

Choice of document due Tuesday February 19. Scan of document and analysis (2-3 page paper) due Sunday February 24 at 9 p.m.. On Tuesday February 26, please bring two copies each of your document and your paper, double-spaced, to class and arrive on time.

Paper No. 1 – The Revolutionary Year, 1917

The Russian Revolutions of February and October 1917 have been extensively researched by a wide range of scholars so we now have elaborate chronologies of what happened on a day-by-day basis. Through concerted efforts scholars have collected primary documents in the form of letters, petitions, diary entries, and the like. In this first paper of the semester we will analyze documents that we will add to our website, “*The Deepening of the Russian Revolution, 1917*,” <http://web.mit.edu/russia1917/>.

Your mission will be to provide a close analysis of one (or at most two) documents relating to the period between February and October. You may choose from the following sources: 1) Michael Hickey, *Competing Voices from the Russian Revolution*, a collection of primary sources that is linked from our Stellar course page under the date February 24; 2) one of the volumes in Hayden Library (see attached list); or 3) one of the sources available on the Internet (list also attached).

Choose a document that you think particularly vividly describe the viewpoint of an individual or group from a particular social class (peasants, workers, soldiers, activists). By **Tuesday February 19** at 1 p.m. I expect you to email me giving the title and date of your document and assuring me that it has not already been used on the website. Please be sure to let me know if you have any questions about your document. Also, in preparing to write your paper you will want to read both horizontally and vertically on the class 1917 website so you will have an idea what else was going on at the time.

Analyzing your documents

Once you have found a document that you think is particularly interesting, your job will then be to study it closely, keeping in mind as well the other documents we have been reading for the course and other documents available from the time. If you would like to study a pair of documents that either take complementary or opposing points of view, that is also fine. In creating your analysis, I would like you to consider the following questions:

- What do you know about the author(s) of this document? Are there relevant demographic factors that affect the person or persons’ perspective (social class, geographic location, sex, age, military rank, proximity to the front)?
- Whom are the authors addressing? How did they choose the person(s) to whom they are writing? How does their choice of audience affect what they have to say? If the audience is an authority figure, what does the document tell you about the authors’ understanding of the nature of authority at this time?
- What are the authors’ views on the topics they are addressing? Are they for or against the war or land reform, for example? Do they think munitions workers, to take another

example, should go on strike or continue to produce for the war effort? Are they pro- or anti-monarchist, pro- or anti-Bolshevik? This is by no means an exhaustive list of possible points of view. Pay close attention. Some may be subtle.

- What kind of language are your subjects using? Think about both phrasing and tone. Are they deferential or defiant? How do they refer to third parties? Is their language formal or informal? Do they seem to show a high level of education or one that is probably not so high? Do you see signs of religious language and/or language that strikes you as particular to a region or a social estate?
- What is the significance of your document(s)? How do you think it fits in the context of other documents from the same time and social class? Are the authors aware of others who are making similar arguments? How (if at all) do they address counter-arguments, i.e., the views of those who would disagree with them?
- What does this document tell you overall about the problems of authority and social change in this tumultuous period in Russian history?
- What title would you like to give your analysis of this document, remembering that this is what a viewer will first see on the timeline?

Your paper

Your paper should be roughly **2-3 pages long**, double-spaced, with normal margins, and should carefully analyze everything you know about this source and the context in which it was written. You may need to do extra research in books, articles, or on the web to learn, say, how a village council worked, or who a particular addressee might be. That is fine and expected. You must carefully footnote any research findings that you make. I expect you to footnote at least three secondary articles by historians, one or two of which you will link your article to on the timeline. You may include citations to other student papers in this course, but you must give full attribution including name, title, date.

You will submit your paper on the homework site of our Stellar page on Sunday **February 24 by 9 p.m.** I will have told you in advance who you will pair up with on Thursday. You will read your comrade's source and paper for Thursday and come to class prepared to give that person substantial advice on how to improve their papers and how to create a one-paragraph abstract of their work.

Note on grading

Please note that you will be graded on both this first draft and on your rewrite. I will then average the grades of the two drafts. If you receive an A on your first draft, it will mean that you probably will have only a few cosmetic changes to make to your paper. If you receive anything less than a full A, I will expect you to make serious revisions to your paper (which both your comrade and I will help you with). If you fail to make improvements, your second grade can go down. Your final grade for this paper will be an average of the two grades. This means you have every incentive to write an A paper from the beginning. I want to warn you, though, that I tend to be quite tough on this first paper as it is our best moment to think about

how to write like historians. So please be prepared to receive some serious criticism. I give very few A's on this paper precisely so I can encourage you analytic thinking and writing.

