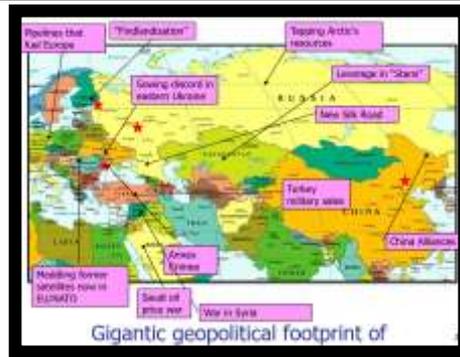


Understanding the Modern World

Class 3, July 22: Why did Soviet Union collapse?



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Understanding Soviet Russia's world

1. Why so globally significant historically?
2. Why did it rise and spread worldwide?
3. Why did it collapse?
4. What were consequences of the collapse?
5. What's Russia's world status now?

- Welcome to class 3 - Dealing with the rise and fall of the Soviet Union and geopolitics of Russia today
- For 40 years of Cold War (1947-91) world divided into three camps:
 - **First world:** North America, Western Europe and Oceania
 - **Second world:** The communist world of the Soviet Union, China and their allies
 - **Third world:** Nations such as India, most of Latin America and Africa that were nonaligned or that shifted their alliance depending upon which side had the best offer
- Collapse of the Soviet Union beginning with the fall of the Berlin wall in Nov 1989 and finally with its formal collapse Dec. 25, 1991, was one of most significant geopolitical events of past half-century
- Cold War era still casts shadows around the world. There are still 5 communist countries - biggest being China, closest being Cuba, most erratic North Korea, Vietnam and Laos in South Eastern Asia a much smaller geopolitical issue for the U.S.
- The objective of this lecture is to provide an understanding of how the end of the Cold War after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Putin geopolitics of the successor state Russia, still affect the world today

Significance of Soviet collapse to understanding the world



- Cold War - more than nuclear threat, a contest for the world between democracy and communism
- After collapse (Dec 25, 1991), world (temporarily) transformed from bipolar to unipolar
- Now, multipolarity of great power rivals
- Thus, understanding Soviet collapse is essential to gaining a better understanding of world today

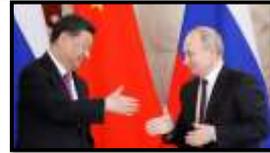
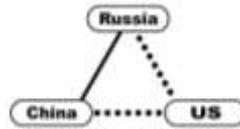
Berlin Wall wasn't only barrier to fall after collapse of Soviet Union and end of Cold War. Traditional barriers to flow of money, trade, people and ideas also fell. - Fareed Zakaria

2

Collapse of Soviet Union in 1991 is one of most significant geopolitical event of past half-century.

- It was much more than easing a threat of a nuclear war between the superpowers U.S. and the Soviet Union.
- Cold War (1947-91) was a global contest between capitalism and communism
- and between democracy and autocracy on a worldwide basis. The contest reached all continents and is still alive today in the continuing struggle with Putin is him of Russia and the emerging power of communist China.
- The Cold War was a global struggle of people's who felt they were fighting for the future of the world. It may have begun in Europe, but it reverberated throughout the world where nearly every country had to choose sides and these choices continue to define their economies and regimes.
- The celebrated fall of Berlin wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union led to greater interchange and rapid expansion of globalization. It temporarily created a unipolar world led by the United States, but over the past 30 years has evolved into a much more complicated multi-polar world, with the U.S. still as the most powerful, but China rapidly rising in its power and influence, the European Union although fraying at the edges and experiencing economic and political difficulties, is a second major force, and with Russia under Putinism and its nuclear arsenals still playing a spoiler role while the Islamic world, which abandoned the communist vs. capitalist struggle to form its religious basis, and now the rising of India, once the leader of the "Third World" believes that it's "time has come" to assume a role as the world's largest democracy and soon to become the world's most populous country.
- Thus, an understanding of Cold War and collapse of Soviet Union is essential to gaining a better understanding of the world today. The goal of this lecture is provide a perspective of Cold War and consequences of collapse of the Soviet Union on understanding the world.

Switch in Geopolitical Triangle



- During Cold War: U.S./China cooperation vs. China/Russia rivals, even at brink of war
- After Cold War: U.S./China rivals & China/Russia allies
- Surge in trade to \$200 bil. after U.S. sanctions on Russia and U.S./China trade war
- Coordinate geopolitical moves often anti-U.S.
- New China Road to pass through Russia
- Signed \$400 billion 30-year gas deal
- China's investments in Russia may hit \$12 billion

Could Russia-China's expansionist ambitions cause Cold War II? Stay tuned for class 8!

