

# Russian Security State

## GOVT-5519 / IPOL-3519 / REES-5519

### Lecture 16. Barbarossa to Moscow

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## Today's objectives

1. *Probe*: what explains the Soviets' great intelligence failure
2. *Consider*: how ideology affects the way states fight  
(and how their enemies respond)
3. *Analyze*: whether Germany could have captured Moscow

Bigest. War. Ever.  
Plan Barbarossa Meets Reality

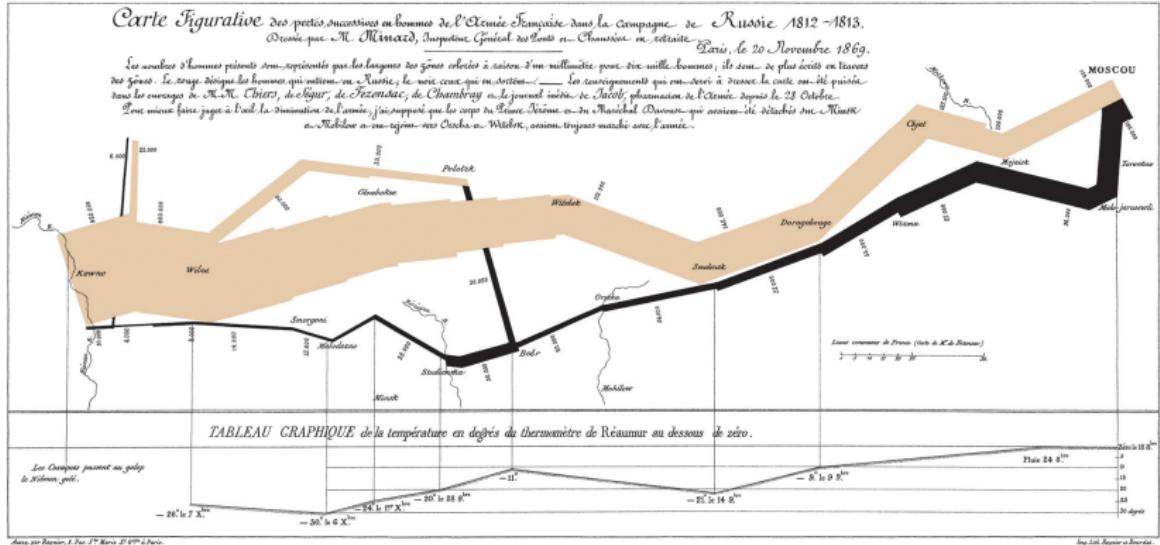


Figure 1: What is this?

## Operation Barbarossa, 22 June 1941

### Assumptions

1. Quick victory is possible
2. After 1941:  
Victory still possible in long war



Figure 2: Into the dark

## Early German successes

Balance of power	Force employment	Geography	Information	Chance
numbers	doctrine	distance	surprise	weather
replacement of losses	strategy	terrain	intelligence	timing
industry/production	training	climate	analysis	luck
logistics	officer quality	roads	communication	
natural resources	technology	fortifications		

## Germans lose momentum

Balance of power	Force employment	Geography	Information	Chance
numbers	doctrine	distance	surprise	weather
replacement of losses	strategy	terrain	intelligence	timing
industry/production	training	climate	analysis	luck
logistics	officer quality	roads	communication	
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# **Bigest. War. Ever.**

## World War II in Europe

Country	Casualties
USSR	28 million
Germany	9 million
Poland	5.8 million
France	550,000
Italy	454,000
UK	450,000
USA	214,000



Figure 3: Hard won

### Great Patriotic War (Eastern Front)

1. 93% of European casualties in WWII
2. 80% of German casualties in WWII
3. 18 of 25 costliest battles of all time
4. almost every concentration camp,  
Jewish ghetto

## Sizing Up the Titans

## Comparative strength, June 1941

### Germany

1. Numbers
  - a) 3.8-4.9M troops
  - b) 3,500-4,617 tanks
  - c) 2,500-4,873 aircraft
  - d) 600,000 vehicles
2. Force structure (157 divisions)
  - a) 12 armored divisions
  - b) 6 airborne divisions
  - c) 12 mechanized divisions
  - d) 7 cavalry divisions
  - e) 120 infantry divisions
  - f) org. into 3 Army Groups:
    - North (→ Leningrad)
    - Center (→ Moscow)
    - South (→ Ukraine)

