

Fall 2013 History 378-01  
2:00-3:15 TR BRYN 121

## Russian History Since 1900

([www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/russia](http://www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/russia))

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Office Hours: M 2-3:00; W 9-10:00; Th 9:45-10:45 and by appointment

### Course Description

This introductory course, which is cross-listed with International and Global Studies, examines Russian and Soviet history in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in two parts: Part I, “From Traditional Russia to the Civil War,” looks at traditional Russian society and culture; developments in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century; the upheaval in Russian society from the late tsarist period through World War I; the revolutions of 1917; and the civil war. Part II, “From the Rise of Joseph Stalin to post-Soviet Russia,” emphasizes the impact of the Stalin Revolution, the purges, and WWII; the reformist course of de-Stalinization pursued by Khrushchev; neo-Stalinism under Brezhnev; Gorbachev’s dramatic reforms in the 1980s; the collapse of the USSR and post-Soviet Russia. The course explores several themes: Russia’s relationship with the West; revolution and the role of the individual in history; the role of gender and class in Russian and Soviet society; and the role of ideology and socialism in theory and practice.

### Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to ...

- Use a historical approach to analyze and contextualize primary and secondary sources representing divergent perspectives.
- Use evidence to interpret the past coherently, orally and/or in writing
- Comprehend that history is not the memorization of dates and facts, but rather the *interpretation* of the past.
- Analyze historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and periods.
- Analyze the key terms, facts, and events in modern Russian/Soviet history and thereby exhibit an informed historical perspective.
- Critically appraise varying historical arguments and clearly express their own interpretations.
- Learn how to critically read and distinguish between different types of historical sources and to “read between the lines” of differing points of view.
- Analyze primary sources and gain insight on how to interpret history through such sources.

### Readings

- *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Mikhail Sholokhov (New York: Vintage Publishers, 1989; ISBN: 9780679725213)
- *Ivan’s War: Life and Death in the Red Army, 1939-1945* (New York: Picador, 2006; ISBN: 9780312426521)
- *Soviet Baby Boomers: An Oral History of Russia’s Cold War Generation*, Donald J. Raleigh (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2011; ISBN: 9780199311231)
- Reserve and online material identified below

**Film:** All students are required to see “Prisoner of the Mountains,” which is available on Bb.

### Course Activities:

Participation	30%	Midterm Exam	25%	(15% in-class; 10% Take Home Essay)
Review Essay	20%	Final Exam	25%	(15% in-class; 10% Take Home Essay)

**Participation:** The 30% class participation grade consists of Worksheets, Online Discussions, and Reaction Pieces (1-2 pages, double-spaced) to the readings designated below. These are intended to be your reaction to or opinion of the readings, not a summary. You can keep up with your participation grade on Blackboard.

**Review Essay:** The Review Essay (worth 20%) requires you to define the issues and arguments involved in a topic of historiographical debate related to the course (see the list of possible topics below). For the essay you should summarize the opposing sides of a historical debate for a topic chosen ahead of time and approved by the instructor, identifying 3-5 major books or articles on that topic in a bibliography. **The essay is due November 14**, but can be turned in at any point of the semester after October 24. **Essays should be double-spaced, 12-pt. font, 8-10 pages (undergrads)/12-15 pages (graduate students)** in length.

**Exams:** There is a midterm exam and a final exam (each worth 25%) for the class. The in-class exams are comprised of Identifications and Short Answer Questions based on course material and readings. In addition, each exam includes a Take Home Essay to be turned in on exam day; each essay, the topics for which are listed below, is worth 10% of the overall exam grade. The exams cover *only* the part of the course for which they are designated (Midterm: Late Imperial Period-Civil War; Final: Rise of Stalin-Contemporary Russia), so they are *not cumulative*.

