HIST 4490/01 Special Topics: History and Russian and Soviet Cinema

Fall 2016
TR 2-3:15

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Communications
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Your professor will respond to email (send ONLY to kvladimi@kennesaw.edu) within 48 hours during the week and on weekends.
Professor will not respond to emails from off campus accounts. Please use your KSU email for all university business.

Course description
This course is an introduction to history, politics, arts, and culture of Russia and the Soviet Union with a concentration on the cinema. After a brief historical survey, students examine prominent themes such as nationalism, ethnicity, state building, imperialism, personal life, and popular culture. This course will introduce some of the most famous movies, and some less familiar ones, from Russia and the Soviet Union.

Learning Objectives:
Students completing the course successfully will have the ability to:

- Create a basic timeline of major events in the history of the region.
- Explain the impact of major events on the fine arts and popular culture of the region.
- Analyze film and literature in relation to historical content.
- Recognize the significance of constructions of ethnicity, gender and national identities as related to contemporary history of the region.
- Interpret political ideologies of social democracy, communism, nationalism and fascism in a global context.
ADA STATEMENT

Kennesaw State University provides program accessibility and reasonable accommodations for persons defined as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Department of Student Success Services.

The website URL: sss.kennesaw.edu/sds
SDS email address: sds@kennesaw.edu
Primary number for Kennesaw campus: 470-578-2666
Primary number for Marietta campus: 678-915-7244
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Netiquette

Netiquette Resource Page

The term netiquette is commonly used in reference to popular forms of online communication, including email, forums and chat. It is derived from “Network and Etiquette”, and “Internet and Etiquette”. It is the set of social conventions that guides interaction over networks. These may include email, blogging, chat, discussion board, and white board etiquette. While some netiquette issues are technical in nature, most concern how people relate to each other. Once the technical nuances are grasped, online etiquette is not much different than offline etiquette.

Academic Support

Students will find a variety of links to support for online learners at http://learnonline.kennesaw.edu/resources/index.php

Academic Honesty:

The high quality of education at Kennesaw State University is reflected in the credits and degrees its students earn. The protection of high standards of academic integrity is crucial since the validity and equity of the University's grades and degrees depend upon it.

No student shall receive, attempt to receive, knowingly give or attempt to give unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any work required to be
submitted for credit (including examinations, laboratory reports, essays, themes, term papers, etc.). Unless specifically authorized, the presence and/or use of electronic devices during an examination, quiz, or other class assignment is considered cheating. Engaging in any behavior which a professor prohibits as academic misconduct in the syllabus or in class discussion is cheating. When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when the ideas, theories, data, figures, graphs, programs, electronic based information or illustrations of someone other than the student are incorporated into a paper or used in a project, they should be duly acknowledged. No student may submit the same, or substantially the same, paper or other assignment for credit in more than one class without the prior permission of the current professor(s).

**Technical Requirements**

You will need a computer with a sound card.

- You need dependable internet access to D2L Brightspace
- You will need Microsoft Office Suite including Microsoft Word, Microsoft Explorer, PowerPoint, and Flash. You can download a free clone version of MS Office at http://www.openoffice.org
- if you have Windows, make sure Windows Media Player is NOT set as the default wmv and mp4 player. There can be format conflicts with Windows, and the files won't run. RealPlayer (http://www.realplayer.com) and iTunes will work fine.
- You will also need Adobe’s Flash Player and Adobe reader, both available free from http://www.adobe.com/

TS is your responsibility. If a document or lecture does not open for you, let your professor know. Your professor may be able to answer common or more universal problems. If the problem is on your end (your computer, software, modem, internet connection), it is your responsibility to find someone on your end to help you with the problem. If you are on KSU campus, you can visit the UITS help desk (http://uits.kennesaw.edu/support/). If off campus, please call the Student UITS support group (470-578-3555) or email studenthelpdesk@kennesaw.edu.

**Attendance:**

Students may not miss more than two weeks of class. This regulation applies to all students even those who add late. There are no excused absences for class meetings.
**Makeups:**
There are no makeups for missed quizzes. Students will be given a makeup exam only if they have a documented emergency or illness and they contact the professor before the exam is proctored. Check the schedule now and change doctor's appointments, arrange for backup childcare and transportation for all exam days.

**Required reading:**
Walter Moss. Russian History, p. 2
Birgit Beumers, A History of Russian Cinema Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema, 5 volumes [http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rrsc20/1/3](http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rrsc20/1/3)

**Links**

*Articles, primary sources and online readings as assigned.*

**Course Requirements/Assignments:**
We will meet twice a week for a discussion of your material. You will read and watch films on your own and answer all provided questions in a written form (30%)
For each movie you have to write answers to provided questions that should be submitted via Dropbox on D2L each Sunday by 6pm.

