Syllabus

Russian 245: Life and Culture
Fall 2017
Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. -10:45 a.m.
Lapham Hall 242

Instructor: Dr. Nina Familiant
Office: 822 Curtin Hall
Telephone: 414-229-4949 (for emergencies only: 414-737-1328)
Email: familian@uwm.edu
Office hours: Fridays 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and by appointment

The objective of this course is to provide you an introduction to the fundamentals of Russian culture as well as to develop your skills in humanistic inquiry. The assignments provide you a broad range of primary texts, from poems to chronicles, and from feature films to recipes. Our objective in class discussion and in our research and writing is to figure out how all these pieces come together to tell the story of Russian culture: how, why, when, and where it came to be what it is.

We will examine Russia’s cultural life through the country’s historical progression. Although this is not a history class, students are expected to become familiar with major ground-breaking historical events in each century, their repercussions and impact on Russia’s cultural life and its further development. Students will learn about themes, trends, patterns in Russian culture expressed in literature, folklore, art, religion, daily life, architecture, and music. Also, each week we will look closer at a specific area of Russian culture (“Aspect of culture” in the syllabus). Areas will vary from grand and complex like Russian iconography to more down-to-earth like Russian hospitality and drinking traditions.

Humanities General Education Requirement
This course partially satisfies the Humanities component of the UWM General Education Requirements (GER). It approaches the study of Russian culture through humanistic means of inquiry (e.g., critical use of sources and evaluation of evidence, exercise of judgment and expression of ideas, organization, logical analysis, and creative use of knowledge). It introduces students to substantial and coherent bodies of historical, cultural, literary, and philosophical knowledge as a means of increasing your understanding of the complexities and varieties of human events. You will gain a fundamental knowledge of Russian culture over the last millennium. You also will analyze and critique the information presented with the goal of identifying elements of all these topics that speak to a uniquely Russian character. You will acquire a refined understanding of the historical readings, literary texts, films, etc. covered in the course, and will be asked to demonstrate thoughtful, original, and creative approaches to the course material in your projects, presentations and exams.

All UWM courses with Humanities GER designation have the following learning outcome: “Students will be able to identify the formation, traditions, and ideas essential to major bodies of historical, cultural, literary, or philosophical knowledge.” In addition, this course addresses the following learning UW System Shared Learning Goal: “Effective Communication Skills
including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and information literacy.” I will use your final projects – both the paper and the presentation – to assess your achievement of these outcomes according to the rubrics under “Coursework Details” below.

Materials

Book:
All materials for the course are posted on D2L, including the main reference Russia: A Concise History by Ronald Hingley (Thames and Hudson, 1991). This book is also available on Amazon at a very modest price if anyone is interested in owning the book instead of reading off screen or making Xerox copies. Any edition would be acceptable for the course. Access to the course site is required for all students.

Coursework:
Your grade will be determined as follows:

25% -- Preparation and participation
10% -- Power Point presentation on a historical personality (cultural influencer)
15% -- Weekly quizzes (10 quizzes +1 quiz on the syllabus)
15% -- Midterm
15% -- Final Exam
20% -- Research project

Coursework Details

1. Preparation and participation. In order to have meaningful and productive discussions, it is crucial that you come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings and other materials. If you do not contribute to class discussions and activities or do not attend class, I cannot give you credit for participation. Likewise, I cannot give you credit for participation if you have not completed the readings and assignments due and are not prepared to discuss them. Forms of participation include: group and pair activities; asking questions; thinking aloud; respectfully disagreeing; making observations; expanding on other students’ contributions; cracking jokes; criticizing the authors; etc. Part of your participation grade reflects whether or not you contribute to a productive and positive classroom atmosphere. Let’s keep these discussions friendly and fruitful! Being disrespectful of your classmates or me will hurt your grade. I will drop your two lowest participation scores when calculating your final grade.

! Key points (dates, names, major concepts, etc.) for each Hingley chapter are posted on D2L and meant to facilitate your preparation for each week of classes. Make sure to find all keys points as you do your homework reading and to know what they are.