3

Switch in U.S.-China- Russia Triangle

- China–Russia relations dramatically improved after the dissolution of the Soviet Union
- With the collapse of the Soviet Union, that de facto U.S.–China alliance ended, and a China–Russia rapprochement began
- They have signed several treaties forming a “Special relationship”
- They have close relations militarily, economically, and politically, while supporting each other on various global issues.
- During the Cold War, China and the USSR were rivals after the Sino-Soviet split in 1961, competing for control of the worldwide Communist movement and even serious possibility of a major war in 1960s;
- Surge in Russia-China trade as U.S. sanctions on Russia after Ukraine and U.S.-China trade war have intensified – trade is about \$200 bil.
- China and Russia informal agreement to coordinate diplomatic and economic moves and build up an alliance against the U.S. and hold deep suspicion of West
- They are in BRICS which may even develop a bank and are trading in their own currencies rather than dollars
- New Silk Road to Europe will pass through Russia and they signed a massive \$400 billion gas deal
- China's investments in Russia were projected to reach \$12 billion by 2020
- Their peoples have positives views in 70% range of each other compared to

Global significance of Cold War



We tend to think of the Cold War as ... a clash of two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, born out of the ashes of World War II and coming to a dramatic end with the collapse of the Soviet Union. But ... the Cold War must be understood as a global ideological confrontation, with early roots in the Industrial Revolution and ongoing repercussions around the world.

The Cold War [was] a century when great power rivalry and ideological battle transformed every corner of our globe. ... The Cold War may have begun on the perimeters of Europe, but it had its deepest reverberations in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, where nearly every community had to choose sides. And these choices continue to define economies and regimes across the world.

From dust jacket of Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War – A World History*, Basic Books, 2017

4

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Why did communism rise in Russia?



- Hardships and oppression after WW I
- Hate of long autocratic rule of Romanovs
- Appeal of revolutionary rhetoric to serfs
- Relative isolation from other countries
- Abundance of natural resources – easy to exploit
- Great Depression weakened foes and capitalism

Robert Service, *Comrades! The History of World Communism*, Harvard University Press 2007



5

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Forced collectivism, industrialization,
centralization, repression...



14 mil. victims, denounced by Khrushchev, yet
now more popular than Putin!

6

Stalinism

- Ruined by WW II, there followed harsh, bleak and starving conditions
- Stalinism wrought forced collectivism, industrialization, centralization, repression...
- Deaths of perhaps 14 million victims of repression during Stalinism
- Stalin (1878-1953) had cult of personality: called the "Builder of Socialism", "Architect of Communism", "Leader of Progressive Humanity" and "Gardner of Happiness"
- But after his death, his successor Nikita Khrushchev in his 1956 "secret speech" denounced Stalin and eased the totalitarianism
- Astonishing, to me, at least, 2019 polls in Russia indicate Stalin at a 70% rating is even higher than Putin's 66%

Source: Robert Service, *Comrades! The History of World Communism*, 2007

How did Communism persist? One-party centralized rule



"They eliminated or emasculated rival political parties. They attacked religion, culture and civil society. ...They abolished the autonomy of the courts and the press. They centralized power. They turned over dissenters to forced-labor camps. They set up networks of security police and informers. They claimed infallibility in doctrine and paraded themselves as infallible scientists They insulated societies against alien influences in politics and culture. They fiercely barricaded their frontiers. They treated every aspect of social life as in need of penetration by the authorities."

Robert Service, *Comrades! The History of World Communism*, 2007, page 9

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How did Soviet economy work?

Central planning



- Government owned means of production, 5-year plans set quantities and prices
- Money and credit played a subsidiary role - only one bank used to facilitate plan
- International trade controlled by government
- **But**
 - Bureaucratic nightmare – plans inconsistent, unrealistic
 - Embarrassed that small private plots were much more productive than colossal communist state farms

The pretend to pay us and we pretend to work – Soviet joke

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How did Soviet economy work? **Central planning**

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Source: Timothy Taylor, *America and the Global Company*, Lecture 7, The Economy of the Soviet Union

Appeal of communism that spread it around the world?



- Perception that central planning was a reasonable option
- Aversion to large capitalistic U.S. corporations
- But wanted economies of size so embraced large government factories for their efficiency
- Great Depression blamed on Capitalism - many thought activist government was needed
- People more interested in food than freedom (Surveys often still give priority to economics over freedom)
- Communists attacked strawmen portrayed as powerful, greedy and hated forces