### Soviet Union

1. Numbers
  - a) 2.9-3.4M troops
  - b) 13,981-15,000 tanks
  - c) 7,758-9,000 aircraft
  - d) 272,600 vehicles
2. Force structure (174 divisions)
  - a) 40 armored divisions
  - b) 12 airborne divisions
  - c) 18 mechanized divisions
  - d) 7 cavalry divisions
  - e) 97 infantry divisions
  - f) organized into 5 Fronts
    - North (Murmansk)
    - Northwest (Leningrad)
    - West (Belarus)
    - Southwest (Ukraine)
    - South (Ukraine)

## Command & control

### 1. Germany

- a) commanding officers well trained
- b) mission-oriented command system  
(*Auftragstaktik*)
- c) operational experience
- d) decentralized C2

### 2. Soviet Union

- a) Stalin's officer purges
- b) unstable command structure
- c) lack of command experience
- d) limited freedom of action on  
battlefield
- e) centralized C2



Figure 4: Lonely at the top

## Military doctrine

1. Offensive
  - a) combined-arms offensive
  - b) “deep battle” concept
  - c) mismatch between doctrine & capability
2. Defensive
  - a) political constraints on defensive planning, doctrine
  - b) further complications due to border expansion
  - c) Stalin Line → Molotov Line

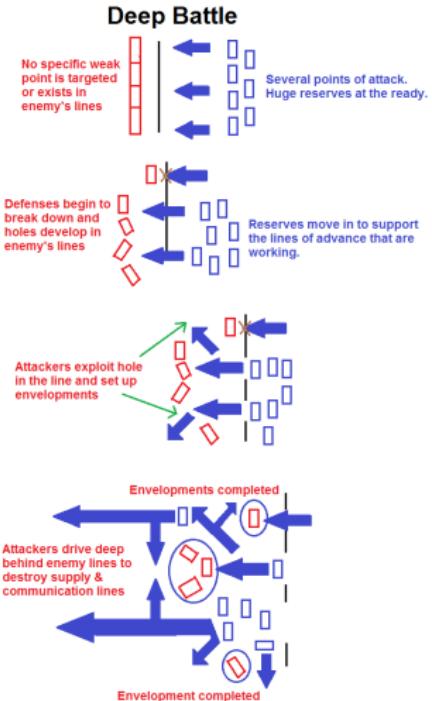


Figure 5: Deep battle

## Ideology:

total war against “Judeo-Bolshevism”

Hitler to Reichstag, 30 January 1939:

*If international finance Jewry should succeed once more in plunging the peoples into a world war, then the consequences will not be the Bolshevization of the world, and therewith the victory of Jewry, but the **destruction of the Jewish race in Europe**.*



Figure 6: Dead serious

## German directives to troops

1. Commissar Order
  - a) 'one cannot count on the enemy acting in accordance with principles of humanity or international law'
2. Severity Order
  - a) 'severe but just revenge on subhuman Jewry'
3. Guidelines to German Troops
  - a) 'ruthless and radical measures against Bolsheviks, agitators, guerrillas, saboteurs, Jews'
4. Hunger Plan
  - a) feed Germany by starving USSR
  - b) 'extinction of industry, good part of population in deficit regions'



Figure 7: Following orders

## Information

1. Many signals
  - a) largest foreign intelligence network on planet
  - b) warnings on impending attack from Soviet agents, British intelligence, German defectors →
2. Signals missed
  - a) Soviet forces not on alert
  - b) aircraft not dispersed or camouflaged
  - c) supply dumps in vulnerable forward positions
  - d) defensive fortifications in midst of re-location

## Discussion

- Why did Stalin ignore warnings of buildup?

