

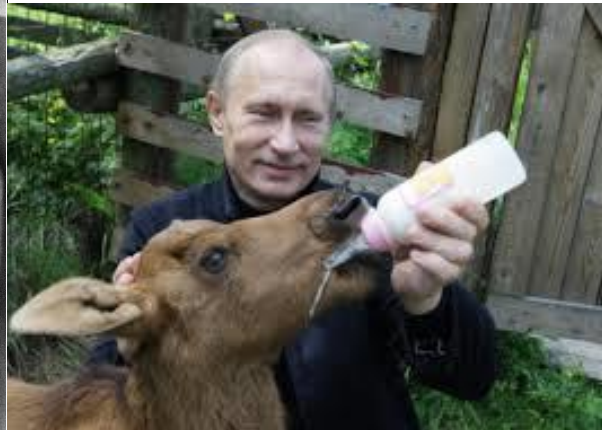
History 133

The Russian Revolutions from Lenin to Putin

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Course Overview: Russia's history over the past century has been extraordinarily turbulent. Russians have experienced war and revolution, state terror, anarchy, famine, mass epidemics, industrialization, and dizzying social, political and economic transformations. In this course we will focus on four eras of rapid change – the Russian revolution of 1917-1921, the “revolution from above” of 1928-1938 which combined breakneck industrialization, forced collectivization of agriculture and terror, the years of de-Stalinization and liberalization under Nikita Khrushchev (1956-1964), and finally the collapse of the USSR and the rise of a new authoritarianism personified by Vladimir Putin. We will ask which of these phenomena deserves the title of “revolution,” and we will explore the deeper causes of change as well as the experiences of ordinary Russians in this tumultuous century.

The goals of this course include –

- Learning close analysis of documents and debates within their historical contexts.
- Moving beyond stereotypes about “the Russian bear,” and Russians’ supposed longing for “the iron fist” to a more nuanced understanding of the processes and driving forces of modern Russian history.
- Understanding the deep background of present-day developments in Russia (for example, growing authoritarian nationalism and the takeover of Crimea).
- Gaining a basic knowledge of the most important events, prominent personalities, socioeconomic developments, etc. in Russian history from 1900 to the present.
- Improving students’ skills in writing and argument.
- Examine the meanings of the word “revolution” and learn the concept of “heuristic device” and the importance of defining terms in an argument.

We will pursue these goals most importantly by class discussion of films and of documents ranging from newspaper articles to political speeches to private letters and a novel. Lectures by the professor will take up about one-quarter of class time. Beginning on October 20 I will be giving questions on course readings the class before they are due, and eliciting student responses the next class before discussion. During the first half of the course we will set up and run in class a mock Communist Party cell, in order to learn about Communist culture on the ground.

We will also work towards our goals through graded assignments. As part of the mock party cell, students will each write a “political autobiography” of an early Soviet alter-ego. Students will write three short papers, the first four pages long, the second and third 6-7 pages each. There will be a final exam at a time and date determined by the registrar, aimed testing students knowledge of lectures and readings from the textbook, Ron Suny’s *The Soviet Experiment*. For details of grading, see below.

For most classes (24 out of 28) reading is assigned. Except in the case of the novel, *Cement*, reading assignments generally amount to around 30 pages per class. This is not a high reading load for a college history course – a total of about 900 pages for the semester.

Tuesday, 9/1 ... Introduction. Lecture on Russian history, geography to emancipation of serfs, 1861. Film (“The Merchant’s Daughter”) and discussion.

Thursday, 9/3 ... Modernization and the Crisis of Tsarism. Suny, *Soviet Experiment*, Introduction *and* 21-38. Read Raymond Williams’ etymology of “revolution” in class.

Tuesday, 9/8 ... Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, Parts I and II, easily found online.

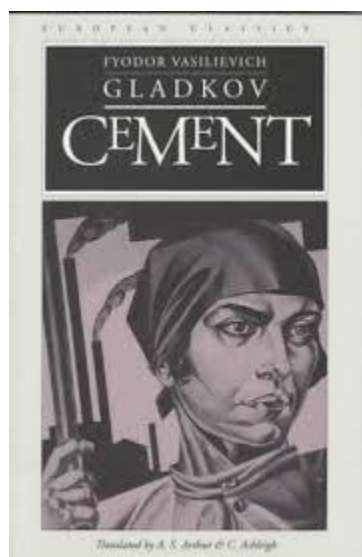
Thursday, 9/10 ... World War I and the Revolutions of 1917. Peter Durnovo, “Memorandum to Nicholas II” at <http://www2.stetson.edu/~psteeves/classes/durnovo.html> . Suny, *Soviet Experiment*, 47-67 (all of Chapter Two).



