

History 575
Spring 2006

READINGS IN STALINISM

(www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/russia)

Instructor: Jeff Jones jwjones@uncg.edu
Office: 224a McIver Office Phone/Voice Mail: 334-4068
Office Hours: M 11:30-12:30; T 2-3; W 10-11; and by appointment

Course Description

This course will examine the historiography of the Stalinist period in Soviet history, examining different interpretations of Stalinism's relationship to Leninism/Bolshevism; the "Stalin Revolution" and Stalin's role in the purges of the late 1930s; the question of whether or not the Stalinist system was "totalitarian"; and the nature of Soviet society during the war and postwar "reconstruction"—the final decade of Stalin's rule. The class is divided into three parts: 1) The Rise of Stalinism; 2) Stalinism & the purges; 3) Stalinism during & after World War II. Students should be motivated and interested in the topic to handle a significant reading and writing load; they are expected to play an active role in the class through oral reports and discussion.

Course Goals

There are several specific goals to achieve for the course:

- By the end of the class students will understand that history is not just the memorization of dates and facts, but rather the *interpretation* of the past
- Students will acquire a knowledge of the key terms, facts, and events in Soviet history during the Stalinist period and thereby gain an informed historical perspective
- Students will gain an understanding of some of the key issues and debates in the broad historiography of the Stalinist period
- Students will gain a focused understanding of the historiography of a specific topic in the Stalinist period by writing a Final Essay on one particular area of interest
- Students will obtain the knowledge and skills to critically appraise varying historical arguments and formulate their own interpretations
- Students will learn how to critically read and distinguish between different types of historical sources and to "read between the lines" of differing points of view
- Students will experience "hands-on" work with primary source material and gain an understanding of how to read history through such sources
- Students will learn how to articulate in a clear and concise manner the main points of a written project in a way that will educate other students in the course
- Students will participate in a respectful and thoughtful manner in discussions of a variety of topics both online and in the classroom
- Students will develop analytical skills and the ability to apply principles and generalizations learned in this class to other problems and situations

Course Activities

Undergraduate Students:

Participation	30%
2 Book Reviews	30%
Final Essay	40%

Graduate Students:

Participation	30%
3 Book Reviews	30%
Final Essay	40%

Readings & Films

- Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times*
- John Scott, *Behind the Urals: An American Worker in Russia's City of Steel*
- Mary Leder, *My Life in Stalinist Russia: An American Woman Looks Back*
- David Hoffman, ed. *Stalinism: The Essential Readings*
- OPTIONAL: Martin McCauley, *Stalin and Stalinism*, 3rd ed.
- We will also see three films out of class at the times designated below: "Burnt by the Sun"; "Thief"; and "Inner Circle"
- Numerous reserve readings identified below

Course Web Page

The course web page is at www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/russia It includes a bibliography, a syllabus with active links to course readings (most of which are on e-reserve), and other features relevant to the course. In addition, we will utilize some aspects of the Blackboard course web page <https://blackboard.uncg.edu> such as (especially) the E-Reserves function and the Online Discussion Board. Grades will also be posted on Blackboard and students are encouraged to use this tool to keep up with their participation grade.

Participation

Student involvement and participation in the course is very important and will take a variety of forms, including participating in online discussions and giving brief oral reports (5-10 minute summaries of students' final essays as described below), as well as discussing readings and films for the class on a regular basis. The participation grade also consists of Worksheets and Reaction Pieces (1-2 pages; these are intended to be your reaction to or opinion of an assigned reading, not a summary) to the readings designated below.

Book Reviews

All students will write a review of *Everyday Stalinism* by Sheila Fitzpatrick. First, read the two reviews of the book provided by the instructor (you are also encouraged to identify other reviews of the book in major scholarly journals). **Your review of the book should be double-spaced, 12-pt. font, and 500-750 words (2-3 pages) in length.** Briefly summarize the main points of the author's thesis and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the book's argument. Consider the following questions: What is the author's thesis? What sources/evidence does the author rely on? Where does the book fit with historiographical trends in the field? How convincing is the author's interpretation and the book's overall argument? How do the reviews assess the book? What points if any do the reviewers criticize? On issues of contention who do you agree with, the author of the book or the reviewers, and why?

Undergraduate students write a second review on a book of their choosing related to their final essay topic (due Monday, April 10), while Graduate students write *two* additional reviews on books of their choosing related to their final essay topic (due Monday, March 20 and Monday, April 10). For these reviews the process will be the same: identify (where possible) at least two published reviews of the book in major scholarly journals (i.e. *The American Historical Review*, *Slavic Review*, or the *Russian Review*, although other scholarly journals are also acceptable), then address the questions outlined above with the same requirements, (double-spaced, 12-point font, 2-3 pages in length).

