RUSSIA and the SOVIET UNION Impact of the Past

Mr. Kuzmich
IS Comparative Government
Journal Question

- Discuss the geographic problems that beset old Russia and the USSR (AKA: the Soviet Union)?
Russian Geography

- Immense
- Ethnically diverse
- Few natural boundaries
- Inconsistent agriculture
- Hostile climate
- Minimal wealth extraction
- Lack of secure warm water ports
The Slavic People

**Western Slavs**
- Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, Slovenians
- Christianized by Rome
- Latin alphabet

**Eastern Slavs**
- Russians, Ukrainians, Serbs
- Eastern Orthodox by Constantinople
- Cyrillic alphabet
- Example: абвгдеёжзийклмнопрстуфхцчшщъыьэюя
  абывгдеёжзийклмнопрстуфхцчшщъыьэюя
Russian Autocracy

• Ivan the Terrible (1530-1584)

• Crowned himself Tsar – Russian emperor

• **tyranny** – coercive rule, usually by one

• Russian territory expanded greatly

• **autocracy** – absolute rule by one in a centralized state

• **Oprichnina** – secret police

• Murdered his own son

• **Caesaropapism** – combining civil and spiritual leadership
Peter the Great — 1672 -1725

- Ruled 1682 – 1725
- Modernization
- Westernization
- Western nobility
- Capital: St. Petersburg
Westernizer vs. Slavophile

**Westernizer**
- Materialistic
- Individual rights
- Spiritually shallow
- Look to Western Europe for answers to political, economic, social problems

**Slavophile**
- Spiritual values and depth
- Warm humanity for the peasantry
- Romantic nationalists
- Cultivate own answers and styles to political, economic, social problems
Catherine the Great and Czar Paul
Romanov Dynasty
“Curse of the Monarchy”

• Alexander I – 1777 (1801-) 1825
• Nicholas I – Brother -1796 (1825-) 1855
• Alexander II – Son – 1818 (1855 - ) 1881
• Alexander III – Son – 1845 (1881-) 1894
• Nicholas II – Son – 1868 (1894-1917) 1918
Alexander I

- Grandmother – Catherine the Great & Peter I
- Reluctant Tsar
  - Fought Napoleon – Rode into Paris in 1814
- Faked death?
  - typhoid
  - Crimea
  - Closed Casket
- 1920 – Communists found Empty Casket
- Conspiracy – monk named:
The real Fyodor Kuzmich
Nicholas I

- Brother of Alexander I
- Russification
- Crimean War
- Constitutional Monarchy?
  - King with limited powers
  - Rejected by all tsars
- Suicide? or
- Thyroid Condition
Alexander II

- Son of Nicholas I
- Tsar Liberator
  - Edict of Emancipation
  - 1861 - freed serfs
- Zemstvos – local parliaments
- Narodniki – radical populist agitators
- Assassinated in 1881
  - Eve of signing a new constitution
Alexander III

- Son of Alexander II
- Crushes Opposition
  - Despot
  - Secret Police
  - Intelligentsia
  - Assassination attempts
    - Alexandr Ulyanov - executed
Nicholas II

- Reluctant Tsar
- Last Tsar
- Abdicates power in February Revolution of 1917 ending 300 years of Romanov rule
Major Events during Nicholas II

- 1904-1905: Russo-Japanese War
- January 1905: Bloody Sunday
- 1905: 1905 Revolution
- October 1905: October Manifesto – Duma - Parliament
- 1914 – 1918: World War I
- March 1917: Feb./Mar. Revolution – Tsar Abdicates power
Marxism

• Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels
• **Communist Manifesto** – 1849
  • Proletariat – class of industrial workers
  • Bourgeoisie – ruling industrial class
  • Imperialism – rich, powerful countries spreading their influence
  • Capitalism – economic system of private ownership, free markets, and profit
• **Communism** – economic theories of Marx combined with organization of Lenin
Marxism comes to Russia

From Germany through:
Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov

- aka Lenin
- 1870 – 1924
- Leader of Soviet Union from 1918 - 1924
- Bolshevik leader
Russian Communists

- Most were exiled as revolutionaries
- Brussels meeting 1903 of exiled Russian communists
- **Bolshevik** (majority) – wanted violent overthrow of monarchy – revolution versus
- **Menshevik** (minority) – wanted to bring socialism to Russia democratically
Lev Davidovich Bronstein aka: Leon Trotsky 1879 – 1940

- Originally a Menshevik
- Became Lenin’s closest follower
- Founder of the Red Army
- Brilliant theorist
- Power struggle with?
Yosif Vissarionovich Djugashvili aka: Koba & Stalin

- 1879 - 1953
- “Man of Steel”
- Ruled the Soviet Union from 1927 - 1953
Major Events of the Communists

- Nov. 1917: October/November Revolution, Bolshevik takeover of power
- March 1918: Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
- 1918-1921: Russian Civil War – Reds vs. Whites, War Communism
- 1921-1928: New Economic Policy (NEP) – Nepmen, kulaks
- 1928-1932: First Five Year Plan – collectivization, industrialization
- 1933-1937: Second Five Year Plan – purges
Stalin’s Power

- Member of the Politburo
- General Secretary of the CPSU - gensek
- CPSU–Communist Part of the Soviet Union
- Commissar of Nationalities
- Leader of the Secretariat
- Leader of the Orgburo
Stalin: “One death is a tragedy; a million is a statistic.”

Paranoia?

Security?
Stalin the Hero?