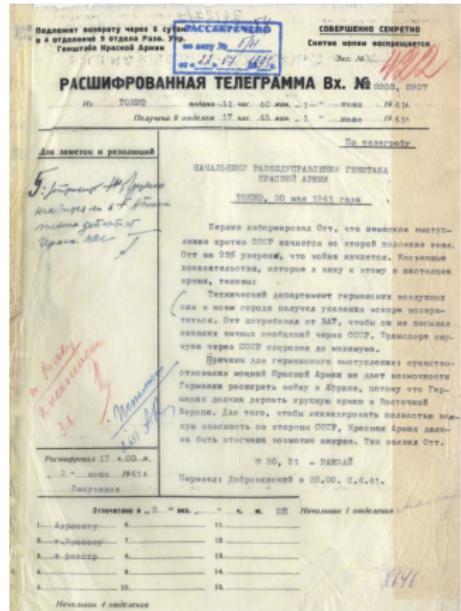


Figure 8: Ramzay/Cassandra

**Bigest. Operation. Ever.**

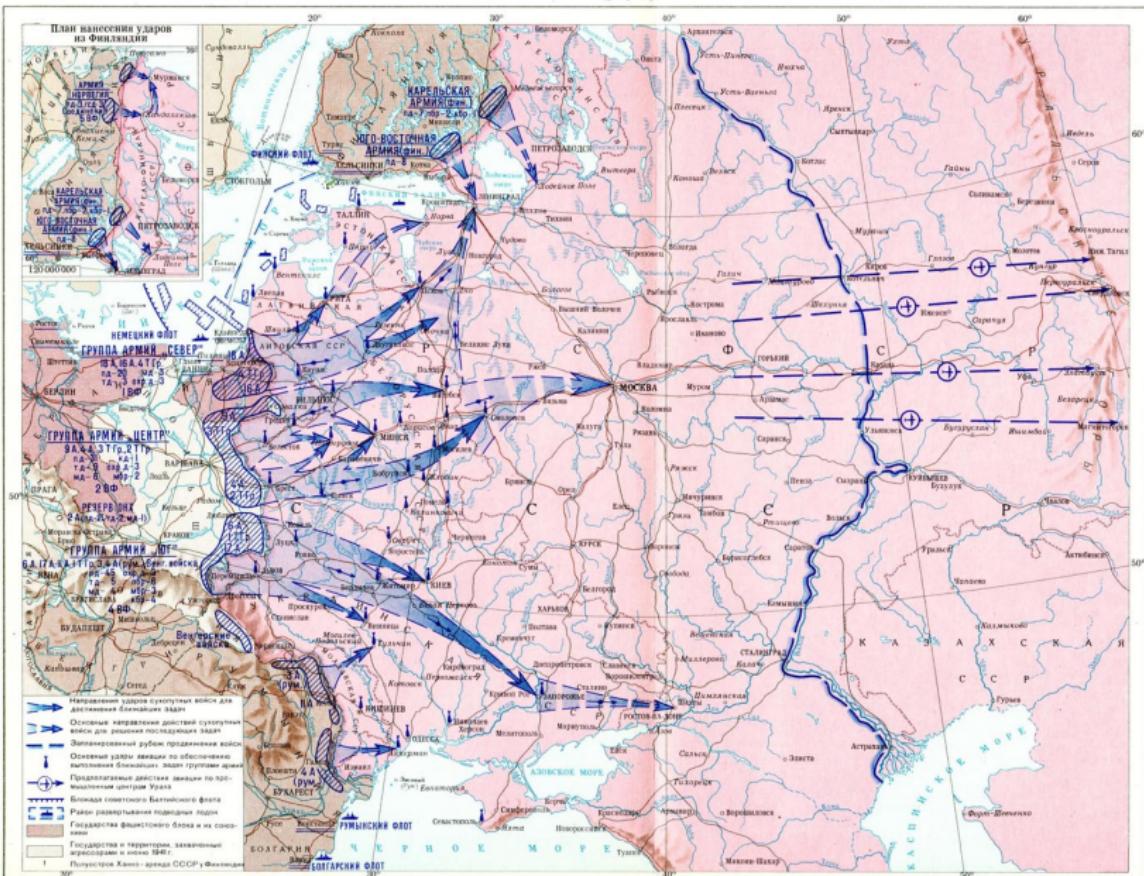
## Operation Barbarossa

1. From ocean to sea
  - a) attack over broad front  
(750 miles)
  - b) fan out to Arkhangelsk-Astrakhan Line (1800 miles)
  - c) territory:  $2,000,000 \text{ mi}^2$   
(territory of France  $\times 10$ )
2. Debate over objectives
  - a) destruction of Red Army ✓
  - b) seize Moscow
  - c) seize Ukraine