**Examples:**
For the movie *Inner Circle*:
What was the Inner Circle and why was (and is) so appealing?
What would people sacrifice to be included in it?
For the movie *The Cranes are flying*:
What was the most surprising (for you)?
What do you know about the war and its impact on the Soviet society after watching the movie?

**Paper** (30% of your grade)
By September 10 choose a topic for your paper. It has to be approved by your instructor. Write a 7-8 page paper on the topic, due December 1, 2016
Final Exam (40% of your grade) is due December 6.
Final exam should be submitted via Dropbox on D2L on December 6, 2016. It will consist of three essay questions and a multiple-choice questions based on various themes discussed.

Evaluation and Grading:
Students are evaluated on a ten-point scale as follows:

- A- 90 and above
- B- 80-89
- C- 70-79
- D- 60-69
- E- 59 and below

Tentative Schedule of Topics:

1. Kievan Rus and Pagans

1. The Image of the Vikings in Russia from *The Thirteenth Warrior.*
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NGuNtxw5Qc&index=4&list=PLTWaFSN27M6VBLM81rv2C54wWwSVXcHHP
   and *The 13th Warrior*
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_4sna75O8Q
   3. The Image of the Kievan Rus' in the Fantasy Films of Alexander Ptushko.
      Sadko https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8RAKma4PX0
      Readings:
      Textbook, Introduction, Kievan Rus'

2. Tetons and Mongols

   1. The Teutonic Knights in *Alexander Nevsky*
      https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-nRev9FvsBU
   2. Novgorodian State and Society in *Alexander Nevsky.*
   3. The Role of Women in *Alexander Nevsky.*
      Readings: Mongols and the rise of Moscovy, textbook


1. Medieval Russian State and Society in *Andrei Rublev.*
2. Medieval Russian Culture, art, religion in *Andrei Rublev*.
3. The Tatar Yoke in *Andrei Rublev*.
   Readings: Medieval Russia, textbook

5. Muscovy and Ivan the Terrible.
   1. Ivan the Terrible in Film: Villain or Hero?
   2. The Image of the Tsar in *Ivan the Terrible*
      https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pABa4kVjI
   3. Class Conflict in *Ivan the Terrible*.
      Readings: Muscovy, politics, society, culture, textbook

6. Peter the Great and Westernization.
   1. A Comparison of *Petr' Pervyi* and *Peter the Great*.
   2. The Image of Russia and the West in the Peter the Great Films
   4. The Ideological content.
      Readings: Modernization and Reforms, Peter the Great, textbook

   1. Russian Society and Culture in *War and Peace*.
   2. Napoleon, Kutuzov and/or other Historical figures in *War and Peace*.
   3. The Image of Russia and the West in *War and Peace*.
      Readings: Russian state and society and war of 1812

8. 19th Century Russian Society and Culture.
   *Viy.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjiB6aWp5wQ
   Readings: Russian state, society and culture, 19 century, textbook

9. Russian Expansion and Empire.
   Russian Imperialism in the Caucasus in *The White Warrior*.
      https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2uFzeGhosY

10. Russian Expansion and Empire-2
   *The Prisoner of the mountains*
Readings: Russian state, society and culture, 19 century, textbook

11. Industrialization and Revolution.

1. The 1905 revolution as Depicted in Battleship Potemkin.
2. The Image of Last Romanovs
Readings: Industrialization and Revolution, textbook

13. Civil war and NEP

At Home with Strangers
Readings: Revolution, Civil war and NEP, textbook

14. 1920s-1930s

1. Popular music in Jolly Fellows
2. Soviet Identity, Men, Women, enemies in Circus
Readings: Soviet state and society in the 1920-1930s

15. Stalinism

Inner Circle
Readings: Stalinism, state and society, textbook

16. WAR

1. The tragedy of human loss and the analysis of a female characters and the image of Motherland in The Cranes are Flying
Readings: The Great Patriotic War, textbook

17. The Thaw and Brezhnev era

Love and Life in Moscow Does not Believe in Tears

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ui6pI-Sqg9k&list=PLIQBIhOnK1sZrP3zTdNdVdGpWVV-xgvd&index=20
Readings: Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras, state and society, textbook
18. Contemporary

The Night Guard
Island
Readings: Gorbachev and contemporary Russia, developments, textbook