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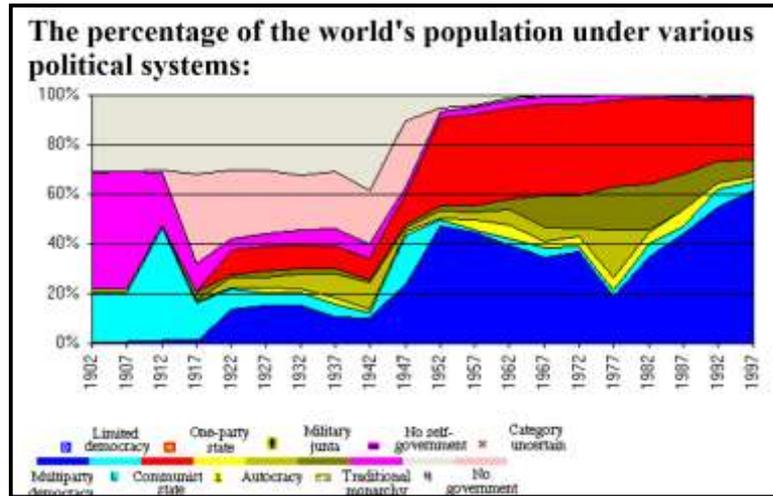
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Communism peaked 1950-90 at one-third

- Countries ever communist numbered 36
- Today 5: Cuba, North Korea, Laos, Vietnam & China



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Communism peaked 1950-90

- Most communist countries at any one time 16 and ever communist 36
- Today 5: Cuba, North Korea, Laos, Vietnam & China
 - US relations with Cuba and N Korea are the most strained, but they are relatively small countries.
 - US maintains relations with the other 3, and despite the Vietnam War, has surprisingly good relations. Vietnam, has prospered in recent years and Ho Che Ming (formerly Saigon) is a booming city. U.S. bilateral relationships with Laos have been controversial.
 - Relationship with China is becoming more strained, after some 40 years of cooperation since the opening; especially since Mao's death in late 1970s.
- The 16 countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, North Korea, Laos, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Soviet Union, Vietnam, and Yugoslavia

Source: Archie Brown, the rise and fall of communism, page 4

In U.S., false forecasts of Soviet Union

- Lincoln Steffens, noted journalist after 1931 trip to Soviet Union said *"I have seen the future and it works."*
- Walter Duranty, *New York Times*, reporter won 1932 Pulitzer prize for glowing reports on Soviet Union and denial of the engineered famine in Ukraine
- Khrushchev famously boasted... in 1956 that "we will bury you"
- Paul Samuelson predicted as late in 1980s the economic dominance of the Soviet Union"

Century of USSR Percent US GDP		
Year	Period	USSR/US
1913	Pre WW I	56%
1920	Post WWI & Revolution	20%
1933	Great Depression	58%
1946	Post WWII	32%
1956	Khrushchev "We'll bury you"	49%
1975	USSR Peak %	70%
1990	Fall Berlin Wall	62%
1999	Post USSR bottom	16%
2020	Only Russia	21%

Maddison Project Database, version 2018 downloaded June 1, 2019, of Real GDP in 2011 US\$.

Reality:

- Soviet GDP relative to U.S. peaked in 1970s
- Soviets couldn't generate sustained technological change due to lack of economic incentives and resistance by the elites

Only country with an unpredictable past.-- Russian joke

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In U.S., false forecasts of Soviet Union

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- Walter Duranty, *New York Times*, reporter won 1932 Pulitzer prize for glowing reports on Soviet Union and denial of the engineered famine in Ukraine. In 1990, The New York Times, which had submitted his works for the prize in 1932, wrote that his later articles denying the famine constituted "some of the worst reporting to appear in this newspaper." [2]
- *"Growth was so rapid that it took in generations of Westerners.... It even took in ... Khrushchev, who famously boasted... in 1956 that "we will bury you"....*
- *Paul Samuelson, repeatedly predicted the coming economic dominance of the Soviet Union ...1984..."*
- *"Though [Soviet] policies ... could produce rapid economic growth, they could not do so in a sustained way. By the 1970s, economic growth had all but stopped.*
- *The most important lesson is that extractive institutions cannot generate sustained technological change for two reasons: the lack of economic incentives and resistance by the elites."*

Failures of Central Planning



- Inability to create incentives to supply what consumers wanted
- Economy barely grew in the 1970s and 1980s
- Substandard goods – except for military
- Widespread shortages and long lines
- Lacked incentive to economize – just meet bogus quotas
- Ignored environmental consequences
- Mobilized for space exploration, but Potemkin false façade masked weaknesses



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Failures of Central Planning

- Lacked incentives to supply what consumers wanted and economize
- Economy barely grew in the 1970s and 1980s
- Substandard goods – except for military
- Widespread shortages—and long lines for purchasing goods
- Ignored environmental consequences
- Mobilized for space exploration, but Potemkin false façade masked weaknesses

Potemkin village – something designed to deceive others into thinking that a situation is better than it really is. Based on stories of a fake portable village built solely to impress Empress Catherine the Great by her former lover Grigory Potemkin.

