

Sociology 431 Spring 2005  
 The Making and Unmaking of Communist Ideals  
 Thursday 7-9pm.

Professor Vujačić  
 Office: King 305a  
 Office Hours:  
 Tues; 12.30-2, Thurs., 1-2.30

**The Making and Unmaking of Communist Ideals**  
 (Learning About Society Through Historiography, Literature, and Film)

In this seminar we will explore the development of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe through historiography, literature, and film. In the first few weeks of the course we will cover the fundamentals of Marxist theory and look at its Leninist application in the Russian historical context. Next, we will explore the background and course of the two Russian revolutions of 1917 through the eyes of one of its main architects and Marxist historians--Leon Trotsky. The main part of the course is devoted to early revolutionary dilemmas, the relationship of intellectuals to the revolution both in Soviet Russia and the West, and the rise of Stalinism. Finally, we will document the process of the gradual disillusionment with Communism in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Throughout the course we will use historiography, literature and film for conveying *sociological* ideas and realities. The students are advised to remember that this is a sociology course and that the emphasis, both in their presentations and their research papers, *must be* on the sociological, not the literary or aesthetic content of the works analyzed. The topic of the research papers will be determined in consultation with the professor. Normally, the topic can be based on the works covered in the seminar but students will be expected to go beyond what was covered in class, both in terms of bibliography and original content.

**Course prerequisites.** Two courses in sociology or consent of instructor.

**Course requirements.**

Attendance and class participation;  
*Attendance at all films, absolutely no exceptions;*  
 One class presentation during the semester;  
 One short paper analyzing a feature film or documentary (5 pages)  
 One 15-page research paper based on the class readings.

**Grading:**

Class and film attendance and participation:	20%
Oral presentation in class:	20%
Short paper (5 pages):	20%
Research paper:	40%

### **Week One. Marxism and Communism**

Karl Marx, “Marx on the History of His Opinions,” “Wage Labor and Capital” and “The Communist Manifesto” in Robert Tucker, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 3-7, 203-218, 469-501.

### **Week Two. The Imperial Russian Historical Context**

Documentary Film: *Red Empire* (part one).

Robert Tucker, *Stalin in Power*, pp.14-24.

Boris Brutzkus, “The Historical Peculiarities of the Social and Economic Development of Russia,” in Bendix and Lipset, *Class, Status, Party*, pp.121-135.

Martin Malia, “What is the Intelligentsia?” in Richard Pipes, ed. *The Russian Intelligentsia*, pp.1-19.

Richard Pipes, “Communism and Russian History,” pp.3-23.

### **Week Three. Marxism and Modernization. Leninism, and the Vanguard Party.**

*Red Empire*, (part two).

Robert Tucker, “Marxism and Modernization,” in *The Marxian Revolutionary Idea*, pp.92-129.

Philip Selznick, *The Organizational Weapon*, pp.1-73.

Joseph Stalin, “The Party,” in *Problems of Leninism*, pp. 96-113.

### **Week Four. The February Revolution of 1917.**

Film: *Reds* (part one).

Leon Trotsky, *The Russian Revolution, Vol. I*: 3-15; 33-63; 101-152; 206-215; 285-331; 458-461.

### **Week Five. The October Revolution of 1917.**

Film: *Reds* (part two).

Leon Trotsky, *The Russian Revolution, Vol. II*: 136-159; 304-322; *Vol. III*, 3-35, 124-200; 276-302; 344-349.

**Week Six: Early Revolutionary Dilemmas.**

Film: Bernardo Bertolucci, *1900* (part one).

Fyodor Gladkov, *Cement*.

**Week Seven: Communism and Western Intellectuals**

Film: Bernardo Bertolucci, *1900* (part two).

Ignazio Silone, *Bread and Wine*.

*Short paper on one of the films due Thursday March 24, in class*

**Week Eight: From the Rise of Stalin to Collectivization**

Film: *Red Empire* (part three).

Tucker, *Stalin in Power*, 25-118; 172-222.

**Week Nine: The Terror and the Great Purge Trials**

Film: *Red Empire*, part four.

Tucker, *Stalin in Power*, 238-337, 366-440.

Transcript of Bukharin= s trial in Robert Tucker, *The Great Purge Trial*, 327-397.

**Week Ten: The End of the Old Bolsheviks**

Film: Nikita Mikhalkov, *Burnt by the Sun*

Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*.

**Week Eleven: Stalinism and Intellectuals**

Czeslaw Milosz, *The Captive Mind*.

**Week Twelve: Coming to Terms with the Legacy of Stalinism.**

*Red Empire* (part six).

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*

**Week Thirteen: Utopia and Its Discontents**

Film: Dušan Makavejev, *Mysteries of the Organism*

Statements by Silone and Koestler in Richard Crossman, ed. *The God That Failed*, 25-119.

***Final paper due on the last day of the reading period, Tuesday, May 17.***