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HIS 350L: 39700
Spring 2011
SZB 467: WF 2-3:30

STALIN'S RUSSIA AT WAR

"It was the Russians who tore the guts out of the German Army."

- Winston Churchill



Course Description: Violence, famine, and epidemic disease took more than fifty million Soviet lives between 1914 and 1953. Over half of these deaths occurred between 1941 and 1945, when the Soviet Union fought the most savage and immense war in history. No other nation ever endured anything like it. The Soviets defeated the invading Axis powers despite the purge of the military leadership in 1937, horrible mistakes at the outset of the war, and widespread hostility within the country to the Stalinist regime. We will focus on the impact of the Stalinist state's attempt to transform the nation into an industrial power, the death and destruction during the German occupation, as well as the courage and barbarism in the fight to the death on the Eastern Front, especially during the Battles of Moscow, Stalingrad, Kursk, and Berlin. Evaluating the role of Stalin (or "Uncle Joe" as the American and British public knew him) and his inner circle, as well as what the Stalinist Revolution and "Great Patriotic War" meant for ordinary Soviets, will be of particular concern.

Grading: This course contains a substantial writing component. During the course of the semester students will write four critical analyses of assigned reading, five pages in length each. In addition, by 11:30 a.m. on most class days, students will e-mail me three questions dealing with that day's reading. The final grade is based on both the written assignments (60% essays; 10% questions) and the extent and quality of classroom participation (30%). Late papers/questions will be penalized. While NSP rules permit students three unexcused absences, in this discussion-based seminar any unexcused absences will negatively impact the class participation grade.

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

For an explanation of academic dishonesty, students should consult the Office of Student Judicial Services at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>.

In keeping with the university's revision of its grading options, this course will be graded with the use of +/- grades (for example A-, C+, etc.).

Writing Tips:

1. You are encouraged to discuss the topic with classmates but the essay you write must be your own work.
2. State your argument in your opening paragraph. Do so quickly and concisely and as forcefully as possible.
3. Support your argument by specific references to evidence from the readings. Also confront the opposing argument and state your reasons for rejecting it.
4. The topic sentence of each of these supporting paragraphs should state the aspect of the topic you wish to discuss.
5. Use the last paragraph to summarize your argument briefly. Let it mirror your first paragraph.
6. Avoid excessive or unnecessary detail. You are writing for an audience (me) who knows what happened and has done the reading.
7. Quote to add punch. Paraphrase otherwise. Do not quote often or use long quotations.
8. Avoid the passive voice. Write about the past in the past tense.
9. Try to write as simply and directly as possible. Omit needless words.
10. Your essay, due at the beginning of class, must be typed, double-spaced, spell-checked, and grammatically correct.

Texts: Kevin McDermott, *Stalin*.
S. A. Smith, *The Russian Revolution*.
John Scott, *Behind the Urals*.
Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*.
Lydia Chukovskaya, *Sofia Petrovna*.
Richard Overy, *Russia's War*.
Catherine Merridale, *Ivan's War*.
Geoffrey Roberts, *Victory at Stalingrad*.
Lee Baker, *The Second World War on the Eastern Front*.
Course Packet available from Paradigm, 407 W. 24th St.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE: Introduction

Wednesday, January 19

Film Clip: "Why We Fight: The Battle of Russia"

Friday, January 21

Reading: Smith, 1-39

McDermott, 1-34

*Father Gapon's Petition

WEEK TWO: Revolutionary Russia

Wednesday, January 26

Reading: Smith, 40-99

McDermott, 34-40

Overy 1-12

Friday, January 28

Reading: Smith, 100-168

McDermott, 41-63

Overy, 13-16

Film: "The Life and Times of Joseph Stalin"

WEEK THREE: Forced Collectivization & Famine

Wednesday, February 2

Reading: *Hindus, "Red Bread"

McDermott, 64-71

Merridale, 29-33

Overy, 16-17, 22-23

Friday, February 4
Film: "Harvest of Despair"

