History 208/208W

Comparative Modern Revolutions

University of Rochester Department of History

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Class meetings: T, Th 12:30-1:45

Office Hours: 11:00-12:30 W, 11:00-12:15 Th

Location: TBA

SOME COURSE GOALS:

* Gain skill at expository writing, including style and presentation of rigorous argument.
* Gain skill at close reading of texts and analysis of argument and rhetoric.
* Increase student knowledge and understanding of global history between 1789 and 1940.
* Address questions such as the following –
  + How and when do we call an upheaval a “revolution”?
  + What kind of political, economic and change do revolutions effect?
  + What do political revolutions change and what do they not?
  + Why do revolutions happen? To what extent are they driven by ideas and ideology, class conflict, war, institutional collapse, a ruling class unwilling to compromise?
  + Do revolutions go through a common series of stages?
  + Do the French, Japanese, Mexican and Russian “revolutions” actually have enough in common to call all of them “revolutions”?
  + How do revolutionaries use earlier histories/narratives to script their own revolutions?
  + What internal and external factors led to the collapse of the government in each revolution we study?
  + Do revolutions lead to centralization or decentralization of states in the long term?
  + What were demands of different revolutionary groups?
  + Can we specify who gained and who lost from a given revolution?
  + How did the international environment affect the onset and course of different revolutions?
  + What were the achievements (if any) of the revolutions we study? What were the costs?
* Familiarize students with some of the schemas and theories scholars have used to interpret revolutions.
* Provide students with tools to think rigorously about political, social, and economic upheaval in our own time.

**CLASS ASSIGNMENTS**

Th, 1/12 … Course Introduction

FRANCE, 1789-1815

T 1/17 … Popkin, Chapters 1-3 (60 pages).

Th 1/19 … Primary Sources … Cahiers (petitions) to the king on the eve of the revolution ... [Read Cahier of the Peasants of Menouville](https://alphahistory.com/frenchrevolution/cahier-peasants-menouville-1789/); [Cahier of the First Estate in St. Malo](https://alphahistory.com/frenchrevolution/cahier-of-the-first-estate-saint-malo-1789/); [Cahier of the Third Estate of Carcassonne](https://history.hanover.edu/texts/cahier.html); [Cahier of the Nobility of Blois](https://history.hanover.edu/texts/cahiers2.html); [Cahier of the Clergy of Blois and Romorantin](https://history.hanover.edu/texts/cahiers1.html). [Cahier of the Third Estate of Versailles](https://history.hanover.edu/texts/cahiers3.html). [Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp)

T 1/24 …Popkin, Chapters 4-6 (65 pages).

Th 1/26 … Discussion documents … [Maximilien Robespierre, “Justification of the Use of Terror” (1794)](https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/robespierre-terror.asp) [Edmund Burke, “Reflections on the Revolution in France” (excerpts)](https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1791burke.asp) and [Thomas Paine, “The Rights of Man” (abridged)](http://sqapo.com/paine.htm)

T 1/31 … Popkin, Chapters 7-9 (49 pages).

Th 2/2 … France: Interpretations. [Jules Michelet, *History of the French Revolution* (1847)](https://archive.org/stream/historyfrenchre00michgoog#page/n94/mode/2up/search/73), Book 1, Chapter 1 (73-83); [Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2419) (1856). Book First, Chapters Four and Five; Book Second, Chapter Two and Chapter Five.

T 2/7 … Marxism and the classical Marxist reading of the French Revolution.… LECTURE … **Paper One due**

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JAPAN, 1860-1890.

Th 2/9 … Ravina, Introduction, Chapters 1, 2. (83 pages).

T 2/14 … Primary Sources.

I. From Tsunoda and de Bary, editors, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, available as e-book in RRL collection - 1. Aizawa Seishisai, excerpts from *Shinron* (“New Proposals”), 1825. 2. Sakuma Shozan, excerpts from *Reflections on My Errors*, 1855. II. On e-reserve – 1. Yoshida Shoin, “Letter to Kitayama Yasuyo on the Role of Dedicated Lower-Ranking People,” 1859. 2. “To Kill the Wicked,” 1860.

Th 2/16 … Ravina, Chapters 3, 4 (53 pages).

T 2/21 … *Ee ja nai ka?* and commoner involvement in the shogunal collapse. “Satirical Song on Current Events,” “Sketch of the July 10, 1866 Edo Riot,” “Outbursts of Popular Discontent”; “Ee ja nai ka,” all on e-reserve. Also read “What the Hell! *Ee ja nai ka* Dancing as a Form of Protest” in George Wilson, *Patriots and Redeemers in Japan* (on e-reserve).

Th 2/23 … Ravina, Chapters 5, 6, Conclusion (81 pages)

T 2/28 … A Marxist Interpretation of the *Ishin.* Read E. H. Norman, *Japan’s Emergence as a Modern State*, excerpts on e-reserve.

MEXICO, 1910-1940

Th 3/2 … Easterling, Part One: “Setting the Stage.”

3/6-3/12 SPRING BREAK

T 3/14 … Wasserman, Part II, Ch. 1. **Paper Two due.**

Th 3/16 … Easterling, Part Two: 1910-1914.

T 3/21 … Wasserman, Part II, Chapters 3,4.

Th 3/23 … Easterling Part Three: 1914-1920

T 3/28 … International Causation: Read John Mason Hart, “Global Causation” from *Revolutionary Mexico: The Coming and Process of the Mexican Revolution* on e-reserve (Blackboard).

