

**Lecture 5: The Soviet Union I**

**Readings**

A. Kolkowicz, Roman, "Toward a Theory of Civil-Military Relations in Communist (Hegemonial) Systems," in *Soldiers, Peasants, Bureaucrats* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1982), pp. 231-251. ISBN: 004322007X.

Chapter 1:

Western scholars long viewed military as successfully Marxist apolitical. Actually, conflict and mistrust, not static. Hegemonial system=single party, "rationale" for mobilization, centralized integrated, activism. Need mobilization, internal and external revolution campaigns, quasi-military, military is revolutionary, praetorian, professional.

Soviet Systemic priorities: (1) centralization, (2) destalinization/transition, (3) expansion.

Political parameters: party hegemony, no legal mechanism for transition of power, security and control organs, civil supremacy and Marxist anti-militarism. Institutional variable: party leadership=state leadership, party controls the security apparatus, modern economy has benefited from military equipment, partial emancipation after destalinization. There was also an increase in commitment abroad, post WWII.

1,2, and 3 correspond to (i) military dependence and subordination, (ii) interdependence and cooperation of military elites into civil (Khrushchev's time), (iii) interdependence, mutual accommodation (Brezhnev) in Soviet history in this sequence terror decreases, isolationism decreases, global role from political decreases, and economic development increases.

1937-8, Stalin purged power struggle; Khrushchev was supported by military but distrusted Zhukov and removed him in '57. Rehabilitation of those purged but the military was dissatisfied with Zhukov and he was ousted in '64 after the Cuban Missile Crisis. In the 70s, the Soviet Union was the high tech equal to the U.S. and there was confidence in its international role and prestige as a technocrat. Conclusion: the more contingent the system's priority and the organization, the stronger the organization. Military and international security organizations have an inverse relationship. Economic and foreign policies are proportional. Détente does not threaten military it gives it access to the west, a role in the 3<sup>rd</sup> world, and legitimizes it in richer domestic relations where it can act as a Spartan educator.

B. Kolkowicz, Roman, *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), Chapters 2, 4, 10, pp. 11-35, 81-98, 322-349. no ISBN.

Chapter 2:

"The Soviet military and the communist Party."

The Party worried about the military particularly during periods of power transition. The military was strong because of Soviet foreign policy but what if such a large professional group is unwilling to subordinate itself (individuals can be weeded out) even though 80% of personnel are in the party or Komsomol. In early history stage,

party dictatorship relied on terror. Trotsky created while Stalin consolidated the professional army, standing but with limits. (1) tension because of the Marxist anti-military doctrine and reality. *Military traits*: elitism, autonomy, nationalism, heroism, *Party Desires*: egalitarianism, subordination, internationalism, anonymity. (2) Substantial disagreements over the nuclear strategy and political appointees.

Party measures to control military: privileges, inclusion of high ranking into the party (positive measure), indoctrination (prophylactic measure), and purges and informers (negative measures).

The military has strengths in its expertise, resilience, and ability to form political alliances in transition periods. Party controlled militaries without impunity during Stalin but now international situation and Sino-Soviet schism has military were more important and strong.

Chapter 4:

Party controlled system. Party aware of problems with multiple authorities but accepts the risk. Commissar Kerensky intervention. Opposition to them in 1918 formalized. Revolutionary Council of the Republic created political organizations on all fronts. Needed to supervise old officers.

- MPA political administration parallels Ministry of Defense.
- Political departments parallel district, groups, fleets.
- Political sections ~ division level.[soedimienie]

MPA is part of the Central Committee.

Four separate sources of authority in each unit: political organizations, military chain of command, local party, and secret police

The author cites instructions by party to commissars: communism must be given priority, indoctrination (daily liturgy: periodicals, handbooks, etc.), and coercion.

Kritika/samokritika=confess your sins to party in meetings.

Party keeps officers guessing about their "profile" and their future.

Chapter 10:

Military role in Soviet politics

Historically there was tension between philosophies, favor military professionals and leaders who despise it. Political integration is an antidote to professionalism. It merges the civil and military.

In central communities, the percentage of military participation increases when its actual inflation decreases after purges.

Popularity is a bad index because the party manipulates.

You can follow what happens in crises. Expect that waning ideology, global commitment strengthens military, actor that must be considered now. The party seeks to synthesize political reliability and professionalism.

**Lecture:**

Class is essentially about principal agent problems. In the US, why are relations so stable? Norms.

Norm = a common sense conscious block or law.

If all written down, doctrine, but when it's a doctrine, it's internalized and doesn't need to be reviewed → a norm. Feaver surveys tried to find out what these norms are. Military people more than civilians thought political civilians should make decisions in war. Confucianism: norm of gentlemen. Huntington: most normative, professionalism. Janowitz: make military look like society, national service (sociological).

