

HISTORY 322
Terrorism in the Russian Empire
Tues & Thurs 13.00 – 14.15
CBC C-216
Spring 2011

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Course Description:

Among the more striking dimensions of the struggle for political change in autocratic Russia was the appearance of a terrorist movement beginning in the 1860s. From that time until the early years of Bolshevik rule, radical terrorists sought to induce political change through violence, above all the assassination of key government figures. Their most striking success was the assassination of Emperor Alexander II in 1881, though many other figures, including two ministers of the interior, were assassinated as well. A terrorist wing of the Socialist Revolutionaries even made an attempt on the life of Vladimir Lenin in 1918, shortly after the Bolshevik seizure of power. In all, one estimate suggests that some 17,000 people (many of them innocent bystanders) fell victim to terrorist violence during the reign of Nicholas II (1894-1917) alone.

Given the prominence of Islamist terrorism in our own day, this course seeks to contribute to the task of placing this phenomenon in historical perspective by analyzing terrorist violence – its motivations, its cultural implications, and its effects on processes of political and social change – in one particular time and place: the late Russian Empire and the very early Soviet years. The course first offers a broad consideration of terrorism in world history with the goal of establishing some basic definitions and placing terrorism in Russia in a wider historical sweep. It thereafter focuses on the autocratic structures and political circumstances that generated the terrorist response in Russia; the intellectual foundations for this violence in prevailing Russian and European thought; the prominence of women in terrorist ranks; the attitudes of moderate political opposition to these extreme forms of political expression; the intellectual challenge of Marxism to terrorist conceptions of change; and the introduction of extra-legal police measures by the autocratic state.

Assignments

Aside from coming to class each and every session, students are expected to complete a series of formal assignments. It is on this basis that course grades will be determined.

QUIZZES (40%). On the course schedule below you will see a series of six scheduled quizzes. These will usually take up 15-30 minutes of the given session and will take a variety of different forms, all designed to prepare you for the culmination of the course – the final examination. For example, you may be asked to provide factual material based on the course up to that point. You may also be asked to relate central ideas and propositions from the required reading. Or you may be asked to write a brief essay based on a triad (see below). There will also be up to three *unscheduled* quizzes, just to keep all students on their toes. Your lowest quiz grade will be tossed out, which means that in all likelihood you can afford to miss ONE quiz. Missing more than that will start to get rather costly. No quiz may be retaken after it has been administered in class. If there are extreme circumstances that will prevent you from taking a

quiz, then you must make arrangements to take the quiz in advance. Each quiz counts for 5% of your final grade (8 quizzes @ 5% each = 40%).

TRIADS (20%). Over the course of the semester, I will provide triads to stimulate your thinking and studying. During that same period, I ask that you submit four triad essays, each one addressing a specific triad in the manner prescribed in separate instructions. There may also be opportunities for you to propose and address your own triad. These will be due, one each, on the first day of each month of the semester (February, March, and April), with the last essay due on 7 May. These may be submitted to me electronically and will be considered on time if received by 11.59 PM of the due date. Essays are downgraded thereafter by 5 points for every 12-hour period until received in a satisfactory form. After three days (72 hours) they are no longer accepted. Details on this exercise will follow. Each triad essay counts for 5% of your grade (4 essays @ 5% each = 20%).

PAPER ON DOSTOEVSKY (10%). A central reading component for this course is the novel *Devils* by Fyodor Dostoevsky. In conjunction with that reading, you will be asked to write an essay of modest length, linking the content of that novel to the larger issues in the course. An instruction to help with that task will follow.

FINAL EXAMINATION (20%). The culmination of the course – and undoubtedly the most amusing part – is the Fantastic and Philosophical Final™. Here, all the material for the entire course will be under review and consideration. A preview of the exam, which counts for 20% of your grade, will be provided. Note that there is no mid-term examination.

FANATICAL PARTICIPATION (10%). A crucial component of any course is student engagement, without which very little learning can actually occur. Engagement comes in a variety of different forms, but the most important is participation in class discussions. Each student should think hard about how to participate in the class discussions. If you find yourself having difficulty participating in the typical fashion, then you need to think about ways to remedy that situation, for example in consultation with the instructor. Participation makes for 10% of your course grade (and, yes, I do give students C's and D's on participation if that is what they deserve).

Required and Beyond

The present syllabus outlines the core requirements and structure of the course. Yet experience shows that some students may be inclined to do even more work and may even get a kick out of doing this. I therefore provide, separately, a supplementary syllabus that indicates optional readings for most sessions. There is no “extra credit” in this course in a formal sense, but those students who do (some of) this extra work will obviously create a favorable impression about their commitment to the course. That said, any student who does only the required work has every opportunity to earn an “A” for the course. There is, in short, no specific expectation that students will do the extra reading outlined in the supplementary syllabus; there is merely the opportunity for them to do so.