A man goes to the official agency, puts down his money and is told that he can take delivery of his automobile in exactly 10 years. "Morning or afternoon?" the buyer asks. "Ten years from now, what difference does it make?" replies the clerk. "Well," says the car-buyer, "the plumber's coming in that morning." - President Reagan joke

Why Soviet Collapse? Some noted explanations



- Sold out by its own elite - Ramo, *The Age of the Unthinkable*, 2009
- Gorbachev dithered, then Reagan, Thatcher, Pope piled up the sand on the Soviet empire and no one in 1989 understood was a sandpile ready to slide and all it took were a few more grains of sand - Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 2005
- Long-term inefficiency and incompetence - Service, *Comrades! The History of World Communism*, 2007
- Squandered resource wealth on arms race and foreign adventurism - Gaidar, *Russia: A Long View*, 2012
- Gorbachev told Bush, it was "ordinary people" who made that happen, Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 2005



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Why collapse? Didn't keep up with changes in world



- One version stresses Reagan's military buildup and confrontation
- But best version: U.S.'s long-term alliances, technological advances, economic growth, and willingness to negotiate were more important
- Communist Party did not give its people a viable political, economic, or social system
- Crimes of Soviet state long ignored, then crashed: Afghanistan war and international isolation deprived the people, and when reforms of Gorbachev also failed, it came crashing down

Source: Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War – A World History*, 2017



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Westad: Why collapse? Didn't keep up with changes in world

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- But best version is that U.S.'s long-term alliances, technological advances, economic growth, and willingness to negotiate were more important
- Russia lost because Communist party did not give its people a viable political, economic, or social system
- Crimes of Soviet state were ignored and then all came crashing down: war in Afghanistan and international isolation deprived the people, and when reforms of Gorbachev also failed, it came crashing down.
- Without bread what freedom?

Source: Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War – A World History*, 2017

Westad: Why Cold War ended?



[E]nded because years of closer association between East and West had reduced the fear that the two sides had for each other, and because of western Europe's proven record of successfully integrating peripheral countries into the European Community. It ended in 1989 because the peoples in eastern Europe rebelled and Gorbachev did nothing to save the Communist regimes. ... The end of Communism could happen so quickly in Europe because the ground had already been laid and because the support of the regimes in the East was already wafer-thin. ...

By 1989, ... Gorbachev wanted to make the USSR a democratic, federal state and to pull the Communist Party, which he still headed, along in the process.

Source: Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War – A World History*, p. 579

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Westad: Why Cold War ended?

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By 1989, Gorbachev insisted that to him the Cold War was over. ... Gorbachev wanted to make the USSR a democratic, federal state and to pull the Communist Party, which he still headed, along in the process.

Source: Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War – A World History*, p. 579

Why did the Cold War stay cold?



- Balance of military power - too costly and uncertain
- Both realized clash could escalate to MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction)
- Arguably, without nukes Cold War would not have remained cold
- Arms control, visits, hot line, tourism ...eased rivalry
- Cautious in each others sphere of influence – U.S. didn't block Berlin Wall, Russia didn't intervene in Latin America
- Thus: Cold War evolved into **"peaceful coexistence"**

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Why did the Cold War stay cold?

- Was a balance of military power and both thought it would be too costly and uncertain to start a war
- Was a shared realization on both U.S. and Soviets that a direct clash could escalate into a nuclear exchange-dubbed MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction)
- Arguably, without nuclear weapons Cold War would've not remain cold
- Arms control also played a role that bolstered deterrence and stability
- Also there was some exchange and tourism which perhaps eased the rivalry
- When the Soviet built the wall in Berlin the U.S. did not block it
- U.S. condemned human rights abuses in Soviet Union, and Soviets would also point to our segregation-but these efforts never reached the boiling point
- Soviets did what they could do to promote anti-American regimes in Latin America and succeeded in Cuba and Nicaragua
- But for the most part, direct Soviet military intervention did not take place in Latin America, where the U.S. under Monroe Doctrine might respond
- Bottom line: despite being in a Cold War, it evolved into a state of "peaceful coexistence"

