

History 419
History of Soviet Russia

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Office hours: Mondays 11-1, 4125 Humanities

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. The course packet is available at PrintEx and as an e-packet through My UW. All 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
9/2 Introduction

Week 2: Revolutionary Russia
9/7 The Russian Empire; 9/9 Film

Reading for Section:

"Manifesto of the Communist Party" (packet)

Week 3: The Road to Revolution
9/14 1905; 9/16 The Road to 1917

*Geoffrey Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 1

Reading for Section:

"Programs of Russian Political Parties" (packet)

Week 4: 1917

9/21 The February Revolution; 9/23 The Bolsheviks Come to Power

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 2

Reading for Section:

Week 5: Making Russia Soviet

9/28 Making Russia Soviet; 9/30 Reds, Whites, and Greens

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapters 3, 4

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," "A Mistake," and "The Beautiful Trousers," in *Mirra Ginzburg ed., The Fatal Eggs

Week 6: Whither the Revolution?

10/5 The Formation of the USSR; 10/7 The NEP

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 5

Reading for Section:

V. I. Lenin, "Lenin's Testament," "Lenin on Nationality Policy," "The New Economic Policy," and "Lenin on the Prerequisites for Socialism" (packet)

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)

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

Week 7: The Rise of Stalin

10/12 The Struggle for Power (Debate); 10/14 The Revolution from Above I

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 6

Reading for Section:

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

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

Week 8: Stalinism

10/19 The Revolution from Above II; 10/21 Midterm

Reading for Section:

*John Scott, Behind the Urals, pp. 3-114

Week 9: Terror

10/26 The Great Terror; 10/28 Making Sense of the Terror

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapters 7, 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 Great Fatherland War

11/2 The Great Fatherland War; 11/4 Postwar Stalinism

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapters 10, 11

Reading for Section:

Vasily Grossman, A Writer at War, pp. 3-132, 213-244

Week 11: "The Harebrained Schemer"

11/9 DeStalinization; 11/11 Life Under Khrushchev

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 12

Reading for Section:

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

Nikita Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament (packet)

Week 12: From Khrushchev to Brezhnev

11/16 The Fall of Khrushchev; 11/18 Era of Stagnation?

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 13

Reading for Section:

"Letters to Auntie," in Ginzburg ed., The Fatal Eggs, 293-305

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

Week 13: Dissent in the Soviet Union

11/23 Dissent in the Soviet Union; 11/25 Thanksgiving

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 14: Cold War Politics

11/30 Brezhnev and the World; 12/2 Chernenko, Andropov, and Gorbachev

Reading for Section:

Anatoly Dobrynin, In Confidence (packet)

"The Brezhnev Doctrine" (packet)

"Meeting of the Politburo of the CPSU" (packet)

Week 15: Gorbachev and Glasnost'

The End of the USSR

12/7 Gorbachev and Glasnost'; 12/9 The Collapse of the USSR

Hosking, The First Socialist Society, chapter 15

Reading for Section:

David Remnick, Lenin's Tomb, pp. 3-51, 433-549

Mikhail Gorbachev, "Perestroika: Origins, Essence, Revolutionary Character" (packet)

Week 16: Yeltsin, Putin, and the New Russia

12/14 Yeltsin, Putin, and the New Russia

Vladimir Putin, First Person, pp. 45-81, 164-207 (packet)