

EURR 4306/5306 & HIST 4608/5608

THE SOVIET UNION: CULTURE AND POWER

Carleton University • Fall 2021

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Office: Virtual • Office Hour: Tuesdays, 5-6pm or by appointment



The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was the world's first socialist country. It formed after the revolutions of 1917 ended the existence of the Russian Empire. This course examines Soviet power in its various forms by surveying problems in the country's history. We will cover such subjects as the meanings of *class*, *nation*, *empire*, and *equality* under socialism, purges, international relationships of the Cold War, and the role of jokes as a coping mechanism in daily life. In other words, the course pays attention to state as well as social and individual perspectives in politics, economy, and culture. We additionally will explore less-commonly studied environmental dimensions of Soviet life.

This course is designed to promote the development of your analytical and communication skills. Through active reading and listening, participation in group conversations, and the completion of various writing and presentation assignments, you will employ and improve your ability to engage ideas and problems, independently and cooperatively.

Course information, documents, and assignment submission. I will post announcements and documents (including this one) to [Brightspace](#). So, check the site at least once a week for any updates you might have missed. You will also submit your assignments through this site.

Collaborating to understand your progress. I will meet with you (virtually) to talk about any questions or concerns you have related to the course. Meetings will usually take place during my office hour. If you cannot make it to my office hour, please email me to request a different

meeting time. Meetings will be more useful and productive if you inform me of what you wish to discuss at least one full day in advance.

Email. Please use formal etiquette in emails to me. Additionally, please write your course number in the subject line of the email (e.g.: EURR 5306). This will help ensure that your message gets my attention. On weekdays, I usually will reply within 24 hours.

Understanding your grades. If you do not understand your grades, or if you want to improve them, please schedule a meeting with me.

GRADING

• Participation	35%
• Presentation	10%
• Mini reviews	30%
• Longer essay	25%

TOTAL 100%

READING MATERIALS

All course activities and evaluations are related to your weekly reading of texts. You are expected to read the sources listed under the “Assigned” and “Primary Source” headings by the date of the class indicated. Sources under the “Background” heading are optional, though recommended. Course texts are listed below in the schedule of activities. Almost all of the texts are all available electronically at one of two locations: the [MacOdrum Library](#) website or at the [Brightspace](#) site for this course. Any remaining texts are weblinked in this document. To avoid any last-minute problems, I recommend that you download or access texts at least one week in advance of the class for which they are assigned. I also recommend that you read them in the order they are listed.

Recommended books.

- Catherine Evtuhov et al., eds., *A History of Russia: Peoples, Legends, Events, Forces* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004).
- Mark Steinberg, *A History of Russia*, 9th edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

PARTICIPATION

Your participation grade (35%) depends on the extent to which you actively engage in the full range of course meeting activities. Class conversations will include discussions of assigned readings so you should always bring assigned materials to class. I may also base your participation grade on some activities that I may announce later in the course.

Zoom etiquette. Our classes will meet virtually on Zoom, and the format of our meetings may change somewhat over time. Please make your best effort to participate actively and respectfully so that class participants (including you) and I can hear you and be heard, and so that we all feel you are engaging with us. I will regularly inform the class of my expectations for how we will interact on Zoom.

Debate. I strongly encourage and expect respectful discussion and debate. Since our class is composed of individuals with a variety of experiences, beliefs, orientations, backgrounds, and identities, participants will inevitably bring a range of differing perspectives. All class participants can express their own interpretation of the topics and problems we cover so long as the interpretations are informed by evidence in the assigned sources.

WRITTEN WORK

Unless otherwise specified, submit electronic copies of written assignments on the Brightspace course site by the due date. All of your written work for this course must be completed and submitted according to the Guidelines for Written Assignments (a separate document). Remember: keep a copy of any work that you submit in this class.

Mini reviews (30%). These are essays that compare and contrast 3-4 of the texts assigned for a single class (secondary sources only). Your task is to identify a common theme(s) and/or problem(s) in the sources you choose, examine how authors discuss the commonalities, what is at stake, and what any similarities or differences between the texts could mean.