Tuesday, 9/15 ... The Revolutions of 1917 from below: Sources from the common people (excerpted from Steinberg, et al, *Voices of Revolution: 1917*), on e-reserve (under heading “1917: Voices of the common people”).

Thursday, 9/17 ... The Bolsheviks in Power – Dictatorship, Terror and Civil War. Suny, *Soviet Experiment*, 68-84, 96-109. Short lecture on NEP.

Tuesday, 9/22...The New Economic Policy in Fiction: Fyodor Gladkov, *Cement*, Chapters 1 through 11.



Thursday, 9/24 ... The New Economic Policy in Fiction: *Cement*, Chapters 12-17 (end).

Tuesday, 9/29 Short “political autobiography” due (2-5 pages double spaced). “Meeting” of mock party cell.

Thursday, 10/1 ... Stalin’s Revolution from Above: Suny, *Soviet Experiment*, 235-272. “Meeting” of mock party cell.



Thursday, 10/8 ... Stalin’s Revolution from Above – Primary Sources. Letter from Feigin to Ordzhonikidze, 1932 at <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/archives/trans-aa2feign.html> . Lev Kopelev, “The Last Grain Collections (1933),” on e-reserve. Excerpt from John Scott, “Behind the Urals,” on e-reserve. Stalin, excerpt from “Tasks of Economic Managers,” at http://academic.shu.edu/russianhistory/index.php/Stalin_on_Rapid_Industrialization.



Tuesday, 10/13 ... The Great Terror, 1937-1938. Suny, *Sov Experiment*, 282-288. Primary sources on Terror on e-reserve (under heading “Primary sources on Great Terror”). “Meeting” of mock party cell. First draft of first paper (5-6 pages) due.

Thursday, 10/15 ... The Great Retreat, Suny, *Soviet Experiment*, 291-315. View excerpts from Stalinism musical film, “Volga, Volga.” “Meeting” of mock party cell.

Tuesday, 10/20 ... World War II. Lecture on WWII. Final draft of first paper (5-6 pages) due.



Thursday, 10/22 ... World War II: Primary sources. Translated soldiers' letters and morale reports on e-reserve (under heading "Soldiers' letters and morale reports").

Tuesday, 10/27 ... View *Enemy at the Gates* for homework. Discussion of film. Brief lecture on postwar USSR.

Thursday, 10/29 ... Cold War Origins. Telegrams from Nikolai Novikov (Soviet Ambassador to US) and George Kennan (US Ambassador to USSR) to home governments (1946) on e-reserve (under heading "Novikov and Kennan telegrams"). David Holloway, "The Premises of Policy" on e-reserve.

Tuesday, 11/3 ... De-Stalinization and "The Thaw," 1956-1964. Suny, 413-446.

Thursday, 11/5 ... Second Paper Due (5-6 pages). View "Ballad of a Soldier (1959)" in class.

Tuesday, 11/10 ... The Thaw / Primary Sources: Joseph Starobin, "1956 – A Memoir," on e-reserve. Excerpts from Nikita Khrushchev's "Secret Speech" (location TBA). Excerpts from Khrushchev's memoirs on his overthrow on e-reserve (under heading "Khrushchev memoirs").



Tuesday, 11/12 ... Growing up in the USSR under Khrushchev and Brezhnev: Excerpts from oral histories in Donald Raleigh, *Russia's Sputnik Generation: Soviet Baby-Boomers Talk about Their Lives* (e-book at U. of Rochester library website – specific excerpts TBA).

Tuesday, 11/17 ... Mikhail Gorbachev, Reform, and Collapse of the USSR (1985-1991): Suny, 479-514.

Thursday, 11/19 ... Russia's Second Republic: Seeking stability in a world turned upside down, 1991-2015, Suny, 515-548.



Tuesday, 11/24 ... Russia's New Elite? Continuity and Change from the USSR to Putin's Russia. Oksana Gaman-Golutvina, "Changing Elite Patterns," *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, issue 6, 2008 (find in JSTOR). Thomas Graham, "From Oligarchy to Oligarchy: The Structure of Russia's Ruling Elite" (1998), at https://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/demokratizatsiya%20archive/07-3_Graham.pdf , 325-327 .

Tuesday, 12/1 ... Third Paper Due (5-6 pages). View documentary “Red Army” (means of viewing TBA). In class: Discussion of “Red Army”.

Thursday, 12/3 ... The Crimean Takeover: A Kremlin Perspective. Putin speech on Crimea at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603> and Russian Defense White Paper, 2010 ... “The Military Dangers and Military Threats to the Russian Federation,” 3-5; “The Military Policy of the Russian Federation,” 6-11 (stop reading at “Development of the Military Organization.” file:///C:/Users/Matthew/Downloads/Russia2010_English.pdf .



