

Russian Revolutions: From Peter to Putin

HIS 315, Spring 2020

Mon/Weds 2:20-4:05, Old Main 301

<http://russianrevolutions20.theleahgoldman.com/>

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Course Description

In this course, we will explore the theme of revolutionary change in Russia from the reign of Peter the Great in the late 17th century to the presidency of Vladimir Putin today. Peter was one of Russia's great revolution makers, orchestrating change in governance, sociability, and cultural expression and setting the stage for future revolutions from above and below. Peter's imperial and Soviet successors in the 18th to 20th centuries embraced his method of making sudden, sweeping changes. And in the new millennium, Putin has proved no less revolutionary. In each of these eras, revolution from above has been challenged by subjects and citizens who also draw on elements of the Petrine legacy. Working thematically, we will explore three types of revolution: the political, the social, and the cultural. Our exploration will take us through a range of primary and secondary sources, to which you will be asked to apply your critical reading, writing, and analytical skills as we discuss them together. Our goal this semester is to explore the many meanings the term "revolution" may take, investigate the often cyclical nature of revolutions, and interrogate why change in Russia has so often taken on a revolutionary character, rather than following a more gradual path.

Course Requirements

Attendance: You are required to attend all meetings of this class and do so **on time**. Our primary method of knowledge creation is discussion, so we must all commit to learning together as a classroom community. I will take attendance at the start of each class. You get **three** absences for free, no questions asked. After that, further absences will negatively affect your grade. If you have already accumulated three absences and must miss class again due to an extraordinary circumstance, please contact me in a timely manner to discuss your situation.

Participation: Not only do you have to show up, you have to talk! And that means you have to do the reading before class on the day it is assigned. Come to class prepared to discuss the assigned materials. Bring those materials with you, along with your notes. Even more important, bring your thoughts, ideas, and questions, and be prepared to share them with your colleagues. If you feel anxious about speaking in front of a group, please contact me during the first week so we can work out a plan for your success. All comments must be respectful, constructive, and to the point. Ad hominem attacks and rambling digressions have no place in my classroom.

Discussion Leadership: Each student will sign up for **one** day on which you will **lead discussion** of the assigned materials. You will need to give a brief introduction placing the materials in context with each other and have 8-10 written discussion questions. You must meet with me in advance to go over your lesson plan. We will start this assignment in Week 4, after we have gotten the feel for our classroom discussions.

Blog Posts: Over the semester, the class will work together to create a blog, which will help shape our intellectual journey. There are two types of posts you can make. A **conversation starter** is a new post. It should be at least one paragraph long, include a properly cited quotation from one of the sources, and pose a discussion question (one that requires analysis, not a yes/no question). A **response** is a nested post that you write in the “Comment” box under an existing post. It should be at least three sentences long and respond to the post in a substantive way. You may give an answer, pose a related question, counter the original post, comment via meme, etc.

You must make both types of posts in each of our main units (Units I, II, and III). In each unit, you must make at least one conversation starter and at least three responses. You may make either type of post in Unit IV for extra credit. *Please note, posts are due **before the start of class**. If you post later, it will not count.

Timeline: Because we’re working thematically, it can be difficult to keep track of when events took place relative to each other. To address that issue, you will work collaboratively to create a master **Revolutions Timeline**. I’ll assign you to a **timeline group** focusing on the Petrine Era, the Height of Empire, or the Soviet Union. Your group must add three items to the timeline during each thematic unit. On the last day of the unit, your group will present your work in class, explaining why you chose those items and how they relate to other items on the timeline. This assignment is graded collectively at the end of each unit.

Midterm Media Project: For your midterm, you will work in pairs to create and present a short video covering a type of Russian revolution that we are not covering in this class. I will hand out a list of topics in class. You and your partner may also choose your own topic, with my approval. You should create a **10-minute video** in a genre of your choosing, which fully explores your topic. Possible genres include, but are not limited to: news report, documentary film, Ted Talk, Between Two Ferns (interview), dramatic reenactment, nature show, etc. You will also give a **15-minute** presentation in class, which will include an introduction and a Q&A. Finally, you will submit a *précis* summarizing your main points and a bibliography of your sources. Each pair will receive a single grade.