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RUSSIA, 1917-1937

Th 3/30 … Read Fitzpatrick, Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 2 through “The Bolsheviks.”

T 4/4 … Read “Voices of Revolution” on e-reserve (Blackboard). **Paper Three due.**

Th 4/6 … Read Fitzpatrick, remainder of Chapter 2, Chapters 3-4.

T 4/11 … Finish Fitzpatrick

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THEORIES AND REFLECTIONS

Th 4/13 … ... Read Crane Brinton on e-reserve

T 4/18. Read Theda Skocpol, “France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions” in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 18, no. 2 (April 1976): 175-210. Find on JSTOR database, RCL.

Th 4/20 … Read Keith Baker and Dan Edelstein, *Scripting Revolution: A Historical Approach to the Comparative Study of Revolutions -* Introduction (pages 1-21) and “You Say You Want a Revolution: Revolution and Revolutionary Scripts in China, 1894-2014,” 231-250. E-book available on RCL website.

T 4/25 … Evaluations and wrap-up.

Monday, 5/1 … **Paper Four due.**

Sunday 5/7 … **Special W-paper due (Writing Intensive students only).**

**CLASS FORMAT …** Approximately one half of class time will be devoted to lecture, and about one half to discussion of reading materials. For the course to work it is very important that you do the readings before the class in which they are due.

**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

All papers are 5-7 pages double-spaced, no extra spacing between paragraphs.

For the special W-paper required of students in the writing -intensive section of the course, students will read one book on a revolution not covered in class – among these might be

Iran, 1979

China 1911-1949

Cuba, 1959

Ethiopia, 1974

Haitian Revolution, 1791

American Revolution, 1775-1790

Paris Commune, 1871

Or any other you would like to propose to me.

Students will read one survey book on the course of the revolution they have chosen, and compare it to other revolutions we studied during the semester, *or* evaluate it against one of theories/images of revolution that we examined.

Grading – Regular Section

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| --- | --- |
| Course Component | Percentage of Final Grade |
|  |  |
| Paper One (5-7 pages) | 20% |
| Paper Two … | 20% |
| Paper Three … | 20% |
| Paper Four … | 20% |
| Class Participation | 20% |

Grading – Writing Intensive Section

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Course Component | Percentage of Final Grade |
|  |  |
| Paper One (5-7 pages) | 16% |
| Paper Two … | 16% |
| Paper Three … | 16% |
| Paper Four … | 16% |
| Special W-paper | 16% |
| Class Participation | 20% |

REQUIRED BOOKS

Stuart Easterling. *The Mexican Revolution: A Short History*. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2013.

Sheila Fitzpatrick. *The Russian Revolution*.  Oxford University Press, 2017 (or any edition published after 2010). Available Rush Rhees e-book.

Jeremy Popkin. *A Short History of the French Revolution.* Milton Park, UK: Routledge Publishing, 2019.

Mark Ravina. *To Stand with the Nations of the World: Japan’s Meiji Restoration in World History.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. Available, Rush Rhees e-book.

Mark Wasserman. *The Mexican Revolution: A Brief History with Documents.* New York: Bedford St. Martins, 2012.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR READING.** For a number of discussion classes there are several different primary source documents assigned. Keeping track of these different primary sources for the class discussions is the biggest challenge of reading for the course. I would recommend noting down for yourself the date and authorship/provenance of each source, so you can place each in context and differentiate one from another during class discussions.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDYING IN GENERAL.** Though there are no tests in the course, I will expect you to show mastery of all course materials in your papers, including lectures and concepts that we explore during discussion. I will write paper prompts that require you to do this. Therefore it makes sense for you to take notes on lectures. It also would make sense to note down important points and ideas that come up during class discussion.

**ATTENDANCE:** You need to attend class regularly. Experience shows that students who do not do so do poorly on class assignments. The very occasional absence due to family issues, sports events, illness and the like is OK.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Class participation is 20% of your grade. You don’t have to be the most active student in class to get full credit (100%) for this, but you do need to contribute a couple of comments per class. I will often ask students early in discussion to offer any thoughts at all they had about the reading. This is your chance, if you are shy, to have formulated something beforehand and to offer it for discussion.

If you never say a word in class, you will get a “zero” for class participation.

If you have real difficulties speaking up in class, contact me to discuss.

In my experience students almost never ask “stupid” questions or make “stupid” comments. So don’t fear doing this. Moreover, your classmates maybe grateful to you if you ask a very basic question – they may have also been confused, but afraid to ask. Also, do not be intimidated if some class members show superior background knowledge about events we are discussing. The course is designed for students with very little background in the events we study, and such students will do fine. Moreover, students with weaker background knowledge will often make very perceptive comments.

**Academic honesty:** All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. *I will not accept Paper One from students who have not signed the “Acceptance of Academic Honesty Policy” on the course Blackboard site.*

**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.**

You are required to read the American Historical Association’s “Defining Plagiarism” at <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/plagiarism-curricular-materials-for-history-instructors/defining-plagiarism> before the second class meeting.

The College’s credit hour policy on undergraduate courses is to award 4 credit hours for courses that meet for the equivalent of 3 periods of 50 minutes each week.  Students enrolled in History 208/208W are expected to devote at least several hours each week outside of class to reading, identifying the main lines of argument in readings, preparing for class discussion, writing papers, etc.

**Students with disabilities:**The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the [Office of Disability Resources](http://www.rochester.edu/college/disability/index.html) at: [disability@rochester.edu;](mailto:disability@rochester.edu;) (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.