This special subject examines the late imperial period of Russian history from the perspective of the fin de siècle. Its goal is twofold: to rediscover the richness and complexity of the era; and to rethink the meaning of the revolutions of 1917. In the years around 1900, questions of both modernity and decay, civilisation and cultural standards were at the heart of intellectual discussions and public debates. They occupied people’s minds and spurred artistic creativity at a time when the country as a whole experienced major economic and social changes. Topics for investigation will thus include the rise of mass movements and the revolution of 1905, but also consumer culture and the “sexual question,” as it was called at the time. Special attention will be paid to the world of the Russian village, the life of factory workers, the decline of the nobility, the pitfalls of the modern urban landscape, popular utopian fantasies, and the momentous changes in literature and the arts. The documentary material for this course will be in English. In addition to more conventional sources (memoirs, decrees, petitions, strike resolutions, programmes of political parties, articles and tracts), they will include literature and a broad variety of audio-visual materials (popular song, film, architecture, posters, paintings, and other works of art), which are available as tape or CD recordings, on video cassettes, and as reproductions in books.

**Sources:**


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Leonid Andreev, Abyss (Waltham, 1929) [31pp.]


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‘Scenes from a Third-Class Car’ in von Geldern and McReynolds (eds.), Entertaining Tsarist Russia, pp. 183–186 [4pp.]

M. Lentovskii, ‘Sarah Bernhardt or, Loge No.2 in the Dress Circle’ in von Geldern and McReynolds (eds.), Entertaining Tsarist Russia, pp. 186–197 [12pp.]
‘Civil War in the Pipe Factory, 20 May 1917’, BK2, no.631 [1p.]
‘An Appeal from the Minister of Labor, 28 June 1917’, BK2, no.642, [1p.]
‘A Resolution on Lockouts by the Conference of Factory Committees in Moscow, 24–28 July 1917’, BK2 no.666 [1p.]
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‘Army Reports on Bolshevik Subversion at the Front, June–July 1917’, BK2, no.850 [3pp.]
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‘Kamenyev Dissents’, McC no.2/17c [1p.]
‘The Soviet Appeal, 4 July 1917’, McC no.2/8a [1p.]
‘The Bolshevik Proclamations of the Nights of July 4 and 5’, BK3, no.1157a [1p.]
‘Statement by Prince L’vov Concerning his Resignation, 9 July 1917’, BK3, no.1186 [2pp.]
‘Kerensky’s Telegram to All the Country, 27 August 1917’, McC no.2/11a [1p.]
‘Violence in Vyborg, 2 September 1917’, BK3, no.1309 [1p.]
‘The Bolsheviks take over Direction of the Petrograd Soviet, 10 September 1917’, BK3, no.1369 [2pp.]
‘Lenin Calls for an Uprising, 12–14 September 1917’, McC no.4/1 [2pp.]
‘Kamenev and Zinoviev Oppose Uprising, 11 October 1917’, McC no.4/2 [3pp.]
‘The Decree on Peace, 26 October/8 November 1917’, McC no.5/4 [2pp.]
‘The Land Decree, 26 October/8 November 1917’, McC no.7/10a [3pp.]
‘The Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, 6/19 January 1918’, McC no.6/6 [2pp.]
‘Establishment of the Cheka, 7/20 December 1917’, McC no.6/3 [1p.]

-Gypsy Romances, Revolutionary and Popular Songs (some of them will be available as recordings in class)

[Total Text Pages c.1760]

Visual sources
(p.108); ‘Has He the Strength…?’ (p.111); I. Bodianskii, back cover of ‘Zarnitsy’ (Summer Lightning) (p.114); Boris Kustodiey, ‘Invasion’ pp. 118–119); Mstislav Dobuzhinskii, ‘October Idyll’ (p.120)


[c.40 images]

**Films**
A selection of pre-1917 films will be shown in class.

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Peter Fritzscche, Reading Berlin 1900 (Cambridge, Mass., 1996).
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John Bowlt and Olga Matich (eds.), Laboratory of Dreams: The Russian Avant-Garde and Cultural Experiment (Stanford, 1996).
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