Final Paper: For your final project, you will write a **3000-word**, independently researched paper on a topic of your choice related to the theme of this class. We will go over requirements for the papers and writing strategies in class. We will also visit the Library to acquaint ourselves with available resources and research methods and devote a day of class to rough draft peer critiques. This assignment has three components:

- 1) A **Proposal** (thesis statement, abstract, annotated bibliography), due Week 12
- 2) A **Rough Draft**, due Week 14
- 3) A **Final Draft**, due at the end of the semester

You must meet with me twice during this project. In our first meeting, we’ll discuss your research question, sources, and writing strategy. In our second meeting, we’ll discuss your proposal. Don’t skip these meetings! They help ensure that you’re on the path to success and prevent you from having to do extra work. If you would like to meet more often or discuss your rough draft one-on-one, I am happy to do so.

Academic Integrity: My policy on **plagiarism** is simple: **Don't do it!** Plagiarism is a very serious offence, which can destroy your academic career and professional prospects. If you plagiarize, rest assured that I will catch you, and **you will automatically fail my class.** In addition, W&J upholds academic honesty in the College community by pursuing cases of academic misconduct. Please read the College's Academic Dishonesty Policy here: <https://wiki.washjeff.edu/display/CATALOG2018/The+Principle+of+Academic+Honesty> . You are responsible for abiding by this policy. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or about the Academic Dishonesty Policy, please talk to me before your work is due!

Resources for Student Success: This is a challenging course, and I highly recommend that you make use of the many helpful resources available to you on campus:

- **PAL (Peer Assisted Learning) Tutors**, located on the ground floor of Alex Hall, can help you with all stages of the writing process. You don't need to make an appointment. Just drop by Sunday -Thursday, 7-9pm. You can check their schedule and other information here: <https://www.washjeff.edu/pal>
- **Information and Technology Services** can help you with hardware, software, and more. Visit the Help Desk in Technology Center Room 121 and learn more here: <https://wiki.washjeff.edu/display/IT/Information+and+Technology+Services>
- **Clark Library** can help you with books, information, research help, and more. We will also spend one day of class familiarizing ourselves with library resources.
- **Office of International Student Initiatives** provides a variety of support services for international students: <https://www.washjeff.edu/international-student-services>
- **Office of Diversity & Leadership Initiatives** offers programs that work to strengthen cultural awareness, diversity education, and leadership development: <https://www.washjeff.edu/diversity>

Grading

Attendance and Participation	10%
Discussion Leadership	10%
Blog Posts	10%
Timeline	10% (graded collectively)
Midterm Media Project	20% (graded collectively)
Final Paper	40% (5% proposal, 10% rough draft + peer critique, 25% final draft)

***If you fail to complete work in any one of these categories, you will fail the class! ***

Course Policies

Office Hours: I welcome you to stop by to discuss our class! I'll be in my office Mondays 10-12 and Tuesdays 11-12 unless otherwise noted. If you know you want to come see me, you can make an appointment; otherwise, just drop in. If you have a conflict with my regular office hours, please email or speak to me to make an appointment for a different time.

Email: Please feel free to email me any time with questions about the class or to schedule an appointment for office hours. I will respond within 24 hours. You must SIGN your email with your name. I won't write back if I can't figure out who you are. In the professional world, you

will be expected to communicate via formal emails, so this is good practice for the future. **You are responsible for checking your W&J email at least once per day.** Email is my only way to communicate with you outside of class, and I need to be able to reach you.

Technology: You may bring computers or tablets to class for taking notes and viewing pdfs. If you fool around online instead of paying attention, you are only failing yourself. It's up to you to take responsibility for your own learning process. However, if you use your device to distract your colleagues, I will make you to put it away for the rest of class.

