

History 331: Twentieth-Century Russia

Summer 2009

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Office hours: Monday 2:00-3:00, Wednesday 11:00-12:00 or by appointment

Course Description:

This course is devoted to the history of the Soviet Union in the “short” twentieth century, but will also include a brief section on Russia and its neighbors in the post-Soviet period. Beginning with the twin revolutions of 1917, it traces the development of the Soviet Union through civil war, famine, rapid industrialization, and forced collectivization. Then, after a brief pause for mid-terms, come the devastation and victory of World War II, the Cold War and Khrushchev’s thaw, stability and stagnation under Brezhnev, and ultimately the breakup of the USSR in 1991. Finally, we will explore the painful transitions of the 1990s and the development of a petro-state under Putin. Heavy emphasis will be placed throughout on governing structures and ideologies and the relationship between state and society.

Course Assignments and Grading:

1. Participation. Students are expected to engage in class discussions, demonstrating knowledge of readings and intellectual curiosity extending beyond the scope of the covered material. This component is worth 5 percent of your final grade.
2. Quizzes. There will be a map quiz on June 29; six additional quizzes based on the readings for that day will be given at random at the beginning of class. The two lowest quiz scores (not including the map quiz) will be dropped and the average of the remaining five will constitute 10 percent of your final grade.
3. Essays. The first essay should be one page long and is due by the last day of class. It is 5 percent of your final grade. The second essay will be three pages long and is due July 8. It will make up 10 percent of your final grade. The third essay will be six pages in length and will be due August 7. It is worth 20 percent of your final grade. The prompts to all three papers are attached to the end of the syllabus.
4. Exams. The mid-term examination will have a brief chronology section, ten identifications and two essays and will make up 20 percent of your final grade. The final examination will be comprehensive for the course. It will consist of a chronology section, ten identifications and three essays and will comprise 30 percent of your final grade. A list of terms and possible essay

questions will be distributed approximately one week before each exam. You are required to bring blue books (preferably the large variety) to each examination.

5. Extra Credit. You may complete one extra credit assignment as outlined on the attached page.

Course Policies:

Honor Code Standards

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university.

Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university's expectation, and my own expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

Preventing Sexual Discrimination or Harassment

Sexual discrimination or harassment (including student-to-student harassment) is prohibited both by the law and by Brigham Young University policy. If you feel you are being subjected to sexual discrimination or harassment, please bring your concerns to the professor. Alternatively, you may lodge a complaint with the Equal Employment Office (D-240C ASB) or with the Honor Code Office (4440).

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this course, you should get in touch with the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (1520 WSC). This office can evaluate your disability and assist the professor in arranging for reasonable accommodations.

Reading Assignments

The history department requires a minimum of 1500 pages of reading for upper-division classes. Readings are to be completed before each class meeting and will come primarily from the following sources:

Geoffrey Hosking. *The First Socialist Society*. 2nd Edition.

Eugenia Ginzburg. *Journey into the Whirlwind*.

Vladimir Voinovich. *The Fur Hat*.

Stephen Kotkin. *Armageddon Averted*.

17 Moments in Soviet History. Located at <http://www.soviethistory.org>. The site requires simple and free registration to obtain access to the readings.

Course Schedule:

1. June 22. Introduction to Russian History

-No readings

2. June 24. War and Revolution

-Hosking, 15-49.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1917, February Revolution, "Formation of the Provisional Government" and "Formation of the Soviets"; Revolution in the Army, "Order No. 1" and "Breakdown of Discipline on the Front;" Peasant Revolution, "Agrarian Disturbances."

3. June 26. Revolution and State-Building

-Hosking, 49-92.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1917, Revolution in the Army, "Condition of the Troops at the Front"; Bolsheviks Seize Power, "On the Eve of Revolution," "Lenin Urges the Immediate Seizure of Power," and "Taking of the Winter Palace;" Economic Apparatus, "Lenin: Loot the Looters;" Red Guard into Army, "Trotsky on the Role of Military Commissars"; Communist Party Building, "Centralization of the Communist Party."

4. June 29. Fashioning a Soviet Union

-Hosking, 93-118.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1917, The Empire Falls, "Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia," and "Stalin on the Limitation of National Self-Determination;" 1921, Kronstadt Uprising, "Demands of the Kronstadt Insurgents," and "Soviet Ultimatums."

-Vladimir Lenin, "State and Revolution" (handout).

-Isabelle Kreindler, "A Neglected Source of Lenin's Nationality Policy," *Slavic Review* 36, no. 1 (1977): 86-100.

5. July 1. NEP

-Hosking, 119-132.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1921, Tenth Party Congress, "Lenin Demands Unity in the Party;" The New Economic Policy, "Moscow from ARA to NEP."

