

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.

Your mission will be to consult the volumes listed below, some of which are available on the Internet. You will each find from one to three documents [depending on their length] that you think particularly vividly describe the viewpoint of an individual from one of the following social groups:

- a) Royal family/nobility – Sources: the Alexander Time Machine, <http://www.alexanderpalace.org/palace/>. Mark Steinberg, *The Fall of the Romanovs*, 1995. Marie, Grand Duchess of Russia, 1890-1958. *Education of a princess, a memoir* NY, 1930.
- b) Mikhail Rodzianko – leading Octobrist; noble; chair of the Fourth Duma and the first Provisional Committee of the State Duma; played a major role in the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II [writings in Browder & Kerensky; <http://www2.stetson.edu/~psteeves/classes/rodzianko.html>; *The reign of Rasputin: an empire's collapse: Memoirs of M. V. Rodzianko* [1927?]. See also SAC, esp. <http://pages.uoregon.edu/kimball/sac.1904.1917.htm#1912fe26>.
- c) Alexander Guchkov – leader of the Octobrist Party; from a merchant family [SAC]
- d) Nationalist monarchist Vasilii Shulg'in, close to main events, wrote memoirs. SAC GRH:258-77, 407-410 [Excerpted TXT].
- e) General Mikhail Vasil'evich Alekseev, Tsarist Chief of Staff [sources in McC2 (below); GRH, Chamberlin; see SAC]
- f) Pavel Miliukov – leading Kadet, historian. See SAC and refs to GRH, 323:24, 333-34, McC2: 45-47. Author, *The Russian Revolution*. 1978, and *Political memoirs, 1905-1917*. 1967. In Russian *Istoriia vtoroi russkoi revoliutsii*. Tom I, vyp. 1-3.
- g) Ariadna Tyrkova – leading Kadet, feminist, journalist, elected to the Petrograd city Duma. Author, *From liberty to Brest-Litovsk, the first year of the Russian revolution*, and *Na putiakh k svobode*. Excerpt on “The Emancipation of Women” in *Russian Women, 1698-1917*.
- h) Prince Georgii L'vov – first head of the Provisional Government, SAC, GRH 396-97
- i) Alexander Kerensky – author, *The Kerensky memoirs: Russia and history's turning point*. 1966. *The prelude to bolshevism; the Kornilov rising*. 1919, and <http://www.archive.org/details/preludetobolshev008537mbp>. Also SAC; Browder and Kerensky.
- j) V. D. Nabokov (father of the novelist), leading Kadet, served in the Chancellery of the Provisional Government: *V. D. Nabokov and the Russian Provisional Government, 1917*. 1976.; also shorter documents in Browder and Kerensky
- k) N.S. Chkheidze – head of the Soviet; Georgian Social Democrat SAC
- l) Irakli Tsereteli, chair of the Petrograd Soviet after Chkheidze; also a Georgian SD
- m) N.N. Sukhanov, SR, author of *The Russian Revolution*, a vivid memoir; or selections in

The Russian revolution; an anthology, edited by M. K. Dziewanowski. New York, Crowell [1970].

- n) Eduard Dune, skilled worker, joins the Red Guards; *Notes of a Red Guard* / Eduard M. Dune; translated and edited by Diane P. Koenker and S.A. Smith. Urbana [Ill.] University of Illinois Press, 1993.
- o) Sergei Melgunov, historian; aristocrat; opponent of the Bolshevik seizure of power; *The red terror in Russia* / by Sergey Petrovich Melgounov. Westport, Conn. : Hyperion Press, 1975.
- p) Martov, Yulii, Menshevik. In Russian: *Obshchestvennoe dvizhenie v Rossii v nachalie XX-go veka* / Pod red. L. Martova, P. Maslova i A. Potresova. S.-Peterburg, Tip. T-va "Obshchestvennaia polza," 1909-14. [try ch section called "Главнейшие моменты"]. Akselrod, P. B. (Pavel Borisovich), 1850-1928. *Pisma P. B. Aksel'roda i IU. O. Martova*. 1967.
In English: some documents in Bunyan and Fisher (below)
- q) Lenin: <http://marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/index.htm>
specifically those for 1917: <http://marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/date/1917.htm>
- r) Trotsky: <http://marxists.org/archive/trotsky/works/index.htm>
- s) Stalin: <http://marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/decades-index.htm>
- t) Alexandra Kollontai, the most prominent female member of the Bolshevik Party and a gifted agitator - <http://www.marxists.org/archive/kollonta/index.htm>
- u) Nikolai Bukharin, one of the youngest members of the inner circle of Bolsheviks; very interested in theoretical implications of the revolution - <http://www.marxists.org/archive/bukharin/library.htm>
- v) General Lavr Kornilov, appointed commander in chief by Kerensky, July 18. SAC
- w) Nikolai Podvoiskii, report on the military organization of the Social Democratic Party, SAC; report in *The Russian Revolution*, edited by Robert V. Daniels, 37-41 [see below].
- x) Petr Garvi, SD - Garvi, Petr A. (Petr Abramovich), 1881-1944. Title: *Vospominania sotsialdemokrata : stati o zhizni i deiatelnosti P.A. Garvi* / 1946