Final Essay

The Final Essay is a historiographical essay addressing an issue raised in the literature. Students can choose any relevant topic that interests them. The essay should show a command of the literature on the chosen topic by assessing the strengths and weaknesses of varying points of view. Essays should be double-spaced, 12-pt. font, 6-10 pages (undergrads)/8-12 pages (graduate students) in length. Possible topics include (but are *not* limited to) the following:

- A Comparison of Different Biographies of Stalin/Trotsky/Bukharin, etc.
- The Relationship between Leninism/Bolshevism and Stalinism
- Stalin's Rise to Power
- The Collectivization of Agriculture
- Labor and Industrial Production in the Stalinist Period
- The Debate over the Ukrainian Famine (1932-33)
- The Assassination of Sergei Kirov
- The Origins and Causes of the purges of the late 1930s
- Religion in the Soviet Union in the Stalinist Period
- Propaganda/Iconography/the Stalin Cult
- National Policy During the Stalinist Period
- Anti-Semitism in Stalinist Russia
- The Soviet Educational System in the Stalinist Period
- The Leningrad Blockade
- Stalin's Role in World War II
- The Origins of the Cold War

Students are required to turn in a Bibliography of readings for their Final Essay on Monday, March 13. To assure the best possible outcome we will go through several drafts: the 1st draft (to be read and commented on by students in the class) is due Monday, April 17; the 2nd draft is due to the instructor Monday, April 24; the final draft is due Monday, May 8 by 5:00 PM

CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday, January 9. Introduction: Themes in Russian History

- Reading for Wednesday, January 11: Excerpt from *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx

Part I: The Rise of Stalinism

BEGIN READING Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*; review due Monday, February 13

Wednesday, January 11. The Rise of Marxism in Russia: Discussion of the Reading

- Reading for Wednesday, January 18: excerpt from "What is to be Done?" by V. I. Lenin

Wednesday, January 18. Leninism & Bolshevism: Discussion of "What is to be Done?"

- Reading for Monday, January 23: 1) "The Proletarian Revolution & the Renegade Kautsky" by Lenin; 2) *Everyday Stalinism* "Introduction," pp. 1-13; 3-4) Two Reviews of *Everyday Stalinism*: a) Lewis Siegelbaum; b) Joanna Rohozinska; **Worksheet 1** due in class

Monday, January 23. Leninism & Bolshevism (cont'd): Discussion of the Readings

- Reading for Wednesday, January 25: 1) "Stalin, Man of the Borderlands" by Alfred Rieber; 2) "Stalin's Mind" by Dmitri Volkogonov

Wednesday, January 25. Stalin as an Historical Personality. “Stalin” (Part 1): “Revolutionary”

- Reading for Monday, January 30: 1) “A Perspective on History: The Soviet System Reconsidered” by Theodore Von Laue; 2) “Theodore von Laue: Defender of Stalin and Stalinism” by John E. Haynes; 3) “Stalin and his Stalinism: Power and Authority in the Soviet Union, 1930-1953” by Ronald G. Suny in Hoffman, ed., *Stalinism: The Essential Readings*, pp.13-34

Monday, January 30. Stalin as an Historical Personality (cont’d): Discussion of the Readings

- Reading for Wednesday, February 1: 1) “Stalinism as Revolution from Above” by Robert Tucker; 2) “Bolshevism and Stalinism” by Stephen Cohen; 3) “Grappling with Stalinism” by Moshe Lewin in Hoffman, ed., *Stalinism: The Essential Readings*, pp. 37-61; 4) “Students in the First Five-Year Plan” by Valentina Bogdan; **Reaction Piece** to reading #4 due in class

Wednesday, February 1. Stalin & the Stalin Revolution: Discussion of the Readings

- Reading for Monday, February 6: 1) Find and turn in two reviews of *Harvest of Sorrow* (1986) by Robert Conquest; 2) “The 1932 Harvest and the Famine of 1933” by Mark B. Tauger; 3) Letters: Robert Conquest; Mark B. Tauger; 4) “Should This Pulitzer be Pulled?” by Douglas McCollam—**NOTE: those whose LAST NAMES BEGIN WITH A-J should post a response to the 1st Blackboard Discussion Board prompt by Sunday**

Monday, February 6. Collectivization & Famine in the Ukraine: Discussion of the Readings

