History 241W-000: Topics in History and Text
Intimacy and Terror

TuThFr, 1:00-3:15
Bowden 116

Summer 2017

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 2:00-3:30
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Overview

*Intimacy and Terror* is a new course offering that explores the repressions of the Soviet totalitarianism through the experience of those who lived through it. Taking a humanistic approach towards such traumatic historical events as the Stalin Revolution, the Terror Famine, forced labor camps (the Gulag), the Great Terror, the horrors of World War and the Cult of Personality, this course will focus on autobiography, memoirs, letters, diaries and other, deeply personal texts to understand how average Soviet citizens dealt with the repercussions of Stalinism. While excellent background works such as Figes, *The Whisperers* will be provided, our primary source material in the class will be on witnesses to this history, not its interpreters. We will read texts or excerpts from persons as diverse as a Kazakh nomad and a Gulag camp commandant, the diary of a Communist true believer and the diary of a rebellious schoolgirl, the account of a political prisoner (*zek*) and the interviews of an architect of terror. We will also sample contemporary film (and later) film, poetry and fiction to understand the heavy burden Soviet citizens bore for living in the first socialist society. Too often the story of Stalinism is reduced to vast generalities and stereotypes of a soulless state machinery that ground down an atomized society. In fact, each event of repression, each grandiose project or mind-numbing statistic related to real people, both as victims and perpetrators (not rarely, both). The course is a 4-credit, writing intensive course and meets the College HUM and post-freshman writing GERs.
Requirements and Grading

- **Participation:** Students are expected to attend all class lectures and discussions. Everyone will do all the required readings and assignments each unit and students will be expected to discuss the unit themes and topics cogently. **20%**

- **Discussion Responses:** One-to-two page post to Canvas responding to each week’s assigned readings. Proper grammar and style are required as well as historical analysis—not simply summation. In other words, you must put your response in context, not simply rely on the text. All responses should be posted by 9:00 pm on the evening prior to discussion (indicated on the syllabus) to Canvas. Failure to post on time will lead to a failing grade on the assignment. **30%**

- **Final Research Paper:** The final written assignment will consist of a research paper or interpretive essay of not less than 12 pages, which will permit students to explore in-depth one of the texts discussed in class. Students must work with one of our primary texts but also put that text into historical, social and political context. In other words, any student choosing Lugovskaia’s *I Want To Live* would need to put this text in the context of Stalin’s indoctrination of children. Anyone wanting to work with Mochulsky’s *Gulag Boss* would have to discuss the role of forced labor in Stalinist Russia. Our shorter texts are also permissible as a basis of the final paper but will probably either involve reading beyond the extracts provided in class or supplemental autobiographical texts. (I have provided “Suggested Readings” for each unit to provide excellent secondary materials on our subjects). This class if focused on the individual’s response to terrifying times and the final research paper will serve to test your ability to independently analyze that experience. To guide students there will be weekly “research assignments” to aid them in finding a topic and sources for this paper. Students will hand in the papers in lieu of our final exam on **Friday, August 4th** (by 3:30 p.m.). Prior to this deadline, students will submit a brief proposal (topic, texts, bibliography) to Dr. Payne by **Friday, July 14th** and meet with him on over the course of the next several days (meetings to be scheduled independently of office hours) to discuss the feasibility of their topics. **Mandatory** draft papers are due on **Sunday, July 23rd** via Canvas (I will return these with comments on Friday, July 28th). These assignments are also noted on the class schedule (below). All written assignments will be submitted through Canvas and anti-plagiarism software applied to them. Please do not infringe on the Honor Code, as such actions will result in a referral to Honor Council. **50%**
Course Policies

- **Attendance:** Class attendance is mandatory and unexcused absences will be detrimental to the class participation grade (five unexcused absences will lead to automatic failure in the classroom participation grade).

- **Classroom Participation:** Discussion is also important, and your willingness to contribute to discussion class will be reflected in your participation grade. Education is not a spectator sport, please be responsive when called on and prepared to discuss the texts.

- **Extensions:** Students must complete course work on time or arrange, **before the assignment is due**, an extension with the instructor. Late assignments will be marked down.

