

Boston University
CLA HI 446 A1: THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION
Anna Geifman

MW 1:30-3:00 History Department Rm. 504
Spring, 2009

Course Goals:

The course examines the 1917 revolution in a broad political, cultural, socio-economic, and psychological context of Russian history. Topics include: the downfall of the Romanov dynasty; Lenin and his rivals; the Bolshevik takeover and early policies; the attitude of the Russian intelligentsia and the literary elite toward radicalism and the Bolshevik establishment; the philosophical justifications and explanations for the revolution; and "Sovietization" of Russian society.

Course Requirements:

- 1). Regular attendance and class participation.
- 2). Oral Reports: Each week one or more students will give a 10-15 minute report analyzing supplemental readings and their research findings. Reports should be informal: students should try not to read from prepared texts, but are welcome to use notes or outlines.
- 3). Research Paper: Students are expected to write one analytical paper (approximately 20 pages) developing a hypothesis or argument and attempting to test it through serious research. Students should begin to think about research topics early in the semester; all topics for the paper must be selected and approved by February 4.
 - a. A brief prospectus of the paper is due February 23. A prospectus (no longer than 2 pages) must state the basic argument or hypothesis of the paper, and describe the proposed methodology. It should also include a discussion of the primary and secondary sources to be used.
 - b. The paper is due in final form on April 27. Late assignments will be accepted only in exceptional circumstances.

Grading:

Research paper: 70%
Reports and class participation: 30%

The last day to drop the class without a "W" grade is Friday, February 13. The last day to withdraw with a "W" grade is Friday, March 6.

Academic Honesty:

Cheating, plagiarism, or other violations of Boston University's standards of academic honesty will be subject to official investigation and appropriate administrative action in accordance with the university's policies.

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Office Hours:

Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30-1:30, Tuesdays, 5:00-6:00, and by appointment, in Room 205, Department of History, 226 Bay State Rd. Telephone: 353-8316.

Readings (Available in the Boston University Bookstore):

Richard Pipes, *A Concise History of the Russian Revolution*
Anna Geifman, *Thou Shalt Kill: Revolutionary Terrorism in Russia, 01894-1917*

Nikolai Chernyshevskii, *What Is To Be Done?*
Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*
Anna Geifman, *Entangled in Terror*
Evgenii Zamiatin, *We*

Additional xeroxed reading materials to be distributed in class.

Course Calendar:

January 14: Introduction: Origins of the Revolutionary Movement
in Russia

January 19: CLASS CANCELLED

January 21: The Great Reforms of Alexander II and the
Revolutionary Intelligentsia

Required readings: Ivan Turgenev, "Of Hamlet and Don
Quixote" (xerox)

January 26: Nihilism in Literature

Required readings: Begin Chernyshevskii, What is to Be Done?
Report topics: 1. "Fathers and Children" controversy
Readings: Ivan Turgenev, Fathers and Children

January 28: The Nihilists

Required readings: cont. Chernyshevskii, What is to Be Done?
Report topics: 2. N. G. Chernyshevskii
Readings: Vladimir Nabokov, The Gift

February 2: The Jacobins

Required Readings: M. Bakunin and S. Nechaev,
"Catechism of a Revolutionary" (xerox)
Report topics: 3. "The Professional
Revolutionary"
Readings: Eric Hoffer, The True Believer or
Philip Pomper, Sergei Nechaev

February 4: FEDOR DOSTOYEVSKY

Required Reading: F. Dostoyevsky, "The Grand Inquisitor" (xerox)

Report topics: 4. Dostoevsky and his political vision

Readings: Fedor Dostoevsky, Diary of a Writer

February 9: The Organized Conspiracy: People's Will
LAST DAY TO OBTAIN APPROVAL OF PAPER TOPICS

Required readings: cont. Chernyshevskii, What is to Be Done?

Report topics: 5. The People's Will Party

Readings: Venturi, Roots of Revolution,

Chapters 20-22

February 11: Alexander III and the Counterreforms

Required readings: finish Chernyshevskii, What is to Be Done?

Report topics: 6. Konstantin Pobedonostsev

Readings: Reflections of the Russian Statesman or "The Falsehood of Democracy"

February 16: CLASS CANCELLED

February 17: MONDAY CLASSES--Russia at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Required readings: Introduction to Anna Geifman, ed., Russia under the Last Tsar (xerox)

Report topics: 7. The Era of Political Stagnation?

Readings: Norman Naimark, Terrorists and Social Democrats: The Russian Revolutionary Movement under Alexander III

February 18: Tsar Nicholas II--Part I: Family and the Entourage

Required Readings: Selections from Geifman, ed., Russia under the Last Tsar (xerox)

February 23: Tsar Nicholas II--Part II: "Nicholas the Last" and

His Rivals

Required Readings: Selections from Geifman, ed., Russia under the Last Tsar (xerox)

February 25: The Growth of the Revolutionary Movement and Formation of Modern Political Parties
PROSPECTUS DUE

Required Readings: Pipes, Introduction and Chapter 1; Geifman, Thou Shalt Kill, Introduction and Chapter 1.
Report topics: 8. Formation of Opposition Parties
Readings: Selections from Geifman, ed., Russia under the Last Tsar

March 2: The Bolshevik Leaders and the "Party of a New Type"--Part I

Required Readings: Richard Pipes, "The Origins of Bolshevism: The Intellectual Evolution of Young Lenin" (xerox)
Report Topics: 9. The Creed
Readings: Karl Marx and Friedreich Engels, The Communist Manifesto
10. The Young Lenin: Formation of a Revolutionary
Readings: Pomper, Lenin Trotsky, and Stalin,
Chapters 1-5

