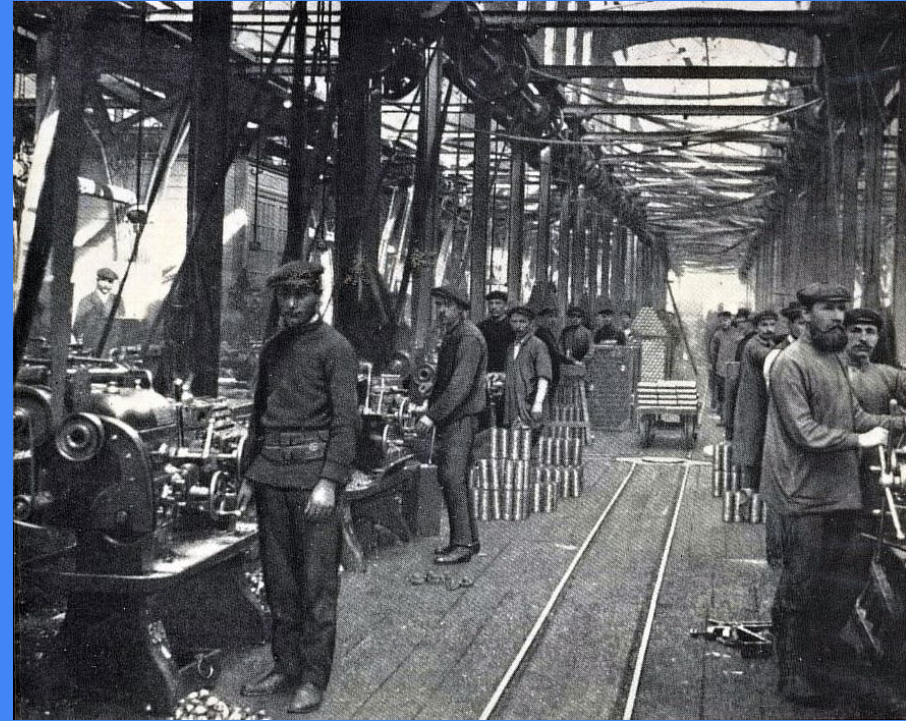
- People to pay heavy redemption payments
- People did not have the money to buy land
- Most ended up with no land
- Did not end poverty
- No increase in production



Russia's Modernization

Workers

- Early 1880s massive industrialization
 - Iron, steel, chemicals, petroleum, and engineering
 - 30 years later Russia was the 5th largest industrialized power in the world
 - Small class of business elites called the **Bourgeoisie** emerged
 - Controlled all new industrial enterprises



Russia's Modernization

Workers cont.

- Working class population skyrocketed
 - Lived outskirts of the city
 - Filthy conditions
 - 2/3rds homes no sewers or water
 - Open cesspools, garbage piled up
 - Dirt roads
 - 2-3 families per apartment
 - Low wages
 - 11 or more hour work days



Factory Conditions

- Extremely harsh
- Children worked 9 hrs a day
- Workers exposed to harmful chemicals: no masks or ventilation
- Workers worked themselves to death
- Employers ruled the factories
 - Through absolute fear
 - Fired at anytime, no reason
 - Could not read newspapers
 - Punished for disobedience
 - Mistreated/humiliated
 - No legal recourse