- **Grading:** The principles of grading in this class are succinct and clear.
  - In those assignments that are brief (discussion responses, pop quizzes [should they become necessary due to a lack of reading the texts!]), grades will be a check (√) or a check minus (√-). The final mark on this particular portion of your grade will simply be a cumulating of all checks versus all possible checks (so, if you get a check on 12 of 13 discussion responses that would be a 92% on your discussion response grade).
  - On more substantial assignments such as exams, oral exams or the final paper, there are various criteria which are examined (I will provide a matrix of my grading criteria on Canvas).
    - In general, however, if you have mastered the material, than you can expect a B.
    - If you have mastered the material and can present an independent analysis of it (history is an interpretive discipline, not the regurgitation of names and dates!), than you will receive an A.
    - C is the mark for those who have not mastered the material.
    - D is reserved for those who clearly do not understand the material at all.
    - F is an option, but only to those students who willfully refuse to do the work or make an attempt to understand the subject.

- **General Email policy:** Dr. Payne reviews email daily during the work week but not necessarily more than once or twice daily (usually in the morning and late evening). Please be patient, especially with learn-link communications. I’m not Google!

- **Other Resources:** The Writing Center provides individualized mentoring on exposition provided by a gifted cadre of mentors. Their sessions are rewarding and beneficial even to accomplished writers. For more information and to schedule an appointment see: [http://www.emory.edu/ENGLISH/WC/](http://www.emory.edu/ENGLISH/WC/)

- **Note on College Writing Requirements:** This course **does** fulfill the College post-freshman writing requirement. As is appropriate for a writing-intensive class, **fully 85% of your grade will be based on writing proficiency**. Late work will be penalized unless prior arrangements are made with the Professor for an extension, so please plan accordingly. These assignments are quite manageable if you plan accordingly (i.e., keep up with the reading, budget time, prepare drafts, etc.)

- **Honor Code:** As in all Emory classes, **the strictures of the honor code apply. Infractions of the honor code, especially cheating and plagiarism, will be handled with the greatest possible severity.** We will be using anti-plagiarism software associated with Canvas, so please do not tempt fate.
Books


Textbooks:


Texts:
# Class Schedule

## Unit 1: Introduction—The Political is Personal

**Mon. (6/26): CLASS INTRODUCTION**

**Weds. (6/28):**

**SECONDARY READINGS:**

**ASSIGNMENT:** Reaction Paper (for unit 2) Due (by 9:00 pm via Canvas).

**Recommended Readings:**
- Igal Halfin, *Red Autobiographies: Initiating the Bolshevik Self*.
- Adam Hochschild, *The Unquiet Ghost: Russians Remember Stalin*.
Unit 2: The Problem of Self in Revolutionary Russia

Thurs. (6/29):
SECONDARY READING:
Orlando Figes, The Whisperers, pp. 1-75.

Fri. (6/30):
ASSIGNMENT: Research Assignment due (by 9:00 pm via Canvas).

Discussion Question:
How, according to Figes, did the Soviet regime obliterate the distinction between the private and the public, the intimate and the political following the Revolution? What was expected of Communist consciousness and how were institutions used to inculcate the new values? How did some, such as Mikhail Baitalsky, embrace this new mentality?

Research Assignment:
Please identify three entries in The Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History [DK14 .M6], its supplement or the The Modern Encyclopedia of East Slavic, Baltic and Eurasian Literatures [PG2940 .M6 INDEX V.1-10] that discuss topics of interest to you concerning the class subject. Submit a short summary of whether you believe this is a workable topic for you. The form of your submission should be the citation and then one or two sentences on the topics feasibility. In other words, “The Gulag: The subject is fascinating to me but seeing the vast amount of memoirist and secondary literature on the topic, I think I need to narrow down the topic, perhaps to Kolyma.” Or, “I really like the idea of writing on one person, such as Anna Akhmatova or Osip Mandelshtam and Hope Against Hope seems like a good memoir to consider both.” Remember, only three topics and spend some time exploring the various entries.

Recommended Readings:
David Hoffmann, Stalinist Values: The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity, 1917-1941.
Unit 3: The Intimate under Siege

Sun. (7/2):
  ASSIGNMENT: Reaction Paper Due (by 9:00 pm via Canvas).

Mon. (7/3):

  TEXT:

Discussion Question:
  Consider the stories in Mikhail Zoshchenko’s Nervous People. What is the urban, post Civil-war experience for the run-of-the-mill Soviet citizen? What insights does Boym present about the habitus—the lived environment in which Soviet citizens experienced the regime—of the Soviet cities which shaped people's mentalities? How did the kommunalka (communal apartment) create a nation of whisperers? How did people try to hold onto some vestige of individuality? Which of Zoshchenko stories is most illustrative of the fear of transparency in the kommunalka?

