

DSE II

History of the USSR: From Revolution to World War II (c. 1917-1945)

Course objective:

The course introduces students to the history of the USSR from the two revolutions of 1917 to the end of the Second World War. Students study the various challenges faced by the Bolsheviks and the steps taken to resolve these issues. Students will also trace the evolution of new institutions and ways of organizing production both in the factory and at the farm. They will also evaluate important foreign policy issues like the setting up of the Comintern, Soviet foreign policy and the Soviet Union's involvement and role in the World War.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course the student shall be able to:

- Demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the major issues in the History of the USSR between 1917 to 1945.
- Explain how USSR emerged out of Imperial Russia.
- Summarize the steps in the consolidation of Bolshevik power.
- Explain the new organization of production in the fields and in the factory.
- Identify linkages between ideology, purges and propaganda.
- Examine Soviet policies for the period of the course in relation to nationalities and gender questions and literature and art forms.
- Outline Soviet foreign policy issues.

COURSE CONTENT:

Unit I: Background to the Russian Revolutions of February and October 1917:

- a) Peasants and workers movements
- b) Literature and arts in post emancipation Russia
- c) War and the revolutions of February and October

Unit II: Consolidation of Bolshevik Power, Economic Policies and Debate in the 1920s: an overview

Unit III: Collectivisation and industrialisation

Unit IV: Ideology Party and State: Centralization and its Problems

Unit V: Life under the Soviet System: 1917-1945

- a) The Nationalities question
- b) Gender
- c) Literature and art forms

Unit VI: Foreign Policy Issues: Comintern [anti-colonial struggles-India/Indo-China; the politics of United Front]; World War II.

ESSENTIAL READINGS AND UNIT WISE TEACHING OUTCOMES:

Unit I: In this unit students will learn about the background to the Russian Revolutions of February and October 1917. They will also examine peasant and labour movements along with role of literature and arts in post emancipation Russia. **(Teaching time: 3 weeks Approx.)**

- Acton, Edward, Vladimir Cherniaev and William Rosenberg eds. (1997). *Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution, 1914-1921*. London: Arnold.
- Figes, Orlando. (1996). *A People's Tragedy: A History of the Russian Revolution*. London: Jonathan Cape.
- Kenez, Peter. (1999). *A History of the Soviet Union from the beginning to the end*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Suny, Ronald Grigor, ed. (2006). *Cambridge History of Russia*. Volume 3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Figes, Orlando. (2002). *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia*. New York: Picador.
- Fitzpatrick, Sheila. (2001). *The Russian Revolution 1917-1932*. New York, USA: Oxford University Press.

Unit II: In this unit students will learn about the consolidation of Bolshevik Power, its economic policies and associated debate in the 1920s. **(Teaching time: 3 weeks Approx.)**

- Fitzpatrick, Sheila. (2001). *The Russian Revolution 1917-1932*. New York, USA: Oxford University Press.

- Nove, Alec. (1993). *An Economic History of the USSR, 1917-1991*. London: Penguin Books, (revised edition).
- Kenez, Peter. (1999). *A History of the Soviet Union from the beginning to the end*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Suny, Ronald Grigor, ed. (2006). *Cambridge History of Russia*. Volume 3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Unit III: In this unit students will learn about the issues related to processes of Collectivisation and Industrialisation in Russia. **(Teaching time: 2 weeks Approx.)**

- Lewin, Moshe. (1985). *The Making of the Soviet System: Essays in the Social History of Inter-war Russia*. New York: Pantheon.
- Allen, Richard. (2003). *From Farm to Factory: A Reinterpretation of the Soviet Industrial Revolution*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Nove, Alec. (1993). *An Economic History of the USSR, 1917-1991*. London: Penguin Books, (revised edition).
- Fitzpatrick, Sheila. (1999). *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Davies, R.W., Mark Harrison and S.G. Wheatcroft (Eds.). (1994). *The Economic Transformation of the Soviet Union, 1913-1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Unit IV: In this unit student will understand the interplay between the ideology of the Party and the State. It will also address issues related to centralization and its problems. **(Teaching time: 2 weeks Approx.)**

- Fitzpatrick, Sheila. (1999). *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Getty, J. Arch and Oleg V. Naumov. (1999). *The Road to Terror: Stalin and the Self-Destruction of the Bolsheviks, 1932-1939*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Service, Robert. (1998). *A History of 20th Century Russia*. London: Penguin Books.
- Suny, Ronald Grigor, ed. (2006). *Cambridge History of Russia*. Volume 3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Unit V: In this unit students will learn about women, the minorities and the question of “nationalities” during the period of the Soviet system, 1917-1945. **(Teaching time: 2 weeks Approx.)**