2. Power Point Presentation. On the first day of classes you will learn about a nationwide TV project “The Name of Russia,” which was conducted in Russia a few years ago. Based on the
list of “finalists,” each student will choose a historical personality that “competed” in the project in order to be recognized as the symbol of Russia. Students will prepare a 20-slide Power Point presentation on his/her historical personality. More details on this assignment will be provided in class. Times of presentations will vary depending on when the personality you’re supposed to present on was born. (For example, if you present on Catherine the Great, your presentation is due during the week when we’re discussing The Age of Empresses.)

3. Research Project. This is a semester-long research project on a topic of your choosing, which will result in a 5-page (1250 words) paper.¹ You will select a topic of interest to you (e.g., the origins of borscht, Pushkin’s ethnic background, vodka-drinking culture, Stalin’s purges, communal apartments, etc.), formulate a question about it (e.g., “Why beets?”), and conduct research online and in the library to find an answer to your question. In your paper, you will present an argument with a clear thesis and use your research findings to support your point of view. You will present a brief oral summary of your paper in class as part of the assignment. The assignment consists of four parts:

1) the prospectus form,
2) a rough draft,
3) your oral presentation in class, and
4) a final copy.

Your project will be graded using a 60-point scale (we’ll go over the expectations and rubrics in more detail in class).

✓ 10 points: Prospectus form (available on D2L under “Content”/ “Research Project”).
✓ 15 points: Complete rough draft. Quality and quantity of research; clarity of writing; organization and argumentation. (See “Guidelines” on D2L under “Content”/ “Research Project”
✓ 5 points: Presentation. A 10-minute summary of your research findings and the argument you present in your paper.

For the final draft:
✓ 10 points: Quality and quantity of research; quality of sources. For full points, you need at least five sources, three of which must be books or scholarly journals.
✓ 10 points: Writing. Structure and organization, style, argumentation, originality, clarity. Incorporation of my comments and suggestions on your rough draft.

An additional ten points will be linked to the Humanities GER learning outcome and the UW System Shared Learning Goal described above. I will assess your achievement of these outcomes using your oral presentation and your final draft according to the following rubrics:

5 points: “Students will be able to identify the formation, traditions, and ideas essential to major bodies of historical, cultural, literary, or philosophical knowledge.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 points</th>
<th>3 points</th>
<th>1 point</th>
<th>0 points</th>
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</table>

¹ The word count does not include bibliography.
Student connects detailed and specific knowledge of her/his research topic with the larger themes and trends of Russian cultural history explored over the semester. S/he is able to effectively field questions during her/his oral presentation.

Student demonstrates detailed and specific knowledge of her/his research topic, but is unable to connect it with the larger themes and trends of Russian cultural history explored over the semester. S/he is able to effectively field most questions during her/his oral presentation.

Student does not demonstrate detailed and specific knowledge of her/his research topic and is unable to connect it with the larger themes and trends of Russian cultural history explored over the semester. S/he is unable to effectively field questions during her/his oral presentation.

Not completed.

5 points: “Effective Communication Skills including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and information literacy."

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 points</th>
<th>3 points</th>
<th>1 point</th>
<th>0 points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student demonstrates the ability to distinguish between all the different categories of information (e.g. primary vs. secondary sources; popular vs. scholarly works) used in her/his research.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates the ability to distinguish between some, but not all categories of information (e.g. primary vs. secondary sources; popular vs. scholarly works) used in her/his research.</td>
<td>Student does not demonstrate the ability to distinguish between the categories of information (e.g. primary vs. secondary sources; popular vs. scholarly works) used in her/his research.</td>
<td>Not completed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student demonstrates wide and careful reading in her/his research.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates wide reading in her/his research, but it is apparent s/he misunderstood much of it.</td>
<td>Student has not completed substantial reading on her/his topic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student delivers a clear and concise summary of her/his project in the presentation and is able to effectively and clearly field questions during her/his oral presentation.</td>
<td>Student delivers a summary of her/his project in the presentation that is not entirely clear and is able to effectively and clearly field most questions during her/his oral presentation.</td>
<td>Student’s presentation is difficult to follow due to deficiencies in organization, sentence-level linguistic structures, and/or manner of delivery. S/he is unable to effectively field questions during her/his oral presentation.</td>
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The final copy of your research paper (completed, revised, edited, and proofread) is due on the last day of the exam week, which is Saturday, December 23rd. **5 points per day will be deducted for late submission.** No paper will be accepted after December 25th.

