

Soviet Russia

Christian Raffensperger
HIST 253H/C-1W
Fall Semester 2014
MWF 10:20-11:20
Hollenbeck 315

Russia in this period is fully enmeshed in European and world history. Over the course of this class we will see Soviet troops in Berlin, as well Soviet activity throughout the world. Russia also goes through a series of dramatic changes in this period from the amazing events of two revolutions in 1917 to the conservative reaction under Stalin, and repetitions of those cycles of reform and reaction throughout the twentieth century. The history of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will change the history of the rest of the world, and as such, is a vital component in understanding not only the events of the twentieth century, but our twenty-first century as well.

Writing Intensive – No Prerequisites
Counts toward RCEP Major/Minor

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Assignments and Deadlines

The format for this class is lecture and discussion, and thus attendance is a main requirement of the course, as is participation.

As a way to track your progress on the readings, there will be a series of quizzes during class. All quizzes will be unannounced. However, common themes for the quizzes will be maps and identifications of main people and concepts discussed in the class. The best way to prepare for these quizzes is to keep up with reading and lecture. If you have questions, please ask!

Over the course of the semester, you will be required to write three papers. All of which will be 5-7 pages in length. The papers must use Chicago Manual of Style footnotes to document your evidence. If you have questions about this, or any other aspect of the papers, please ask, or you can use the Writing Center (located on the first floor of Hollenbeck).

The first writing assignment will be a historiography paper in which you will analyze the views of Sheila Fitzpatrick and Richard Pipes on the Russian Revolution. We will spend the week (week 4) discussing this in class in some detail and the paper will be due the next week. The goal of the paper is to understand how historians construct their arguments and to understand the idea that there is a change over time in the way historians think about an issue. It is also important to understand the politics that go into making historical arguments. In the paper you will set up each historian and their argument, and then talk about the differences between the two.

The second writing assignment will be a paper examining two different narratives of the GULag. We will read and discuss Ginzburg and Solzhenitsyn in class over nearly two weeks. You will then have to write a paper bringing in what Suny talks about, and what we talked about in class as background to Ginzburg's and Solzhenitsyn's stories. Discuss their similarities and differences and if the stories they tell match up with the history that Suny and I have given you.

The final paper will be an examination of Khrushchev and Brezhnev as leaders of the Soviet Union. The traditional portrayal, which will be discussed in class, is that Khrushchev was "good" and Brezhnev was "bad." But through reading Suny, and two specific, scholarly articles, you will examine the relationships between the two men in regard to how they governed the Soviet Union and dealt with the problems and possibilities of that position.

Finally, there will be three exams which will divide up the material in the course. The exams will not be cumulative, with the exception of one over-arching essay question on the final exam.

If you have any questions about any of these assignments, please come see me during my office hours or make an appointment. Finally, this syllabus is subject to change by the instructor, if changed, the students will be informed with sufficient notice to complete assignments.

The grades will be weighted as follows:

- Attendance: 5%
- Participation: 5%
- Exam 1: 15%
- Historiography Paper: 10%
- GULag Paper: 10%
- Exam 2: 15%
- Khrushchev and Brezhnev paper: 10%
- Quizzes: 10%
- Final Exam: 20%
- Exam 3: 15%
- Cumulative Essay 5%

Required Books

Sheila Fitzpatrick. *The Russian Revolution*. (hereafter Fitzpatrick)
Ronald Grigor Suny. *The Soviet Experiment*. (hereafter Suny)
Eugenia Ginzburg. *Journey into the Whirlwind*

Schedule of Meetings and Assignments

Week 1 (August 25, 27, 29): Introduction and Background on the Romanovs
(Moss 491-516 [Moodle]; Fitzpatrick, 15-39)
Nicholas II and Reaction; 1905 Revolts; Duma; Russo-Japanese War

Week 2 (September 1, 3, 5): War, Provisional Government and Revolution
(Fitzpatrick, 40-61; Suny, 3-46)

World War I; Nicholas and Alexandria; The February Revolution; Creation of the Provisional Government and soviets

Week 3 (September 8, 10, 12): Red October

(Suny, 47-67; Fitzpatrick, 61-67; Lenin, "Our Revolution" [Moodle])

The dog days of Summer 1917; October Revolution; All power to the soviets; Beginnings of Civil War

Week 4 (September 15, 17, 19): Historiography of the Revolution

(Fitzpatrick; Pipes, "Three Whys of the Russian Revolution" [Moodle])

Two historians of the revolution view it differently, we will discuss each in class and then talk about what the similarities and differences are.

