

# Revolution and Resistance in Twentieth-Century Central Europe

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The twentieth century, Lenin once predicted, would be remembered as a century of revolution. Perhaps nowhere did this forecast prove more accurate than in central Europe, which between 1917 and 1992 witnessed arguably no fewer than eight revolutionary episodes. Of course, these events did not unfold in quite the way Lenin envisaged; in the same way that central Europe became a laboratory for competing ideologies of the twentieth century, so it became the birthplace and testing ground of new styles of revolution and resistance.

This two-semester seminar examines the history of revolution in central Europe and the related phenomenon of resistance to oppressive regimes. Our focus in the fall semester will be on the twentieth century, but since the history of revolution in the region extends back to the eighteenth century (or arguably even the fifteenth), we may “peel back the layers of the onion” in the winter semester if there is sufficient interest. Similarly, our definition of “central Europe” in the fall will be relatively exclusive (limited to Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary, and Poland in their various geographic incarnations), but the possibility exists to consider peripheral regions of central Europe (Croatia, Lithuania, Transylvania, etc.) in the winter. This is by no means a course on the “Cold War”; rather than international relations, the reading list emphasizes social, cultural, and intellectual history, showcasing the perspectives and experience of those actually doing the resisting or the work of revolution. Our aim will be to understand their mindset, their actions, and the context and consequences of both. Specifically, we will ask how the meaning of *revolution* has evolved in central Europe, how the techniques and aims of revolution and resistance have changed over time, and how conceptions of a desired ideal society have shifted concomitantly.

## READING MATERIALS

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The following books are available for purchase at Paragraphe Bookstore, 2220 McGill College Ave. All of them are also available on 3-hour loan at Redpath Reserves. Where additional copies exist in McLennan Library or the Polish Institute Library (3479 Peel St.), the number is indicated in parentheses. Electronic availability is indicated with an asterisk. Students buying books should consult the course schedule first, since on Oct. 17 and Nov. 28 there will be a choice of readings.

\*Jan Gross, *Revolution from Abroad: The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (2)

Bradley Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*

Gary Bruce, *Resistance with the People: Repression and Resistance in Eastern Germany, 1945-1953*  
 Kieran Williams, *The Prague Spring and Its Aftermath: Czechoslovak Politics, 1968-1970*  
 Timothy Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity* (5)  
 \*Padraic Kenney, *A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe 1989*  
 Shana Penn, *Solidarity's Secret: The Women Who Defeated Communism in Poland* (1)  
 \*Charles Maier, *Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany*

Three coursepack volumes will be made available at appropriate times in the semester.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

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The breakdown of assignments (across both semesters) and weights for overall mark determination are as follows:

Class participation	15%
with reading responses	5%
and periodized chronologies	5%
Historiographical essay	10%
with accompanying seminar leadership	5%
Short paper	10%
Research presentation	10%
Research paper	40%

Class Participation: This is a course based on discussion. You are encouraged to ask questions and to engage one another in polite but energetic debate. While oral contributions are one form of class participation, a positive attitude and the ability to listen also count.

Reading Responses: To maximize the effectiveness of our discussions, you will be asked each week (except the week when you prepare your historiographical essay) to write one page summarizing your thoughts about that week's readings. These responses will not be graded; instead, the mark for this component will simply be the number of submitted responses divided by the number of weeks when they were required. In order to count, responses must be submitted by 9:00 a.m. on Wednesdays.

Chronologies: To further augment the quality of our discussions, you will be expected in most weeks to prepare a *periodized* chronology of the events to be discussed that week (maximum 1 page). As with the reading responses, the chronologies must be submitted by 9:00 a.m. on Wednesdays, and you should be prepared to defend your periodizations in class. The chronologies will not be graded; as with the reading responses, the mark will simply be the number of submitted chronologies divided by the number of weeks when they were required. The weeks when they are not required will be announced in class.

Historiographical Essay: Each week, one or two students will be asked to write a short paper (4-7 pages) critically comparing one of the required readings for that week with one of the recommended texts (where a choice is offered among required readings, students may elect to compare two of these). Historiographical essays will be due in class on Wednesdays.

