History 347 (CRN 41052):

Twentieth-Century Russia and Soviet Union

Instructor: Alex Kashirin
Time and Place: 4:00-5:50 p.m. on MTWR at 101 ALL
Office: 340 X, McKenzie Hall
Office Hours: 2:00-3:30 p.m. on Mondays
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Description: This is an introductory lecture-discussion survey course on the history of Russia and Soviet Union in the twentieth century. The course is organized topically and focuses on major developments and landmarks of Russian-Soviet history, beginning with the crisis of authority in late imperial Russia on the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and culminating in the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Requirements: The students are expected to attend lectures, participate in discussions of assigned readings, write a 5-7 page paper on one of several assigned topics (40%), take weekly quizzes (20%), and a final exam (40%).

Required readings (available in bookstore):

Geoffrey Hosking, *The First Socialist Society*
Nicolas Werth, *Cannibal Island*

Other required readings will be posted on Blackboard

Week 1. Revolution, Civil War and the New Economic Policy

Monday: *Political, Social and Cultural Conditions in Russia That Yielded Up the Revolution*

Reading: *The First Socialist Society*, p. 15-34; Melissa Stockdale, “The Russian Experience of the First World War” (Blackboard).

Tuesday: *From October Takeover to War Communism*

Reading: *The First Socialist Society*, p. 35-92; The Polarization of Russia’s Political Spectrum after the Tsar’s Abdication: “Report at the Seventh Congress of the Party of People’s Freedom (Kadets)”, Lenin’s “On the Proletariat’s Tasks in the Current Revolution (April Theses)”, and “The Mensheviks on Lenin’s ‘April Theses’”; “Order N. I”; and “Prologue: The Patrimony of Imperial Russia” from Sean McMeekin’s *History’s Greatest Heist: The Looting of Russia by the Bolsheviks* (All on Black Board).

Wednesday: *Building an Affirmative Action Empire*
Reading: *The First Socialist Society*, p. 93-118; Terry Martin’s “An Affirmative Action Empire: The Emergence of the Soviet Nationalities Policy, 1919-1923” (Blackboard).

Thursday: **The NEP**

Reading: *The First Socialist Society*, p. 119-148; Alan Ball’s “Private Trade and Traders During NEP,” Lenin’s “On Party Unity” (Blackboard).

Over the weekend read Nicolas Werth’s *Cannibal Island*.

**Week 2. Collectivization and Industrialization**

Monday: **The First Five-year Plan**

Reading: *The First Socialist Society*, p. 149-182; Moshe Lewin’s “‘Taking Grain’: Soviet Policies of Agricultural Procurement before the War” (Blackboard).

Tuesday: **The Reign of Terror and the GULAG**

Reading: *The First Socialist Society*, p. 183-226; Oleg Khlevniuk’s “Famine,” and Norman M. Naimark’s “The Genocide Issue” from *Stalin’s Genocides* (both on Blackboard); watching *Holodomor* in class.

Wednesday: **The Reign of Terror and the GULAG (continued)**

Reading: Oleg Khlevniuk’s “The Great Terror” and Nikolai Bukharin’s letter to Stalin (both on Blackboard); discussing *Cannibal Island*.

Thursday: **Exploring Everyday Stalinism**

Reading: John Hellbeck, “Fashioning the Stalinist Soul: The Diary of Stepan Podlubnyi, 1931-9” (on Blackboard), watching Konchalovsky’s *The Inner Circle* in class.

**Week 3. From the Great Patriotic to Cold War**

Monday: **Debacle and Victory**


Tuesday: **Descending into Cold War: Stalin’s Last Years**

Reading: *The First Socialist Society*, p. 296-235; “Novikov’s Telegram” (Blackboard).

Wednesday: **De-Stalinization**
Reading: *The First Socialist Society*, p. 326-362; Khrushchev’s “Secret Speech” (Blackboard).

Thursday: *Khrushchev’s Crackdown on Religion*

Reading: Dimitry Pospelovsky’s “Persecutions under Khrushchev” (Blackboard).

**Week 4. Stagnation and Collapse**

Monday: “*Developed Socialism*”

Reading: *The First Socialist Society*, p. 363-401; Andrei Siniavsky’s “Socialist Realism” (Blackboard); **paper is due in class**.

Tuesday: *The Chorus of Dissent*

Reading: *The First Socialist Society*, p. 402-445; Andrei Sakharov’s “Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom” and Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s “As Breathing and Consciousness Returns” (Blackboard).

Wednesday: *The Fall*

Reading: The First Socialist Society, p. 446-501; watching Leslie Woodhead’s *How the Beatles Rocked the Kremlin* in class.

Thursday: **Final Exam**