Tuesday, 12/8 ... The Crimean Takeover: Western, Ukrainian and Russian Dissident Perspectives. Moscow Times, “Crimea is the Final Nail in the Soviet Union’s Coffin”, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/crimea-is-the-final-nail-in-the-soviet-unions-coffin/517715.html>.

Fedor Lukyanov, “Perestroika -2014”, www.gazeta.ru <http://www.gazeta.ru/comments/column/lukyanov/5952017.shtml> (Russian language).
Translated by M. Lenoe, on e-reserve.

Petr Poroshenko, “Ukraine Has Begun the Liberation of Her Lands from the Russian Invaders. Glory to Ukraine!” Translated by Matt Lenoe, on e-reserve. <http://oleg-leusenko.livejournal.com/1520304.html>

Thursday, 12/10 ... Evaluations and Class Wrap-Up

GRADING:

Three papers	15% each = 45%
Political autobiography	15%
Reading responses written in class (from Oct. 20 to end of course)	15%
Final exam	15%

Class participation	10 %
Total	100%

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Fyodor Gladkov, *Cement* (Evanston IL: Northwestern University Press, 1994).

Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Soviet Experiment: Russia, the USSR and the Successor States* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011) / second edition required.

I DO NOT TOLERATE CHEATING OR PLAGIARISM (PRESENTING SOMEONE ELSE’S SCHOLARLY WORK AS YOUR OWN). I WILL PURSUE THE UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINARY PROCESS AGAINST STUDENTS WHO PLAGIARIZE OTHERS’ WORK. AT A MINIMUM, STUDENTS WHO PLAGIARIZE WILL RECEIVE A “0” ON THE ASSIGNMENT IN QUESTION.

Students with disabilities relevant to class work can talk directly to me (Lenoe) A summary of University resources available to students with disabilities, with contact phone numbers, is available at <http://www.rochester.edu/college/osp/regguide/faq.html>.

Lenoe Criteria for Grading Papers:

In general I look for the following when I grade papers. This list is not exhaustive and is *not* in order of priority.

1. Original insights into documents read (issues not discussed in readings or class).
2. Clear presentation of insights into documents (whether or not they are original). Another way of putting this is clear organization (one paragraph per discrete idea, logical links between each idea).
3. Clear statement of thesis or theses in the first paragraph, with follow-through in the rest of the paper. You need to tell me right away what your point or points are, and do so in your own words: IMPORTANT NOTE: “Topic X is interesting” or “Topic Y is important,” or “Many people have different views about topic Z” are not adequate thesis statements. They are so general as to be meaningless.
4. Relatively simple, but not childish, writing style. I would like you to use words whose meaning you already know clearly to express ideas as concisely as possible. You do not to

need to use long “academic” words or sentence structures to earn a good grade. Of course there is a happy medium here. I also don’t want you to write like a first-grader (“Charlemagne was king. He had a lot of power. He conquered many lands.”) A hint: use active voice verbs in your writing whenever possible.

5. Correct grammar. Most common errors seem to be:
 - a. Incomplete sentences. Every sentence must contain at a minimum, a subject or verb.
 - b. Pronoun does not agree in number or gender with the noun it is standing in for.
 - c. Improper capitalization of nouns. In modern English, only proper nouns (names of places, people, months, days of the week, etc.) are capitalized. Words like “fate,” “revolution,” (unless you’re talking about a specific revolution) are not.
 - d. Confused apostrophes. The plural form in English contains NO APOSTROPHES.
 - e. Special case of confused apostrophes: “its” and it’s”. “Its” is the possessive form, similar to “his,” “hers,” “mine,” and like other possessive pronouns, contains NO APOSTROPHE. “It’s” is the contraction of “It is,” and does contain an apostrophe. Just remember possessive form always equals NO APOSTROPHE.
 - f. Verb does not agree in number with its subject (“The professor write ...).
6. Logical connections between ideas, evidence, etc. Make sure that you don’t argue one thing in one paragraph, and the exact opposite in the next. The evidence you use should back up the claims you make.
7. Factual accuracy. You need to have the facts right and to show that you understand the historical context (social structures, religious beliefs, political systems, etc.) of the time when particular primary sources were written. This includes, very importantly, getting the chronological (time) order of events right.

A paper that has all of these qualities will likely earn an A or an A+. A paper missing one may be an A- or an A. A paper missing two of these qualities will probably be a “B.” A paper lacking three or four will likely be a “C.” And so on.

Number values of letter grades.

A+ = 100 %

A = 95 %

A- = 92 %

B+ = 88 %

B = 85 % etc.

Calculating final grade averages:

92.5 and up = A.

90-92.5 = A-

87.5-90 = B+

85-87.5 = B

82.5-85 = B-