Brief History

The first Russian fiction film, Stenka Razine by Drankov, dates back to 1908. By 1913, Russia already had 1,400 cinemas and had produced around a hundred films. From 1914, the Tsarist regime began making propaganda films. Protazanov, Gardin and Mozhukhin enjoyed remarkable careers during the years of conflict. The Revolution in 1917 brought disarray to the film sector. Many filmmakers emigrated (Ermolieff, Mozhukhin, Protazanov – who later returned). In 1919, the film industry was nationalised and the world’s first film school (the VGIK) was created. Film became the main vector of communication, education and propaganda. In 1922, Lenin relaxed his grip and re-established a private film industry that was to give birth to the works of Barnet, Protazanov and Pudovkin. The state cinema produced Eisenstein’s Strike. From Eisenstein’s The Battleship Potemkin to Abram Room’s Bed and Sofa, avant-garde films and documentaries (Vertov) were produced alongside more traditional films on historic themes or dealing with everyday life. The great theories on editing were developed during this period. From the end of the 1920s, the film industry was affected by the tightening of Stalin’s ideological grip and avant-garde cinema (Kouleshov, Vertov, Eisenstein) was condemned as “elitist”. In 1932-1934, film production was subjected to the dogma of Socialist Realism, although the Hollywood model was admired. The 1930s were marked by musicals (Alexandrov, Pyriev), “psychological” films (Donskoy), films about ordinary life (Trauberg and Kozintsev) and epics. After the great Stalinist purges, the film industry saw a popular revival of films about historic figures that exalted patriotism (Petrov’s Peter the Great, Eisenstein’s Alexander Nevsky, Pudovkin’s Souvorov) in the face of a rising tide of various forms of fascism. However, the war revived documentaries (Donskoy, Vertov, Dovzhenko). The post-war period veered towards the cult of Stalinism (Chiaureli’s The Fall of Berlin), while the number of films was in de Production took off again with the advent of “the thaw” (1955-1956), when restrictions were relaxed and the individual was once again at the centre of filmmakers’ preoccupations. Upon their return from the
war, Chukhrai (*Ballad of a Soldier*), Bondarchuk (*Destiny of a Man*) and Ozerov (*Liberation*) depicted the tribulations that had been suffered. In 1958, Kalatozov was singled out to receive the Palme d’Or in Cannes for *The Cranes are Flying*. In spite of ideological obstacles — with sanctions ranging from being summoned to the Kremlin (Khutsiev for *I am Twenty*) to a ban on filmmaking (Askoldov for *Commissar*), as well as re-editing, cuts, changes to the dialogue, delayed releases, the banning of festivals, censorship of the credits, and so forth — Tarkovsky, Konchalovsky, Paradzhanov, Guerman, Muratova, Chepitko, Okeev, Mikhalkov, Klimov, Panfilov, Iosseliani, Khamraev and Norstein, all earned their places in the pantheon of the 1960s and 1970s (although some of their films were not discovered until after the Perestroika). At the turn of the 1970s, the gap widened between the image that the Soviets held of their cinema (as a popular art form) and the way it was perceived by the Western world (as a demanding auteur genre). In foreign film festivals, the favored Soviet films were those made by directors who ran into problems with censors, reflecting the degradation of the USSR’s image. Even today, contemporary Russian cinema still suffers from this dualism. There were still many excellent movies made by such directors as N. Mikhalkov: Among Strangers, Mechanical Piece for Piano, Oblomov, and many others. The Perestroika changed the whole picture. In 1986, the Union of Filmmakers pushed the old guard aside and made room for the reformers. Pichul (*Little Vera*), Podniek (*Is it Easy to be Young*?), Abouladze (*Repentance*), Sokurov (*The Lonely Voice of Man*) and Shakhnazarov (*Zero City*) showed images that had previously been forbidden and addressed themes that had long been taboo (drugs, sex, the Gulag, poverty, Stalinism, vulgar language, etc.), conferring a new image on Russian cinema. In 1990-1991 (with the dissolution of the USSR), Lounguine (*Taxi Blues*), Kanevski (*Freeze, Die, Come to Life*), and Bobrova (*Hey, You Geese*) reflected the social collapse. The 1990s were deeply rooted in this trend, even though “money-laundering films” abounded. However, the disorganization of the system prevented these filmmakers from being screened publicly. Thanks to co-productions (mainly with France), directors like Mikhalkov (*Burnt by the Sun*), Guerman (*Khrustalyov, My Car!*), Dykhovitchny (*Moscow Parade*), Todorovski (*Katia Ismailova*) and Sokurov (*Russian Arc*) managed nevertheless to make films. The recent developments in the last decade from 2005 to 2015 produced significant and extraordinary films such as Night Guard, *Leviathan* directed by Andrey Zvyagintsev, *Hard to be a God* directed by Aleksey German, and The Geographer Drank His Globe Away directed by Aleksandr Veledinsky among others.