Figure 9: Campaign plan

# Plan Barbarossa Meets Reality

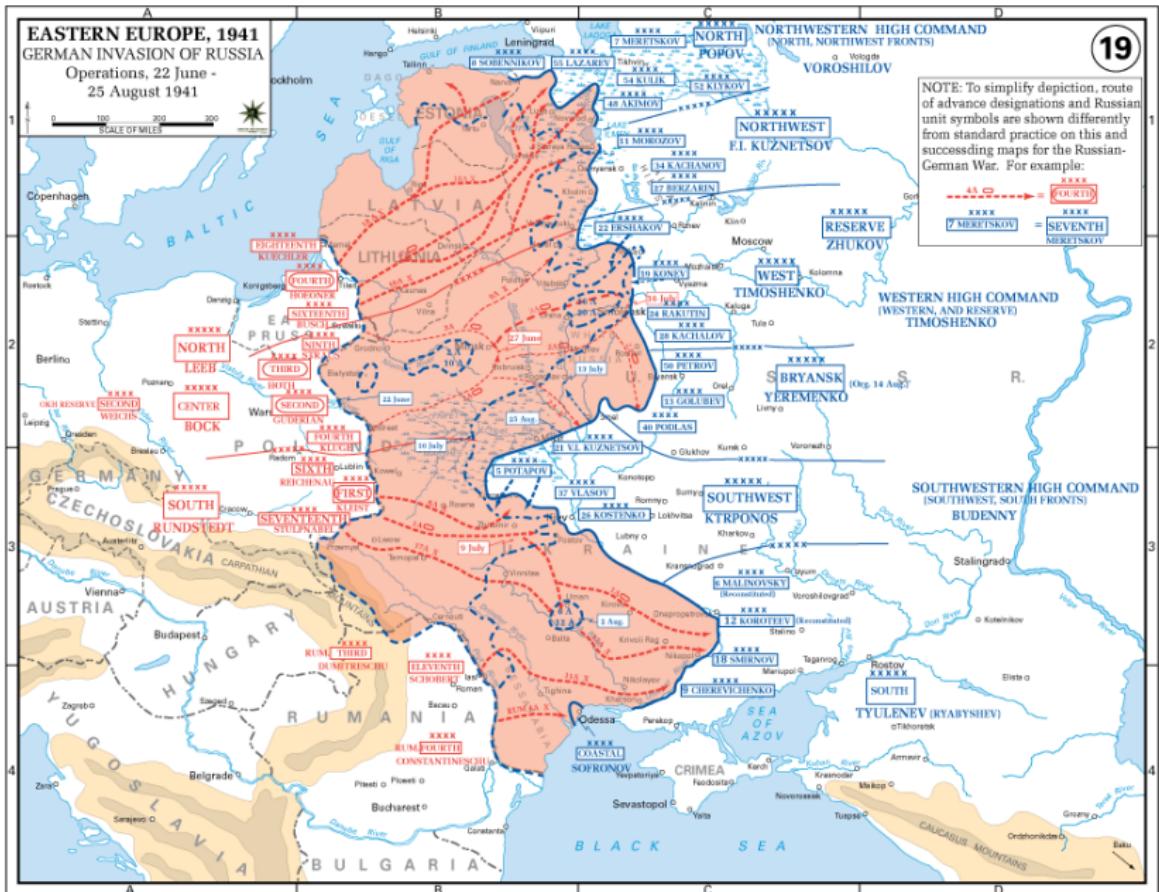


## First 60 Days

Biggest. War. Ever.  
Plan Barbarossa Meets Reality

First 60 Days  
Advance on Moscow

19



## Soviet responses

## 1. Organizational

- a) establishment of High Command (Stavka)
  - b) re-organization of ground forces
  - c) creation of NKVD 'Special Sections' to improve discipline

## 2. Industrial

- a) evacuation of 1,500 industrial plants to Asia



Figure 12: A giant awakens



Figure 13: Stavka

## German challenges

1. Logistics
  - a) frontline units outrunning supplies
  - b) underdeveloped road infrastructure
2. Behind-the-line attacks
  - a) regular ambushed by partisans, regular Soviet troops
  - b) few incentives for Soviets to surrender



Figure 14: Not yet victorious



Figure 15: Not yet defeated

## Fight or fight

in which scenario would you be *least* likely to surrender to the enemy, and why?

