

History 419
History of Soviet Russia

Professor F. Hirsch

Spring 2007

This course surveys Soviet history from 1917 to 1991, examining the formation and dissolution of the Soviet Empire. We will explore the connection between revolutionary politics and culture, the violent effort to forge a socialist society, Soviet nationality policy, the experiences and consequences of war, postwar efforts at reform and stabilization, and the break-up of the USSR into a collection of independent states.

Format: Lectures and discussion section. Attendance at discussion section is mandatory. Students are expected to show up prepared and ready to participate.

Readings: Books marked * are available at the University Book Store. A required course packet is available at Printex on State Street. All course materials are on reserve at College Library.

Grading: Course grades determined as follows: discussion section 20%, midterm exam 20%, 5-6 page term paper based on a memoir and course readings 20%, short weekly response papers 15%, map quiz 5%, final exam 20%. Students taking the course pass/fail must pass all components of the course. Exam questions will be based on lectures and mandatory readings.

Week 1: Prelude

1/23, 1/25: Introduction; The Russian Empire

"Manifesto of the Communist Party" (Packet)

Week 2: Revolutionary Russia

1/30; 2/1: 1905; The Road to 1917

*Geoffrey Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 1

Reading for Section:

"Programs of Russian Political Parties" (Packet)

Week 3: 1917

2/6, 2/8: The February Revolution; The Bolsheviks Come to Power

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 2

Reading for Section:

*V. I. Lenin, State and Revolution

Week 4: The Civil War

2/13, 2/15: Making Russia Soviet; Reds, Whites, and Greens

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 3

Reading for Section:

"Solemn Oath on Induction into the Worker-Peasant Red Army" (Packet)

A. Kollontai, "The Family and the Communist State" (Packet)

L. Trotsky, "'Thou' and 'You' in the Red Army" (Packet)

Panteleymon Romanov, "About Cows," "Inventory," "Inefficiency," and "A Mistake" in *Mirra Ginzburg ed., The Fatal Eggs

Week 5: The Formation of the Soviet Union

2/20, 2/22: The Formation of the USSR; Film

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 4

Reading for Section:

J. V. Stalin, "The Question of the Union of the Independent National Republics," "The Union of Soviet Republics," "The Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," and "Practical Measures" (Packet)

V. I. Lenin, "The New Economic Policy," "Lenin's Testament," and "Lenin on Nationality Policy" (Packet)

Week 6: Whither the Revolution?

2/27, 3/1: The NEP; The Struggle for Power (Debate)

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 5

Reading for Section:

Mikhail Bulgakov, "The Fatal Eggs," in Ginzburg ed., The Fatal Eggs

V. I. Lenin, "Lenin on the Prerequisites for Socialism" (Packet)

J. V. Stalin, "Stalin on Socialism in One Country" (Packet)

Week 7: The "Great Break"

3/6, 3/8: The Revolution from Above I; The Revolution from Above II

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 5

Reading for Section:

M. Ilin, "New Russia's Primer" (Packet)

*John Scott, Behind the Urals, pp. 3-6, 55-92

Lev Kopelev, "The Last Grain Collections" (Packet)

Week 8: Stalinism

3/14, 3/15: The Great Terror; Midterm

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 6

Reading for Section:

Review readings from weeks 1-7

Week 9: Terror and War

3/20, 3/22: Making Sense of the Terror; The Great Fatherland War

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapters 8, 9

Reading for Section:

Veronique Garros, ed. Intimacy and Terror, pp. 111-165, 251-290 (Packet)

Lewis Siegelbaum and Andrei Sokolov, ed. Stalinism as a Way of Life (Packet)

Week 10: The Beginning of the Postwar Era
3/27, 3/29: Postwar Stalinism; DeStalinization
Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapters 10, 11

Reading for Section:

"In the Nazi Ring" (Packet)
*John Scott, Behind the Urals, pp. 173-266

Week 11: Spring Break
4/3, 4/5

Week 12: "The Harebrained Schemer"
4/10, 4/12: Life Under Khrushchev; The Fall of Khrushchev
Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 12

Reading for Section:

Nikita Khrushchev, "The Crimes of the Stalin Era" (Packet)

Week 13: The Brezhnev Era Begins
4/17, 4/19: Springtime for Brezhnev; Thanksgiving
Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 13

Reading for Section:

*Loren Graham ed., The Ghost of the Executed Engineer

Week 14: Stagnation, Dissent, and Cold War Politics
4/24, 4/26: Dissent in the Soviet Union; Cold War Politics
Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 14

Reading for Section:

"The World of Samizdat" (Packet)
Andrei Sakharov, "How I Came to Dissent" (Packet)
Andrei Sakharov, "Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom" (Packet)
Joshua Rubenstein and Alexander Gribanov, eds., The KGB File of Andrei Sakharov (Packet)

Week 15: The Road to Perestroika
5/1, 5/3: Chernenko, Andropov, and Gorbachev; Gorbachev and Glasnost'
Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 15

Reading for Section:

*David Remnick, Lenin's Tomb, pp. 3-51
Mikhail Gorbachev, "Perestroika: Origins, Essence, Revolutionary Character" (Packet)
Anatoly Dobrynin, In Confidence (Packet)

Week 16: The End of the USSR
5/8, 5/10: The Collapse of the USSR; Yeltsin, Putin, and the New Russia

Reading for Section:

David Remnick, Lenin's Tomb, pp. 433-49