Gorbachev: Praised in West but despised in Russia



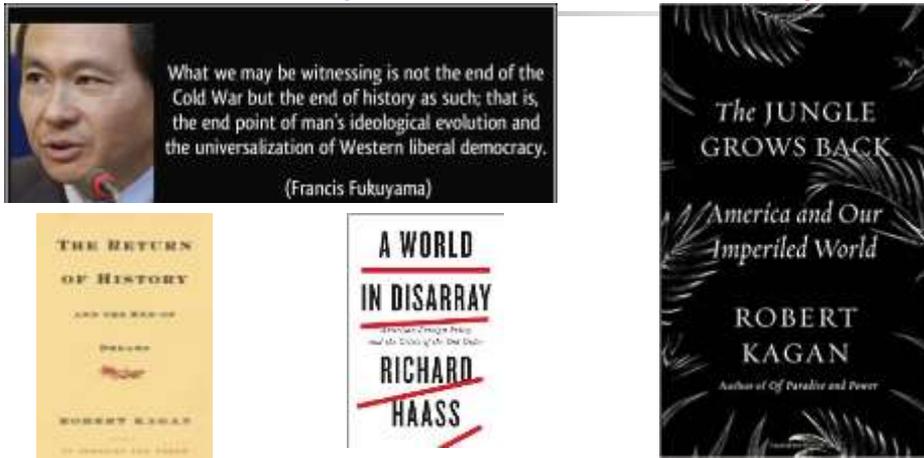
- Gorbachev - last leader of the Soviet Union
- Withdrew from Soviet–Afghan War and met with Reagan to limit nukes and end Cold War
- Policies of glasnost ("openness") for enhanced freedom of speech and press and perestroika ("restructuring") decentralized economic decisions
- After leaving office, critic of Yeltsin and Putin and campaigned for social democracy
- Nobel Peace Prize for pivotal role in ending the Cold War, curtailing human rights abuses
- In Russia, blamed for Soviet collapse & economic crisis

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Gorbachev: Praised in West but despised in Russia

- Gorbachev - last leader of Soviets from 1985 until 1991
- Although committed to preserving Soviet state and to its socialist ideals, believed significant reform was necessary, particularly after the 1986 Chernobyl disaster.
- Withdrew from Soviet–Afghan War and embarked on summits with President Reagan to limit nuclear weapons and end the Cold War
- Policy of glasnost ("openness") allowed for enhanced freedom of speech and press, while his perestroika ("restructuring") decentralized economic making to improve efficiency
- After leaving office, was critic of Russian Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin, and campaigned for Russia's social-democratic movement.
- Widely considered one of the most significant figures of the second half of the 20th century
- Nobel Peace Prize—widely praised for his pivotal role in ending the Cold War, curtailing human rights abuses in the Soviet Union
- Conversely, in Russia he is often derided for not stopping the Soviet collapse, which brought a decline in Russia's global influence and precipitated an economic crisis.

Understanding the world after Soviet collapse U.S. triumphalism, Russian catastrophe



“1991 Soviet fall, the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century” - Putin, 2005

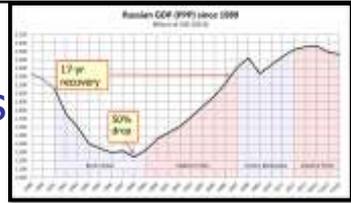


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Understanding the world after the Collapse: Euphoria dashed by disarray

- Haass, *World in Disarray*: Policies that have guided the world since WW II cannot uphold order in an age threatened by terrorism, spread of nuclear weapons, climate change and cyberwarfare. And a great power rivalry returning. U.S. remains the world's strongest country, but is being challenged by Middle East chaos, China's rise, North Korea's recklessness, Europe's instability and rising populism, nationalism and anti-globalization.
- Kagan, *Return of History*: Hopes for peace after the end of the Cold War have been dashed. Great powers are once again competing - for honor and influence. International competition among U.S., Russia, China, Europe, Japan, India, and Iran raise new threats of regional conflict. Communism is dead, but a new contest between western liberalism and the great eastern autocracies of Russia and China and radical Islamists violent struggle against the modern secular cultures and powers
- Kagan, *The Jungle Grows Back – America and Our Imperiled World, 2018*: World order U.S. built after World War II, which required sacrifice but brought unprecedented benefits, is precarious and needs constant tending lest the jungle grow back and engulf us all.

Transition to capitalism catastrophic for most Russians yet West failed to assist



- Except Baltics, independence of republics due to Soviet collapse – essentially a decolonization
- Russians felt robbed of their position as superpower and discovered were far behind the West
- After collapse, many didn't get pensions, starved, unemployed, and alcoholic
- West provided little aid and then expanded EU and NATO to its borders

Since collapse, Russians regretted its collapse, reached in 2018 a high of 66%

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Transition to capitalism catastrophic for most Russians yet West failed to assist

- Except the Baltics, independence of the republics was not demanded from below but a consequence of Soviet collapse – essentially a decolonization like the British Empire
- Russians felt robbed of their position as an elite superpower and discovered they were materially far behind the West
- After the collapse, many didn't get their pensions, starved, unemployed, malnourished, and alcoholic with lifespans
- West provided little aid and then expanded EU and NATO to its borders

Source: Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War – A World History*, 2017

In polling since collapse, majority of Russians regretted its collapse reaching 2018 high 66%

Putinism replaced communism in Russia?