- 3 pages (>2 and <4)
- Undergraduate students write 2 mini reviews. Graduate students write 3 mini reviews.
- Submit by 3pm the day of the class for which the sources are assigned. Any week.
- Submission due dates per paper:
 - October 4: last chance for first paper (undergraduates and graduates)
 - November 1: last chance for second paper (graduates)
 - November 29: last chance for second paper (undergraduates); last chance for third paper (graduates)

Longer essay (25%). The longer essay is a more substantial review essay. You will examine how scholars address a problem or theme in the assigned readings, and which applies to the entire Soviet period (ex.: gender inequality; environmental degradation).

- Due: December 10 at 4pm.
- Pages: 7-8 (undergraduates) or 9-10 (graduates).
- Sources to be used:
 - Undergraduates. 7 sources. 4-5 texts assigned in-class, from different weeks. 2-3 texts from your own research (approved by me).
 - Graduates. 9-11 sources. 4-6 texts assigned in-class, from different weeks. 4-7 texts from your own research (approved by me).
- Paper proposal (due November 17 by 4pm). 1-2 pages: 1-2 paragraphs describing the problem to-be-addressed, and a list of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the sources you intend to examine.
- Grade distribution:
 - Paper proposal 5%
 - Paper submitted 20%

Total 25%

Plagiarism is cheating. The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as *“presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.”* This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course or even suspension or expulsion from the University.

PRESENTATION

You will introduce one “background” text in an oral presentation to the class (worth 10%), as assigned by me by September 22. You will give the presentation at the end of the class prior to the class for which the background text is listed. Please complete this assignment according to the Guidelines for Oral Presentations (a separate document).

You may not be absent from class on the date of your presentation. Absence on this day is permitted only if you have proof of a good excuse, such as a health or personal emergency. In such cases, you are still required to complete the assignment by arrangement with me.

IDENTITY

This class acknowledges all genders. If the class roster shows a legal name that you no longer prefer, please let me know. I will gladly use the name and/or gender pronoun you prefer. Please advise me of such a preference as early as possible.

SPECIAL ACCOMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows.

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the [Pregnancy Accommodation Form](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

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SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

September 13 — Russian Autocracy Enters the Twentieth Century

Background

- Choi Chatterjee et al., *Russia's Long Twentieth Century: Voices, Memories, Contested Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 5-46. [Brightspace]

September 20 — The Russian Revolutions

Background

- Mark Steinberg, *A History of Russia*, 9th edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018) [hereafter "Steinberg"], 423-45.
- Catherine Evtuhov et al., eds., Chapter 31 in *A History of Russia: Peoples, Legends, Events, Forces* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004) [hereafter "Evtuhov"], 605-25.

Assigned

- Mark Steinberg, Chapter 3 and Conclusion, in *The Russian Revolution, 1905-1921* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017), 68-91, 350-58. [Brightspace]
- Steinberg, 445-59. [Brightspace]
- Liudmila Novikova, "The Russian Revolution from a Provincial Perspective" *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* [journal hereafter "Kritika"] 16, no. 4 (2015): 769-85.
 - Marco Buttino, "Central Asia (1916-20): A Kaleidoscope of Local Revolutions and the Building of the Bolshevik Order," in *The Empire and Nationalism at War*, edited by Eric Lohr (Bloomington, IN: Slavica, 2014), 109-137. [Brightspace]

OR

- Yuki Murata, "Multiple Paths to Autonomy: Moderate Ukrainians in Revolutionary Petrograd," *Kritika* vol. 22, no. 2 (Spring 2021): 255-84.
- David Hoffman, "The Great Socialist Experiment? The Soviet State in its International Context" *Slavic Review*, 76 no. 3 (2017): 619-628.
- Frederick C. Corney, "Istpart and the Institutionalization of Memory," Chapter 4 in *Telling October: Memory and the Making of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 97-125 (endnotes on pp. 250-56). [Brightspace]

September 27 — The 1920s: Communism as a Work In-Progress

Background

- Evtuhov, Chapter 32.
- Ronald Grigor Suny, ed., Chapter 21 in *The Cambridge History of Russia, Volume III The Twentieth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006) [hereafter "Suny"].