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. Or it could be two documents that show change in views over time. If you find a source that is, say, a whole book, choose one chapter for close analysis. In creating your analysis, I would like you to consider the following questions (though not necessarily in this order):

- Who is the author addressing? How did they choose the person(s) to whom they are writing? Is this a diary, a memoir, a letter, a petition, a newspaper article, a polemic? How does their choice of audience affect what they have to say?
- What does the document tell you about the author's understanding of the nature of power [vlast'] and authority at this time? What does he/she think about revolution itself? Do they discuss "democracy," "the people," "the state"? 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 is your subject 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 you see signs of religious language and/or language that strikes you as particular to 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? Is the author being polemical (i.e., arguing with others)? Is he/she using emotional language to appeal to others?
- What do you know about the author(s) of this document? Are there relevant demographic factors that affect the person's perspective (social class, geographic location, sex, age, position in the revolutionary government)?
- What does this document tell you overall about the problems of authority and social change in this tumultuous period in Russian history?

Your paper

Your paper should be roughly **4-5 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 will need to consult at least one scholarly article through Google Scholar to find out a bit more about your author and their perspective. Most of your analysis should be your own close reading of the document, but the question of context is also crucial. You must carefully footnote any research findings that you make. I expect you to footnote at least two secondary articles by historians.

You will submit your paper on the class site during Session 6, as well as bringing two copies to class that day.

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. 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 to think and write like historians.

Meeting for discussion

During Session 6, 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 during Session 10. I am not yet sure whether we will be able to add these papers to the class website, but I would like to do so if we can. Hence, 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 during Session 6, you must also turn in a scan of your primary document (try to get the best quality you can). You should then scan or link to any additional documents (including secondary sources) for Session 10.

You must provide accurate and detailed bibliographical information for all sources that you use. *Any attempts at plagiarism are completely unacceptable and will be found out. 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 and Communication Center](#) 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.

Collective goal

Our collective goal will be to develop a composite picture of 1917 from a variety of political and estate perspectives. If possible, we will also 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).

Primary sources in print form

Jonathan Daly and Leonid Trofimov, *Russia in War and Revolution, 1914-1922* (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 2009)

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

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

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

Martin McCauley, ed., *The Russian Revolution & the Soviet State, 1917-1921: Documents* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1975) [McC2]

Ronald Grigor Suny, ed., *The Structure of Soviet History. Essays and Documents* (Oxford University Press, 2003), esp. pp. 32-39, 42-48 [documents by Kerensky, Tsereteli, Lenin]

Other Primary Sources and Websites with Primary Documents from this Period

James Bunyan and H. H. Fisher. *The Bolshevik revolution, 1917-1918; documents and materials*. 1961, c1934].

Robert V. Daniels, ed., *The Russian Revolution*. 1972.

Golder, Frank Alfred, 1877-1929. *Documents of Russian history, 1914-1917*. Transl. Emanuel Aronsberg. Gloucester, Mass., P. Smith, 1964 [1927] [GRH]

Michael C. Hickey, *Competing voices from the Russian Revolution* .

“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>

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.]

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.htm#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>

Bibliography of Secondary Sources

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- 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)
- and Boris Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution: The Language and Symbols of 1917* (Yale University Press, 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)
- 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)
- , *Prelude to Revolution. The Petrograd Bolsheviks and the July Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1968)
- 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)
- The Longman Companion to Imperial Russia 1689 - 1917* by David Longley
- The Longman Companion to Russia since 1914* by Martin McCauley
- <http://cominganarchy.com/2009/06/02/political-geography-of-the-russian-revolution/>

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