- Putinism – Crony (KGB) capitalism
 - 149/180 in 2020 Freedom of Press
 - 137/198 in 2019 Corruption Perceptions
 - Under 2020 constitution, Putin can stay until 2036
- Oil and military strength empower his foreign ventures and anti-West ploys
- Why is Putin so popular?
 - Restored stability after 1990s Yeltsin chaos
 - Boosted morale after impoverished at home and humiliated abroad
 - Macho take-charge image

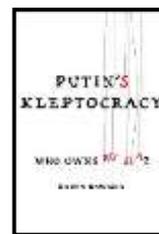
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What replaced communism in Russia? **Putinism**

- Putinism – Crony (KGB) capitalism
 - Ranks 149/180 in 2020 Freedom of Press
 - Ranks 137/198 in 2019 Corruption Perceptions
 - Under the 2020 new constitution, Putin can stay in power until 2036
- Oil boom empowered, now its foreign ventures and anti-West ploys
- Why Putin so popular?
 - Restored stability following Yeltsin chaos of 1990s
 - Boosted morale after being impoverished at home and humiliated abroad



Books with troubling revelations of Putinism



- Belton, former Moscow correspondent, writes:
 - Putin and former KGB buddies siphoned billions to West
 - Interferes in U.S. elections
 - Sponsors extremist politics in Europe
 - Works to undermine Western institutions
- Dawisha, scholar at Ohio's Miami University writes:
 - Putin's coterie of former KGB buddies and oligarchs effectively own and control a third of Russia's wealth
 - Putin's wealth may be \$70 billion
 - Putin began plotting even before the 1991 collapse
 - Putin is a master of engineering crises to embellish image
 - Blaming U.S. for all of Russia's ills is Putin's favorite ploy

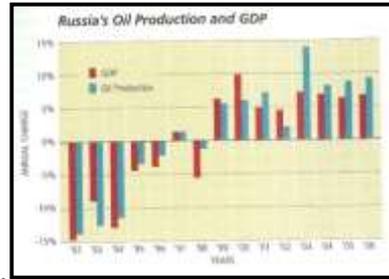
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Books with troubling revelations of Putinism

- Belton, investigative journalist and former Moscow correspondent reveals how Putin and the small group of KGB men surrounding him rose to power and looted their country. Putin replaced the freewheeling tycoons of the Yeltsin era with a new generation of loyal oligarchs, who in turn subverted Russia's economy and legal system and extended the Kremlin's reach into U.S. and Europe. Networks of operatives were able to siphon billions of dollars out of state enterprises and move their spoils into the West. Putin and his allies are reasserting Russian power while taking control of the economy for themselves, suppressing independent voices, and launching covert influence operations abroad.
- Dawisha, scholar at Ohio's Miami University, writes that Putin's former KGB buddies and powerful oligarchs effectively own and control a third of Russia's wealth. Putin's wealth may be \$70 billion. Putin climbed from KGB, to mayor's office of St. Petersburg, elbowed into Yeltsin's inner circle and succeeded him. Putin began plotting even before 1991 collapse. Putin was able to leverage his inside information, contacts and clout to multiply, and elbow into Yeltsin's inner circle and succeed him.

Sources: Catherine Belton, *Putin's People: How the KGB Took Back Russia and Then Took On the West*, 2020 and Karen Dawisha, *PUTIN'S KLEPTOCRACY: Who Owns Russia?* 2014

Russia's petrol dependence & power



- Petro power
 - 1st natural gas producer & exporter
 - 1st oil producer & 2nd largest exporter
- Leverage over Europe
 - W. Europe imports 40% of natural gas & 25% of oil from Russia
 - 75% of W. Europe gas imports via Ukraine
 - Ukraine depends on Russia for gas
 - Russia shutoff supplies in 2005-2006 and 2008-2009

So goes energy, so goes Russian economy.

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Russia's petrol dependence and power

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 - Russia depends on Ukraine to transmit gas
 - Ukraine depends on Russia for gas
 - Russia shutoff supplies in 2005-2006 and 2008-2009
- So goes energy, so goes Russian economy.