Later we will read Katzenstein's book (but norm isn't well defined).

Inglehart's Theory of Catholic vs. Protestant culture, comparative politics.

USSR

Distributes table from MIT dissertation. Ch. 5-6 only military arbitration would help anti-Stalin. Khrushchev battled Malenkov for succession. Zhukov rehabilitated and then removed by Khrushchev. (October revolt double coded).

USSR close to a garrison state yet robust civilian control.

Commissars introduced under provisional government in 1917 because most officers of tsarist background. Needed dual approval. Huge assertion in civil war, needed commissars post civil war replacement of bourgeois. 25% were old officers and by 1929 it was only 11% who had tsarist military background. During the 1920s, Bucharan MEP executed 1930s rehabilitated by Gorbachev by late 20s. Stalin on top collectivization fame in the Ukraine. Industrialize country, increase military urbanization, Stikanov Soviet John Henry (hero super worker) ideal force will make up for backwardness.

Party membership in 1922 was 10% and in 1933 it had increased to 70%.

By the mid 30s, military looked more like the society because there was a large portion with peasant backgrounds. Colton argues that by the mid 30s, control passed from the commissars to internal control under the NKVD. By the 1980s, the ethnic divisions made the army officers unhappy with keeping the union. Conflicts among the enlisted. Many recruits were Central Asian. Discrimination against the Balts.

MPA outgrowth of commissars. All of Soviet system parallels party and government like democracies but one party always rules.

General Secretary Politburo effectively leader of state even if sometimes held no office in the government. General Staff was not JCS, extension of Ministry of Defense.

MPA controlled by party but formally part of the Ministry of Defense. Soviet military air defense and strategic rocket are separate services. Construction brigades (mostly Central Asian).

Kolkovich pp. 85-88.

MPA contain, party committee that directs it. PPO party organization at factory level. Purges carried out at PPO level and reinstated later. Stalin's objective was to purge at the high level.

By the 70s and 80s, most believed that the air control worked through socialization and education. Kolkowicz vs. Colton. Some say all knew it was nonsense.

Colton-Kolkowicz debate

Lasted for years in Cold War. P. 288 of Colton predicts that if things that Gorbachev did happen military will act as corporate actor to protect itself.

Kolkowicz, subject control, indoctrination. Military traits vs. communist ideas. Can't let these traits be autonomous (Huntington). 50% something

There is a gap, military favored in the case of party crises. Need to keep them in check. P. 87 of Huntington, the footnote: Totalitarian states can't have the Huntington solution.

Colton, writing after Kolkowicz, on military participation in political decisions. Chart with issues spectrum. There's little incentive to intervene, only if the government acts against their interest. There wasn't a lot of conflict between the military and the party. The party and military values were relatively the same. Both were conservative and on the same page. At the lower level, the MPS and military work together.

Neither has a strict normative argument. Is it just in developed societies? Same in Chinese communism.

How do you define the military interest?

The paper argues that the military believed it couldn't defend the country with high tech computers and different type of society. Couldn't anticipate it would get out of control. The gulf war demonstrated this too. Andropov was a KGB reformist. But the country disintegrating not realistically. Layton had argued military would intervene but it never happened. The military's primary interest wasn't to allow disintegration of state but that was not the case for Russian officer corps. But Chechnya was an exception.

How does it work? Is it helplessness in communist systems or totalitarian in general?

Main article in the 1920s Inter-army opposition, 1928. Reasonable recommendations but cleaned up just because they were criticized.

### **Purges**

D. Reese, Roger, "The Red Army and the Great Purges," in *Stalinist Terror: New Perspectives*, J. Arch Getty and Roberta T. Manning, ed. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993. ISBN: 0521446708.

Reese: 10,000 were fired but 30,000 were hired. The Army lost competence but not size. Proportionally, the minority of officers purged and many who did didn't resist because they had obtained benefits in the past. For the most part, the purge was done by PPO and not the MPA. There was a culture of fuming in enemies of state. Unintended people took this seriously. In a system without appeal and law, can get carried away. You have to prey on others and they prey on you.

E. Watt, Donald, "Who Plotted Against Whom? Stalin's Purge of the Soviet High Command Revisited," *Soviet Military Studies* 3 (no. 1): 46-65.

Now with more records theories. 1.) conflict between Stalin and the Red Army 2.) Stalin wanted to eliminate opposition 3.) German-Soviet military plot to align. 1936-1937 rumors of reproachment used as existence against Marshal [Tukhachevsky](#). He doesn't come down definitively on any one option. More in favor of 2.) Image of Stalin as not paranoid. Marshal Tukhachevsky was pro-France. Stalin wanted to ferment war in the West. Goes against conventional wisdom that Stalin concerned with legitimacy. Really anti-Benes (President of Czechoslovakia during inter-war years) . Hitler and Stalin used him, he claims.