Triad Assignment #3: The Foundations for the Final Exam Triad Essay

The Triad Assignment #3 will be the first step in producing an excellent essay as part of your final exam. For the moment, we are not concerned with actually writing the essay. Rather, at this point we want to focus on gathering material and articulating a thesis that can serve as the foundation for that essay later. So all we are looking for now is thesis and bullet points. But lest you think that this is a small or trivial task, keep in mind that the triads on offer are much broader in their scope than the ones that we have encountered to this point. Indeed, each of them requires that you address at least two of the three cases in this course (US, Russia, Iran). Needless to say doing this well will take time, which is why we are making it a two-step process, with an opportunity for feedback between the two stages.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the assignment is to strengthen skills in the area of reading comprehension, making historical connections, assembling evidence, and composing an effective short essay of one paragraph.

**Knowledge:** By doing this assignment, you will acquire a firm comprehension of a set of important texts including and pertaining to the history of revolutions and constitutions in the US, Russia, and Iran.

**Skills:** In this assignment you will develop the skill of making historical connections across a large mass of material; identifying evidence relevant to a particular thesis; and comparing two cases in a systematic way.

**Tasks:** Step 1) Choose ONE of triads below on which to work. Note that because each triad is very broad in its scope, I have provided a brief explanation for each one that indicates the kinds of things that you should be thinking about as you approach the task. That explanation does not of course exhaust the things that you will need to address; the idea is just to get you started.

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<th>federation</th>
<th>ideology</th>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Russian Revolution</td>
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<td>USSR</td>
<td>Iranian Revolution</td>
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This triad requires you to compare the ways in which the idea of federation was implemented in both the United States and the USSR. Think about the challenges that drove revolutionary leaders to see federation as an appropriate arrangement, as well as the specific form that federation took in the two cases. Consider the steps that led in both cases to the adoption of a federal solution. Finally, note how federalism differed in the two cases.

“Ideology” here means the system of ideas and ideals that motivated those who opposed the old regime in both cases and that revolutionaries sought to implement once they had taken power. This triad is thus designed to clarify what revolutionary leaders were actually seeking to accomplish, and how they went about it. You might also consider how the ideology of these two revolutions was reflected in constitutions?
Vladimir Lenin
Ruhollah Khomeini
revolutionary leadership

Revolutions are large-scale historical events involving millions of people, yet the leadership of particular people often proves critical as well. This triad asks you to think about revolutionary leadership by considering the particular roles of Lenin and Khomeini. In what ways were they indispensable to the revolutions? To what extent were those leaders simply responding to or reflecting larger forces essentially beyond their control?

United States
USSR
constitutional change

Rarely is a constitution written down once and then never changed. Yet the ways in which constitutions change can vary. This triad asks you to compare the nature of constitutional change in the United States and the USSR. In what ways and for what reasons did constitutional change become necessary in both countries? In what ways was that change similar or different in the two cases?

Step 2) Identify the various course materials that are relevant to the issues in the triad, and review those materials carefully. This review period is critical.

Step 3) Compose a sentence that combines all three of the items in the triad and draws on all the relevant material in the course. This is your thesis.

Step 4) Using bullet points, make EIGHT factually true statements, based on the reading and/or lecture/discussion, that either directly support or provide necessary context for the thesis statement. The relationship of evidence to the thesis must be clear. It is not sufficient simply to offer random material from the book or lecture. Each statement should include a reference to the source of that information (with a page or date reference). Six of these pieces of evidence should come from reading. Four pieces of evidence should pertain to each of the two cases that you choose to address. Make sure to include page and date references for your evidence.

Step 5) After having listed the evidence, go back and review the thesis. Is it still accurate in light of the evidence you have now provided? Is all the evidence actually relevant to making the thesis valid? If no, then make appropriate changes to either the thesis or the selection or presentation of evidence. Make sure, yet again, that the relationship of the evidence to the thesis is clear.

Step 6) Present the thesis and the evidence in the format described in Triad Assignment™ #1, which is still available on the web site. Using 1.5-space, the thesis plus evidence should not be less than one page and not more than two. Be aware that efforts to make the text look like more than it actually is will be regarded as a personal offense to the course’s entire instructional team.

Criteria: The assignment will be excellent if

a) the thesis contains all three of the items in the triad (highlighted in bold) [5 points];
b) the thesis is clear, grammatically correct, and reflective of the course materials [10 points];
c) there are eight pieces of evidence that are accurate and relevant to the thesis, and are presented in clear and complete sentences [40 points];
d) each piece of evidence includes the source and its page number or date [16 points];
e) four pieces of evidence relate to each of two cases addressed in the course; at least six pieces of evidence are drawn from readings; and at least three pieces of evidence come from original sources (everything labeled “document” in the Werth textbook) or from the “readings” in the Werth textbook (for example Edward Carr on the constitution of the RSFSR) [24 points];
f) and the assignment is printed or typed on clean white paper, using the format of Triad Assignment™ #1 [5 points].