Cell Phones: Turn them off or set them to vibrate. Please do not take a call unless it is an emergency. If you must do so, leave the room quickly and quietly. **You may not use your cell phone for course work. You may not use your phone for any reason in office hours.**

Student Support and Accommodations: To serve our mission to promote academic excellence, W&J is committed to providing appropriate accommodations for students with documented physical, learning, and psychological disabilities. The College's goal is to make its programs and facilities available to all students so that students with disabilities can be integrated as completely as possible into the W&J community. Ensuring equal access for all students is a collaborative effort between the Director for Academic Success, students, and faculty. All participants have a role in making education accessible. It is your responsibility to self-identify to the Director for Academic Success as early as possible when accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids are services are needed and to seek information, counsel, and assistance as necessary. Once I have been informed of your approved accommodations, it is my responsibility to provide them in a timely manner. Please help me help you by letting me know about any documented disabilities as early as possible in the semester. For more information about how to obtain documentation, please contact the Director for Academic Success Richard Barber by email at rbarber@washjeff.edu, by phone at 724-223-6008, or on the ground floor of Clark Library. You can find more information here: <http://wiki.washjeff.edu/display/disabilitysupport>

Notice of Nondiscrimination: W&J does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, sex, religion, age, marital status, national origin, the presence of any physical or sensory disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other basis prohibited by applicable federal, state, and local laws, and has a firm commitment to promote the letter and spirit of all equal opportunity and civil rights laws. W&J is committed to creating an environment in which every student feels safe and empowered to learn, and I, too, am strongly committed to this goal. That doesn't mean we won't argue with each other in this class, sometimes intensely. We will do so often! But we will do so respectfully. To ensure that respect, I reserve the right to intervene as I deem necessary, while doing my utmost to safeguard your right to free speech. If something happens in class that upsets you or makes you feel unsafe, *please* come talk to me about it, or if you prefer, leave an anonymous note on my office door.

Course Materials

The following books are required for HIS 315 and are available for purchase or rental at the W&J Bookstore. You are welcome to purchase or borrow your books elsewhere, but you are responsible for ensuring you have the **correct edition**. Shorter readings and all other materials are available to you on Sakai. Always bring the text under discussion to class.

Ludmilla Alexeyeva and Paul Goldberg. *Thaw Generation: Coming of Age in the Post-Stalin Era* (Little, Brown, 1990) ISBN 978-0-316-03146-2

James Cracraft. *The Revolution of Peter the Great* (Harvard, 2003) ISBN 978-0-674-01984-3
Available as an eBook in the Library!

Isabel de Madariaga. *Catherine the Great: A Short History* (Yale, 2002) ISBN 978-0-300-09722-1
Available as an eBook in the Library!

Alexander Pushkin and Earl Sampson. *The History of Pugachev* (Phoenix, 2001) ISBN 978-184212-418-8

David Saunders. *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform, 1801-1881* (Longman, 1992) ISBN 978-0-582-48978-3

Leo Tolstoy. *Hadji Murat* (Vintage, 2012) ISBN 978-0-307-95134-2

Course Schedule

UNIT I: Political Revolution

Week 1

Jan 22: Introduction

What is a revolution? When, if ever, is revolution necessary?

Week 2

Jan 27: Peter's Political Revolution

Cracraft, *The Revolution of Peter the Great*, chapters 2 + 3

“Petrine Reform Legislation,” *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia*, pp. 112-123 (from “Manifesto Depriving Tsarevich Aleksei of the Throne” to “The Ecclesiastical Regulation”)

“Reorganization of Russia by Peter the Great”, *Imperial Russia: A Sourcebook*, pp. 15-21 (from “Decrees on Duties of the Senate” to “The Table of Ranks”)

Jan 29: Catherine's Legal Revolution

Madariaga, *Catherine the Great*, chapters 3, 6, 10, 11

“The Nakaz, or Instruction, of Catherine II to the Legislative Commission of 1767-1768,” *Imperial Russia: A Sourcebook*, pp. 79-93

Week 3

Feb 3: The Decembrist Revolt

Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, chapter 4

“The Decembrist Movement,” *Imperial Russia: A Sourcebook*, pp. 178-196

Feb 5: The Revolutionary Great Reforms

Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, chapters 8-9

“Alexander II's Manifesto Emancipating the Serfs,” *Imperial Russia: A Sourcebook*, pp. 307-311

