Stalinism

History 635, Section 004
Fall 2018
Wednesdays, 7:20-10:00 pm
Location: Research Hall 202

Prof. Steven A. Barnes
Robinson B 349
sbarnes3@gmu.edu
Availability: Mondays 1:30-3:00pm, and before or after class by appointment.

Course Description:

Joseph Stalin ruled the Soviet Union from his victory in a succession battle after Vladimir Lenin’s 1924 death until his own death in 1953. During that time, the Soviet Union went from “backward” peasant economy to a heavily urbanized and industrialized “socialist” country that emerged victorious in World War II. “Building socialism” in Stalin’s Soviet Union was “accomplished” at the cost of millions of lives. This course will explore differing interpretations of the history of Stalinism. Topics for discussion will include Soviet ideology, terror, Stalinist culture and society, the politicization of everyday life, industrialization and urbanization, family and gender politics, nationalities policies, and foreign policy—all of which combined to create the strange new culture that has been called Stalinism.

Course Requirements:

1) Participation:

Participation is crucial to the success of this course. Consequently, participation in each week's discussion will contribute substantially to the final grade. Attendance in class is crucial. If you do not attend, you cannot participate and your participation grade will suffer accordingly. At the same time, attendance alone is not enough. You need to be sure that you make your voice heard. Everybody has something to contribute to the discussion—whether through comments, questions, etc., and we all need and deserve the benefit of many voices.

2) Discussion Leaders:

One student will be required to lead the week's discussion. They should begin briefly introducing the book, raising some of the broad issues raised by the week's readings, and providing some value added to the discussion. The value added could include reading and summarizing scholarly reactions to the work(s) under discussion. This would include not only reading reviews of the items under discussion, but tracing out citations to the work in other monographs and articles as a way to trace the works’ influence. The value added could include finding and discussing primary source(s) related to the topic under discussion. You could also bring (or display) short primary sources for the class to read that would add to our discussion.
Your initial presentation should be approximately 10 minutes. **This should not be a summary of the week's reading.** After this, the presenters should prepare discussion questions around the broad issues and themes raised by the readings. Remember that it is best to pose open-ended interpretive questions rather than narrowly factual ones. You are trying to provoke discussion on the subjects we will be discussing in class.

3) **Written Assignments:**

Students will write 2-3 page (double-space, 12 point Times New Roman font) papers on the readings for 7 of the class sessions. It is your choice which weeks you choose not to write an assignment. These assignments are **due at the beginning of the class session for which they are written.** These reviews **should not summarize** the book, but should raise the points you see as most relevant for class discussion. Assume your reader is already familiar with the book, and you are engaging them in a discussion. If you came to my office to talk about a book we are reading, you would not start out by telling me what the book is about.

Only the six highest grades out of the seven papers will be counted toward your final grade. HOWEVER, you may not drop a zero. You MUST write seven total papers, or a grade of zero will be included in the tally for each paper that was not completed.

Additionally, students will write a final paper of 10-12 pages. The final paper will be discussed in more detail in class. It will only require a small amount of reading and research beyond that which is already required for the class. The final paper will be **due via e-mail on Saturday, December 15.**

**Grade Breakdown:**

- Presentation/discussion leading: 10%
- Participation in discussion: 30%
- 7 small papers – counting the six best grades at 5% each: 30%
- Final Paper: 30%

**Course Policies – READ CAREFULLY:**

**Policy on Late Work:** No extension on assignments will be granted. Grades on assignments will be reduced by 5 percent for each day of lateness. Please submit late assignments via email as soon as they are finished and bring them in hard copy to the next class session.

**Email Addresses:** The professor will communicate with students via email. Therefore, all students must activate and check their official GMU email addresses frequently.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services at 703.993.2474 or ods.gmu.edu. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.
Cheating and Plagiarism: All work in this class must be your own unless otherwise directed by the professor. If you haven't already, read the George Mason University Honor Code (http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#honor_system_and_code). For purposes of this course, cheating and plagiarism are defined as follows:

- Cheating encompasses the following:
  1. The willful giving or receiving of an unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students.
  2. The above may be accomplished by any means whatsoever, including but not limited to the following: fraud; duress; deception; theft; trick; talking; signs; gestures; copying from another student; and the unauthorized use of study aids, memoranda, books, data, or other information.
  3. Attempted cheating.

- Plagiarism encompasses the following:
  1. Presenting as one's own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment.
  2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment.

Violators will be referred to the Honor Board. Penalties at the graduate level can be up to and include dismissal from the graduate program.

Course Reading:

The readings for the course are listed below. Students are responsible for acquiring starred books. All journal articles are available via George Mason libraries online collections. Other items are either available online or will be made available by the instructor as noted.

Week 1 (August 29) Introduction

Week 2 (September 5) Stalinism and Biography
*Oleg Khlevniuk, Stalin: New Biography of a Dictator

Week 3 (September 12) Stalinism and Everyday Life
*Sheila Fitzpatrick, Everyday Stalinism

Week 4 (September 19) Speaking Bolshevik: Foucault’s Stalinism?
*Stephen Kotkin, Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization

Week 5 (September 26) Stalinism and the Modern State
*David Hoffmann, *Cultivating the Masses: Modern State Practices and Soviet Socialism, 1914-1939*

**Week 6 (October 3) Revisionism and Soviet Subjectivity**


**Week 7 (October 10)  **Stalinist Culture

*Katerina Clark, Moscow, the Fourth Rome: Stalinism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Evolution of Soviet Culture, 1931-1941.*

**NOTE: October 17 – No Class**

**Week 8 (October 24)  **Stalinism, Family, and Women


**NOTE: Special Makeup Session on October 26**

**Week 9 (October 26)  **Stalinism and Terror, Take 1

*Jörg Baberowski, Scorched Earth: Stalin’s Reign of Terror.*
Paul Hagenloh, “‘Socially Harmful Elements’ and the Great Terror,” in Stalinism: New Directions, Sheila Fitzpatrick (Ed.) [Chapter will be made available electronically.]

**Week 10 (October 31)  Stalinism and Terror, Take 2**

*Wendy Goldman, Terror and Democracy in the Age of Stalin*


**Week 11 (November 7)  Stalinism and Terror: The Perpetrators**

*Lynne Viola, Stalinist Perpetrators on Trial: Scenes from the Great Terror in Soviet Ukraine*


**Week 12 (November 14)  The Stalinist Gulag**

*Steven A. Barnes, Death and Redemption: The Gulag and the Shaping of Soviet Society*

**Week 13 (November 28)  Stalinism and War**

*Catherine Merridale, Ivan’s War: Life and Death in the Red Army, 1939-1945*

**Week 14 (December 5)  Stalinism, Ethnicity, Nationalism**

*Tarik Cyril Amar, The Paradox of Ukrainian L’viv: A Borderland City Between Stalinists, Nazis, and Nationalists.*