1. Scenario 1
  - a) Geneva Conventions honored in enemy's POW camps
2. Scenario 2
  - a) Geneva Conventions do not apply in enemy's POW camps
3. Scenario 3
  - a) Geneva Conventions do not apply in enemy's POW camps
  - b) at home: 'surrender = treason'



Figure 16: Your choice

## Problems of Germans' own making

1. Conditions in POW camps
  - a) high mortality
  - b) no food, medical care
  - c) human experiments
2. SS Einsatzgruppen
  - a) mass killings of civilians (esp. Jews) behind German lines
3. Reprisals for partisan attacks
  - a) thousands of villages burned to ground
  - b) public executions

→ strong incentives *against* civilians' cooperation & Soviet soldiers' surrender



Figure 17: POW camp

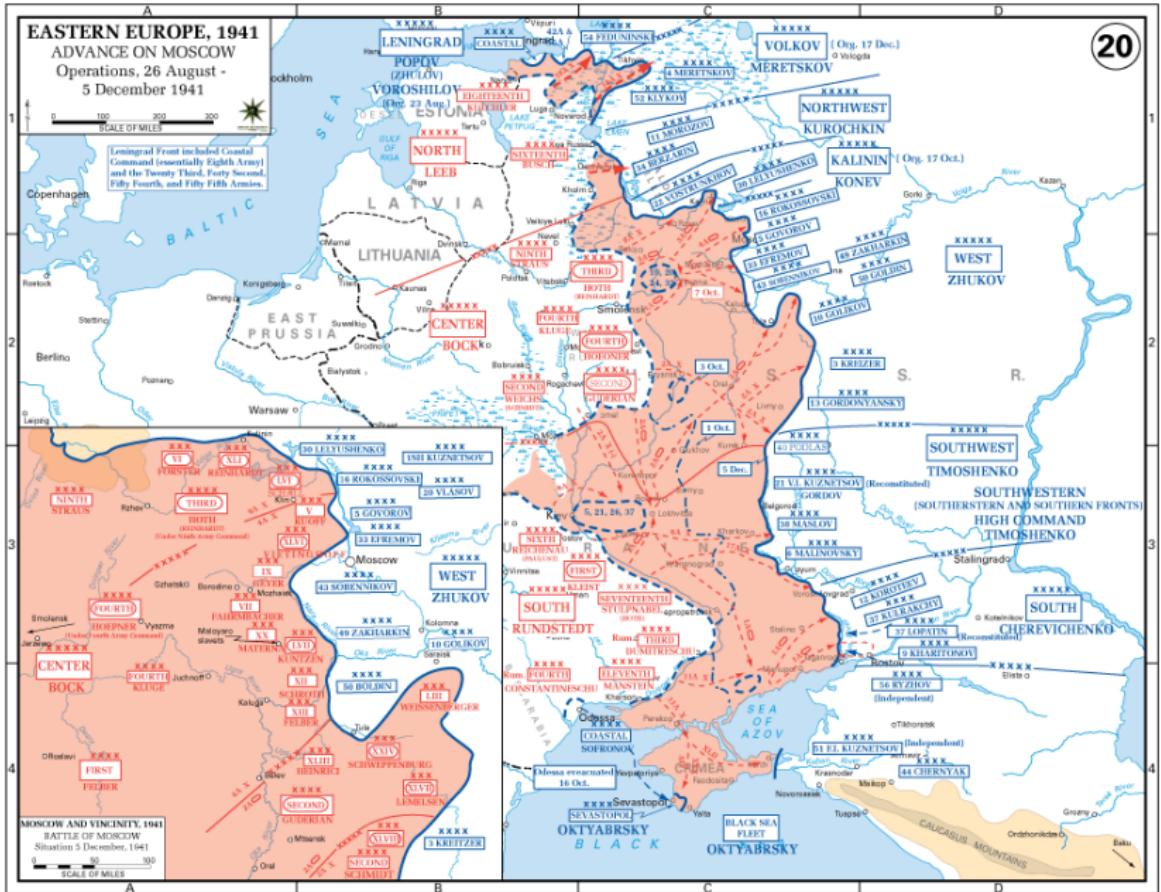


Figure 18: Einsatzgruppe

## Advance on Moscow

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## First 60 Days Advance on Moscow



(to be continued. . . )

# NEXT MEETING

*USSR at War: Stalingrad to Berlin* (Th, Oct. 31)

- was Hitler's "southern strategy" fatally flawed?
- was Germany's defeat at Stalingrad avoidable?
- what are Stalingrad's lessons for urban warfare?