**Grading:** Grades are compiled on a point system. For example, if you make an 80 on the Midterm Exam (12/15) + 88 on the Midterm Take Home Essay (8.8/10) + an 85 on the Final Exam (12.8/15) + 93 on the Final Take Home Essay (9.3/10) + 85 on your Written Assignment (17/20) + 90 on Participation (27/30), your final grade = **86.9** or **87 B+**

### CLASS SCHEDULE

Tuesday, August 20. Introduction

BEGIN READING: *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Parts I & II (“Peace” & “War”); [Worksheet 1](#) due in class September 12

#### Part I: From Traditional Russia to the Civil War

Thursday, August 22. Traditional Russian Society

- Reading for August 27: [“Prisoner of the Caucasus”](#) by Lev Tolstoy; **Online Discussion 1:** reply to the prompt on Blackboard by 8:00AM Tuesday, August 27  
Tuesday, August 27. Russia in the Caucasus: Discussion of the Reading
- Reading for August 29: excerpts from [“What is to be Done?”](#) by V. I. Lenin; **Online Discussion 2:** reply to the prompt on Blackboard by 8:00AM Thursday, August 29  
Thursday, August 29. The Origins of Russian Marxism & Lenin’s “What is to be done?”
- Reading for September 3: “October Manifesto”  
Tuesday, September 3. The Russian Revolution of 1905
- Optional Reading: [“1905 Pogroms in Russia”](#) by Mazelev

Thursday, September 5. The 1905 Revolution (cont'd): Battleship Potemkin

- Optional Reading: [“Potemkin’ Restored to Uncensored Glory”](#)

Tuesday, September 10: Between the Revolutions: Russia in Transition

- Optional Reading: [“The Story of an Assassination”](#) by Marie Sukloff

Thursday, September 12. Calm Before the Storm: Discussion of *And Quiet Flows the Don*

READING: *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Parts III & IV (“Revolution” & “Civil War”); [Worksheet 2](#) due September 26

Tuesday, September 17. 1917: Revolutionary Turmoil in Russia

Thursday, September 19. Revolutionary Turmoil in Russia (cont'd)

- Reading for September 24: [“Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited Peoples”](#); excerpts from [“The Proletarian Revolution and The Renegade Kautsky”](#) by V. I. Lenin; and [“Theses on Communist Morality in the Sphere of Marital Relations”](#) by Alexandra Kollontai; **\*\*Reaction Piece 1** due in class

Tuesday, September 24. The Bolsheviks Come to Power

Thursday, September 26. The Cossacks & the Civil War: Discussion of *And Quiet Flows the Don*

Tuesday, October 1. **MIDTERM EXAM: TAKE HOME ESSAY DUE IN CLASS**

**MIDTERM EXAM Take Home Essay Question (worth 10% of the overall course grade) (12-point font, 3-5 pages double-spaced):** Drawing on at least two sources from the course, respond to this question: In your opinion, was the collapse of the Russian autocracy and the Bolshevik rise to power inevitable or, without the strains of World War I, could Russia have gradually evolved into a Constitutional Monarchy or parliamentary democracy?

## **Part II: From the Rise of Joseph Stalin to post-Soviet Russia**

BEGIN READING: *Ivan’s War*; **\*\*Reaction Piece 2** due October 24

Thursday, October 3. Stalin as a Historical Personality & the Struggle for Power

- Optional Reading: [“Stalin, Man of the Borderlands”](#) by Alfred Rieber

Tuesday, October 8. The Struggle for Power (cont'd) & the Stalin Revolution

- Reading for October 10: [“Should This Pulitzer be Pulled?”](#) by Douglas McCollam; **Online Discussion 3**: reply to the prompt on Blackboard by 8:00AM Thursday, October 10

Thursday, October 10. The Stalin Revolution (cont'd)

Thursday, October 17. The Stalinist Terror

- Reading for October 22: [Stalin as Time’s “Man of the Year” 1939 & 1942](#)

Tuesday, October 22. “And Tomorrow there was War”: Discussion of the Reading

Thursday October 24. WWII in the USSR: Discussion of *Ivan’s War*

- Optional Reading: excerpt from [Through the Burning Steppe](#)

**BEGIN READING:** *Soviet Baby Boomers*; **\*\*Reaction Piece 5** due November 21

Tuesday, October 29. Russia After the War

- Reading for October 31: excerpts from the 1947 speeches of Andrei Zhdanov and President Harry Truman; **Worksheet 3** due in class