Understanding Soviet/Russia impact on Modern World



- Essential aid for China to make rapid transformation - biggest aid program ever, including Marshall Plan
- At peak of Soviet-India cooperation in 1970s, built steel plants and “peaceful nuclear test”
- Cold War **M.A.D.** threat affected everyone in world
Soviet ties with Cuba impacted U.S. & Latin America
- Korean War, first hot war post-WW II, Vietnam War, & Cuban Missile crisis most perilous periods

Source: Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War – A World History*, Basic Books, 2017, p 237 and 627



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Understanding Soviet/Russia impact on Modern World

- Impossible for China to make rapid transformation of China without Soviet aid - biggest such program ever undertaken, anywhere including the U.S. Marshall plan-page 237
- At peak of Soviet-Indian cooperation of mid-1970s as the USSR expanded its military and economic cooperation with India including the building of steel plants and the development of oil and coal reserves and also helping India in a “peaceful nuclear test” in 1974
- Reason why the Cold War affected everyone in the world was a threat of nuclear destruction -page 627
- China, USSR’s partner for over a decade has become a dominant Asian Power
- The Korean War, first hottest and hottest war of the Cold War, the Vietnam War and the Cuban Missile crisis were three of the most dangerous periods post WW II

Source: Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War – A World History*, Basic Books, 2017, p 237 and 627

What's Russia's status now? Top enemy and most unfavorable since end Cold War

75% in U.S. believe Russia interfered in 2016 elections and 72% think they will this year - Pew

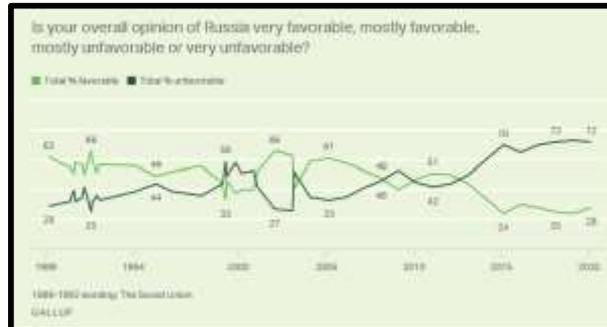
U.S. unfavorable view more than doubled since 1989 - Pew

60% in West have little confidence in Putin – Pew 2019

What one country do you consider to be US's greatest enemy today?

	2020	2019	2011
	%	%	%
Russia	23	32	3
China	22	21	16
Iran	19	9	25
N Korea	12	14	16
Middle East	1	1	--

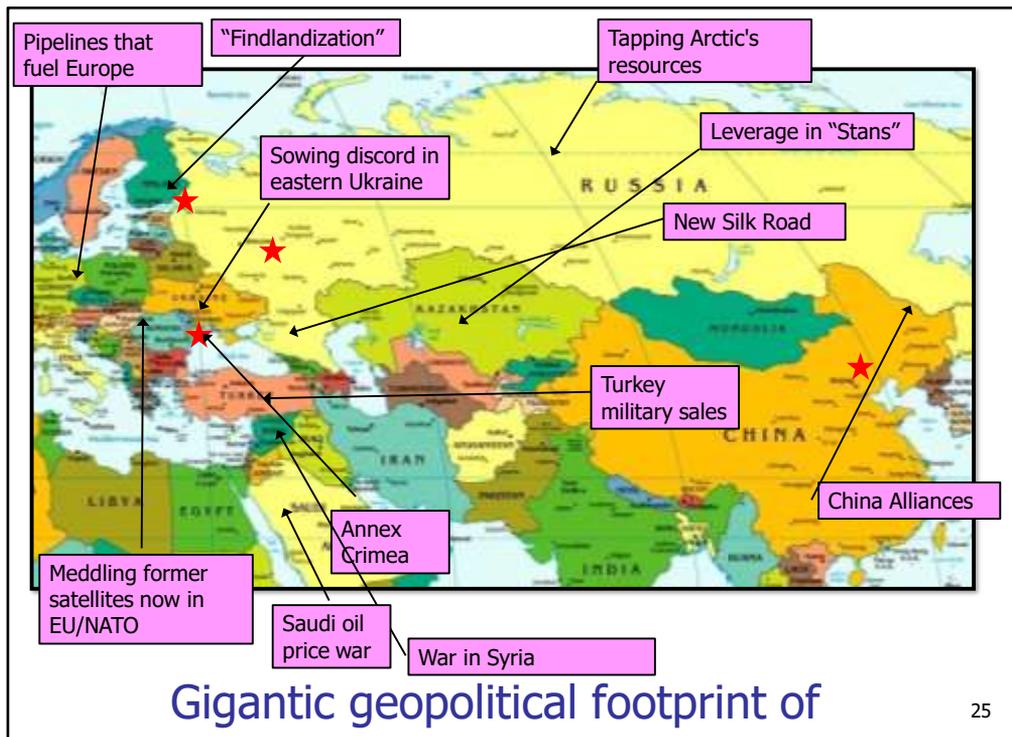
news.gallup.com/poll/1642/russia.aspx



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U.S. & Russia relations today? Top enemy and most unfavorable since end Cold War

- Over in the US believe that Russia interfered in the 2016 elections and think they will again this year according to a Pew survey
- Over the past 30 years, the favorable view of the Soviet Union has declined and the unfavorable view rise by more than double. The unfavorable view is now at its peak.
- There has been a dramatic shift in who is U.S. greatest enemy. In 2011, North Korea and Iran topped the list. By 2020 China and Russia did with Iran in third place. Surprisingly, the Middle East in 2020 is considered to be the greatest enemy by only 1%.
- The rise of both Russia and China on enemy list is indicative of the rise of great power rivals.