WEEK FOUR: Breakneck Industrialization

Wednesday, February 9
Reading: McDermott, 71-87
Scott, ix-92
Overy, 18-20
Merridale, 33-43

Friday, February 11
Reading: Scott, 117-170

WEEK FIVE: The Great Terror

Wednesday, February 16: *Essay #1 Due*
Reading: McDermott, 88-95
Overy, 24-25
*Conquest, "The Kirov Murder"
*Knight, "1 December: The Murder"
*Getty, "The Politics of Repression Revisited"
*Getty, "Growing Tension in 1935"

Friday, February 18
Reading: Overy, 21-22, 24-33
McDermott, 95-115
Merridale, 44-48

WEEK SIX: Fear and Belief in the Terror

Wednesday, February 23
Reading: Chukovskaya, 1-120

Friday, February 25
Reading: Scott, 173-206
Discussion of Film: "Burnt by the Sun"

WEEK SEVEN: Why Confess?

Wednesday, March 2
Reading: *"Bukharin's Letter to Stalin"
Koestler, 1-96

Friday, March 4: *Essay #2 Due*
Reading: Koestler, 97-272

WEEK EIGHT: How War Came

Wednesday, March 9

Reading: Overy, 34-55
McDermott, 116-121
Roberts, 20-22
Merridale, 39-48
Baker, 10-15; Doc. 1

Friday, March 11

Reading: Overy, 56-72
Baker, 15-31; Doc. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Merridale, 39-81
Roberts, 17-19, 23-26
Film Clip: "The Hour before Midnight"

***** SPRING BREAK *****

WEEK NINE: Operation Barbarossa

Wednesday, March 23

Overy, 73-98
McDermott, 122-136
Merridale, 82-115
Baker, 3-9, 32-40, 44-48; Doc. 7, 8, 9, 10
Film Clip: "The Goths Ride East"

Friday, March 25

Reading: Overy, 99-112
Baker, 40-44
*Bidlack, "Survival Strategies"

WEEK TEN: Battle of Moscow in War of Annihilation

Wednesday, March 30

Reading: Overy, 113-124
Baker, 50-56; Doc. 11, 12, 13, 14
Merridale, 116-124, 146-152
Roberts, 39-45

Friday, April 1: **Essay #3 Due**

Reading: Overy, 125-153

Baker, 48-50, 70-73; Doc. 17

Roberts, 26-32

Merridale, 125-126, 136-143, 187-225

Film: "She Defends the Fatherland"

WEEK ELEVEN: The Battle of Stalingrad

Wednesday, April 6

Reading: Overy, 154-170

Roberts, 49-104

Baker, 57-68; Doc. 15, 16

Merridale, 171-171

Friday, April 8

Reading: Overy, 171-189

Roberts, 107-136

Baker, 68-70

Merridale, 179-186

WEEK TWELVE: The Battle of Kursk and False Dawn

Wednesday, April 13

Reading: Overy, 190-222

Baker, 73-81

Merridale, 187-225

Roberts, 139-142

Film Clip: "The Citadel"

Friday, April 15

Reading: Overy, 223-244

Baker, 82-98; Doc. 18, 19, 20

Merridale, 226-280

Roberts, 142-145

Discussion of film: "Come and See"

WEEK THIRTEEN: The Red Army in Germany

Wednesday, April 20

Reading: Overy, 251-289

Baker, 98-102; Doc. 21, 22, 23

Merridale, 281-335

Roberts, 146-161

*Naimark, "The Problem of Rape"

Discussion of Film: "A Woman in Berlin"

Friday, April 22

NO CLASS – EASTER WEEKEND

WEEK FOURTEEN: Assessment & Post-War Russia

Wednesday, April 27

Reading: Overy, 290-330

Baker, 103-107

McDermott, 137-167

Merridale, 336-388

Film clip: "The Fall of Berlin"

Friday, April 29: *Essay #4 Due*

WEEK FIFTEEN

Students prepare for the three week extension of the course (May 9-31) in London, Normandy, Paris, and Berlin.