Week 5 (September 22, 24, 26): Civil War and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics -
Historiography Paper due 9/22; Exam 1 on 9/26

(Fitzpatrick, 68-92; Suny, 68-109, [Suny, 110-36 recommended])

Reds and Whites; Foreign intervention; War Communism; A new nation is created; Escape from the Russian Empire

Week 6 (September 29, October 1, 3): NEP

(Fitzpatrick, 93-119; Suny, 137-87 [Suny, 188-212 recommended])

Modifying the revolution; Socialism in one country; Succession politics

Week 7 (October 6, 8, 10): Stalin's Revolution

(Fitzpatrick, 120-48; Suny, 213-72)

Nationalities policy; Enemies to the Left; Enemies to the Right; Collectivization; Industrialization

Week 8 (October 13, 15, 17): GULag and its discontents

(Suny 273-90; *Journey into the Whirlwind*)

The Great Terror; Ginzburg's personal account

Week 9 (October 22, 24 - No Class 10/20): Prelude to War - GULag Stories Paper due
10/24

(Solzhenitsyn selections [Moodle]; Suny, 316-35)

Discussion of GULag cont. (Monday and Wednesday); Popular Front and Collective Security; Spanish Civil War

Week 10 (October 27, 29, 31): World War II

(Suny, 336-62)

Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact; Surprise Attack; Stalingrad; Berlin-bound

Week 11 (November 3, 5, 7): A New World Order (Exam 2 on 11/7)

(Suny, 363-410)

Soviet Eastern Europe; Reorganization of Soviet government; Cold War; Death of Stalin

Week 12 (November 10, 12, 14): Khrushchev in Control

(Suny, 411-46; Khrushchev article [Moodle])

Khrushchev's Secret Speech; The Thaw; Cold War heats up; Cuban Missile Crisis; Brezhnev takes over

Week 13 (November 17, 19, 21): Brezhnev and Stagnation

(Suny 447-76; Brezhnev article [Moodle])

Stagnation internally; Repression externally; Protest and Rebellion

*Week 14 (December 1, 3, 5, **No Class November 24**): Gerontocracy*

(Suny 477-81)

Discussion of the Khrushchev and Brezhnev articles (Monday and Wednesday); increasing Stagnation internally; Rise of dissident culture; Andropov and Chernenko; Increasing Conflict with the West

*Week 15 (December 8, 10, 12): The Rise of Gorbachev - **Khrushchev and Brezhnev paper due 12/8***

(Suny, 481-514)

Gorbachev in power; Internal and External Reform; Glasnost and Perestroika

Final Exam – Tuesday, December 16, 3:30–6:30 P.M.

For More Information:

Suny has an excellent collection of suggested sources at the end of each chapter. Find a chapter that contains what you are looking for, and search that list; it contains the classics, as well as the most modern scholarship.

Missed Examinations, Papers, and Class Sessions

A good rule of thumb is do not miss anything. However, if you are ill or have a conflict and cannot make a class, notify me in advance or as soon after the class as is possible. *Do not miss examinations!* If you have a conflict, notify me a minimum of one week in advance and we can schedule an exam as close to the normal time as possible. If you miss an examination for reasons that are not discussed with me ahead of time or are not catastrophic you will receive a zero, which is much worse than an F in your overall grade. Late papers are accepted for one week, but the grade will drop one full grade when turned in after class the day it is due. For each additional day thereafter (weekend day or weekday) that it is late, it will drop a fraction of a grade, for example—an A paper handed in after class will be a B paper, handed in the next day will be a B- paper, the next day a C+ paper.

Attendance Policy

As part of your grade for this class, and to get the most out of the class, you are required to attend on a regular basis. Attendance in this class is worth 5% of your grade, and attendance will be taken on a regular basis. If you are going to miss class, let me know in advance. If you accumulate 3 unexcused absences over the course of the semester, you

will receive a grade of F for your attendance. If you miss 7 or more classes over the course of the semester you will receive a grade of zero for your attendance, much worse than an F when calculating your final grade. You are solely responsible for signing the attendance sheet, or notifying me of your absence, as proof of your presence in class.

Special Needs

Wittenberg University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for eligible students with disabilities. In keeping with this policy, if you are eligible for course accommodation due to a disability, please provide me with your self-identification letter from the academic services office, 208 Recitation Hall, during the first few weeks of the semester so that we may discuss appropriate arrangements.

If you have significant responsibilities outside of class that will impact your performance, e.g., an infant or young child, care for an aging parent, or a job that requires you to be on-call, please speak to the instructor as soon as possible, and we can discuss arrangements to make your classroom experience the same as everyone else's.

Weather-Related Concerns

Whenever weather becomes a problem, I shall do my best to adhere to the university guidelines. If the university cancels classes, there will be no class. If the university has not cancelled class, but I am unable or unwilling to risk traveling, I will do my best to post a notice to this effect on Moodle as early as possible. I will do my best not to cancel class if at all possible.

If there is an exam scheduled or a deadline for a written assignment on a day when class is cancelled, you may assume that the exam or assignment will be due on the following class session.

Academic Honesty

Students in this course are expected to uphold the standards of Wittenberg's Code of Academic Integrity. At its most basic level, this means that you will not turn in someone else's writing as your own, quote from a source without proper acknowledgment, or provide a classmate with inappropriate help. You will be asked to submit papers and exams with the following statement followed by your signature: "I affirm that my work upholds the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity at Wittenberg, and that I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance." Sanctions for violating these rules range from receiving no credit for a particular assignment to failing the course for a significant act of academic dishonesty. If you are in doubt about any of these rules, please talk to me before submitting your work.