

History 600: Stalin and Hitler

Professor F. Hirsch
fhirsch@wisc.edu
Spring 2016
Office hours: Fridays 1:15-2:15, and by appointment.

This course looks at the development of the Stalinist Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, and at the changing relationship between these two states and their leaders in the 1930s and 1940s. We will compare Stalinism and Nazism, and investigate the ways in which Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin influenced and learned from each other. We will look at collaboration between the two regimes, focusing in part on the politics and outcomes of the Hitler-Stalin Non-Aggression Pact of 1939. We will also examine politics, propaganda, everyday life, and reproductive policies under both regimes. Finally, we will look in depth at the Second World War. We will investigate the genocidal policies pursued by each regime and delve into the questions of resistance, collaboration, and judgment.

Format: Reading and discussion. Students are expected to show up for class prepared and ready to participate. Students will have the opportunity to co-lead discussion twice during the semester.

Response Papers: Over the course of the semester students will write ten short (one-page) "response papers" related to the weekly readings.

Research Papers: Students will work on original 15-page research papers on topics related to the course theme. Students are required to use a range of primary sources and to become well acquainted with the secondary literature on their chosen topic. Primary sources might include newspapers, memoirs, government documents, archival documents (in edited volumes or on approved websites), photographs and other visual sources, speeches, letters, and so on. On designated dates (see below), students will submit a research question, a revised research question, a research proposal, a revised research proposal, and a short bibliography of primary and secondary sources. Research papers are due by 5 pm on Monday May 9.

Readings: Readings with a * next to them are available for purchase at the University Store and on reserve at College Library. You can also find used copies through on-line sellers. Readings with a [P] next to them are in the course packet. The course packet is available for purchase at StudentPrint on East Campus Mall and is also on reserve at College Library.

Course grades will be based on the following distribution: Participation (including presentations) 35%, response papers 20%, research-related assignments 15%, final research paper 30%.

Library Session: All students are required to attend the scheduled library session at Memorial Library during class time on February 19.

Part One: Approaches

Week 1, 1/22: Introduction

Timothy Snyder, "Hitler vs. Stalin: Who Was Worse," *New York Review of Books*, January 27, 2011. (Sent via email).

Week 2, 1/29: Comparative Biographies

Common Readings:

1. Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives*, 1993, pp. 342-418. [P]
2. Richard Overy, *The Dictators: Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia*, 2004, pp. 1-131. [P]

Individual Assignment:

Find another secondary source (book or article) that examines the life of Stalin and/or Hitler. Read or skim it (depending on the length). Bring it to class and be prepared to briefly discuss it.

Response Paper #1:

How effective is the method of comparative biography for understanding the rise of Nazism and Stalinism? Answer in a 1-page double-spaced "response paper."

Week 3, 2/5: Totalitarianism/Age of Extremes

Common Readings:

1. Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, 1965, pp. 15-27. [P]
2. *Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* 1998, pp. 3-249.

Individual Assignment:

Find another secondary source (book or article or website) that engages the idea of "totalitarianism." Read or skim it (depending on the length). Bring the source to class and be prepared to briefly discuss it in relation to the common readings.

Response Paper #2:

Do you believe Nazism and Stalinism have common roots? Answer in a 1-page double-spaced "response paper."

Week 4, 2/12: Entangled Histories

Common Readings:

1. Klas-Göran Karlsson, "The Evil Twins of Modern History? Reflections on the Entangled History of Communism and National Socialism," in *Perspectives on the Entangled History of Communism and Nazism*, ed. Klas-Göran Karlsson, Johan Stenfeldt, and Ulf Zander, 2015, pp. 9-50. [P]
2. "'For Official Use Only': Moscow as a City on the Enemy Map," in Karl Schlögel, *Moscow 1937*, 2013, pp. 538-543. [P]
3. *Vasily Grossman, *A Writer at War: A Soviet Journalist With the Red Army*, 2005, 3-64, 190-224, 280-350.

Individual Assignment:

Find a primary source that you could use to write an "entangled history" of Soviet-Nazi relations. Read or skim it. Bring it to class and be prepared to briefly discuss it.

Response Paper #3:

How effective is the idea of "entanglement" for understanding Russian-German relations? Answer in a 1-page double-spaced "response paper."

Research Deadline #1:

Research Question Due in Class

Week 5, 2/19: Memorial Library Session

Week 6 2/26: Comparison From Within

Common Reading:

*Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, 2010.

Individual Assignment:

Find and read a book review of *Bloodlands*—and bring it to class. Do you agree with the reviewer's assessment of the book? Be prepared to discuss.

Response Paper #4:

In your opinion what are the strengths and the flaws of Snyder's *Bloodlands*? Answer in a 1-page double-spaced "response paper."