- Engel, Barbara Alpern. (2004). *Women in Russia 1700-2000*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Martin, Terry. (2001). *The Affirmative Action- Empire: Nations and Nationalisms in the Soviet Union 1923-1939*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Erlich, Victor. (1994). *Modernism and Revolution: Russian Literature in Transition*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Suny, Ronald Grigor, ed. (2006). *Cambridge History of Russia*. Volume 3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Unit VI: In this unit students will learn about Soviet foreign policy issues with reference to anti-colonial struggles in India/Indo-China. It also examine role of the USSR during the second World War.(Teaching time: 2 weeks Approx.)

- McDermott, Kevin and Jeremy Agnew. (1996). *The Comintern: A History of International Communism from Lenin to Stalin*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Roberts, Geoffrey. (2006). *Stalin's Wars 1939-53: From World War to Cold War*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Suny, Ronald Grigor.(Ed.). (2006). *Cambridge History of Russia*. Volume 3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Service, Robert. (1998). *A History of 20th Century Russia*. London: Penguin Books.
- Kenez, Peter. (1999). *A History of the Soviet Union from the beginning to the end*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SUGGESTED READINGS

- Carley, M.J. (1999). *1939: The Alliance that Never Was and the Coming of World War II*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee.
- Carr, E.H. (1950-1964). *A History of Soviet Russia*, 7 volumes. New York: Macmillan.
- Cohen, Stephen. (1973). *Bukharin and the Russian Revolution: A Political Biography, 1888-1938*. New York: Alfred Knopf.
- Davies, R.W. (1980-1996). *The Industrialization of Soviet Russia*. Vol. 1: *The Socialist Offensive: The Collectivization of Soviet Agriculture, 1929-1930*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, Vols. 2,3, and 5.
- Dobrenko, Evgeny and Marina Balina ed. (2011). *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth Century Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Dobrenko, Evgeny. (2007). *Political Economy of Socialist Realism*, New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Filtzer, Donald. (1986). *Soviet Workers and Stalinist Industrialization, 1928-1941*. Pluto Press.
- Fitzpatrick, Sheila. (1999). *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gatrell, Peter. (2014). *Russia's First World War: a social and economic history*. New York: Routledge.
- Goldman, Wendy. (2002). *Women at the Gates: gender and industry in Stalin's Russia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gregory, Paul. (2004). *The Political Economy of Stalinism: Evidence from the Soviet Secret Archives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kotkin, Stephen. (1995). *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lieven, Dominic.(Ed.). (2006). *Cambridge History of Russia, Vol. 2: Imperial Russia, 1689-1917*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Moser, Charles.(Ed.). (1992). *Cambridge History of Russian Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Viola, Lynne.(Ed.). (2002). *Contending with Stalinism: Soviet Power and Popular Resistance in the 1930s*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Volkov, Solomon. (2009). *The Magical Chorus: A History of Russian Culture from Tolstoy to Solzhenitsyn*. New York: Vintage Books.

Teaching Learning Process:

Classroom teaching, classroom discussions and student presentations in class and/or in tutorials. Presentations shall focus either on important themes covered in the class lectures, or on specific readings. As this is a paper tracing the history of regions outside the Indian subcontinent, supporting audio-visual aids like documentaries, maps and power point presentations shall be used widely. Overall, the Teaching Learning Process shall emphasise the interconnect- edness of issues within the different rubrics to build a holistic view of the time period and re- gion under study.

Assessment Methods:

Students will be regularly assessed for their grasp on debates and discussions covered in class. Two written assignments will be used for final grading of the students. As this is a discipline-

specific elective paper actively chosen by the student, his/her engagement with the paper shall be assessed, preferably, through at least one project as a written submission. Overall, students will be assessed on their ability to engage with a sizeable corpus of readings assigned to the theme for written submissions, and to draw concrete connections between issues/events/debates discussed in this paper and the corresponding issues/events/debates discussed in their Core history papers.

Internal Assessment: 25 Marks

Written Exam: 75 Marks

Total: 100 Marks

Keywords:

Russian Revolutions 1917, Peasants, Literature, Bolsheviks, Economic Policies, Collectivization, Centralization, Soviet System, Nationalities Question, Gender