Recommended Readings:
  Svetlana Boym, Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia.
  Anne E. Gorsuch, Flappers and Foxtrotters: Soviet Youth in the "Roaring Twenties."
Tues. (7/4): NO CLASS—INDEPENDENCE DAY BREAK
Unit 4: The Great Break—Communism Goes on the Offensive

Weds. (7/5):
SECONDARY READING:

TEXT:

ASSIGNMENT: Reaction Paper Due (by 9:00 pm via Canvas).

Thursday, 7/6:
SECONDARY READINGS:

TEXTS:

Friday, 7/7:
ASSIGNMENT: Research Assignment due (by 9:00 pm via Canvas).

Discussion Questions (chose one):
In an environment of vicious class purges and the rise of a vast punitive apparatus in the GULag (see Siegelbaum's documents) why was "working on the self" such an important endeavor? Figes highlights the stories of Simonov and Podliubny, both of whom tried to meet the expectations of the regime to become "New Soviet Men." Why would victims of the regime identify with its goals? Note, however, as Fitzpatrick points out, too many people had a damaged biography not to "reinvent" themselves in more devious ways.

Research Assignment:
Using Euclid, identify three scholarly monographs that represent a good, scholarly resource for studying your topic of interest. A monograph is a scholarly, peer-reviewed book (usually put out by a major university press) that focuses on one subject rather than trying to create a syncretic overview of a subject, such as a textbook. Thus, Catriona Kelly's, *Comrade Pavlik: The Rise and Fall of a Soviet Boy Hero*, is appropriate but Moshe Lewin's *The Soviet Century* would not. Memoirs, letters, etc., since they are primary sources, would also not apply. Thus, von Geldern's and Stites, *Mass Culture in Soviet Russia*, would not be a good choice. Briefly write up you observations of each based on a quick skim (Google Books is helpful here). For example, "Jochin Hellbeck's *Revolution on My Mind* is a very detailed discussion of young communist diary writers like Stepan Podliubny. I think his book will really put in context why people wrote diaries in a society that prosecuted thought crimes.”

Recommended Readings:
Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow.*
Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin’s Peasants.*
Lynn Viola, *The Unknown Gulag: The Lost World of Stalin’s Special Settlements.*
Lynne Viola, *The War Against the Peasantry, 1927-1930.*
Unit 5: Thank you, Comrade Stalin for Our Happy Childhoods

Mon. 7/10:  
SECONDARY READINGS:  

TEXTS:  

Wednesday, 7/12:  
SECONDARY READINGS:  

TEXT:  

Thursday, 7/13:  
TEXT:  

Friday, 7/13:  
ASSIGNMENT: Paper Proposals Due (by 9:00 pm via Safe-Assign on Canvas).

Discussion Question:  
Cynthia Hooper notes an extraordinary politicization of private life and sentiment in her discussion of affective ties (often familiar) and how they were suspect by the Stalinist regime. In a regime that lionized denunciation of parents (Pavlik Morozov) and spouses (*Party Card*), the difficulties of adolescent rebellion are even more fraught with peril than is usual. How was Nina Lugovskaya, in many ways a normal teenage girl struggling with crushes, boredom in school, resentments over "too perfect" siblings and self-doubt, deeply alienated by the regime's treatment of her father? What is the tenure of the comments in her diary (bolded in the text) that the NKVD used against her? Does Nina strike you as precociously political or was she simply a normal teenager struggling to make sense of a world that rarely fits into the regime's propaganda? What did she say, in the privacy of her diary, that deserved imprisonment in the worst Soviet Gulag, Kolyma?

Recommended Readings:  
Cathy A. Frierson and Semyon Vilensky, eds., *Children of the Gulag*.
David Hoffmann, "Stalinist Family Values" ch. 3 in *Stalinist Values: The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity*, pp. 88-118.
Catriona Kelly, *Children's World: Growing Up in Russia, 1890-1991*.
Monday, 7/17:
SECONDARY READINGS:

TEXTS:
Eugenia Ginzburg, Journey Into the Whirlwind, 1-47.

Wednesday, 7/19:
SECONDARY READING:

TEXT:
Eugenia Ginzburg, Journey Into the Whirlwind, 48-119.

