

CAS IR 542/UNI SS 542/CAS PO 556

RUSSIA: A REEMERGING COUNTRY IN TROUBLE

Fall 2008

Tu/Th 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

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SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

Russia has taken great strides to regain its status of a superpower. When speaking in public its leaders sound confident, even triumphalist. The political scene in Moscow is stable and the economy is good. Yet, Russia is also a country in trouble. Some seventy million Russians live in areas that are severely polluted. The country's population has declined from 151 million in 1990 to 140 million in 2007; there are 11 births but 16 deaths per 1,000 population. To Russia's east, China has 1.2 billion, in the west, the EU has 375 million, and to Russia's south there are some 300 million Muslims. Men in North Korea (69) and Bosnia (75) live longer than do men in Russia (59).

The old totalitarian system came to an end almost two decades ago. How different is the new system? Although Russian citizens are now free to express their political views, power remains vested in the hands of a small elite that has squandered away much of Russia's wealth and channeled vast sums of foreign assistance into private accounts at home and abroad. Corruption is a serious problem. Transparency International lists Russia as being 143rd on a global corruption scale. It's been estimated that some \$30 billion are spent annually on bribes for state officials.

The present situation in Iraq and Afghanistan, among other factors, has made energy production very profitable. This has been to be good for Russian state coffers. The state economy keeps improving; it has grown by seven percent annually since the crisis of 1998. The federal budget has run surpluses since 2001. The most recent surplus figure was three percent in 2007. Yet, the country's political and security relations with the United States and the EU countries have declined during the past several years.

This course will focus on the emergence of new power structures in Russia. It will examine the impact of organized crime and the public health and environmental crises on today's Russia. It will analyze the careers of President Dmitry A. Medvedev, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, Boris Yeltsin and Mikhail Gorbachev. We will study Russia's current policies. We will examine the conflicts between Yeltsin and Gorbachev and their attack on the Brezhnevite political, security and military élites. We will review the main achievement of Gorbachev, viz., the transfer of power from the party to regional and union soviets.

The course will study the fate of other players on the contemporary Russian political scene, such as Yuri Luzhkov and the oligarchs Mikhail Khodorkovski, Roman Abramovich, Boris Berezovsky, and Vladimir Gusinsky.

Recent developments in Russia and the country's changing role on the international arena will be discussed on the basis of current reports and analyses.

REQUIRED READINGS

Peter Baker and Susan Glasser, *The Kremlin Rising* (New York: Scribner, 2005).

David Hoffman, *The Oligarchs: Wealth and Power in the New Russia* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2002).

David Satter, *Darkness at Dawn: The Rise of the Russian Criminal State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

ADDITIONAL READINGS are assigned from the following books:

James H. Billington, *Russia Transformed: Moscow, August 1991* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor* (Oxford University Press, 1996).

Murray Feshbach, *Russia's Health and Demographic Crises: Policy Implications and Consequences* (Washington: The Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute, 2003).

Paul Klebnikov, *Godfather of the Kremlin: Boris Berezovsky and the Looting of Russia* (New York: Harcourt, Inc., 2000).

Martin Sixsmith, *The Litvinenko File: The Life and Death of a Russian Spy* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2007).

OFFICE HOURS:

I am available for consultations during my office hours, every Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. My office is at 745 Commonwealth Ave. (STH), room 634. I am also always happy to speak with you before and after each lecture. If you are unable to see me during my office hours I will make a prompt arrangement to see you as soon as possible.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There will be a midterm and a final examination, each worth c. 50 percent of the final grade. This arrangement is not mathematically perfect because I need room to reward active course participation or to penalize poor attendance and failure to read the assigned texts.

The midterm examination will take place on 21 October 2008. The final examination is scheduled by Boston University for Friday, 19 December 2008, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Please note that I am not able to change this arrangement.

Familiarity with assigned texts is essential. Attendance and active participation are required. I start each lecture with a review of the material covered to date. Please come prepared to be challenged.

It is your responsibility to know and understand the provisions of the Academic Conduct Code; a copy can be obtained in the Dean's Office.

Please observe the no eating or drinking in the classroom rule. If you wear a baseball hat take it off for the duration of the class. And please turn off your cell-phones.

POLICY ON INCOMPLETES

No incomplete grades will be reported unless the student has presented a plausible explanation why the coursework cannot be finished on time. The student will then fill in a form requesting an incomplete grade; this will include a written commitment to satisfy the outstanding obligations by a specific date, which must be no later than one calendar year from the date on which the final examination took place.

POLICY ON "W" GRADE

The last day to drop this class without a "W" grade on your transcript is 6 October 2008. The last day to drop this class with a "W" grade is 10 November 2008.