Purchasable Books

- Charles Townshend, Terrorism: A Very Short Introduction (Oxford, 2003). 978-0192801685
- Avrahm Yarmolinsky, Road to Revolution: A Century of Russian Radicalism (Princeton UP and Collier books).
- Fyodor Dostoevsky, Devils (Oxford World Classics, 2008). 978-0199540495
- Philip Pomper, Lenin's Brother: The Origins of the October Revolution (Norton & Company, 2009). 978-0393070798.
- Anna Geifman, Entangled in Terror: The Azef Affair and the Russian Revolution (SR Books, 2000). 978-0842026512.
- Leonid Andreyev, The Seven Who Were Hanged (FQ Books, 2010). ASIN: B003YJFXYW [any edition is probably OK]

Date	Class Topics & Readings	Assignments
18 Jan	Introduction: The Fun & Terror to Come!	
20 Jan	Terror(ism): Definitions & Concepts Charles Townshend, <u>Terrorism</u> , pp. 1-35	
25 Jan	Terror(ism) in History Townshend, pp. 36-73 Martin Miller, "Ordinary Terrorism in Historical Perspective," <u>Journal for the Study of Radicalism</u> 2.1 (2008): 125-154 [thru library web site]	
27 Jan	Nationalist & Religious Terror Townshend, pp. 74-113	Quiz
1 Feb	The Birth of Russian Socialism Avrahm Yarmolinsky, <u>Road to Revolution</u> , chap. 4.*	First triad essay due 1 February
3 Feb	Emancipation & Responses Yarmolinsky, chaps. 5 & 6.	
8 Feb	Karakozov & the First Attempt on the Tsar Yarmolinsky, chap. 7. Claudia Verhoeven, "The Making of Russian Revolutionary Terrorism," in Isaac Land, ed., <u>Enemies of Humanity: The Nineteenth-Century War on Terrorism</u> (New York, 2008), 99-116 [web campus]	
10 Feb	The Nechaev Affair Yarmolinsky, chap. 8. Sergei Nechaev's "Catechism of a Revolutionary" [web campus]	Quiz
15 Feb	Populism & "Going to the People" Yarmolinsky, chaps. 9 & 10.	

* The different editions of Yarmolinsky have different paginations, but the chapters should be the same in all versions. If you wish to skim the earlier chapters of Yarmolinsky, feel free to do so.

17 Feb	<p>The Turn to Terror Yarmolinsky, chaps. 11 & 12. Program of People's Will [web campus]</p>	
22 Feb	<p>Vera Zasluch & the Female Terrorist Barbara Alpern Engel, "The Emergence of Women Revolutionaries in Russia," <u>Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies</u> 2.1 (1977): 92-105 [thru library web site]. Ana Siljak, "Introduction," <u>Angel of Vengeance: The "Girl Assassin," the Governor of St. Petersburg, and Russia's Revolutionary World</u> (New York, 2008), 1-13 [web campus]</p>	
24 Feb	<p>The Problem of Terrorist Trials in Russia Samuel Kucherov, "The Case of Vera Zasluch," <u>Russian Review</u> 11.2 (1952): 86-96 [thru library web site]. Ana Siljak, "The Trial of Vera Zasluch," in Steven Usitalo & William Whisenhunt, eds., <u>Russian and Soviet History</u> (Lanham, 2008), pp. 147-161 [web campus].</p>	Quiz
1 March	<p>Governors-General & the Dictatorship of the Heart Richard Wortman, "The Crisis of Autocracy," <u>Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy</u>, vol. 2 (Princeton, 2000), pp. 129-157 [web campus].</p>	Second triad essay due 1 March
3 March	<p>The Assassination of Alexander II Yarmolinsky, chaps. 13 & 14.</p>	
8 March	<p>The Autocracy's Response: The Security Laws of 1881 Jonathan W. Daly, "Origins of a Modern Security Police in Russia," in <u>Autocracy under Siege: Security Police and Opposition in Russia, 1866-1905</u> (DeKalb, 1998), 12-48 [web campus].</p>	
10 March	<p>The Destruction of People's Will Yarmolinsky, chaps. 15 & 16 + Epilogue</p>	Quiz
15 & 17 March	<p>NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK But begin reading Phillip Pomper, <u>Lenin's Brother</u>.</p>	
22 March	<p>The Emergence of Marxism in Russia Pomper, <u>Lenin's Brother</u>, preface and pp. 1-86</p>	

24 March	Bureaucratic Conservatism under Alex III Pomper, pp. 87-158	
29 March	Alexander Ulianov & Terrorist Conspiracy Finish Pomper, pp. 159-223	Quiz
31 March	The Autocracy and Political Crime Jonathan Daly, "Political Crime in Late Imperial Russia," <u>Journal of Modern History</u> 74.1 (March, 2002): 62-100 [thru library web site].	
5 April	The Socialist Revolutionary Party and Violence Anna Geifman, <u>Entangled in Terror</u> , pp. 1-29	Third triad essay due 1 April
7 April	The Female Terrorists in the SR Party Geifman, pp. 31-49 Sally Boniece, "The Spiridonova Case, 1906: Terror, Myth, and Martyrdom," <u>Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History</u> 4.3 (2003): 571-606 [thru library web site].	
12 April	Liberal Attitudes towards Terrorism Geifman, pp. 51-103	
14 April	Terrorism in the Caucasus Geifman, pp. 105-122	
19 April	The Revolution of 1905 and Terrorist Violence Geifman, pp. 123-166	Quiz
21 April	Terrorists and the Secret Police Finish Geifman, pp. 167-181	
26 April	Crime & Punishment: The Psychology of Execution Leonid Andreev, <u>The Seven Who Were Hanged</u>	
28 April	The Bolshevik Seizure of Power (1917) No reading	Dostoevsky assignment due 1 May

3 May	<p>The Last Gasp of SR Terrorism Lutz Häfner, “The Assassination of Count Mirbach and the ‘July Uprising’ of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries in July, 1918,” <u>Russian Review</u> 50.3 (July, 1991): 324-344.</p>	
5 May	<p>A Pitiful Attempt at Summary Townshend, pp. 114-139</p>	<p>Fourth triad essay due 7 May</p>
10 May	<p>FINAL EXAMINATION</p>	<p>FINAL EXAM 13.00-15.00</p>