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HISTORY 421: RUSSIAN HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION
Schofield Barracks, Fall Evening 2000
SYLLABUS

Instructor:

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Introduction:

In this course we will explore the underlying themes, conditions, and events that have influenced the course of Russian/Soviet history from ancient times to the present.

Texts:

John M. Thompson, *Russia and the Soviet Union*, 4th edition (Westview Press, 1998).
Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*. (Oxford University Press, 1994)

Course requirements:

1. You are expected to read the chapters assigned from the textbook(s) and to formulate one or two questions on the reading before class. You are encouraged to participate in class or group discussions, and you *may* be asked to complete some short assignment -- a quiz, impromptu essay, short oral report or the like -- during each class period.
2. You are expected to choose two books from the reading list and write a two-to-three-page book report on each. Your report should identify the historical context and main theme(s) of the book, show through specific examples how the author develops the themes, and focus on a particular aspect of the book that interests you. Be prepared to give an impromptu oral presentation based on your book report.
3. You will be asked to select a topic related to Russia and/or the former Soviet Union that has been making the news in recent months and to provide a brief historical background to the events being reported in a written report of two or three pages, with a bibliography. If you quote or paraphrase material from a source, please cite that source in a footnote. Be prepared to give an impromptu oral presentation based on your findings. You may turn in your report any time before or on December 4.
4. You are expected to take three exams, two mid-terms and a final, based on the class discussions and the readings. You will be given six or seven exam questions to study in advance, three of which will appear on the exam. In class, you will be asked to answer two of the three alternatives in essays of about two pages each. In each essay, put forth your thesis, make three or four points to support it, and state your conclusions. *It may be to your advantage to study for the exams with other members of the class.*

Grading: Assignments will be weighted as follows:

Each of three exams 20% of your grade

Each book or news report: 10% of your grade

Class participation: 10% of your grade

CLASS SCHEDULE:

October 2: *Burnt by the Sun.*

Read Thompson, Chapters 1 and 2.

October 9: Holiday; no class.

October 16: Introduction. Geography. Ancient, Kievan, and Appanage Russia. The Mongols. The Rise of Moscow, Ivan the Terrible, the Time of Troubles.

Read Thompson, Chapters 3 and 4.

October 23: Peter the Great and Westernization.

Read Thompson, Chapters 5 and 6. First book report due.

October 30: First midterm exam.

Catherine the Great, Power, and Backwardness.

Read Thompson, Chapters 7 and 8.

November 6: The Crimean War to the 1905 Revolution.

Read Thompson, Chapters 9 and 10. Second book report due.

November 13: Lenin's Revolution, Civil War, and NEP.

Read Thompson, Chapter 11 and Fitzpatrick, Chapters 1-4.

November 20: Stalin's Revolution. The Great Purge, World War II, The Big Deal.

Read Thompson, Chapter 12 and Fitzpatrick, Chapters 5-6.

November 27: Second midterm exam.

The Cold War, Khrushchev and the Thaw, Brezhnev and Stagnation

Read Thompson, Chapter 13.

December 4: Gorbachev and *Perestroika*. The New Russia.

Read Thompson, Chapters 14 and 15. News report due.

December 11: Final exam

Reading List:

Isaac Babel, *1920 Diary*

Mikhail Bulgakov, *The Heart of a Dog*

Anton Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard* or *Three Sisters*

Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground*.

Nikolai Gogol, *The Government Inspector* or *The Overcoat*

Eugenia Ginzburg, *Journey into the Whirlwind*.

Boris Pasternak, *Dr. Zhivago*

Alexander Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin*

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*

Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*

Ivan Turgenev, *Diary of a Superfluous Man*