4. **Weekly quizzes.** The first quiz will take place on Monday, September 11th. It will consist of several multiple-choice questions based on the content of the course syllabus. Beginning the week of September 18th, you will have short factual quizzes (4-6 questions to be answered in 1-2 sentences or multiple choice assignments) based on the material read and studied at home, and discussed in class during the previous week. Quizzes are meant to check your understanding and retention of the material.
5. **Midterm and Final Exam.** The midterm is a cumulative one-hour exam. The final is a cumulative two-hour exam. It will take place during the week of the finals. Both exams consist of short-answer questions (e.g., “What is the signature ingredient of borscht?”), short essays (e.g., “What are the principle differences between Moscow and St. Petersburg?”), and one long essay on a broader question (e.g., “How has the legacy of slavery (serfdom) in Russia affected its political culture?”).

6. **Voluntary class project** for 3 points to be added to the final: *A Day in the Life of Russia.* Interested students should find a recent piece of news from a reputable English-language news source (e.g., New York Times, The Moscow Times, The Guardian, LATimes, BBC, Reuters, etc.) and share your findings with the class. Students should also provide their personal opinion on the news. On the day of the assignment, each participating student should submit an index card with the following information: name of the news source, name of the contributor(s), date of publication, and topic (e.g., “Dangers of working as a journalist in Russia”).

**Course Policies** (in alphabetical order)

**Absences:** If you miss a class for any reason, your preparation and participation score for that day will be zero.

**Alternative exam dates:** The midterm and the final exam could be rescheduled for a later or an earlier date in exceptional cases only (e.g., medical or family emergency). Proper documentation is required for rescheduling.

**Disabilities:** If you have any kind of disability that might affect your performance in this class, please notify me immediately so that we can accommodate your needs. If you wait until the semester is already half-over, I may not be able to accommodate you.

**Harassment:** No harassment of any kind will be tolerated. If you feel you are being harassed or if you think one of your classmates is being harassed in any way, please inform either me or our departmental chair (Professor Michael Mikos, mikos@uwm.edu) immediately so that we can get the problem taken care of.

**Make-up policy:** This course has no make-up policy on single missed quizzes. However, some arrangements could be in case of a prolonged absence (e.g., illness or family circumstances) if you have proper documentation.

**Phones:** Turn them off and stow them during class! Using your phone during class is the same as being absent: you will get a zero for your participation grade that day. If you have an emergency and need to be able to check your phone, let me know before class starts to avoid a zero for participation.

**Plagiarism:** Any cases of suspected plagiarism will be referred immediately to the Dean of Students for investigation and disciplinary action (which might include expulsion from the
University). Generally speaking, plagiarism is the act of presenting other people’s ideas or language as your own (e.g. quoting a website without citation). If at any point you are at all unsure as to whether you might be committing plagiarism, please just ask! The consequences of plagiarism are unpleasant for everyone, so let’s avoid it at all costs. For policies on academic misconduct, complaint procedures, and grade appeal procedures, see [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf)

**FINAL EXAM** will take place on Wednesday, December 20th, 7:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m., in our regular classroom. (Arrive 10 minutes earlier!)

