

Stalinism

History 635, Section 001
Fall 2012
Tuesdays, 7:20-10:00 pm
Location: Robinson B222

Prof. Steven A. Barnes
Robinson B226A
sbarnes3@gmu.edu
703-993-1247
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 6-7 pm and 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, collectivized agriculture, 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.

2) Oral Presentations:

One and occasionally two students will be required to open the week's session with a brief discussion of the issues raised by the week's readings, after which they will lead discussion of the readings.

3) Written Assignments:

Students will write 2-3 paragraph responses to readings in 10 of 13 weeks on the discussion boards of the course Blackboard site and will respond to one other comment on the discussion board in those same weeks. It is your choice which weeks you choose not to write an assignment. Your 2-3 paragraph response is due by 8:00pm on the Monday evening before class. Your

response to others' posts are due by 5:00pm on the day of class. These responses should not just capsule the book, but should raise the points you see as most relevant for class discussion.

Additionally, students will write a final paper of 10-12 pages. You will choose a primary source related to the history of Stalinism. You will then use the primary source to interrogate the historiography discussed in class, and you will use the historiography to elucidate the primary source. Details will be discussed further in class. No additional research will be required. **THIS IS NOT A RESEARCH PAPER.** The final paper will be **due Tuesday, December 11 by midnight via message on the course Blackboard site.**

Grade Breakdown:

Participation	20%
10 weeks of participation on course discussion board (4% each)	40%
Final Paper	40%

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.

Email Addresses: The professor will communicate with students via email. Therefore, all students must activate and check their official GMU email addresses frequently. You may forward it to another account, but you are responsible for the information that is sent via your official account.

ADA: Students with learning disabilities who need special accommodation must present appropriate documentation to me by the third week of class. Contact the Disability Resource Center (<http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc>) to obtain documentation.

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 which defines cheating and plagiarism and outlines the penalties and procedures that apply thereto. Violators will receive the maximum penalty allowed by the University. If you have any questions on what constitutes cheating or plagiarism after reviewing these materials, please talk to me. If you are unsure when completing an assignment, ask me. Do not take a chance of your case winding up before the Honor Board.

Course Reading:

The readings for the course are listed below. Additional material may be provided by the instructor to supplement the scheduled weekly readings. All books are available at the GMU Bookstore.

Week 1 (August 28)

Introduction

Week 2 (September 4)

Robert Service, *Stalin: A Biography*

Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Beyond Totalitarianism*, Chapter 1

Week 3 (September 11)

Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization*

Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Beyond Totalitarianism*, Chapter 6

Week 4 (September 18)

Lynne Viola, *Peasant Rebels under Stalin: Collectivization and the Culture of Peasant Resistance*

Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Beyond Totalitarianism*, Chapter 2

Week 5 (September 25)

Mark Edele, *Stalinist Society: 1928-1953*

Jochen Hellbeck, "Speaking Out: Languages of Affirmation and Dissent in Stalinist Russia," *Kritika* I/1 (Winter 2000) (Available electronically via the George Mason library catalog.)

Anna Krylova, "The Tenacious Liberal Subject in Soviet Studies," *Kritika* I/1 (Winter 2000) (Available electronically via the George Mason library catalog.)

Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Beyond Totalitarianism*, Chapter 7

Week 6 (October 2)

David Hoffmann, *Cultivating the Masses: Modern State Practices and Soviet Socialism, 1914-1939*

Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Beyond Totalitarianism*, Chapter 8

OCTOBER 9 – NO CLASS. MONDAY NIGHT CLASSES MEET ON THIS TUESDAY NIGHT.

Week 7 (October 16)

Jan Plamper, *The Stalin Cult: A Study in the Alchemy of Power*

Week 8 (October 23)

Paul Hagenloh, *Stalin's Police: Public Order and Mass Repression in the USSR, 1926-1941*

Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Beyond Totalitarianism*, Chapter 5

Week 9 (October 30)

Wendy Goldman, *Inventing the Enemy: Denunciation and Terror in Stalin's Russia*

Amir Weiner, "Nature, Nurture, and Memory in a Socialist Utopia: Delineating the Soviet Socio-Ethnic Body in the Age of Socialism," *The American Historical Review*, October 1999.

(Available electronically via the George Mason library catalog.)

Peter Holquist, "State Violence as Technique: The Logic of Violence in Soviet Totalitarianism," in *Stalinism: The Essential Readings* and also in *Landscaping the Human Garden*. This chapter will be made available at a later date.

Week 10 (November 6)

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

Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Beyond Totalitarianism*, Chapter 4

Week 11 (November 13)

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

Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Beyond Totalitarianism*, Chapter 9

Week 12 (November 20)

Anna Krylova, *Soviet Women in Combat: A History of Violence on the Eastern Front*

Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Beyond Totalitarianism*, Chapter 3

Week 13 (November 27)

Boris Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond*

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

Week 14 (December 4)

Ethan Pollock, *Stalin and the Soviet Science Wars*

Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Beyond Totalitarianism*, Chapter 10