- Also recommended: Evtuhov, Chapter 33; and Steinberg, 459-60.

Assigned

- Alan Ball, “Building a New State and Society: NEP, 1921-28,” Chapter 6 in Suny, 168-91.
- Terry Martin, “An Affirmative Action Empire: The Soviet Union as the Highest Form of Imperialism,” in *A State of Nations*, edited by Ronald Grigor Suny and Terry Martin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 67-82.
- Andrew Sloin, “Bundism and the Nationalities Question,” Chapter 5 in *The Jewish Revolution in Belorussia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 147-77.
- Richard Stites, *Revolutionary Dreams: Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in Russian Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) [hereafter “Stites”], 3-10, 37-46, 101-26
- Wendy Z. Goldman, “Working-Class Women and the ‘Withering Away’ of the Family,” in *Russia in the Era of NEP*, edited by Sheila Fitzpatrick et al., 125-39.
- Paul Josephson, et al., eds., *An Environmental History of Russia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013) [Hereafter “Josephson”], 60-69.

October 4 — Struggles Over Ideology and Leadership

*Deadline for first mini-review.

Background

- Suny, Chapter 9.
- Also recommended: Steinberg, 460-64.

Assigned

- Stites, 223-254.
 - Diane Koenker, "Men against Women on the Shop Floor in Early Soviet Russia: Gender and Class in the Socialist Workplace," *American Historical Review*, vol. 100, no. 5 (December 1995), 1438-64.

OR

- Pey-Yi Chu, “Encounters with Permafrost: The Rhetoric of Conquest and Processes of Adaptation in the Soviet Union,” Chapter 10 in *Eurasian Environments: Nature and Ecology in Imperial Russian and Soviet History*, edited by Nicholas B. Breyfogle (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018), 165-186. [Brightspace]
- Lewis H. Siegelbaum and Leslie Page Moch, “Transnationalism in One Country? Seeing and Not Seeing Cross-Border Migration within the Soviet Union,” *Slavic Review* vol. 75, no. 4 (Winter 2016): 970-986.
 - Adeeb Khalid, “The Making of Uzbekistan,” Chapter 8 in *Making Uzbekistan: Nation, Empire and Revolution in the Early USSR* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 257-90. [Brightspace]

OR

- Botakoz Kassymbekova, “Open-Air Rule,” Chapter 1 in *Despite Cultures: Early Soviet Rule in Tajikistan* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016), 19-52. [Brightspace]

Primary

- Mustafa Chokayev, “Turkestan and the Soviet Regime,” *Journal of The Royal Central Asian Society* vol. 18, no. 3 (1931): 403-420. [Brightspace]

October 11 — Thanksgiving Break

October 18 — The Stalin Era I: Revolution from Above

Background

- Steinberg, 465-81.

Assigned

- Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 1-15, 115-48.
- Seth Bernstein, “Class Dismissed? New Elites and Old Enemies among the ‘Best’ Socialist Youth in the Komsomol, 1934-41,” *The Russian Review* vol. 74, no. 1 (January 2015), pp. 97-116.
- Alissa Klots, “The Kitchen Maid as Revolutionary Symbol: Paid Domestic Labour and the Emancipation of Soviet Women, 1917-1941,” in *The Palgrave Handbook of Women and Gender in Twentieth-Century Russia and the Soviet Union*, edited by Melanie Ilic (London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 83-97. [Brightspace]
- Dan Healey, “An Infinite Quantity of Intermediate Sexes: The Transvestite and the Cultural Revolution,” Chapter 6 in *Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia: The Regulation of Sexual and Gender Dissent* (University of Chicago Press, 2001), 152-180.
- Stephen Brain, “Stalin’s Environmentalism,” *The Russian Review* vol. 69, no. 1 (2010): 93-118.

Primary

- “XX Years of the Great October Socialist Revolution,” *USSR In Construction*, no. 9-11 (1937), selections TBD. [Brightspace]

October 25 — Fall Break

November 1 — The Stalin Era II: Murder and Trauma

*Deadline for second mini-review (grad students).

Background

- Suny, Chapter 23.

