

**HIST 419P**  
**The Origins of Ethnic Cleansing in the Russian Empire**  
**and in the Soviet Union**

Fall 2023  
Tues./Thur. 3:30–4:45  
Taliaferro Hall (TLF) 0103

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Office hours: Tues. 11:00–noon and 2:00–3:00; and by appointment.

**Course Description**

This course offers an in-depth analysis of the ethnic and nationality policies in the Russian Empire and in the Soviet Union, with a focus on different forms of violent or potentially violent social engineering that were run, inspired, contrived, or mediated by the state. These were procedures of defining ethnicity and ascribing identity; systems of classification of subjects/citizens by various criteria; techniques of surveillance; practices of stereotyping and scapegoating; population transfers; resettlement and relocation; purges; expulsion; etc.

We will explore how the authoritarian Romanov and, later, totalitarian Soviet regime's drive to homogenize diverse populations and their attempts at science-based governance conspired to produce mass cleansings and, ultimately, mass killings. We will look at the role that different types of nationalism played in shaping the regimes' attitudes toward ethnic and religious minorities, as well as marginalized social groups.

**Course Objectives**

After successfully completing this course you will be able to:

- Apply theories of ethnic cleansing and genocide to understanding Russian and Soviet history;
- Evaluate the role of state-directed violence in Soviet politics of revolution and social transformation;
- Define the specificities of the Russian and Soviet management of ethnic differences in a broader international context

**Assignments and Grading**

*Class Participation* – worth 15 points total:

Attendance in both lecture and discussion sessions, a careful reading of weekly assignments, and participation in the discussion session are crucial for success in the course. While the week's first session will be devoted to a lecture, the second class will be devoted mostly to the discussion. Discussions will be based on a set of prompts/questions to be posted on ELMS in advance; so you need to complete the reading assignment by the discussion session but are encouraged to start doing it before the week's first meeting (lecture).

*Reaction Papers* – worth 4 points each:

At the end of Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10, write a reaction paper/response that addresses the assigned reading for that same week, but with an eye toward the other readings from the previous

week. Cite the assigned readings by author and page number. Your typed paper must be about 500–600 words long (no ban on a longer response, of course). In it, you are encouraged to answer at least two questions from those two weeks' discussion prompts. Discussion prompts are uploaded under "Assignments" on ELMS, and you should submit your response the same way, through "Assignments," by the time of the second class in Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10.

The total of five responses gives a maximum of 20 points.

*Midterm Examination on Thursday, October 12* – worth 20 points:

The exam will be based on modified discussion questions from Weeks 1–6.

*Term Essay, due by Friday, December 1* – worth 20 points:

That's a 6-7 page term paper on a specific subject (of your choice, helped and shaped by guidelines) within the general topic "Institutions, Ideas, and Individuals behind Ethnic Violence." A separate handout on the paper will be discussed in class several weeks before it is due.

*Final Examination on Tuesday, Dec. 19* – worth 25 points.

This exam will be based on modified discussion questions mostly from Weeks 7–13.

### **Grading Structure:**

Class Participation: 15 %

Reaction Papers: 20 %

Midterm Examination: 20 %

Term Essay: 20 %

Final Examination: 25 %

### **Total: 100 %**

All assessment scores will be posted under "Grades" on ELMS.

*Extra assignment: Reading Presentation* – adding another 10 points to your grade:

Choose one class to introduce the assigned reading or its segment to the class for discussion. You are encouraged to provide more information about the events, policies, or persons discussed in the reading and include one or two discussion questions.

## **Required Texts**

1. Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).
2. Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire, 1552–1917* (Harvard University Press, 1997 or any later printing).
3. Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (Basic Books, 2010 or any later printing).
4. Materials posted on ELMS.

## **Course Outline**

**Introduction. Aug. 29.**

**WEEK 1. Aug. 31 and Sept. 5.**

**Ethnic Cleansing: A Tentative General Explanation**

- Mann, *The Dark Side*, pp. 1–33, 55–69.