Week 4

Feb 10: The Revolutions of 1917

- Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, pp. 23-78
Vladimir Lenin, "Lenin's Concept of the Revolutionary Party (What Is To Be Done?)," *Imperial Russia: A Sourcebook*, pp. 362-378
Leon Trotsky, "Terror and Militarization," *A Documentary History of Communism*, pp. 180-186

Feb 12: Revolutionary De-Stalinization

* Timeline Groups present in class! *

- Polly Jones, "From the Secret Speech to the Burial of Stalin: Real and Ideal Responses to de-Stalinization," *Dilemmas of de-Stalinization*, pp. 41-63
Nikita Khrushchev, "The Cult of the Individual (Secret Speech)"
Evgeny Evtushenko "Mourners Crushed at Stalin's Funeral (Precocious Autobiography)" and "Stalin's Heirs"
Hungarian Crisis, *Seventeen Moments in Soviet History*. Start with the Subject Essay (<http://soviethistory.msu.edu/1956-2/hungarian-crisis/>) and explore the linked Texts, Images, Video (turn on closed captioning for English subtitles), and Audio

UNIT II: Social Revolution

Week 5

Feb 17: No class! Happy Presidents' Day! Attend the Symposium on Democracy

Feb 19: Peter's Social Revolution

- Lindsey Hughes, *Peter the Great: A Biography*, pp. 51-57
Lindsey Hughes, *Russia in the Era of Peter the Great*, pp. 186-202, 248-257, 280-288
"Petrine Reform Legislation," *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia*, pp. 110-111 (Decrees on the Calendar, German Clothes, and Shaving)
Peter I, "Decree on Noble Assemblies"
Nancy S. Kollmann, trans. "Etiquette for Peter's Time: *The Honorable Mirror for Youth*," *Russian History* 35:1/2 (Spring-Summer 2008), 63-83

Week 6

Feb 24: Catherine's Educational and Publishing Revolutions

- Madariaga, *Catherine the Great: A Short History*, chapters 8, 9, 15
Alexander Radishchev, "A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow," *Readings in Russian Civilization*, v.2, pp. 261-279

Feb 26: Pugachev's Rebellion

- Pushkin, *The History of Pugachev*
"Pushkin's Pugachev Rebellion" (Harvard University GIS Map Project)

Week 7

Mar 2: Conquest and Revolt in the Caucasus

- Tolstoy, *Hadji Murat*

Mar 4: Soviet Social Revolution

Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Stalin and the Making of a New Elite," *The Cultural Front*, pp. 149-182

Pasha Angelina, "The Most Important Thing," *In the Shadow of Revolution*, pp. 305-321

Ekaterina Olitskaia, "My Reminiscences (3)," *In the Shadow of Revolution*, pp. 424-434

Spring Break!

Week 8

Mar 16: Midterm Presentations

Mar 18: Midterm Presentations

Week 9

Mar 23: The Revolutionary Idea of Human Rights

* Timeline Groups present in class! *

Ludmilla Alexeyeva, *Thaw Generation*, pp. 3-7, 83-84, 97-105, 119-141, 167-169, 206-2011, 278-294

Mar 25: Library Day

We will meet in the Library Classroom to learn about resources and begin research on your final papers.

UNIT III: Cultural Revolution

Week 10

Research Question Meetings this week!

Mar 30: Peter's Cultural Revolution

Cracraft, *The Revolution of Peter the Great*, chapters 4 + 6

Lindsey Hughes, "From Tsar to Emperor: Portraits of Aleksei and Peter I," *Picturing Russia: Explorations in Visual Culture*, pp. 51-56

The Great Palace at Peterhof (the website is in Russian; just look at the images!):

- Start here: http://peterhofmuseum.ru/objects/peterhof/bolshoy_petergofskiy_dvorets
(click on the first small image and scroll through all 14 images)

- Continue here: <http://peterhofmuseum.ru/objects/peterhof> (click on the "play" button just above the timeline)

Apr 1: Pushkin's Literary Revolution

Alexander Pushkin, "The Bronze Horseman," *An Anthology of Russian Literature*, pp. 118-130

