

Rosa Luxemburg, Co-founder of the Spartacus League (c. 1918)

Abstract

Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919), revolutionary and political theorist, had already led an eventful life before the November Revolution. Born in Congress Poland, she came to Berlin in 1898 with the help of a marriage of convenience. There she joined the the SPD and became active in the German worker movement. She was sentenced to prison several times because of her criticism of the imperial government and the First World War. Together with Karl Liebknecht, she formed the Spartacus League during the war in protest against the SPD's accommodation with the government, that is, the so-called fortress peace or *Burgfrieden*. As a committed pacifist, she criticized bellicose nationalism and wartime capitalist business profits, hoping to establish a socialist international. Luxemburg switched to the USPD, but radical Spartacists remained a minority with little influence there too. These then became founding members of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) in early 1919. Luxemburg demanded a socialist soviet government following the Russian model instead of a parliamentary democracy like Social Democrats around Ebert sought. In the course of the January unrests, Luxemburg and Liebknecht were interrogated by paramilitary soldiers, mistreated, and then murdered. Their bodies were found months later in the Landwehr Canal.

Source



Source: Rosa Luxemburg, c. 1918.

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