--N. S. Simonov, "'Strengthen the Defense of the Land of Soviets': The 1927 'War Alarm' and its Consequences," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 48/8 (1996): 1355-64.

6. July 6. Leninism and the Pretenders to the Throne (Dictatorship within Dictatorship)

-Hosking, 132-148.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1924, Death of Lenin, "Stalin on the Death of Lenin;" Industrialization Debate, "Socialism in One Country..." and "Zinoviev on State Capitalism;" Lenin's Succession, "Kamenev on Stalin"; 1929, Year of Great Change, "A Year of Great Change (skim)."

-Nils Erik Rosenfeldt, "The 'Consistory of the Communist Church': The Origins and Development of Stalin's Secret Chancellery," *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, 9/2-3 (1982): 308-24.

7. July 8. Constructing the Socialist Countryside

-Hosking, 149-170.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1929, Liquidation of the Kulaks, “Collectivization Drive Accelerated” and “Dizzy with Success;” 1936, Year of the Stakhanovite, “Nine Girls,” and “Complaints about the MTS.”

-Lynne Viola, “Bab’i Bunty,” *Russian Review* 45, no. 1 (1986): 23-42.

-Lev Kopelev, excerpts from *Education of a True Believer* (handout).

-*Journey into the Whirlwind*

8. July 10. Constructing the Socialist City

-Hosking, 170-182, 205-226.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1929, Magnetic Mountain, “Construction Accidents” and “Time Forward!”; 1936, Year of the Stakhanovite, “Stalin at the Conference of the Stakhanovites (skim).”

-Stephen Kotkin, “Speaking Bolshevik” from *Magnetic Mountain* (handout).

-*Journey into the Whirlwind*

9. July 13. Terror and the Gulag

-Hosking, 183-204.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1936, The Great Terror, “Stalin on Deficiencies in Party Work,” “End of the Purges Announced” and “Autobiography of an Exile.”

-*Journey into the Whirlwind*

10. July 15. Nationality, Religious, and Foreign Policy

-Hosking, 227-260.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1929, Churches Closed, “Protest of Church Closing” and “Remove the Gold...”; Making Central Asia Soviet, “Practice of Chauvinism and Local Nationalism;” 1936, Creation of the Ethnic Republics, “Collective Farm Women of Tataria”; 1939, Soviet Territorial Annexations, “Molotov on the Meaning of the Soviet-German Pact.”

-Yuri Slezkine, “The USSR as a Communal Apartment,” *Slavic Review* 53, no. 2 (1994): 414-52.

-David Hoffman, “Mothers in the Motherland: Stalinist Pronatalism in its Pan-European Context,” *Journal of Social History*, 34/1 (2000): 35-54.

11. July 17. No class—Midterm Exam in the Testing Center (July 16-17)

12. July 20. World War II: Barbarism on the Eastern Front; Society on the Home Front

-Hosking, 261-295.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1943, 900 Days, “Blockade Diary” or “Diary;” Deportation of Minorities, “Beria Report on the Deportation;” Holocaust, “Massacre in the Ukraine.”

13. July 22. Late Stalinism: Expanding Empire while Rebuilding the Socialist Project

-Hosking, 296-325.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1947, The Cold War, “Stalin on Churchill’s Iron Curtain Speech;” Zhdanov, “Zhdanov on the Duty of a Soviet Writer;” 1954, Succession of Stalin, “Stalin on Enlarging the Central Committee.”

-Melvyn P. Leffler, “The Cold War: What do 'We Now Know'?” *American Historical Review* 104, no. 2 (1999): 501-524.

14. July 27. Khrushchev: Reform or Retrenchment?

-Hosking, 326-362.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1954, Succession to Stalin, “Beria is Condemned”; Virgin Lands Campaign, “The Virgin Lands Program”; 1956, Khrushchev's Secret Speech, “Excerpts from the Secret Speech” or “Annotated Full Text (skim)”; The Anti-Party Group, “Khrushchev Expels the Anti-Party Group;” *Literary Life at a Crossroads*, “Pravda Denounces Pasternak and the Nobel Award.”

-Susan Reid, “The Cold War in the Kitchen: Gender and the de-Stalinization of Consumer Taste in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev,” *Slavic Review*, 61/2 (2002): 211-52.

15. July 29. Transfer of Power and the Cold War

-Hosking, 363-401.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1968, Third World Friendships, “Friendship University”; The Chinese Border, “On the Struggle for the Solidarity...” and “On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism”; Crisis in Czechoslovakia, “Action Program” and “Brezhnev Doctrine”; 1980, Solidarity in Poland, “Martial Law in Poland.”

-*Fur Hat*

16. July 31. Brezhnev: Fading Revolution

-Hosking, 402-445.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1973, Soviet Consumerism, “Liberman Proposal” and “Goods for the People”; 1980, Underground Economy, “How Speculation Thrives.”