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND ASSIGNMENTS**

*Please note: Readings and assignments are due on the date listed.*

All audio/video materials listed in the syllabus will be listened to/watched in class unless specified otherwise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>09/06</td>
<td><strong>Welcome to 245! Добро пожаловать!</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Introductions&lt;br&gt;• Syllabus overview&lt;br&gt;• Assignment of&lt;br&gt;• Power Point presentations&lt;br&gt;Research project: Begin to think about a topic for your research paper.</td>
<td>Discussion: What is (Russian) culture? (in class)&lt;br&gt;General culture-related video materials (to be shown in class).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>09/11</td>
<td><strong>Quiz on the syllabus What is Russian Culture?</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Hingley, pp.7-10&lt;br&gt;• Fedor Dostoevsky, “The Pushkin Speech”</td>
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</tbody>
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2 Reading assignments might be changed at the instructor’s discretion to meet the needs and pace of the class.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09/13</td>
<td>The “Before”</td>
<td>• Aleksandr Blok, “The Scythians”</td>
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<td>• “A Mummy Unearthed from the Pastures of Heaven”</td>
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<td><strong>Aspect of culture:</strong></td>
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<td>Stereotypes about Russians</td>
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<td>World through the Russian eyes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>09/18 Quiz 1</td>
<td>• Hingley, 11-22</td>
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<td>• <em>The Russian Primary Chronicle (RPC)</em>: “The Beginning of the Russian</td>
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<td>State and the Arrival of Rurik”</td>
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<td>• “The Founding of the City of Kiev” (RPC)</td>
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<td>• Aleksandr Pushkin, <em>The Ballad of Oleg the Wise</em></td>
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<td>• “Vladimir Christianizes Russia” (RPC)</td>
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<td>• “The Martyrdom of Boris and Gleb” (RPC)</td>
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<td>Christianization of</td>
<td><strong>Research Project:</strong></td>
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<td>Rus’</td>
<td>Prospectus forms of your research project are due no later than Sunday,</td>
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<td>September 24th</td>
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<td>Kievan Rus’</td>
<td><strong>Byliny:</strong> Hero Tales of Russia</td>
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<td><em>The Lay (Tale) of Igor’s Campaign</em> (excerpts)</td>
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<td>Borodin, <em>Prince Igor</em> (opera)</td>
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<td>09/20</td>
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<td><strong>Aspect of culture:</strong></td>
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<td>Superstitions</td>
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<td>• Tolochko, “Religious Sites in Kiev During the Reign of Volodimer</td>
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<td>Sviatoslavich”</td>
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<td>Pavlovskaya, “Main Features of the Russian Character”</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>09/25 Quiz 2</td>
<td>• Hingley, 23-31</td>
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<td>• Frazier, <em>Travels in Siberia</em></td>
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<td>• “The Tale of the Destruction of Riazan” (RPC)</td>
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<td>• Movie “Mongol”</td>
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<td>The Tatars and the</td>
<td><strong>The Chronicle of Novgorod</strong></td>
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<td>Rise of Moscow</td>
<td>Livonian Rhymed Chronicle</td>
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<td>09/27</td>
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<td>Movie <em>Aleksandr Nevsky</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Week 5 | 10/02 | Quiz 3 | • *Eralash Show* video skits  
• Hingley, 31-40  
• Afanasy Nikitin, *Journey Across Three Seas*  
• Law Code of 1497  
• Att. Monk Sylvestr, *Rules for Russian Households*  
   **Early Muscovy**  
   **Ivan the Terrible**  
   10/04 |  
| Week 6 | 10/09 | Quiz 4 | • Hingley, 52-58  
• *Boris Godunov* (movie)  
• Mussorgsky, *Boris Godunov* (opera)  
• Glinka, *Ivan Susanin* (opera)  
   **The Time of Troubles**  
   10/11 |  
| Week 7 | 10/16 | Quiz 5 | • Hingley, 69-81  
   **Muscovy under the First Romanovs**  
   **Aspect of culture**: Art of Iconography  
   **Aspect of culture**: Folk tales and pseudo-folk tales (authored)  
• “Baba Yaga” and “At Pike’s Command”  
• Pushkin in cartoons: *The Tale of Tsar Saltan* (to be watched at home)  
• Grigory Milliar, Baba Yaga of Soviet cinematography  
   10/16 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 8</th>
<th>10/23</th>
<th>Quiz 6</th>
<th>Autocracy Militant Reformation and Counter-Reform</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>10/30</td>
<td>Quiz 7</td>
<td>Decline and Fall of the Empire 1917</td>
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<td>11/01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>11/06</td>
<td>Quiz 8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Peter the Great**

- Pushkin, *The Bronze Horseman*
- John Perry, *Peter’s Social Reforms*

**The Age of Empresses**

- Hingley, 82-96
- Catherine the Great, *Memoirs*

**Aspect of culture:** Drinking

- Pokhlebkin, 175-88
- Dostoevsky, Chapter on Marmeladov family from *Crime and Punishment*
- Erofeev, *Moscow to the End of the Line* (excerpts)