Seminar Leadership: In the week when you submit your historiographical essay, you will be asked to launch the class discussion with a brief (maximum 5 min.) summary of your findings and one or two provocative questions about the required readings.

Short Paper: In early February, upon completion of our survey of the literature, students will be asked to submit a short paper (4-7 pp.) assessing the twentieth-century history of revolution in central Europe in its entirety. The paper should be argumentative, making a case for a theme which you see unfolding in this history, which can help to understand both “the big picture” and the individual cases.

Research Presentation: Near the end of the second semester, students will be asked to make formal, oral presentations of their research. The setting will be that of a mock academic conference, with questions from the audience expected and debate encouraged. Presenters should plan on speaking for 15 to 20 minutes.

Research Paper: An original research paper (20 pages minimum) analyzing primary documents will be due on Apr. 10. Prior to this date, please observe the following interim deadlines:

Nov. 7: In class, turn in a 3x5 card with a preliminary description of your proposed topic.

Dec. 5: Submit a 1-paragraph statement of your tentative thesis, accompanied by a preliminary bibliography, to the instructor via e-mail.

Feb. 27: Bring four copies of a preliminary outline of your paper to class, and be prepared to discuss your outline in a small group.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

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### **FALL SEMESTER**

#### **SEPT. 5: WHAT IS A REVOLUTION?**

##### **Readings for Seminar**

[Ilan Rachum, “The Meaning of ‘Revolution’ in the English Revolution \(1648-1660\)”](#) [21 pp.]

Keith Michael Baker, “Inventing the French Revolution” [21 pp.]

[Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, \*The Communist Manifesto\*](#), preamble and first chapter [17 pp.]

##### **Recommended Reading**

Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution*

François Furet, *Interpreting the French Revolution*

Charles Tilly, *European Revolutions, 1492-1992*

[Alexis de Tocqueville, \*The Old Regime and the French Revolution\*](#)

#### **SEPT. 12: BACKGROUND TO 1918**

##### **Readings for Seminar**

*INNOVATIONS IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF REVOLUTION*:

[Vladimir I. Lenin, \*What Is to Be Done?\*](#) (1902), parts: I. A, D; II. intro, A, B; III. E; IV. C, D [56 pp.]

[Leon Trotsky, \*Results and Prospects\*](#) (1906), chapters 3 and 4 [20 pp.]

*THREE VIEWS OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION*:

Rex Wade, *The Russian Revolution, 1917*, contents [1 p.]

Rex Wade, "Historical Overview" [22 pp.]

[Sheila Fitzpatrick, \*The Russian Revolution\*](#), contents + chapters 2 and 3 [55 pp.]

Orlando Figes & Boris Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution*, contents, chapter 2, and conclusion [46 pp.]

[Hayden White, "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality"](#) [23 pp.]

*FROM RUSSIA TO CENTRAL EUROPE:*

Tibor Hajdu, "Socialist Revolution in Central Europe, 1917-21" [18 pp.]

## **SEPT. 19: THE REVOLUTIONS OF 1918 IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE**

### **Reading for Seminar**

Oszkár Jászi, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary* (1923) [236 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, *The Making of a State* (1925)

Tibor Hajdu, *The Hungarian Soviet Republic* (1979)

András Siklós, *Revolution in Hungary and the Dissolution of the Multinational State 1918* (1988)

Josef Kalvoda, *The Genesis of Czechoslovakia*

György Péteri, *Effects of World War I: War Communism in Hungary*

Sándor Szilassy, *Revolutionary Hungary, 1918-1921*

Rudolf Tökés, *Béla Kun and the Hungarian Soviet Republic: The Origins and Role of the Communist Party of Hungary in the Revolutions of 1918-1919*

## **SEPT. 26: THE REVOLUTIONS OF 1918 IN GERMANY AND AUSTRIA**

### **Reading for Seminar**

F. L. Carsten, *Revolution in Central Europe, 1918-1919* [325 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

*IMPORTANT SECONDARY LITERATURE:*

Pierre Broué, *The German Revolution, 1917-1923*

Richard Comfort, *Revolutionary Hamburg: Labor Politics in the Early Weimar Republic*

Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis*

Scott Stephenson, *The Final Battle: Soldiers of the Western Front and the German Revolution of 1918*

*SOME RELEVANT PRIMARY SOURCES:*

Rosa Luxemburg, *Leninism or Marxism?*

Rosa Luxemburg, *The Russian Revolution*

## **OCT. 3: WAR AS REVOLUTION I: COMMUNISM**

### **Reading for Seminar**

[Jan Gross, \*Revolution from Abroad\*](#) [240 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

Alfred Senn, *Lithuania 1940: Revolution from Above*

## **OCT. 10: WAR AS REVOLUTION II: NATIONAL SOCIALISM**

### **Readings for Seminar**

Hans Mommsen, "The Nazi Regime: Revolution or Counterrevolution?" [15 pp.]