Meeting for discussion

In class on Tuesday February 26 we will devote the bulk of our class time to discussing our sources and papers in pairs and small groups. Please remember that one of the most important rules of feedback is always to look for ways to help. This means a) accentuating what is already good; b) helping the writer to see the argument she or he may have embedded in the paper but which has not fully come out yet; c) offering constructive criticism in the most supportive manner possible.

Creating the website

Your revised essay will be due on **Tuesday March 5**. For that date you must also pay special attention to your title and create an executive summary/abstract. An example of a title might be "Soldiers Threaten Mutiny over Galician Offensive" if that is your topic. Your executive summary should be one paragraph long so that a viewer clicking on, say, June 25, would pull up your description of what was going on for soldiers at that time.

I would particularly like you to write your paper with hyperlinks to both the scholarly articles and any other primary documents that are on line. When you turn in your paper on Sunday February 24, you must also turn in a scan of your primary document (try to get the best quality you can). You can then scan or link any additional documents (including secondary sources) for March 5.

You must provide accurate and detailed bibliographical information for all sources that you use. *Any attempts at plagiarism will be ruthlessly tracked down. This is going to be a public website and any use of other's materials without attribution is completely unacceptable. Any attempts to plagiarize will prompt a failing grade on this assignment and a warning in the person's file at MIT.*

I also want to strongly recommend that you consider visiting the Writing Center (12-132) for help at any stage with your writing. They offer free, one-on-one, professional advice from lecturers who are published writers about all types of academic, creative, and professional writing and about all aspects of written and oral presentations. If you begin by going to <http://writing.mit.edu/wcc>, you can click on "Appointments" to find a time and a person to work with.

Collective goal

Our collective goal will be to add to the timeline in ways that show some of the enormous variation among the complaints and demands of each of these groups and the ways in which their demands changed over time. Each of you will be providing analysis of one small document or a pair of documents in ways that will add to the viewers' understanding of the revolution and how it developed over time. Visitors to our timeline will be able to read both "across" the documents to follow a particular line of development (e.g., the mutiny of the soldiers, the uprisings of the peasants, and so on) and "down" the document (i.e., at a particular moment time).

On-Line Chronologies of the Russian Revolution

<http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.1917.1920.htm> - "Students' Annotated Chronology"

<http://www.barnsdle.demon.co.uk/russ/datesr.html>

<http://europeanhistory.about.com/od/russiaandukraine/a/rrevstimeline1.htm>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Revolution_\(1917\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Revolution_(1917))

http://www.indopedia.org/Russian_Revolution_of_1917.html#Brief_Chronology_leading_to_R_evolution_of_1917

<http://www.marxists.org/history/ussr/events/timeline/1917.htm>

<http://web.archive.org/web/19991103122911/www.departments.bucknell.edu/russian/chrono3.html>

Primary sources in print form (on reserve in Hayden)

Edward Acton and Tom Stableford, eds., *The Soviet Union: A Documentary History* (2005)

Robert P. Browder and Alexander F. Kerensky, *The Russian Provisional Government, 1917: Documents* (Stanford University Press, 1961) [partially available on line]

http://books.google.com/books?id=LzWsAAAAIAAJ&dq=browder+kerensky+russian+provisional+government&printsec=frontcover&source=bl&ots=DSY1VAMI6G&sig=90rIUDyQLauLsvwtRXDCYMB0k&hl=en&ei=IZdDS_7UEdPN8QaD0_CDBQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=5&ved=0CBoQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q=&f=false
Hayden Library - Stacks | DK265.19.B877

V. P. Butt, ed., *The Russian Civil War: Documents from the Soviet Archives* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996)

Jonathan Daly and Leonid Trofimov, *Russia in War and Revolution, 1914-1922* (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 2009), esp. pp. 35-130, 210-222

Eric Homberger with John Biggart, eds., *John Reed and the Russian Revolution: uncollected articles, letters, and speeches on Russia, 1917-1920* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992)

Martin McCauley, ed., *The Russian Revolution & the Soviet State, 1917-1921: Documents* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1975)

Morgan Philips Price (1885-1973), *Dispatches from the Revolution: Russia, 1916-18* (London: Pluto Press, 1997)

Mark D. Steinberg, *Voices of Revolution, 1917* (New Haven, CT : Yale University Press, 2001)

Mark D. Steinberg and Vladimir M. Khrustal'ev, eds., *The Fall of the Romanovs: Political dreams and personal struggles in a time of Revolution* (New Haven, CT : Yale University Press, 1995)

Ronald Grigor Suny, ed., *The Structure of Soviet History. Essays and Documents* (Oxford University Press, 2003), esp. pp. 32-47