Assigned

- David L. Hoffman, “The Conceptual and Practical Origins of Soviet State Violence,” Chapter 5 in *The Anatomy of Terror: Political Violence Under Stalin*, edited by James Harris (Oxford University Press, 2013), 89-104. [Brightspace]
- Gabor Rittersporn “The Omnipresent Conspiracy,” in *Stalinist Terror: New Perspectives*, edited by J. Arch Getty and Roberta Manning (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 99-115. [Brightspace]
- Peter Whitewood, “The Purge of the Red Army and Soviet Mass Operations, 1937-38” *Slavonic and East European Review* 93, no. 2 (2015): 286-314
- Sarah Cameron, “Questioning the Distinctiveness of the Ukrainian Famine,” *Contemporary European History* vol. 27, no. 3 (August 2018): 460-64.
- Serhy Yekelchyk, Review of books on famine by Stalnislav Kulchytsky and Sarah Cameron, *The Journal of Modern History* vol. 93, no. 2 (June 2021): 496-98.
- John Waterlow, *It’s Only a Joke Comrade! Humour, Trust and Everyday Life Under Stalin (1928-1941)* (Oxford, UK: 2018), 1-10, 31-32, 47-49, 57-64, 113-33, 199-213. [Brightspace]
- Joy Neumeyer, “Darkness at Noon: On History, Narrative, and Domestic Violence,” *American Historical Review* (March 2021): 1-8.

Primary

- “Nikolai Bukharin’s Letter to Stalin, 10 December 1937,” in *The Soviet Union: A Documentary History. Volume 1: 1917-40*, edited by Edward Acton and Tom Stableford (University of Exeter Press, 2005), 245-50. [Brightspace]

November 8 — The “Great Patriotic War”Background

- Steinberg, 482-503.

Assigned

- Wendy Z. Goldman and Donald Filtzer, *Fortress Dark and Stern: The Soviet Home Front During World War II* (Oxford University Press, 2021), 1-10, 57-93.
- Moritz Florin, “Becoming Soviet through War: The Kyrgyz and the Great Fatherland War” *Kritika* 17, no. 3 (2016): 495-516
- Donald Filtzer, “The Impossible Task: Keeping Cities Clean,” Chapter 1 in *The Hazards of Urban Life in Late Stalinist Russia: Health, Hygiene, and Living Standards, 1943-53* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 22-65. [Brightspace]
- Serhy Yekelchyk, “The Western Republics: Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltics,” Chapter 19 in Suny, 522-548.
- Francine Hirsch, “The Soviets at Nuremberg: International Law, Propaganda, and the Making of the Postwar Order,” *The American Historical Review* vol. 113, no. 3 (June 2008): 701-730.

November 15 –The Cold War: The USSR and the World

Background

- Suny, Chapter 24.
- Steinberg, 527-34.

Assigned

- Steven G. Marks, “Communism and the New Forms of Dictatorship,” Chapter 9 in *How Russia Shaped the Modern World: From Art to Anti-Semitism, Ballet to Bolshevism* (Princeton University Press, 2003), 299-332. [Brightspace]

OR

- Rachel Applebaum, “The Rise of Russian in the Cold War: How Three Worlds Made a World Language,” *Kritika* vol. 21, no. 2 (Spring 2020): 347-70.
- McGuire, Elizabeth. *Red at Heart: How Chinese Communists Fell in Love with the Russian Revolution*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017, 3-12, 296-318. [Brightspace]

OR

- Tobias Rupperecht, “Paradise Lost and Found: Latin American Intellectuals in and on the Soviet Union,” Chapter 3 in *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin: Interaction and Exchange between the USSR and Latin America During the Cold War* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), 128-90. [Brightspace]
- Greg Bankoff, “A Curtain of Silence: Asia’s Fauna in the Cold War,” in *Environmental Histories of the Cold War*, ed. J.R. McNeill and Corinna R. Unger (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 203-226. [Brightspace]
- Asif Siddiqi, “Competing Technologies, National(ist) Narratives, and Universal Claims: Toward a Global History of Space Exploration,” *Technology and Culture* vol. 51, no. 2 (April 2010): 425-443.

