

HIST 358: History of Russia, 1861-Present



Konstantin Iuon, “Parade on Red Square, November 7, 1941” (1949)

Source: <http://www.artcontext.info>

Instructor: Prof. Steven E. Harris

University of Mary Washington – Spring Semester 2016

This class meets TR, 8:00am-9:15am; Monroe 111

Office hours: M, 10:00am-2:00pm; TR, 1:45-2:15pm and by appointment

Office: Monroe Hall 224; tel. (540)-654-1390; e-mail: sharris@umw.edu

Description

One hundred years ago, the Revolution of 1917 transformed Russia and the world. On the centenary of this momentous year in Russian history, we will explore the Old Regime of Imperial Russia that 1917 largely destroyed and the Soviet Union that replaced it. A predominantly peasant country on the margins of Europe that was considered “backward” by domestic reformers and outside observers alike and humbled by major military defeats, Russia was not a likely candidate for a socialist revolution, much less the status of a superpower with nuclear weapons. How did this startling transformation of Imperial Russia into the world’s foremost communist state occur? What was the impact of this transformation upon Russian state and society, and the modern world? How did all of this fall apart in 1991 and what has been Russia’s post-Soviet existence? These are the main questions we explore this semester.

Assignments

Class participation:	15%
Paper #1:	15%
Midterm exam:	20%
Paper #2:	20%
Final exam:	30%

Readings

- * Stephen Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
- * Rex Wade, *The Russian Revolution, 1917*, 3rd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).
- * Ana Siljak, *Angel of Vengeance: The Girl Who Shot the Governor of St. Petersburg and Sparked the Age of Assassination* (New York, 2009).

August 29: Introduction to Modern Russian History

Emancipation of the Serfs and the Great Reforms under Alexander II

August 31: * Siljak, *Angel of Vengeance* (1-53)

September 5: * Siljak, *Angel of Vengeance* (55-165)

The Russian Intelligentsia and Revolutionary Politics

September 7: * Siljak, *Angel of Vengeance* (167-213)

September 12: * Siljak, *Angel of Vengeance* (215-314)

The Late Russian Empire

September 14: * Wortman, "Rule by Sentiment" (blog)

September 19: * Lincoln, "1905: The Year of Turmoil" (blog)

September 21: * Holquist, "Russia at War" (blog)

September 25: **(Monday): * Paper #1 due today, 12pm**

The Russian Revolution

September 26: * Wade, *The Russian Revolution* (1-85)

* "Formation of the Provisional Government" (blog)

* “Formation of the Soviets” (blog)

September 28: * Wade, *The Russian Revolution* (86-143)

October 3: * Wade, *The Russian Revolution* (144-231)
 * “On the Question of Nationalities” (blog)
 * “Kornilov Responds to Kerenskii” (blog)

October 5: * Wade, *The Russian Revolution* (232-301)
 * “Lenin Urges the Immediate Seizure of Power” (blog)
 * “Assumption of Soviet Power” (blog)

October 10: **Midterm exam**

October 12: * Willimott, “Socialism in One Dormitory” (blog)

October 14-17: Fall Break

October 19: * Viewing and discussion of *Bed and Sofa* (Abram Room, 1927)

October 24: * Viewing and discussion of *Bed and Sofa* (Abram Room, 1927)

October 26: * Starr, “Visionary Town Planning during the Cultural Revolution” (blog)

Stalinism and World War II

October 31: * Fitzpatrick, “Becoming Cultured: Socialist Realism and the Representation of Privilege and Taste” (blog)

November 2: * Simonov, chapter one of *The Living and the Dead* (blog)

November 7: * Fürst, “Wartime Heroes for Post-War Youth: The Rise and Fall of *The Young Guard*” (blog)

November 8 (Monday): Paper #2 due today, 12pm

The Thaw and Late Socialism

November 9: * Bittner, “A Cult of Personality and a ‘Rhapsody in Blue’” (blog)
 * Khrushchev, “Secret Speech to the Twentieth Congress” (blog)

November 14: * Jones, “Between Myth and Memory: War, Terror, and Stalin in Soviet Popular Memory” (blog)

November 16: * Harris, “The Waiting List” (blog)
 * “Soviet Pensioners Try to Leave the *Kommunalka*” (blog)

November 21: * Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*, vii-xiii, 1-112.

November 22-26: Thanksgiving Break

The Collapse of the USSR and Post-Soviet Russia

November 28: * Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*, 113-170.

November 30: * Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*, 171-196.

December 5: * Borenstein, “Overkill: Bespredel and Gratuitous Violence” (blog)

December 7: * Merry, “The Origins of Russia’s War in Ukraine” (blog)

Final exam: Tuesday, December 12, 8:30am-11:00am