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Gigantic geopolitical footprint of Russia

- Russia's massive size (1/6 of the earth) and Eurasian position gives it a massive geopolitical footprint
- As the map indicates, it borders or is nearby many of the world's geopolitical hotspots and pressure points
- Russia is equipped and positioned to tap the resources of the Arctic and will likely along with Canada be most benefited by global warming
- Although no longer considered a superpower, nevertheless under Putin is aggressively seeking to rebuild its global influence
- It's massive oil and gas supplies are crucial to many members of the European Union and make it a major competitor to the long term U.S. ally Saudi Arabia
- It is expanding its influence in the Middle East with its participation in the Syrian war and provision of military equipment to NATO member Turkey
- It has developed a geopolitical alliance with China and will be on the pathway of the new Silk Road to Europe.
- Although its GDP ranks only 11th and GDP per capita 50th, geopolitically it punches way above its weight

Russia's Present & Prospects

SWOT



- **Strengths** internally– Huge area, military strength, energy and natural resources, strong leader, well-educated
- **Weaknesses** internally– Energy dependent, declining population and life expectancy, kleptocracy, monopoly of Putinism, limited warm water access, inequality and poverty, northern climate
- **Opportunities** externally– Leverage energy exports, G20 & UN Security Council, Arctic, partnership with China
- **Threats** externally– Former satellites in EU, sanctions for Crimea, brain drain- majority youth want to migrate, oil price fall, Islamic terrorism



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Russia's present and prospects? **SWOT**

[The swot analysis is a shorthand way of summarizing the present and prospects of a country both internally and externally. Hopefully this short summary will provide you in a nutshell an overview of Russia's situation in the world. As the class progresses, I will also present SWOT analysis for other major countries we are discussing.]

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- **Weaknesses** internally– Energy dependent, declining population and life expectancy, kleptocracy, monopoly of Putinism, limited warm water access, inequality and poverty, northern climate
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Why did Soviet Union collapse?



1. Why so significant to understanding the world?

- Divided the world, Cold War threat of MAD, wasteful military spending race, but kept Cold War cold, influence on Third World

2. Why did it arise and spread worldwide?

- Depression tarnished capitalism, secrecy and limits on foreign access, halo of artistic and Sputnik achievements, boasts of equality, no unemployment, free housing

3. Why collapse?

- Failure to keep up, inefficiency, pressure from West, failure of Gorbechev's reforms, satellites' rebellion, Cold War weariness ...

4. Situation today?

- Putinism – reclaim glory, KGB capitalism, spoiler role with west, dependent on energy

Next: Why has Latin America been so fascinating yet so frustrating

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Recommended Books on Russia

- Catherine Belton, *Putin's People: How the KGB Took Back Russia and Then Took On the West*, 2020 (Belton is former Moscow correspondent who details how Putin and his KGB cronies rose to power and installed a new generation of loyal oligarchs who have siphoned billions of dollars and moved their spoils into the West. Putin is reasserting Russian power and launching covert influence operations abroad.)
- Karen Dawisha, *PUTIN'S KLEPTOCRACY: Who Owns Russia?* 2014 (Dawisha, scholar of Russian politics at Miami University in Ohio, argues Putin and his friends from KGB days are kleptocrats who have become fabulously rich. Putin's macho image and blaming all ills on the West have garnered him widespread popular support.)
- Ralph Raico, *Russia and the Soviet Union*, Audible Audiobook, 2006 (Only 3 hours and very intriguing history of Russia – my favorite way to refresh my understanding of Russia and Soviet Union)
- Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War – A World History*, Basic Books, 2017 (Best book on Cold War – very comprehensive, balanced by highly respected Norwegian historian of Cold War and professor at Yale)



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Timeline 1917-91



- 1917: Communist Revolution – exit WW I
- 1922: Soviet Union created after Revolution & Civil War
- 1945: WW II ends; 27 of 72 million deaths in USSR
- 1947: Stalin defies, occupies E Europe, Cold War begins
- 1949: Explode atomic device
- 1961: Sputnik first manned space flight
- 1962: Cuban Missile Crisis – closest nuclear encounter
- 1978-82: Soviet costly Afghan war
- 1985-91: Gorbachev reforms
- 1989: Fall of Soviet regimes and Berlin Wall
- 1991: Gorbachev out, Yeltsin in, Soviet Union breaks up
- 1999 - to date: Yeltsin to Putin who can rule to 2036