- Reading for Wednesday, February 8: 1) “Introduction” and “Popular Resistance in the Stalinist 1930s” by Lynne Viola; 2) “A Worker’s Strike in Stalin’s Russia” by Jeffrey Rossman; 3) “A Peasant Rebellion in Stalin’s Russia” by Tracy McDonald; **Worksheet 2** due in class

Wednesday, February 8. Resistance in Stalinist Russia: Discussion of the Readings

- Reading for Monday, February 13: 1) “1936 Constitution of the USSR”; 2) “State and Society under Stalin: Constitutions and Elections in the 1930s” by J. Arch Getty; 3) “The Soviet Tragedy: A History of Socialism in Russia” by Martin Malia in Hoffman, ed., *Stalinism: The Essential Readings*, pp. 65-78

Monday, February 13. “Life is gayer, everyone is happier now”: Russia in the 1930s—discussion of *Everyday Stalinism*. **BOOK REVIEW DUE** in class

Part II: Stalinism & the purges

BEGIN READING Scott, *Behind the Urals*; Reaction Piece due Wednesday, March 22

Wednesday, February 15. Stalinist Repression. “Stalin” (Part 2): “Despot”

- Out-of-class Film: “Burnt by the Sun” (the film is 2:20 long) in 225 Curry Hall at 4:00
- Reading for Monday, February 20: 1) “The Assassination of Kirov” (from *Let History Judge*) by Roy Medvedev; 2-3) Two reviews of Robert Conquest’s *Stalin and the Kirov Murder* by a) Peter B. Kaufman; b) J. Arch Getty; 4) “The Politics of Repression Revisited” by J. Arch Getty; 5) “Another Kind of Fear: The Kirov Murder and the End of Bread Rationing in Leningrad” by Lesley Rimmel—**NOTE: those whose LAST NAMES BEGIN WITH K-Z should post a response to the 2nd Blackboard Discussion Board prompt by Sunday**

Monday, February 20. The Assassination of Sergei Kirov: Prelude to the Purges?

- Reading for Wednesday, February 22: 1) “Stalin and the Making of the New Elite, 1928-1939” and 2) “How the mice buried the cat” by Sheila Fitzpatrick; 3) Excerpt from the *Gulag Archipelago* by Alexander Solzhenitsyn; 4) “The Assault on Party and State Cadres, 1937-38” by Roy Medvedev (from *Let History Judge*); **Worksheet 3** due in class

Wednesday, February 22. Varying Perspectives on the Purges: Discussion of the Readings

- Reading for Monday, February 27: 1) “Party and Purge in Smolensk, 1933-1937” by J. Arch Getty; 2) “Problems of Interpretation” by Robert C. Tucker; 3) “Problems of Evidence” by Niels Erik Rosenfeldt; 4) “Reply” by Getty; **Reaction Piece to these readings due in class**

Monday, February 27. Varying Perspectives on the Purges (cont’d): Discussion of the Readings

- Reading for Wednesday, March 1: “The Sky Darkens” by J. Arch Getty and Oleg Naumov from *The Road to Terror*, pp. 331-52

Wednesday, March 1. Varying Perspectives on the Purges (cont’d): Discussion of the Reading & the film “Burnt by the Sun”

- Reading for Monday, March 13: 1) “Now It Can Be Told, Even In Russia” by Norman Davies; 2) “The Bard of Terror” by Charles H. Fairbanks; 3) “Fear and Belief in the USSR’s ‘Great Terror’” by R. W. Thurston; 4) “What is Terror?” by Robert Conquest; 5) “On Desk-Bound Parochialism, Commonsense Perspectives, and Lousy Evidence: A Reply to Robert Conquest” by Thurston—**NOTE: those whose LAST NAMES BEGIN WITH A-J should post a response to the 3rd Blackboard Discussion Board prompt by Sunday, March 12**

Monday, March 13. “Fear” & “Terror” in the Purges: Discussion of the Readings. **Final Essay Bibliography due in class**

- Reading for Wednesday, March 15: 1) “The Objectives of the Great Terror, 1937-1938” by Oleg Khlevnyuk; 2) “Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization” by Stephen Kotkin; 3) “State Violence as Technique: The Logic of Violence in Soviet Totalitarianism” by Peter Holquist in Hoffman, ed., *Stalinism: The Essential Readings*, pp. 83-156

Wednesday, March 15. “Fear” & “Terror” in the Purges (cont’d): Discussion of the Readings

- Reading for Monday, March 20: 1) “Working, Struggling, Becoming: Stalin-Era Autobiographical Texts” by Jochen Hellbeck; 2) “Women in Soviet Society: Equality, Development, and Social Change” by Gail Warshofsky-Lapidus in Hoffman, ed., *Stalinism: The Essential Readings*, pp. 181-235; 3) “Memoirs of an Engineer” by Valentina Bogdan; 4) “A Family Chronicle” by Inna Shikheeva-Gaister; **Reaction Piece** to readings #3-4 due in class

Monday, March 20. “Fear” & “Terror” in the Purges (cont’d): Discussion of the Readings.

