The Russian poet Evgenii Yevtushenko wrote “No, Stalin did not die. He thinks that death can be fixed. We removed him from the mausoleum. But how do we remove Stalin from Stalin's heirs?” Yevtushenko’s question continues to haunt Russia 57 years after Stalin’s death as Russians try to come to terms with Stalin, Stalinism and their place in Russian history. But what was Stalinism? Can it be reduced to the man, Stalin, or was it a phenomenon that went beyond the person? Is it possible to speak of Stalinism without Stalin?

The philosopher Slavoj Zizek recently wrote: “We should also admit that we still lack a satisfactory theory of Stalinism.” This class attempts to rectify this admission by exploring Stalin the person alongside the ideological, social, cultural, and historical phenomenon called Stalinism. This class will attempt to answer questions like: What role did Stalin as a personality contribute to Stalinism as a political system? What were the historical social conditions in Russia, and Soviet Russia in particular that led to Stalinism taking root? How did people experience Stalinism in their everyday and political lives? How did it shape their identities? What role does violence play in Stalinism as a political system? How does it compare to Nazism? And finally, how is Stalinism as remembered and in what ways does it continue to haunt Russia today? By providing answers to these questions, perhaps we can take a few steps closer to discovery a satisfactory theory of Stalinism.

**Required Texts**

Author Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*, Scriber, 1968

**Class Schedule**

**Week One**

Introduction: Stalin in History, Stalin as History

Lecture: Biography and Stalin
• Service, Chapters 1-4

**Week Two**

Lecture: Stalin as a Marxist

• Service, Chapters 5-10

Discussion: The Political Thought of Joseph Stalin

• Joseph Stalin, *The Foundations of Leninism*, 1924
• ---, Marxism and the National Question, 1913
• Erik Van Ree, “Stalin as Marxist: The Western Roots of Stalin’s Russification of Marxism,” in Davies and Harris (eds.), *Stalin*, 159-180.

**Week Three**

Lecture: From Commissar to General Secretary

• Service, Chapters 17-22

**Week Four**

Discussion: Why Stalin?

• James Harris, “Stalin as General Secretary: the Appointments Process and the nature of Stalin’s Power,” in Davies and Harris (eds.), *Stalin*, 63-82.

Lecture: Stalin’s Revolution

• Service, Chapters 23-27

**Week Five**

Discussion: What was the Stalin Revolution

Lecture: Stalin as Dictator

- Service, Chapters 28-33

Week Six

Discussion: Stalin in Power


Lecture: Daily Life under Stalin

Week Seven

Discussion: Everyday Stalinism


Lecture: The Great Terror

Week Eight

Discussion: Stalinist Terror, Violence and Authoritarian Populism


Discussion: Understanding the Terror

• Author Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*.
• Bukharin’s letter to Stalin,” 10 December 1937
• “Ezhov’s letter of resignation to Stalin” 23 November 1938
• “Ezhov’s statement before the USSR Supreme Court,” 3 February 1940

**Week Nine**

Lecture: The USSR as a Communal Apartment

Discussion: Nationality under Stalinism


**Week Ten**

Lecture: How did people resist Stalinism?

Discussion: Resisting Stalinism


**Week Eleven**

Lecture: Stalinist Identities

Discussion: Stalinist Self and Identity


• Sarah Davies, “‘Us against them’: social identity in Soviet Russia, 1934–41” in Sheila Fitzpatrick, ed., *Stalinism: New Directions*, Routledge, 2000, 47-70


**Week Twelve**

Lecture: Stalin at War

• Service, Chapters 34-41

Discussion: Two Authoritarianisms: Stalinism and Nazism


**Week Thirteen**

Lecture: DeStalinization

Discussion: Stalin and the Cult of Personality


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**Week Fourteen**

Lecture: Stalinism Today

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**Week Fifteen**

Discussion: Stalinism as Memory


• David Brandenberger, *A New Short Course?: A. V. Filippov and the Russian State's Search for a "Usable Past"* *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Volume 10, Number 4, Fall 2009, pp. 825-833


Discussion: What is/was Stalinism?