Research Deadline #2

Revised Research Question Due in Class

Part Two: Themes

Week 7, 3/4: Mass Politics and Propaganda States

Common Readings:

1. *Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich*, 2001, pp. 13-147, 230-252.

2. Jan Plamper, *The Stalin Cult: A Study in the Alchemy of Power*, 2012, pp. xiii-xx, 29-86. [P]
3. Look at Soviet and Nazi propaganda posters and other forms of visual culture. (I'll hand out or email a list of websites.)

Response Paper #5:

How important were the Hitler myth and the Stalin cult to the Nazi and Soviet revolutions? Answer in a 1-page double-spaced "response paper."

Research Deadline #3

One-Page Research Proposal Due in Class

Week 8, 3/11: Everyday Life under Stalin and Hitler

Common Readings:

1. *Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s*, 1999, pp. 67-189.
2. Detlev J. K. Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life*, 1982, pp. 21-80. [P]
3. "Diary of Stepan Filippovich Podlubny," in *Intimacy and Terror: Soviet Diaries of the 1930s*, ed. Veronique Garros, Natalia Korenevskaya, and Thomas Lahusan, 1995, pp. 291-331. [P]

Response Paper #6:

Do this week's readings challenge or complicate the idea of "totalitarianism"? Answer in a 1-page double-spaced "response paper."

Week 9, 3/18: Reproduction under Stalin and Hitler

Common Readings:

1. David L. Hoffmann and Annette F. Timm, "Utopian Biopolitics: Reproductive Policies, Gender Roles, and Sexuality in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union," in *Beyond Totalitarianism: Stalinism and Nazism Compared*, ed. Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick, 2009, pp. 87-129. [P]
2. Maria Sophia Quine, "Nazi Population Policy: Pronatalism and Antinatalism During the Third Reich," in *Population Policies in Twentieth Century Europe*, 2013, pp. 89-132. [P]
3. Paula A. Michaels, "Motherhood, Patriotism, and Ethnicity: Soviet Kazakhstan and the 1936 Abortion Ban," *Feminist Studies* 27, no. 2 (2001): 307-333. [P]
4. "Degree on the Prohibition of Abortions," June 27, 1936. [P]

Response Paper #7:

Do these three academic articles do a good job explaining Soviet and Nazi reproductive policies? Explain in a 1-page double-spaced "response paper."

Week 10, 3/25 SPRING BREAK

Week 11, 4/1: Resistance and Collaboration

Common Readings:

1. *Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (1993), pp. 1-113, 147-189.
2. Lynn Viola, "The Question of the Perpetrator in Soviet History" (with comments by Wendy Goldman and Peter Fritzsche), *Slavic Review* 72, no. 1 (2013): 1-31. [P]
3. Lev Kopelev, "The Last Grain Collections (1933)," in *The Education of a True Believer*, 1978, pp. 224-272. [P]

Response Paper #8

Why did "ordinary people" participate in the crimes of Stalinism and Nazism? Answer in a 1-page double-spaced "response paper."

Research Deadline #4

Revised One-Page Research Proposal Due in Class

Week 12, 4/8: Judgment at Nuremberg

Common Readings:

1. Joseph E. Persico, *Nuremberg: Infamy on Trial*, 1994, pp. 3-128. [P]
2. Victor Zaslavsky, *Class Cleansing: The Massacre at Katyn*, 2008, 1-5, 52-115. [P]
3. Francine Hirsch, "The Nuremberg Trials as Cold War Competition: The Politics of the Historical Record and the International Stage," in *Memory and Postwar Memorials*, ed. Marc Silberman and Florence Vatan, 2013, pp. 15-30. [P]
4. A. Poltorak, *The Nuremberg Epilogue*, 1971, pp. 15-31, 222-265. [P]

Response Paper #9

In your opinion was it fair that the Soviets (along with the other victors) got to sit in judgment of the Nazi leaders in the Nuremberg Trials? Explain in a 1-page double-spaced "response paper."

Research Deadline #5

Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources Due in Class

Week 13, 4/15: Remembering Stalinism and Nazism

1. Slavoj Žižek, "The Two Totalitarianisms," *London Review of Books* 27, no. 6, March 17, 2005. [P]
2. *Masha Gessen, *Esther and Ruzya: How My Grandmothers Survived Hitler's War and Stalin's Peace*, 2005.

Response Paper #10

What can we learn from Gessen's book about Soviet and German history? Explain in a 1-page double-spaced "response paper."

Part Three: Research and Writing

Week 14, 4/22: Class Presentations and Research Consultations

Week 15, 4/29: Class Presentations and Research Consultations

Week 16, 5/6: Wrap-Up Discussion

****FINAL RESEARCH PAPERS ARE DUE ON MONDAY MAY 9 BY 5 PM**