Jan Gross, *Polish Society under German Occupation*, pp. 29-306 [278 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

#### *IMPORTANT SECONDARY LITERATURE:*

Chad Bryant, *Prague in Black: Nazi Rule and Czech Nationalism*

Peter Hoffmann, *German Resistance to Hitler*

-----, [The History of the German Resistance, 1933-1945](#)

Stefan Korbonski, *The Polish Underground State* (1978)

Radomír Luža, *The Resistance in Austria, 1938-1945* (1984)

#### *SOME RELEVANT PRIMARY SOURCES:*

Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski, *The Secret Army* (1951)

Jan Karski, *Story of a Secret State* (1944)

Stefan Korbonski, *Fighting Warsaw: The Story of the Polish Underground State, 1939-1945*

Radomír Luža, *The Hitler Kiss*

## **OCT. 17: POSTWAR REVOLUTIONS IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE**

### **Reading for Seminar** (please choose *one* of the following)

Bradley Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* [288 pp.]

Padraic Kenney, *Rebuilding Poland: Workers and Communists, 1945-1950* [345 pp.]

[Martin Mevius, Agents of Moscow: The Hungarian Communist Party and the Origins of Socialist Patriotism 1941-1953](#) [268 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

#### *RECENT AND IMPORTANT SECONDARY LITERATURE:*

Jonathan Bloomfield, *Passive Revolution: Politics and the Czechoslovak Working Class, 1945-1948*

John Connelly, *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945-1956*

Peter Kenez, *Hungary from the Nazis to the Soviets*

Hugh Seton-Watson, *The East European Revolution*

#### *A RELEVANT PRIMARY SOURCE:*

Czesław Miłosz, *The Captive Mind*

## **OCT. 24: THE EAST GERMAN UPRISING OF 1953**

### **Reading for Seminar**

Gary Bruce, *Resistance with the People: Repression and Resistance in Eastern Germany, 1945-1955* [195 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

[Norman Naimark, The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945-1949](#)

Andrew Port, *Conflict and Stability in the German Democratic Republic*

Gareth Pritchard, *The Making of the GDR, 1945-53*

## **OCT. 31: THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION OF 1956**

### **Reading for Seminar**

Bill Lomax, *Hungary 1956* (1976) [187 pp.]

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 2nd ed., epilogue

### **Recommended Reading**

#### *RECENT AND IMPORTANT SECONDARY LITERATURE:*

Paul Lendvai, *One Day That Shook the Communist World*

György Litván, ed., *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956*

Victor Sebestyén, *Twelve Days: The Story of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution*

Konrad Syrop, *Spring in October: The Story of the Polish Revolution 1956* (1957)

#### *A RELEVANT PRIMARY SOURCE:*

Sándor Kopácsi, *In the Name of the Working Class: The Inside Story of the Hungarian Revolution*

## **NOV. 7: THE PRAGUE SPRING**

### **Reading for Seminar**

Kieran Williams, *The Prague Spring and Its Aftermath* [253 pp.]

H. Gordon Skilling, "Reform, Revolution, or Counterrevolution?" [29 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

#### *RECENT AND IMPORTANT SECONDARY LITERATURE:*

Galia Golan, *The Czechoslovak Reform Movement: Communism in Crisis, 1962-1968*

-----, *Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia: The Dubček Era, 1968-1969*

Vladimír Kusín, *The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring*

H. Gordon Skilling, *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution*

#### *SOME RELEVANT PRIMARY SOURCES:*

Vladimír Fišera, *Worker's Councils in Czechoslovakia 1968-9*

Zdeněk Mlynář, *Nightfrost in Prague*

## **NOV. 14: VARIETIES OF DISSENT**

### **Readings for Seminar**

Adam Michnik, "A New Evolutionism" (1976) [14 pp.]

