



A legal history conference

Russian Revolution in the Nordic perspective

Oslo 7 November 2017

Background

In February and October 1917 Revolutions took place in Russia, bringing about dramatic changes in the society and the legal system. Did the Russian Revolution(s) have any impact on the Nordic countries? What legal transformations did the Revolution(s) bring about for Russia and for the Nordic countries?

This conference will be of interest not only for legal historians. We invite legal scholars, practitioners, students and everyone interested in history of Russia and the Nordic states, international and comparative law and Russian law. Each session allows for sufficient time for questions and discussion.

This conference aims at discussing the history, legal implications, and legacy of the 1917 Russian Revolution. Without understanding the legal and political transformations which occurred in Russia 100 years ago, we may not fully understand the legal system of Russian law in the later Soviet and post-Soviet period, and the implications for the Nordic countries.

This conference will shed light on the 1917 Russian Revolution in the Nordic perspective from several angles:

The first session is dedicated to the History, Philosophy, and Law of the Revolution(s). What happened in the 1917-Russia and why? What was the philosophy the Revolutionists accepted (or rejected)? What was the Revolutionary law? What role did comparative law have in the Soviet and Russian legal system?

The second session discusses the impact which the Russian Revolution had on the property and ownership rights and on the markets. What trade relations did Norway and Russia have before 1917? What impact did the Revolution have on ownership rights? And also on more recent legal history - the legal reforms under perestroika, the introduction of joint ventures and, following the disintegration of the USSR, the privatization processes of 1990s.

The third session will present an international and comparative law perspective on the Russian Revolution, exploring a wider time frame than just 1917. Did Russian lawyers contribute to the development of the international law? Who was Fyodor Fyodorovich Martens? How did the Soviet Union contribute to the UN Charter and the universal human rights? Did the 1917 Revolution in Russia influence other Nordic countries – and if so, how?

We discuss this in light of two examples, namely Finland and Latvia.

Each session envisages discussion and questions; and a brief commentary by Professor William E Butler.

Program

9:00-9:15 Coffee

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Law, Society and Historic Change and hosted by

UiO • Scandinavian Institute of Maritime Law
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9:15-9:30 Welcome/Introduction: Professor Dag Michalsen, Dean of the Law Faculty
Note by Liv Monica Stubholt, Selmer

9:30 Keynote speech: Professor William E. Butler (Penn State University)

Revolution: history, philosophy and law (10:00-12:15)

Chair: Professor Marit Halvorsen (Department of Public and International Law)

10:00 *History of the 1917 Russian Revolution(s)*: Professor Emeritus Åsmund Egge (UiO)

10:25 The Socialist and the Social-- the Parallel History of Soviet and Scandinavian Welfare States:
Professor Scott Newton (SOAS University, London)

10:50 Coffee break

11:00 *Comparative Law in Russia: historical traces of influence*: Irina Fodchenko, PhD candidate (UiO)

11:15 *Revolutionary Law in Russia: continuity and change*: Dr. Tatiana Borisova (HSE St. Petersburg)

11:30 Questions and discussion

12:15-13:00 Lunch break

Revolution: State, market, and ownership rights (13:00 -15:30)

Chair: Professor Gentian Zyberi (Norwegian Center for Human Rights)

13:00 *Fisheries in Finnmark – relationship with Russia in legal history perspective*: Professor Emerita Kirsti Strøm Bull (UiO)

13:20 *Right to State and other property after the revolution and/or recognition of new government in Russia, contra Russian recognition of the Norwegian government in 1905*: Professor Ola Mestad (UiO)

13:40 *Real property law in pre- and post-soviet Russia: has the Revolution altered Russia's legal regime?*
Professor Tina Hunter (University of Aberdeen)

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- 14:00 *How Russia became a market economy - or did it?* Professor Kaj Hobér (University of Uppsala; Stockholm Chamber of Commerce)
- 14:30 Questions and discussion
- 14:50 *Commentary*/Professor William E Butler
- 15:00 – 15:15 Coffee break

International and Comparative Law perspectives on the Russian Revolution (15:15-17:30)

Chair: Professor Alla Pozdnakova (Scandinavian Institute of Maritime Law)

- 15:15 *The Martens Clause and its importance for the development of international humanitarian law*, Professor Gentian Zyberi (NCHR)
- 15:35 *The Soviet Union and the negotiation of the UN Charter and universal human rights, 1941-1948*: Professor Emeritus Åsbjørn Eide
- 15:50 *Turbulent times: Finnish independence and civil war in a comparative context*: Professor Jukka Kekkonen (University of Helsinki)
- 16:20 “*Latvian Socialist Soviet Republic or so called ‘Stuchka’s Republic’ (December 1918 – January 1920) as a Latvian statehood alternative and social experiment*”: Dr.iur. Elīna Grigore - Bāra (University of Latvia)
- 16:40 *Commentary*/Professor William E Butler
- 17:00 Questions and round-up

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