REEMERGENCE OF RUSSIA
Course Outline
Fall 2008

Lecture 1. September 2	Introduction
Lecture 2. September 4	Vladimir Putin
Lecture 3. September 9	Elza Kungayeva (2000) and <i>Kursk</i> (2000)
Lecture 4. September 11	From Ryazan (1999) to <i>Nord-Ost</i> (2002)
Lecture 5. September 16	Russia's War on Terrorism: Beslan (2004)
Lecture 6. September 18	<i>Vorovskoy mir</i> and <i>The Mafiya</i>
Lecture 7. September 23	Medical Crisis
Lecture 8. September 25	Russia's Environmental Crisis
Lecture 9. September 30	Litvinenko, etc.
Lecture 10. October 2	Gorbachev's Path to Power
Lecture 11. October 7	The Gorbachev Experiment
Lecture 12. October 9	The August Coup d'État
Lecture 13. October 16	The Final Act: The USSR Collapses
Lecture 14. October 21	MIDTERM
Lecture 15. October 23	Alexander Smolensky and Yuri Luzhkov
Lecture 16. October 28	Anatoly Chubais
Lecture 17. October 30	Mikhail Khodorkovsky
Lecture 18. November 4	Boris Berezovsky
Lecture 19. November 6	Vladimir Gusinsky
Lecture 20. November 13	Privatization of Russia
Lecture 21. November 18	Yeltsin, the Oligarchs & Easy Money
Lecture 22. November 20	A Hobbesian Moment on Sparrow Hills
Lecture 23. November 25	The New "Board of Directors" of Russia
Lecture 24. December 2	The Oligarchs at War
Lecture 25. December 4	Decline of the Oligarchs
Lecture 26. December 9	Putin Rules
Lecture 27. December 11	Review

**Lecture 1
Introduction**

Description of the course & discussion of required readings; course requirements, attendance, readings, policy on incompletes, and grading.

**Lecture 2
Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin**

Baker and Glasser, *Kremlin Rising*, 38-77.

**Lecture 3
Vignettes from Putin's Russia: Elza Kungayeva and Kursk**

Baker and Glasser, *Kremlin Rising*, 99-120, 87-91.

Satter, *Darkness at Dawn*, 5-23.

**Lecture 4
From Ryazan (1999) to Nord-Ost (2002)**

Satter, *Darkness at Dawn*, 24-33.

Baker and Glasser, *Kremlin Rising*, 156-178.

Klebnikov, *Godfather of the Kremlin*, 301-307.

**Lecture 5
Russia's War on Terrorism: Beslan (2004)**

Baker and Glasser, *Kremlin Rising*, 15-37.

**Lecture 6
Vorovskoy mir and the Mafiya**

Klebnikov, *Godfather of the Kremlin*, 11-45, 170-211.

Satter, *Darkness at Dawn*, 112-155, 222-247.

Lecture 7
The Medical Crisis

Feshbach, *Russia's Health and Demographic Crises*, 63-78.

Baker and Glasser, *The Kremlin Rising*, 179-196.

Satter, *Darkness at Dawn*, 198-221.

Lecture 8
Russia's Environmental Crisis

Feshbach, *Russia's Health and Demographic Crises*, 23-60.

Lecture 9
Litvinenko, etc.

Sixsmith, *The Litvinenko File*. Read as much as you can to form an opinion regarding this case and its possible links with topics we've covered.

Lecture 10
Gorbachev's Path to Power

Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, 24-88.

Lecture 11
The Gorbachev Experiment

Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, 155-211.

Lukes, "Changes in the Decision-Making Apparatus: *Vsja vlast' sovietam*," in Ra'anan and Lukes, *Gorbachev's USSR*, 72-94.

Lecture 12
The August Coup d'État

Billington, *Russia Transformed*, passim.

Klebnikov, *Godfather of the Kremlin*, 72-76.

Lecture 13
The Final Act: The USSR Collapses

Klebnikov, *Godfather of the Kremlin*, 46-77.

Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, 252-305.

Lecture 14
MIDTERM
(21 October 2008)

Lecture 15
Alexander Smolensky and Yuri Luzhkov

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 31-77, 237-269.

Lecture 16
Anatoly Chubais

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 78-99, 308-364, 410-441.

Klebnikov, *Godfather of the Kremlin*, 212-247.

Lecture 17
Mikhail Khodorkovsky

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 100-126, 495-501.

Klebnikov, *Godfather of the Kremlin*, 202-211.

Lecture 18
Boris Berezovsky

Klebnikov, *Godfather of the Kremlin*, passim.

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 127-149.

Lecture 19
Vladimir Gusinsky

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 150-174.

Lecture 20
Privatization of Russia

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 177-208.

Lecture 21
Yeltsin, the Oligarchs and Easy Money

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 209-236.

Lecture 22
A Hobbesian Moment on Sparrow Hills

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 270-295.

Lecture 23
The New “Board of Directors” of Russia

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 296-364.

Lecture 24
The Oligarchs at War

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 365-396.

Lecture 25
Decline of the Oligarchs

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 442-489.

Baker and Glasser, *Kremlin Rising*, 78-98, 272-292, 335-353.

Lecture 26
Putin Rules

Klebnikov, *Godfather of the Kremlin*, 284-317.

Satter, *Darkness at Dawn*, 248-256.

Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 487-489.

Lecture 27
Final Reflections