[Charter 77](#) [4 pp.]

Václav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless" (1978) [90 pp.]

Václav Benda, "The Parallel *Polis*" (1978) [7 pp.]

Martin Palouš, "Jan Patočka versus Václav Benda" [8 pp.]

KOR's Appeal to Society (1978) [9 pp.]

John Paul II, speech on Victory Square in Warsaw, 2 June 1979 [4 pp.]

Adam Michnik, "A Lesson in Dignity" (1979) [9 pp.]

György Konrád, *Antipolitics*, pp. 91-98, 104-09, 113-24, 133-47, 181-86, 191-207, 227-33 [67 pp.]

[Slavoj Žižek, "Attempts to Escape the Logic of Capitalism"](#) [19 pp.]

Barbara Falk, "The Dissident Contribution to Political Theory" [52 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

#### *RECENT AND IMPORTANT SECONDARY LITERATURE:*

Barbara Falk, *The Dilemmas of Dissidence in East-Central Europe*

John Keane, *Democracy and Civil Society*

-----, *Václav Havel: A Political Tragedy in Six Acts*

David Ost, *Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-Politics*  
Aviezer Tucker, *Philosophy and Politics of Czech Dissidence from Patočka to Havel*  
SOME RELEVANT PRIMARY SOURCES:  
János Kis, *Politics in Hungary: For a Democratic Alternative*  
Adam Michnik, *The Church and the Left*  
Jan Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*

## **NOV. 21: SOLIDARITY**

### **Reading for Seminar**

Timothy Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity* [371 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

Neal Ascherson, *The Polish August*

[Arista Maria Cirtautas, \*The Polish Solidarity Movement: Revolution, Democracy and Natural Rights\*](#)

Jan Kubik, *The Power of Symbols against the Symbols of Power: The Rise of Solidarity and the Fall of State Socialism in Poland*

Roman Laba, *The Roots of Solidarity: A Political Sociology of Poland's Working-Class Democratization*

Jadwiga Staniszkis, *Poland's Self-Limiting Revolution*

## **NOV. 28: THE 1980s UNDERGROUND**

### **Readings for Seminar** (please choose *one* of the following)

[Padraic Kenney, \*A Carnival of Revolution\*](#) [306 pp.]

Shana Penn, *Solidarity's Secret* [323 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

Timothy Garton Ash, *The Uses of Adversity: Essays on the Fate of Central Europe* (1989)

## **WINTER SEMESTER (TENTATIVE)**

## **JAN. 5: THE EAST GERMAN REVOLUTION OF 1989**

### **Reading for Seminar**

Charles Maier, *Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany* [337 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

Gareth Dale, *The East German Revolution of 1989*

[Konrad Jarausch, \*The Rush to German Unity\*](#)

Dirk Philipsen, *We Were the People: Voices from East Germany's Revolutionary Autumn of 1989*

## **JAN. 12: THE CZECHOSLOVAK REVOLUTION OF 1989**

### **Reading for Seminar**

James Krapfl, *The Gentle Revolution: Politics, Culture, and Community in Czechoslovakia, 1989-1992* [275 pp.]

### **Recommended Reading**

Gil Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*

Abby Innes, *Czechoslovakia: The Short Goodbye*

Bernard Wheaton & Zdeněk Kavan, *The Velvet Revolution: Czechoslovakia, 1988-1991*

### **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE AFTER JAN. 12:**

Jan. 19—additional topic

Jan. 26—additional topic

Feb. 6—discuss short papers and work to date on research papers; short papers due

Feb. 13—no class

Feb. 20—no class

Feb. 27—discuss research paper outlines

Mar. 13—no class

Mar. 20—research presentations

Mar. 27—research presentations

Apr. 3—research presentations

Apr. 10—wrap-up discussion; research papers due

### **POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL TOPICS:**

- Round Tables (and Their Consequences) in Poland and Hungary
- The Fringes of Central Europe (Transylvania, Croatia & Slovenia, the Baltic States)
- Resistance in Central Europe after 1989
- Revolutionary Traditions (before the Twentieth Century)
- Theories of Revolution and Totalitarianism

### **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

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McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism, and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity/> for more information).