November 22 — Post-WWII Socialism

Background

- Steinberg, 511-27.
- Suny, Chapter 22.

Assigned

- Stephen Brain, “The Great Stalin Plan for the Transformation of Nature,” *Environmental History* vol. 15 (October 2010): 670-94.
- Kate Brown, “Securing the Nuclear Nation,” *Nationalities Papers* vol. 43, no. 1 (2015): 8-26.
- Jeff Sahadeo, “Race and Racism,” Chapter 4 in *Voices from the Soviet Edge: Southern Migrants in Leningrad and Moscow* (Cornell University Press, 2019), 93-115.

- James Heinzen, “‘Greetings from Sunny Georgia!’ Cultural Brokers and the Bribe Trail,” Chapter 4 in *The Art of the Bribe: Corruption Under Stalin, 1943-1953* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 120-37. [Brightspace]

- Kristy Ironside, *A Full-Value Ruble: The Promise of Prosperity in the Postwar Soviet Union* (Boston, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021), 1-16, 89-120.

OR

- Jeffrey S. Hardy, *The Gulag After Stalin: Redefining Punishment in Khrushchev’s Soviet Union, 1953-1964* (Cornell University Press, 2016), 1-18, 160-208. [Brightspace]

November 29 — Daily Life and Counterculture

*Deadline for third mini-review (grad students). Deadline for second mini-review (undergrads).

Assigned

- Barbara Walker, “The Moscow Correspondents, Soviet Human Rights Activists, and the Problem of the Western Gift,” Chapter 8 in *Americans Experience Russia: Encountering the Enigma, 1917 to the Present*, edited by Choi Chatterjee and Beth Holmgren (London, UK: Routledge, 2012), 139-60.

- Benjamin Nathans, “Talking Fish: On Soviet Dissident Memoirs,” *The Journal of Modern History* vol. 87, no. 3 (Sept. 2015): 579-614.

- Sergei Zhuk, “Antipunk Campaigns, Antifascist Hysteria, and Human Rights Problems, 1982-84” in *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City: The West, Identity and Ideology in Soviet Dnepropetrovsk, 1960- 1985* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 265-279.

- Maija Runcis and Lalita Zalkalns, “Women’s Role in the Alternative Culture Movements in Soviet Latvia, 1960-1990,” in Ilic, 365-80.

Primary

- Natalia Baranskaia, “A Week Like Any Other,” *Novyi Mir* no. 11 (1969). [[See Seventeen Moments in Soviet History Site at this weblink](#)]

December 6 — The Soviet 1980s: Can of Worms

Background

- Stephen Kotkin, “Waiting for the End of the World,” Chapter 4 in *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000* (Oxford University Press, 2000), 86-112.

- Steinberg, 566-85.

Assigned

- David Remnick, *Lenin’s Tomb: The Last Days of the Soviet Empire* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 198-215, 234-47.

- Joy Neumeyer, “Late Socialism as a Time of Weeping: The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Vladimir Vysotskii,” *Kritika* vol. 22, no. 3 (Summer 2021): 511-33.

- Artemy Kalinovsky, “Decision-Making and the Soviet War in Afghanistan: From Intervention to Withdrawal,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* vol. 11, no. 4 (Fall 2009): 46-73.
- Paul Josephson, “Gorbachev’s Reforms, Glasnost, and Econationalism,” Chapter 5 in Josephson, 254-86.
- Isaac Scarborough, “(Over)determining Social Disorder: Tajikistan and the Economic Collapse of Perestroika” *Central Asian Survey* 35, no. 3 (2016): 439-463.

December 10 — Post-Soviet Eurasia: Nostalgia and Reality

Background

- Evtuhov, Chapter 42.

Assigned

- Katrine Bentdsen Gotfredsen, “Void Pasts and Marginal Presents: Of Nostalgia and Obsolete Futures in the Republic of Georgia” *Slavic Review* 73, no. 2 (2014): 246-264.
- Serguei Oushakine, “‘We’re Nostalgic But We’re Not Crazy’: Retrofitting the Past in Russia,” *The Russian Review* vol. 66, no. 3 (July 2007): 451-82.