**Week 8**

- Hingley, 97-132 (long, sorry!)
- Tchaikovsky, *The 1812 Overture*
- Pushkin, “Deep in Siberian Mines”
- Ivan Turgenev, “Mumu”

**Week 9**

- Hingley, 134-150
- Movie *Rasputin: Dark Servant of Destiny*

**Week 10**

- Hingley, 170-181
- Lynne Viola, “The War Against the Peasantry”

**Aspect of culture:** Food

- “7 Bizarre Foods Every Russian Grew Up With” (Buzzfeed.com)
- Cartoon for grown-up “Banquet”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Soviet Russia (pre-war)</th>
<th>Soviet Russia (WWII and post-war)</th>
<th>Focus: John Reed, Isadora Duncan, Dean Reed, Samantha Smith</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 11/08 | • Alexandra Kollontai, “Sexual Relations and the Class Struggle” | • Stalin, *Dizzy with Success*  
• Ivanova, *Labor Camp Socialism*  
**Aspect of culture:** Living arrangements: *kommunalka, khrushchevka, Rublevka* | • Movie *Reds*  
• TV Series *Esenin*  
• *New York Times* articles on Samantha Smith |
| 11/13 | • Hingley, 182-190  
• Kseniia Simonova’s sand art (video)  
• Evgeny Nosov, *The Red Wine of Victory*  
• Victoria Fedorova, *Admiral’s Daughter* (excerpts)  
• TV series *Zoia* | • Hingley, 192-196  
• Anna Akhmatova, *Requiem*  
• Yevgeny Yevtushenko, *March 5th, 1953*  
• Movie *Stalin’s Funeral*  
**Aspect of culture:** National musical instruments: *boyan and balalaika* |
| 11/15 | • Hingley, 192-196  
• Anna Akhmatova, *Requiem*  
• Yevgeny Yevtushenko, *March 5th, 1953*  
• Movie *Stalin’s Funeral* | • Hingley, 192-196  
• Anna Akhmatova, *Requiem*  
• Yevgeny Yevtushenko, *March 5th, 1953*  
• Movie *Stalin’s Funeral*  
**Aspect of culture:** National musical instruments: *boyan and balalaika* |
| 11/20 | • Hingley, 192-196  
• Anna Akhmatova, *Requiem*  
• Yevgeny Yevtushenko, *March 5th, 1953*  
• Movie *Stalin’s Funeral*  
**Aspect of culture:** National musical instruments: *boyan and balalaika* | Focus: John Reed, Isadora Duncan, Dean Reed, Samantha Smith  
• Movie *Reds*  
• TV Series *Esenin*  
• *New York Times* articles on Samantha Smith |

**Research rough drafts are due no later than Sunday, November 26th. No late submissions.**
### Thanksgiving Break

#### Week 13
- **11/27**
  - Quiz 10
  - Collapse of the USSR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 14</th>
<th>12/04</th>
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</table>
|         | Quiz 10
|         | Perestroika |
|         |          |

- **11/29**
  - Hingley, 196-199
  - Orlango Figes, *Burying the Bones*
  - Movie *My Perestroika*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 14</th>
<th>12/06</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Russians Abroad</td>
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<td>Russia Today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(A Day in the Life of Russia)</td>
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- **11/29**
  - Oksana Robski, *Casual Russian Godfathers*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 14</th>
<th>12/06</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joint class project</td>
</tr>
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<td>(5 bonus points on the final)</td>
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<td>Details: TBA in class</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Taskina, Russian Harbin**
- **Waves of (Russian) Immigration to the USA**
- **Sergey Dovlatov, A Foreign Woman**

#### Aspect of culture: Russian holidays
- **Movie The Irony of Fate, or With Light Steam!**
- **Fedina, What Every Russian Knows (And You Don’t), 1-11**

#### Week 15
- **12/11**
  - Research presentations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 15</th>
<th>12/13</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Research presentations</td>
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С Новым Годом!  
Happy New Year!