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.



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This document is an appendix to the syllabus distributed at the beginning of the fall semester. For information on course requirements and university policies, please refer to that initial document.

## WINTER COURSE SCHEDULE

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### **JAN. 9: THE EAST GERMAN REVOLUTION OF 1989**

#### **Reading for Seminar**

Charles Maier, *Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany* [337 pp.]

#### **Recommended Reading**

Gareth Dale, *The East German Revolution of 1989*

[Konrad Jarausch, \*The Rush to German Unity\*](#)

Dirk Philipsen, *We Were the People: Voices from East Germany's Revolutionary Autumn of 1989*

### **JAN. 16: THE CZECHOSLOVAK REVOLUTION OF 1989**

#### **Reading for Seminar**

James Krapfl, *The Gentle Revolution: Politics, Culture, and Community in Czechoslovakia, 1989-1992* [275 pp.]

#### **Recommended Reading**

Gil Eyal, *The Origins of Postcommunist Elites*

Abby Innes, *Czechoslovakia: The Short Goodbye*

Bernard Wheaton & Zdeněk Kavan, *The Velvet Revolution: Czechoslovakia, 1988-1991*

### **JAN. 23: THEORIES OF REVOLUTION AND TOTALITARISM**

#### **Common Reading**

[Peter Siani-Davies, "Romanian Revolution or Coup d'état? A Theoretical View of the Events of December 1989"](#) [12 pp.]

Jack Goldstone, "The Comparative and Historical Study of Revolutions" [18 pp.]

Karl Dietrich Bracher, "The Disputed Concept of Totalitarianism" [23 pp.]

#### **Recommendations for Individual Reading—Revolution**

Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution*

Crane Brinton, *The Anatomy of Revolution*  
Michael Kimmel, *Revolution: A Sociological Interpretation*  
Jaroslav Krejčí, *Great Revolutions Compared: The Outline of a Theory*  
Martin Malia, *History's Locomotives: Revolutions and the Making of the Modern World*  
[Theda Skocpol, \*States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China\*](#)  
Charles Tilly, *European Revolutions, 1492-1992*

#### **Recommendations for Individual Reading—Totalitarianism**

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*  
Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*  
Abbott Gleason, *Totalitarianism: The Inner History of the Cold War*  
George Orwell, *1984*  
J. L. Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy*  
Slavoj Žižek, *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?*

### **JAN. 30: TESTING TEMPORAL AND GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDS**

#### **Recommendations for Individual Reading—Revolutions in Central Europe before 1918**

Peter Blickle, *The Revolution of 1525: The German Peasants' War From a New Perspective*  
Robert Blobaum, *Rewolucja: Russian Poland, 1904-1907*  
István Deák, *The Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848-1849*  
Thomas Fudge, *The Magnificent Ride: The First Reformation in Hussite Bohemia*  
Stanley Pech, *The Czech Revolution of 1848*  
John Rath, *The Viennese Revolution of 1848*  
Wolfram Siemann, *The German Revolution of 1848-49*  
Alex Storozynski, *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution*

#### **Recommendations for Individual Reading—Revolutions on the Margins of Central Europe**

[Aleksa Djilas, \*The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and Communist Revolution, 1919-1953\*](#)  
Anatol Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the Path to Independence*  
Peter Siani-Davies, *The Romanian Revolution of December 1989*  
[Jozo Tomasevich, \*War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945: Occupation and Collaboration\*](#)  
Anthony Upton, *The Finnish Revolution, 1917-1918*  
[Nebojša Vladislavljević, \*Serbia's Antibureaucratic Revolution: Milošević, the Fall of Communism and Nationalist Mobilization\*](#)

### **SCHEDULE FOR FEB. 6 - APR. 10**

Feb. 6—discuss short papers and work to date on research papers; short papers due

Feb. 13—no class

Feb. 20—no class

Feb. 27—no class

Mar. 13—discuss research paper outlines

Mar. 20—no class

Mar. 27—research presentations

Apr. 3—research presentations

Apr. 10—research presentations and wrap-up discussion; research papers due