

Midterm Exam 1

Select two topics and write up to a five-page, double-spaced response for each. *Your exam is due at the beginning of class on February 25.* You need not do any additional reading to answer the questions, yet you may reference and draw upon any or all of the readings you have done for this class. The goal of this essay is to think analytically about the issues we have discussed and form your own analysis of them. In your response to the question, use the material in the readings as evidence to support the points you raise. All citations and quotations must be referenced. You must include mention of the author of the text and the page number from where you are drawing the information within the body of your essay. Please include a bibliography at the end of your paper with the full references.

You will be graded on content as well as on style. Anyone who anticipates having difficulty with writing is encouraged to make use of the services offered by the Writing Center, 219 Boucke, tel: 863-3240.

Choose any two questions

1. What was the New Economic Policy? Why was it implemented, and under what circumstances? What were the ramifications for the greater society, both positive and negative, of this policy, and why was it eventually abandoned?
2. Why was serfdom adopted in Russia so late? What were the implications of emancipation of the serfs? What were the biggest positive elements of abolition prior to the Stolypin reforms?
3. The Russian empire was making economic progress prior to the outbreak of the Great War. Was there sufficient momentum for Russia to break out of its backwardness? What were the positive signs? What were the negative signs?
4. What was the rationale for the federated political structure that was adopted when the USSR was formed? What role might the civil war have played in making these decisions? What advantages did ethnoterritorial organization offer and which tensions took root at this time?
5. Russia was a large exporter of grain prior to WW1. This was thought to be big advantage for Russia when war broke out. Why was this advantage a mirage? Why was food supply such a problem for a grain exporting country that could no longer export grain? To what extent were these problems that were manifested during the war to re-surface during the postwar period and the 1920s? Was there some structural feature at work?

6. Why was it important to create a new Soviet person from the multicultural population the Bolsheviks inherited from the Russian Empire? What were their goals and how were they pursued?