

HIS 342: 20th Century Russia/Soviet Union Spring 2017

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Office Hours: Generally, between 2:30 and 5:00, M-F.

Course Description

This is part two of a two semester survey of Russian history from the ninth century to the present. (Note that the first semester, while useful, is not a prerequisite for this course). In this semester we will examine the history of Russia and the Soviet Union from 1900 to the present. Topics covered include the demise of the Romanov dynasty, the October Revolution and the rise of Communism, the reign of terror under Stalin, the Cold War, the long decline and eventual collapse of the Soviet system, and the post-Soviet world of Russia and other successor states. We will be reminded throughout this course that the area we commonly call Russia is made up of many non-Russian peoples, for whom the last few decades represent a period of increased nationalist sentiment.

Course Outcomes

Successful completion of this course should give you a basic background knowledge of the issues and events which shaped the course of Russian and Soviet history in the 20th century. Since the USSR was such a major player on the world scene in this century, you should also gain a deeper understanding of global history during this same time period. In addition, you will be introduced to some of the key areas where scholars have yet to reach consensus in their interpretations of historical events and given some (limited) ability to evaluate these controversial subjects for yourself. Also, by means of an extensive historiographical research project, you will gain better understanding of how historical argumentation is formulated, and at the same time sharpen your own analytical skills.

Texts

The following required texts are available for purchase in the bookstore:

Kort, Michael. *The Soviet Colossus*. Seventh Edition. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2010.

Reed, John. *Ten Days that Shook the World*. New York: Penguin Books, 1977 (Original 1919).

Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr I. *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1956*. Abridged Edition by Edward Ericson. New York: Harper Perennial Classics, 2002.

Alexievich, Svetlana. *Voices from Chernobyl: The Oral History of a Nuclear Disaster*.

Translated by Keith Gessen. New York: Picador, 2006.

Assignments and Expectations

1. Regular class attendance and active participation in discussions is essential for your success in this course. Poor attendance or obvious lack of preparation will adversely affect your grade. Note that you should complete the reading assignments as indicated on the course calendar before coming to class, and be prepared to discuss them.
2. Four quizzes will be given covering basic names, dates, events, etc.
3. You will complete three short (5 page) reflection papers on the Reed, Solzhenitsyn, and Alexievich books.
4. A mid-term and a final examination will be given. Both of these will consist of a mix of essay questions, short answers, etc.
5. You will complete a 10 page book review/historiographical research paper on a topic we mutually agree upon. More information on this project, which will involve several steps, will be found on a separate handout.
6. Your grade will be calculated approximately as follows:

Attendance, participation	--10%
Three Short Papers	--15%
Mid-term	--25%
Final Exam	--25%
Research Project	--20%
The Mother of all Map Tests	--5%

Course Calendar

(**Note:** This is subject to change! You are responsible for any and all changes announced in class.)

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
T	JAN 10	The Tsarist System	Kort, ch. 1-5
W	11	<i>cont.</i>	
F	13	Tsar Nicholas II	Kort, ch. 6
M	16	NO CLASS	[Start reading Reed!]
W	18	Prelude to Revolution	Kort, ch. 7
F	20	1905 Revolution	Kort, pp. 73-85
M	23	The Stolypin Era	
W	25	World War I	Kort, pp. 85-99
F	27	February Revolution	Map Test
M	30	Summer 1917	Kort, 99-113
W	FEB 1	The October Revolution	John Reed
F	3	<i>cont.</i>	
M	6	War Communism & Civil War	Kort, ch. 10
W	8	<i>cont.</i>	
F	10	N.E.P	Kort, ch. 11

M		13	<i>cont.</i>	
W		15	Rise of Stalin/1920s	Kort, ch. 12
F		17	<i>cont.</i>	
M		20	Stalin's Revolution	Kort, pp. 199-223
W		22	<i>cont.</i>	
F		24	Stalinism & Society	Kort, pp. 223-245
M		27	<i>cont.</i>	[Start reading Gulag!]
W	MAR	1	Catch-up/Review?	
F		3	Mid-Term Examination	
"Spring Break"--No Class				
M		13	World War II/Great Patriotic War	Kort, ch. 14
W		15	<i>cont.</i>	
F		17	Stalin's Final Years and legacy	Kort, ch. 15
M		20	The Gulag Experience	Solzhenitsyn
W		22	Khrushchev & De-Stalinization	Kort, ch. 16
F		24	<i>cont.</i>	
M		27	Beginning of Cold War	
W		29		[Start reading Akexievich]
F		31	Brezhnev and Stabilization	Kort, ch. 17
M	APR	3	<i>cont.</i>	
W		5	Stagnation & Gerontocracy	
F		7	Gorbachev Era & Reform	Kort, ch. 18
M		10	<i>cont.</i>	Alexievich
W		12	Collapse of the USSR	
F		14	NO CLASS—EASTER BREAK	
M		17	NO CLASS—EASTER BREAK	
W		19	Yeltsin and "Russian Devolution"	Kort, ch. 19
F		21	<i>cont.</i>	
M		24	Putin and Russia?	Kort, ch. 20
W		26	<i>cont.</i>	
F		28	Conclusions/Review/Catch-up	

Final Examination: Monday, May 1, 7:30-10:00

Course Calendar

(Note: This is subject to change! You are responsible for any and all changes announced in class.)

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
R Jan 15	Fundamentals of Russian History	Kort, chs. 1-5, pp. 3-44
T Jan 20	Tsar Nicholas and the Crisis of Tsarism	Kort, ch. 6
R Jan 22	Prelude to Revolution	Kort, ch. 7
T Jan 27	1905 Revolution and Reform	Kort, pp. 73-85
R Jan 29	WWI and the Fall of the Romanovs	Kort, pp. 85-99 (Map Test)
T Feb 3	Conflicts and Crisis 1917	Kort, pp. 99-113
R Feb 5	The October Revolution	John Reed
T Feb 10	War Communism & Civil War	Kort, ch. 10
R Feb 12	Soviet Society under N.E.P.	Kort, ch. 11
T Feb 17	Rise of Stalin/1920s	Kort, ch. 12
R Feb 19	Stalin's Economic Revolution	Kort, pp. 199-223
T Feb 24	(continue)	
R Feb 26	Stalinism and Society	Kort, pp. 223-245
T Mar 3	(conclusion and review)	
R Mar 5	Mid-term Examination	
	Spring Break	
T Mar 17	World War II/Great Patriotic War	Kort, ch. 14
R Mar 19	Stalin's Final Years	Kort, ch. 15
T Mar 24	Stalin's Legacy	Solzhenitsyn
R Mar 26	Khrushchev & De-Stalinization	Kort, ch. 16
T Mar 31	Beginning of the Cold War	
R Apr 2	Easter Recess	
T Apr 7	Brezhnev and Stabilization	Kort, ch. 17
R Apr 9	(continue)	
T Apr 14	Gorbachev and Reform	Kort, ch. 18
R Apr 16	(continue)	
T Apr 21	Yeltsin and "Russian Devolution"	Kort, ch. 19
R Apr 23	(continue)	
T Apr 28	Putin and Russia?	Kort, ch. 20
R Apr 30	(continue)	

Final Examination: Thursday, May 7, 10:30-1:00