Thursday, October 31. Origins of the Cold War: Discussion of the Reading

- Reading for November 5: Excerpt from Khrushchev's 1956 **Secret Speech**

Tuesday, November 5. Khrushchev & de-Stalinization: the "Thaw"

- Optional Reading: Khrushchev as *Time's* "Man of the Year" 1957; excerpts from *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Alexander Solzhenitsyn and *Not By Bread Alone* by Vladimir Dudintsev

- Reading for November 7: "**Fiasco in Riazan Oblast**" from *Khrushchev: The Years in Power* by Roy & Zhores Medvedev; and "**Bloody Saturday: Novocherkassk, 1962**"; **\*\*Reaction Piece 3** due in class

Thursday, November 7. Crisis in the Early 1960s

Tuesday, November 12. The Brezhnev Era: Stability, Neo-Stalinism, & Stagnation

Thursday, November 14. The Gorbachev Phenomenon: *Perestroika & Glasnost*; **\*\*REVIEW ESSAY DUE IN CLASS**

- Optional Reading: "**Gorbachev: From High Hopes to the Bitter End**" by Theodore von Laue; and *Gorbachev as Time's "Man of the Year" 1987 and 1989*
- ❖ **FILM:** view "Prisoner of the Mountains" on Bb for an in-class discussion on November 19; **\*\*Reaction Piece 4** due in class

Tuesday, November 19. The Collapse of the USSR & Post-Soviet Russia; Discussion of "Prisoners of the Mountains"

Thursday, November 21. Russia Today: Discussion of *Soviet Baby Boomers*

- Optional Reading: "**Whither Human Rights in Russia?**": Statement of Ludmilla Alexeyeva, Chair, Moscow Helsinki Group

Tuesday, November 26. **FINAL EXAM: TAKE HOME ESSAY DUE IN CLASS**

**FINAL EXAM Take Home Essay Question (worth 10% of the overall course grade) (12-point font, 3-5 pages double-spaced): Choose one of the following questions:**

1. Drawing on at least three sources from the course, respond to this question: In your opinion, what were the main factors in the collapse of the Soviet Union? (Note: begin with the early Stalin era to address this question).

OR

2. Drawing on at least three sources from the course agree with one of these two statements:
  - a. The Soviet Union under Stalin and his successors was clearly a totalitarian society.

or

- b. The term "totalitarian" does not adequately describe the Soviet Union under Stalin or his successors because it conceals more than it reveals.

### **List of Possible Topics for the Review Essay:**

- Traditional Russian culture and society
- The Late Imperial Period
- Tsarist Nationalities Policy
- Sport and entertainment in late imperial Russia
- The 1905 Revolution and/or Period Between the Revolutions
- World War I in Russia
- The 1917 Revolution(s)/Revolutionary Period
- The Soviet Civil War
- The NEP period/1920s in the Soviet Union
- A Comparison of Different Biographies of Lenin/Stalin/Trotsky/Bukharin/Gorbachev, etc.
- The Collectivization of Agriculture
- The “Stalin Revolution”
- The Debate over the Ukrainian Famine (1932-33)
- Labor and Industrial Production in the Stalinist/Soviet Period
- The Debate over the Assassination of Sergei Kirov (1934)
- The Origins and Causes of the purges of the late 1930s
- Religion in Russia/the Soviet Union
- Art/Literature/Film in the Soviet period
- Propaganda/Iconography/the Stalin Cult
- Sport and entertainment in the USSR
- National Policy during the Stalinist/Soviet Period
- The Role or Position of Women in Russia/the Soviet Union
- Anti-Semitism in Russia/the USSR
- The Soviet Educational System
- The Leningrad Blockade
- World War II in the Soviet Union
- Postwar Reconstruction
- The Origins of the Cold War
- The “Thaw”/Khrushchev Period
- The Soviet Space Program
- The Gorbachev Reforms
- The Soviet-Afghan War
- Russia Since the Collapse of the USSR

Note: these are just a few suggestions of the types of topics that might be doable for the Review Essay; by no means is this list intended to be exhaustive and students are welcome to come up with their own possible topics (or variations of those listed above).