-*Fur Hat*

17. August 3. The 1980s: Gerontocracy and Rebirth

-Hosking, 446-459.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1980, Underground Economy, “Knights of the 'Jeans Culture’”; 1985, Anti-Alcohol Campaign, “Alcohol as Solace and Barter”; Meltdown in Chernobyl, “First Address on Chernobyl” (skim); Perestroika and Glasnost, “Gorbachev Wades into the Crowd,” “Gorbachev Challenges the Party,” and “Zaslavskaja on Perestroika.”

-*Armageddon Averted*, preface, 1-57.

18. August 5. 1989/1991: The Fall of Communism

-Hosking, 459-501.

-*Seventeen Moments*, 1991, 500 Days, “Five Hundred Days Plan”; The August Coup, “The Putsch Addresses the Soviet People,” “Yeltsin Appeals to the Russian,” and “Communist Party Banned.”

-*Armageddon Averted*, 58-112.

-Ann Tusa, “A Fatal Error,” *Media Studies Journal*, 13/3 (1999): 26-9.

19. August 7. Prolonged Collapse and Legacies of the Soviet Union in the Successor States

- Armageddon Averted*, 113-196.
- Stephen Kotkin, "Trashcanistan."
- Freedom of the Press and Election articles (handouts).

20. August 10. Wrap-Up

Final Exam: Wednesday, August 12, 1:00 to 2:50 p.m.

Hist 331 Essay Assignments

1. Out or photocopy a substantive newspaper article covering any world event. In approximately one double-spaced page (standard 12-point font, 1" margins), explain how specific historical knowledge or a conceptual framework from this class helped you analyze the event in greater depth than the summary provided by the journalist. The chosen topic can come from a part of the former Soviet Union, but it may also come from anywhere in the world outside the United States. This paper may be turned in at any point up to the last day of class.
2. Select two documents from different sections from the years 1917 or 1921 on the *Seventeen Moments* website and put them in conversation with each other. Please move beyond simple comparing and contrasting; you might explore latent tensions between the two or demonstrate how one illuminates the other. The emphasis here is on depth of analysis, not breadth of subject material. You may assume that I am your audience, so extensive background information is not necessary. Also, as you will only be referencing two documents, footnotes/endnotes are not needed. The final product should be three full double-spaced pages in length, and is due at the beginning of class on July 8.
3. You fell asleep in Moscow in 1935 and woke up in 1970. What has changed? What remains the same or similar? What has been endowed with new meaning? (As an alternative, select another location within the Soviet Union and/or different dates, which should be 20-35 years apart)

In crafting your essay, focus your thoughts on a particular segment of society: peasants, workers, soldiers, bureaucrats, intellectuals, women, Jews, etc., although keep in mind that many people have multiple such identities. A number of different topics could be explored in such a paper, so do not try to cover everything in detail. Rather, choose a few areas on which to focus (while acknowledging other avenues of exploration that you will not cover), select your examples carefully, and be concise. Use only the required readings for the class, plus any other information you can glean from the *Seventeen Moments* website. This is primarily a thought piece rather than a research paper. The point is not to rehash everything that happened between the two points in time, although some such information may be necessary, but rather to explore in encapsulated form their similarities and differences. Just how did the Soviet Union under Brezhnev differ from Stalin's USSR? Your audience for this paper is an educated non-specialist. You may therefore assume the reader is familiar with the main characters and events of Soviet history (Stalin, the purges, WWII, Cold War, Khrushchev's 'thaw,' Brezhnev), but additional information will need to be succinctly provided. Footnotes or endnotes should be used to cite sources. The target length for this paper is six full double-spaced pages (standard 12-point font, 1" margins). Please be within half of a page of this guideline. The paper will be collected at the beginning of class on August 7.

EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENT

For extra credit you may select one of the following two assignments. Responses may be e-mailed to the instructor at any point before the final exam and up to two percentage points will be added to your final grade.

1. Visit the Springville Museum of Art (or, with the instructor's approval, another museum or gallery with a significant Soviet art collection) and spend some time in the Russian Gallery. Select two paintings from different decades and write a one-page response to each. Devote one paragraph of each page to describing the painting itself (genre, subject matter, technique, colors, interesting details, use of symbolism, etc.), and a second paragraph to locating the painting within its historical context. How does it reflect the hopes and fears of the time period? Is it a representative piece from this era or is it somehow unorthodox? Use as sources any reading material from the course syllabus plus other information gleaned from the *17 Moments* website. Additional information from outside material may be used but is not required. If you wish, your second response may include points of comparison and contrast with the painting detailed in your first response.
2. Watch two feature-length Soviet films and follow the same guidelines noted above—two one-page responses broken into describing the film and then setting the film in its historical context.