Websites with Primary Documents from this Period

“The Russian Revolution” - <http://www.barnsdle.demon.co.uk/russ/rusrev.html>

http://www.historyguide.org/europe/rusrev_links.html

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook39.html>

Lenin's works: <http://marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/index.htm>

specifically those for 1917: <http://marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/date/1917.htm>

Lenin in the Lenin Museum: http://www.stel.ru/museum/february_russian_revolution.htm

Trotsky's works: <http://marxists.org/archive/trotsky/works/index.htm>

Stalin's works: <http://marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/decades-index.htm>

Kerensky, “The Prelude to Bolshevism: The Kornilov Rising” (1919) -

<http://www.archive.org/details/preludetobolshev008537mbp>

Nicholas II's 1917 diaries and letters, as well as those of other members of the royal family; Nicholas II's abdication; the order for his arrest; interrogation of some members of the royal court in 1917: <http://www.alexanderpalace.org/palace/>

The All-Russian Congress of Soviets: <http://www.marxists.org/glossary/events/a/arcs.htm>

World War I documents relating to Russia:

<http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php?title=Special%3ASearch&search=russia&go=Go>

including the Abdication of Nicholas II:

http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The_Abdication_of_Nicholas_II

“Face of Russia” (PBS timeline) <http://www.pbs.org/weta/faceofrussia/timeline-index.html>

“Seventeen Moments in Soviet History” <http://www.soviethistory.org/> [You have to register to use this site, but it is free and has many useful primary documents, including some film clips and art as well as political manifestoes and the like.]

Bibliography of Secondary Sources

Edward Acton et al., eds., *Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution 1914-1921* (Indiana University Press, 1997)

James H. Bater, *Studies in Russian Historical Geography*

Edward Hallett Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution* (3 vols.) (1950-1978)

William Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution* (2 vols.) (1935)

Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy, The Russian Revolution 1891 – 1924* (Pimlico, 1996)

Orlando Figes, *Peasant Russia, Civil War: The Volga Countryside in Revolution, 1917-1921* (Oxford University Press, 1989) [Hayden Library - Stacks | DK265.8.V56.F53 1989](#)

----- and Boris Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution: The Language and Symbols of 1917* (Yale University Press, 1999) [Hayden Library - Stacks | DK265.F468 1999](#)

Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution* (Oxford University Press, 1982, 2008)

Anna Geifman, *Russia Under the Last Tsar: Opposition and Subversion, 1894-1917*

Anna Geifman, *Thou Shalt Kill: Revolutionary Terrorism in Russia, 1894-1917* (1993)

Daniel H. Kaiser, ed., *The Workers' Revolution in Russia, 1917: The View from Below* (Cambridge University Press, 1987)

J.L.H. Keep, *The Russian Revolution*

David Mandel, *The Petrograd Workers and the Soviet Seizure of Power: From the July Days, 1917 to July 1918* (Studies in Soviet History and Society)

Martin A. Miller, *The Russian Revolution: The Essential Readings* (Blackwell Essential Readings in History)

Vladimir Nabokov (father of the famous novelist, 1869-1922), *V. D. Nabokov and the Russian Provisional Government, 1917*, ed. Virgil D. Medlin and Steven L. Parsons (Yale University Press, 1976) [Library Storage Annex - Off Campus Collection | DK265.7.N26 1976](#)

Bernard Pares, *The Fall of the Russian Monarchy* (1939)

Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution* (Vintage, 1991)

-----, *Three Whys of the Russian Revolution* (Pimlico, 1995)

Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power: The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd* (NY: Norton, 1976) [Dewey Library - Stacks | DK265.8.L4.R27 1976](#)

-----, *Prelude to Revolution. The Petrograd Bolsheviks and the July Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1968) [Dewey Library - Stacks | DK265.8.L4.R116](#)

M. Rendle, *Defenders of the Motherland: The Tsarist Elite in Revolutionary Russia* (2009)

Harold Shukman, ed., *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of the Russian Revolution* (1988)

Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary, 1879-1929* (1973)

Adam B. Ulam, *The Bolsheviks* (1965)

Dmitri Volkogonov, *Lenin: a New Biography* (1994)

Rex A. Wade, *The Russian Revolution, 1917* (Cambridge, 2000)

Alan Wildman, *The End of the Russian Imperial Army* (Princeton University Press, 1980)

Bertram D. Wolfe, *Three Who Made a Revolution: A Biographical History* (1948,1964)

Alan Wood, *The Origins of the Russian Revolution* (Routledge, 2003)

Other Reference Works

The Longman Companion to Imperial Russia 1689 - 1917 by David Longley

The Longman Companion to Russia since 1914 by Martin McCauley

Other websites

<http://cominganarchy.com/2009/06/02/political-geography-of-the-russian-revolution/>