March 4: The Bolshevik Leaders and the "Party of a New Type"--Part II

Required Readings: Pipes, Chapter 5
Report Topics: 11. The "traditional" Social Democrats vs. the "Party of a New Type"
Readings: John Keep, Russian Social Democracy

MARCH 8: CLASS CANCELLED

MARCH 10: CLASS CANCELLED

March 16: The Revolution of 1905--Part I

Required Readings: Begin Geifman, Entangled in Terror;
Pipes, Chapter 2; Geifman, Thou Shalt Kill, Chapters 2-5

Report Topics: 12. Russian Anarchism

Readings: Bakunin, God and State

March 18: The Revolution of 1905--Part II

Required Readings: Cont. Geifman, Entangled in Terror;
Norman Naimark, "Terrorism and the Fall of Imperial Russia"
(xerox)

Report Topics: 13. 1905: sociopolitical,
psychological, and cultural crisis

Readings: Abraham Ascher, Russia in Disarray:
Revolution of 1905

March 23: Russian Political and cultural Climate Before and
During the Great War

Required Readings: Pipes, Chapter 3; Geifman, Thou Shalt
Kill, Chapter 8; cont. Geifman, Entangled in Terror

Report Topics: 14. Petr Stolypin

Readings: "We Need a Great Russia!"

15. The Pre-War Years

Readings: W. Bruce Lincoln, In War's Dark Shadow

16. Impact of the Great War

Readings: Petr Durnovo, "Memorandum to Nicholas I"
and Norman Stone, The Eastern Front

March 25: Final Test: The Downfall of the Romanov Dynasty and
Flawed Democracy (March-November 1917)

Required Readings: Finish Geifman, Entangled in Terror;
Pipes, Chapter 4; Thomas Riha, ed., Readings in Russian
Civilization, vol. 3, Chapters 44-45 (xerox)

Report Topics: 17. February 1917: "The Spontaneous
Revolution"

Readings: T. Hasegawa, February Revolution

18. Was Democracy Possible?

Readings: Roger Pethybridge, ed., Witnesses of
the Russian Revolution

March 30: The Bolshevik Takeover

Required Readings: Pipes, Chapter 6; Pomper, Lenin Trotsky,

and Stalin, Chapters 27-29 (xerox)

Report Topics: 19: Mass Movement or Coup d'etat?

Readings: Alexander Rabinowitch, The Bolsheviks

Come to Power: Petrograd 1917 or Marc Ferro, The Bolshevik

Revolution: A Social History of the Russian Revolution

April 1: Early Bolshevik Policies: Building the One-Party State and the "Red Terror"

Required Readings: Pipes, Chapters 7-8, 10; Geifman, Thou Shalt Kill, Epilogue

Report Topics: 20: Lenin's Notion of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat"

Readings: Anna Geifman, "Red Terror, 1917-1921"

21: The One-Party State

Readings: Leonard Schapiro, The Origin of the Communist Autocracy, 1917-1922

April 6: Russian Intelligentsia and the Bolshevik Regime

Required Readings: Alexander Blok, "Intelligentsia and Revolution" (xerox); Anna Geifman, "Russian Intelligentsia, Terrorism, and Revolution" (xerox); Geifman, Thou Shalt Kill, Chapters 6-7; begin Zamiatin, We

Report Topics: 22. "No enemies on the left"

Readings: Excerpts from Boris Pasternak, Doctor Zhivago

23. "To Join or Not to Join?"

Readings: Excerpts from Nadezhda Mandelshtam, Hope against Hope.

April 8: The Revolution as an Intellectual Phenomenon

Required Readings: Pipes, Chapter 13; Aleksandr Blok, "The Twelve" (xerox); Vladimir Maiakovsky, "Vladimir Il'ich Lenin" (xerox); excerpts from Lev Trotsky, Literature and Revolution (xerox); cont. Zamiatin, We

Report Topics: 24. Alexander Blok

Readings: selected poems, including the "Scythians"

25. Nikolai Berdiaev

Readings: Origins of Russian Communism

April 13: War Communism and the Russian Civil War

Required Readings: Pipes, Chapter 9, 11-12; cont. Zamiatin, We; Evgenii Zamiatin, "The Cave" (xerox)

Report Topics: 26. The Civil War: A Controversy

Readings: Brovkin, Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War

27. War Communism

Readings: Pomper, Lenin Trotsky, and Stalin, Chapter 33; selected stories by Evgenii

Zamiatin and Boris Pil'niak

April 15: From War Communism to the New Economic Policy

Required Readings: Pipes, Chapter 15; finish Zamiatin, We

Report Topics: 28. Why the NEP?

Readings: I. Getzler, Kronstadt, 1917-1921: The Fate of a Soviet Democracy and Pomper, Lenin Trotsky, and Stalin, Chapter 35

April 20: CLASS CANCELLED

April 22: The Soviet Culture: Creating "Homo Soveticus"

Required Readings: Pipes, Chapter 14; Vladimir Brovkin, Russia after Lenin: Politics, Culture, and Society (selected sections) (xerox); begin Koestler, Darkness at Noon

Report Topics: 29. The Propaganda State

Readings: Peter Kenez, The Birth of the Propaganda State

April 23: MONDAY CLASSES--Toward Stalinism

Required readings: cont. Koestler, Darkness at Noon

Report Topic: 30. Was Stalin Inevitable?

Readings: Sections from Nadezhda Mandelshtam, Hope Against Hope

April 27: RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Required Readings: finish Koestler, Darkness at Noon

Report topics: Class presentations of research topics

April 29: Was there an Alternative to Stalinism?

Required readings: Pipes, Chapter 16; Pomper, Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin, Chapters 37-39 (xerox)

Report topics: Class presentations of research topics