Graduate Students: 2nd Book Review due

Wednesday, March 22. An American Perspective on the “Steel City”: Discussion of *Behind the Urals*; **Reaction Piece to the book due in class**

Part III: Stalinism during & after WWII

BEGIN READING Leder, *My Life in Stalinist Russia*; Reaction Piece due Wednesday, April 12

Monday, March 27. Russia at War

Wednesday, March 29. Soviet Russia During the War & After

- Out-of-class Film: “Thief” (the film is 1:33 long) in 225 Curry Hall at 4:00
- Reading for Monday, April 3: 1) “Postwar Soviet Society: The ‘Return to Normalcy’” by Sheila Fitzpatrick; 2) “Russia after the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments” by Elena Zubkova in Hoffman, ed., *Stalinism: The Essential Readings*, pp. 277-300; 3) “Denunciation and Its Function in Soviet Governance: From the Archive of the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs” by Vladimir A. Kozlov; 4) “A War Remembered: Soviet Films of the Great Patriotic War” by Denise J. Youngblood

Monday, April 3. Postwar Soviet Society

- Reading for Wednesday, April 5: 1) “Introduction” and 2) “‘Every Family Has Its Freak’: Perceptions of Collaboration in Occupied Soviet Russia, 1943-1948” by Jeffrey W. Jones; **Worksheet 4** due in class; OPTIONAL: “‘People Without A Definite Occupation’: The Illegal Economy and ‘Speculators’ in Rostov-on-the-Don, 1943-1948” by Jones; “Celebrating the Soviet Present: The *Zhdanovshchina* Campaign in Ukrainian Literature and the Arts” by Serhy Yekelchuk; “Local-Outsider Negotiations in Postwar Sevastopol’s Reconstruction, 1944-53” by Karl Qualls

Wednesday, April 5. Soviet “Reconstruction”: Discussion of the Readings & the film “Thief”

- Out-of-class Film: “Inner Circle” (the film is 2:20 long) in 225 Curry Hall at 4:00
- **NOTE: those whose LAST NAMES BEGIN WITH K-Z should post a response to the 4th Blackboard Discussion Board prompt by Sunday**

Monday, April 10. “Late Stalinism.” “Stalin” (Part 3): “Generalissimo.” **Undergraduate Students: 2nd Book Review due; Graduate Students: 3rd Book Review due**

Wednesday, April 12. An American’s Perspective on Stalinism: Discussion of *My Life in Stalinist Russia* & the film “Inner Circle”; **Reaction Piece to the book due in class**

Monday, April 17. Oral Reports. **1st Draft of the Final Essay due in class**

- Reading for Wednesday, April 19: Read and comment on other students’ Final Essays

Wednesday, April 19. Oral Reports

Monday, April 24. Oral Reports. **2nd Draft of the Final Essay due in class**

Wednesday, April 26. Oral Reports

Monday, May 1. Conclusion: the Legacy of Stalinism

Monday, May 8: Final Essay Due

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Martin Malia, *Russia Under Western Eyes*

Giuseppe Boffa, *Stalinism*

Richard Pipes, *Formation of the Soviet Union*

Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution, 1917-32*

-----, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization*, 1994

Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization*, 1995

John Barber and Mark Harrison, *The Soviet Home Front, 1941-45: A Social and Economic History of the USSR in World War II*, 1991

Bonnell, Victoria, *Iconography of Power: Soviet Political Posters under Lenin and Stalin*, 1997

Conquest, Robert, *Harvest of Sorrow*, god???

Dunham, Vera, *In Stalin's Time: Middleclass Values in Soviet Fiction*, 1976

Getty, J. Arch, *Origins*???

Weiner, Amir, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution*, 2001

Medvedev, Roy, *Let History Judge*, 1989

Cohen, Stephen, *Bukharinism*...

Davies, Sarah, ??????????????

Osokina, Elena,

Trotsky, Leon, *The Revolution Betrayed*

Biographies of Stalin

Volkogonov, Dmitrii, ??????????????

Deutscher, Issac, ??????????????

Trotsky, Leon. ??????????????

{ see my old 511-b Notes }