Alexander Pushkin, "The Queen of Spades," *Alexander Pushkin: Complete Prose Fiction*, pp. 211-233

Alexander Pushkin, "A Prisoner of the Caucasus," *Eugene Onegin and Other Stories*, pp. 131-148

Week 11

Apr 6: The Intelligentsia I: Revolutionary Awakening

Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, chapter 6

Ivan Kireevskii, "On the Nature of European Culture and Its Relation to the Culture of Russia," *Russian Intellectual History: An Anthology*, pp. 174-207

Vissarion Belinskii, "Letter to N.V. Gogol," *Russian Intellectual History: An Anthology*, pp. 252-261

Apr 8: The Intelligentsia II: Radical Revolutionaries

Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, chapter 11

Vera Figner, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, pp. 68-76, 93-119

Week 12

Paper Proposals Due at 10pm on Sunday, Apr. 5

Apr 13: Soviet Revolutionary Rituals

Richard Stites, "Bolshevik Ritual Building in the 1920s," *Russia in the Era of NEP*, pp. 295-307

Richard Stites, "Festivals of the People," *Revolutionary Dreams: Utopian Visions and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution*, pp. 79-100

Boris Arvatov, "The Proletariat and Leftist Art," *Bolshevik Visions: First Phase of the Cultural Revolution*, pp. 238-241

"The Ideological Platform of the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians," *Music and Soviet Power, 1917-1932*, pp. 128-131

Charles Maynes, "Symphony of Sirens, Revisited" (podcast episode):

<http://99percentinvisible.org/episode/episode-79-symphony-of-sirens-revisited/>

Aleksandr Mosolov, *Symphony: The Iron Foundry*

Apr 15: Revolutionizing the Arts: Socialist Realism

*** Timeline Groups present in class! ***

Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, pp. 27-45, 255-260

Andrei Zhdanov, "Soviet Literature—The Richest in Ideas"

Valentin Kataev, "Time, Forward!"

Central Committee of the Communist Party, "Resolution on the Journals *Zvezda* and *Leningrad*"

Week 13

Apr 20: Revolutionary Collapse

Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More*, pp. 282-298

"Gorbachev Challenges the Party (Glasnost)"

Tatyana Tolstaya, "The Price of Eggs," *Pushkin's Children*, pp. 206-215

UNIT IV: Putin's Revolution

Apr 22: Putin's Political Revolution: Great Power Plays

Tony Wood, "The Man and the System," *Russia Without Putin*, chapters 1 + 5

Sarah Oates, "Kompromat Goes Global?: Assessing a Russian Media Tool in the United States," *Slavic Review* 76:S1 (2017), 57-65

Vladimir Putin, "Address by the President of the Russian Federation (March 18, 2014)"

Week 14

Rough Drafts Due at 5pm on Sunday, Apr. 26

Apr 27: Rough Draft Peer Critique Day

Apr 29: Putin's Social Revolution: Repression, Resistance, Survival

Ann Garrels, *Putin Country: A Journey Into the Real Russia*, chapters 3, 10, 15, 18

Jeff Sharlet, "Inside the Iron Closet: What It's Like to Be Gay in Putin's Russia," *GQ*, (Feb 4, 2014)

Julia Ioffe, "Net Impact: One Man's Cyber-Crusade Against Russian Corruption," *The New Yorker* (April 4, 2011), pp. 26-32

Week 15

May 4: Putin's Cultural Revolution: Art For and Against

Arkady Ostrovsky, "Rocking the Kremlin," *The Economist* (August/September 2017)

"Vladimir Putin: 20 Years in Power—In Pictures," *The Guardian* (Aug. 9, 2019)

Music Videos:

Mashani, "My Putin!"

Sasha Chest feat. Timati, "My Best Friend is President Putin"

Voina (War), "Artists Flip Off the FSB"

Pussy Riot, "Punk Prayer," "Putin Will Teach You How to Love," "Chaika"

Robbie Williams, "Party Like a Russian"

Final Papers due at 10pm, Sunday, May 10

Good luck!!!