**WEEK 2. Sept. 7 and 12.**

**The Russian Empire, 1700–1855: Formation, Expansion, Governance**

- Hosking, *Russia*, pp. 3–41, 75–85, 90–94, 95–115, 120–137, 142–149.

\*\*\* **Reaction Paper 1** due by Tuesday, Sept. 12

**WEEK 3. Sept. 14 and 19.**

**The Russian Empire, 1855–1905: Tsarist Reforms and Population Politics. Russia's Poles and Jews**

- Hosking, *Russia*, pp. 153–162, 315–326, 367–380, 390–397.
- Peter Holquist, “To Count, to Extract, To Exterminate: Population Statistics and Population Politics,” in Terry Martin and Ron Suny (eds.), *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 111–144.

**WEEK 4. Sept. 21 and 26.**

**War in the Caucasus: First Experiments with Mass Forced Migration**

- Charles King, *The Ghost of Freedom: A History of the Caucasus* (Oxford UP, 2008), pp. 64–98.
- Mann, *The Dark Side*, pp. 70–76, 98–100.

\*\*\* **Reaction Paper 2** due by Tuesday, Sept. 26.

**WEEK 5. Sept. 28 and Oct. 3.**

**Wartime Population Politics: The Russian Germans as Enemy Aliens during World War I; Russian Occupation of Habsburg Galicia**

- Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia during World War I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 15–32.
- Eric Lohr, “Patriotic Violence and the State: The Moscow Riots of May 1915,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* vol. 4: 3 (2003), pp. 607–626.

**WEEK 6. Oct. 5 and 10.**

**A Comparative Case: The Armenian Genocide of 1915–16**

- Mann, *The Dark Side*, pp. 111–179.
- King, *The Ghost of Freedom*, pp. 153–161.

\*\*\* **Reaction Paper 3** due by Tuesday, Oct. 10.

\*\*\* **Thursday, Oct. 12 – Midterm Examination on all material through Week 6**

**WEEK 7. Oct. 17 and 19.**

**The Jews in the 1917 Russian Revolution and in the 1918–1921 Civil War**

- Zvi Gitelman, *A Century of Ambivalence: The Jews of Russia and the Soviet Union, 1881 to the Present* (Bloomington&Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001), pp. 59–87.
- Jeffrey Veidlinger, *In the Midst of Civilized Europe: The Pogroms of 1918–1921 and the Onset of the Holocaust* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2021), pp. 1–18, 133–154.

**WEEK 8. Oct. 24 and 26.**

**An “Affirmative Action Empire”: Ethno-territorial Foundations of the Soviet Union**

- Terry Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2001), pp. 1–27.
- Francine Hirsch, “Border-Making and the Formation of Soviet National Identities,” in: Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2005), pp. 145–160.

\*\*\* **Reaction Paper 4** due by Thursday, Oct. 26

**WEEK 9. Oct. 31 and Nov. 2.**

**The 1932–33 Famine in Soviet Ukraine (*Holodomor*): A Deliberate Act of Genocide?**

- Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (Basic Books, 2010), pp. 1–20, 21–58.
- Three short pieces of Primary Source Reading from the book, *The Holodomor Reader: A Sourcebook on the Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine*, comp. and ed. by Bohdan Klid and Alexander J. Motyl (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2012):
  - a. Walter Duranty, “Russians Hungry, But Not Starving” (pp. 102–104);
  - b. Gareth Jones, “Reds Let Peasants Starve” (pp. 104–107);
  - c. Joseph Stalin’s letter to Lazar Kaganovich on changing the Ukrainian Soviet Republic leadership (pp. 239–240).

**WEEK 10. Nov. 7 and 9.**

**Stalinist Class-Based and Ethnic-Based Cleansings: Part 1**

- Snyder, *Bloodlands*, pp. 59–63, 71–75, 78–87, 89–109.
- Lynne Viola, *Stalinist Perpetrators on Trial: Scenes from the Great Terror in Soviet Ukraine* (Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 10–29.