ASSIGNMENT: Reaction Paper Due (by 9:00 pm via Canvas).

Thursday, 7/20:
TEXT:
Eugenia Ginzburg, Journey Into the Whirlwind, 120-179.

ASSIGNMENT: Finish draft of paper

Discussion Question:
Evgenia Ginzburg was an elite and true-believing Communist. What role did denunciation play in her fall from grace? How did the demonization of the political opposition become a powerful cognitive frame that trapped her, despite her loyalty as a Soviet citizen? What was the Kafka-esque world that those accused in the Great Purges found themselves in? As Figes makes clear in the tragic story of Yuliia Piatnitsky, no one was above suspicion and once suspected, testimony would be procured—one way or another.

Recommended Readings:
Sheila Fitzpatrick, Tear Off the Masks!: Identity and Imposture in Twentieth Century Russia.
J. Arch Getty, The Road to Terror; Stalin and the Self-Destruction of the Bolsheviks, 1932-1939.
Paul R. Gregory, Terror by Quota; State Security from Lenin to Stalin.
Wendy Goldman, Terror and Democracy in the Age of Stalin.
David Shearer, Policing Stalin’s Socialism.
Sunday, 7/23:
ASSIGNMENT: **Paper Drafts Due by 9:00 pm via Canvas**

Monday, 7/24:
SECONDARY READINGS:

TEXT:

Wednesday, 7/26:

TEXTS:

Thursday, 7/27:
TEXT: Reaction Paper Due (by 9:00 pm via Canvas).

Friday, 7/28:
Draft Papers Turned Back

**Discussion Question (chose one):**

1. **What was the Gulag and why did it grow to such a massive size?** How did its inmates, including people such as the economist Kondratiev, try desperately to maintain an intimate connection with their families? How did Ginzburg’s prison experience make it clear to her that her commitment to communist ideals was mistaken and allow her to make friends and help people very much outside her experience?

2. **Most of the cogs in Stalin's machinery of repression, from the informers to the bureaucrats to the camp bosses, were careerist officials who simply conformed to the system.** What do you think about the actions of men like Mochulsky and Simonov—those who knew the repression was wrong but participated in it for expedience sake? In the grim conditions of the post-war USSR were their decisions driven by ambition, loyalty or fear (or a combination of all of the above)?

**Recommended Readings:**
Janusz Bardach, *Man is Wolf to Man: Surviving the Gulag*.
Steven A. Barnes, *Death and Redemption: The Gulag and the Shaping of Soviet Society*.
Unit 8: Resistance and Liberation

Monday: 7/31

SECONDARY READINGS:

TEXT:

Discussion Question:
As Figes makes clear, the death of Stalin crystallized a great deal of resistance to his totalitarian system. In more subtle ways, Furst indicates many younger people were already distancing themselves from Stalinist mentalities in the late 1940s and increasingly “tuned out” of the Soviet project (as Raleigh chronicles). Nevertheless, Barnes argues that post-Stalin Gulag revolts were profoundly Soviet in their frame. Even Solzhenitsyn's rebels at Kengir are remarkable for their insistence on approaching their strike as a pro-Soviet action. Could one resist repression and still be 'Soviet'? If so, how?

Recommended Readings:
Erik Kulavig, *Dissent in the Years of Khrushchev: Nine Stories about Disobedient Russians*. 
Wednesday, 8/2:
SECONDARY READINGS:
TEXT: Yevgeny Yevtushenko, “Heirs of Stalin.” (Open Society Archives) (Youtube of his performance [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=example)

Discussion Question (only for class discussion—no written response):
Varlam Shalamov wrote that, "A human being survives by his ability to forget." So, it would seem, does an authoritarian regime. The Soviet government, especially after 1964, systematically silenced memories of the Stalinist terror and continued low-grade repression of those who would use these memories as a systemic critique of Communism, at least until the explosive events of perestroika. How does Figes make clear that this repression of memory has deeply scarred Soviet (and post-Soviet) families as well as the post-Soviet countries' political culture? Do you believe that Yevtushenko's fear has been realized and the ghost of Stalin again terrorizes Russia?

Recommended Readings:
Miriam Dobson, *Khrushchev's Cold Summer: Gulag Returnees, Crime and the Fate of Reform after Stalin*.

FRIDAY 8/4 FINAL PAPERS DUE (3:15 p.m.)