\*\*\* **Reaction Paper 5** due by Thursday, Nov. 9.

**WEEK 11. Nov. 14 and 16.**

**Stalinist Class-Based and Ethnic-Based Cleansings: Part 2; and, What Did Race and Nationality Mean in the Soviet Union in the Time of Nazism's Rise**

- Viola, *Stalinist Perpetrators on Trial*, pp. 30–54, 166–179.
- Hirsch, “Ethnographic Knowledge and Terror,” in: Hirsch, *Empire of Nations*, pp. 280–302.

**WEEK 12. Nov. 21 and (after the Thanksgiving Recess) 28.**

**Soviet Deportations on the Eve and during WWII; Post-war Forced Relocations and Population “Exchanges”**

- Snyder, *Bloodlands*, pp. 114–118, 123–126, 128–130, 130–138, 313–337.
- Norman Naimark, *Stalin's Genocides* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 80–98.

\*\*\* *November 22–26 – Thanksgiving Recess* \*\*\*

\*\*\* **Term Essay** due by Friday, Dec. 1.

**WEEK 13. Nov. 30 and Dec. 5.**

**Soviet Reckoning with Nazism; Stalinist Antisemitism**

- Francine Hirsch, *Soviet Judgment at Nuremberg: A New History of the International Military Tribunal after World War II* (New York: Oxford UP, 2020), pp. 1–6, 8–10, 13–14, 18–22, 28–29, 33–34, 99–106, 225–227, 293–295, 316–319, 320–321, 324–335.
- Snyder, *Bloodlands*, pp. 339–351, 362–364, 365–369.

**WEEK 14. Dec. 7.**

Review Session

\*\*\* **Tues., Dec. 19 – FINAL EXAM**

**Procedures and Policies**

Academic integrity:

The University's **Code of Academic Integrity**

<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/registration-academic-requirements-regulations/academic-integrity-student-conduct-codes/>

is designed to ensure that the principles of academic honesty and integrity are upheld. In accordance with this code, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please ensure that you fully understand this code and its implications because all acts of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of this code. All students are expected to adhere to this Code. It is your responsibility to read it and know what it says, so you can start your professional life on the right path.

On every examination, paper or other academic exercise not specifically exempted by the instructor, students must write by hand and sign the following pledge:

*I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).*

Attendance and absences: Attendance in both lecture and discussion sessions, careful reading of weekly assignments, and participation in the discussion session are crucial for success in the course. Missed assignments may be made up by appointment with the instructor, upon the condition of previous satisfactory performance.

Prolonged absence from class or illness preventing attendance requires written documentation from the Health Center and/or health care provider verifying dates of treatment when student was unable to meet academic responsibilities.

Absence due to religious observance will not be penalized, however, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor within the first 3 weeks of class regarding any religious observance absence(s) for the entire semester. The calendar of religious holidays can be found at [http://faculty.umd.edu/teach/attend\\_student.html#religious](http://faculty.umd.edu/teach/attend_student.html#religious)

Accessibility and Disability Services:

The University of Maryland is committed to creating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive educational, working, and living environment for people of all abilities. The University of Maryland is also committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the University, or be subjected to discrimination. The **Accessibility & Disability Service (ADS)** provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals to provide equal access to services, programs and activities. ADS cannot assist retroactively, so it is generally best to request accommodations several weeks before the semester begins or as soon as a disability becomes known. Any student who needs accommodations should contact me as soon as possible so that I have sufficient time to make arrangements.

For assistance in obtaining an accommodation, contact Accessibility and Disability Service at 301-314-7682, or email them at [adsfrontdesk@umd.edu](mailto:adsfrontdesk@umd.edu). Information about **sharing your accommodations with instructors, note taking assistance** and more is available from the **Counseling Center**.

More on the UMD Course Related Policies: <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html>