

2012

Syllabus for RUS494, Russia: From Empire to Nation,

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Connecticut College

Spring 2012

RUS 494: Senior Seminar



***Russia: From
Empire to Nation***

Petko Ivanov

RUS 494: Senior Seminar

Russia: From Empire to Nation

Spring 2012, TR 1:15-2:30
Blaustein 207



Instructor: Petko Ivanov

Blaustein 330, x5449, pivanov@conncoll.edu

Office hours: Wednesday 1:15-2:15, and by appointment

Course Overview

The course is designed to provide senior students with a general framework of reference for the principal categories of modern (post-eighteenth-century) Russian identities, with particular emphasis on the notions of empire and nationhood in their historical development. The course targets a vast spectrum of phenomena (from the discursive production of history, space and subjectivities, to the commodification of “Russianness”) and artifacts that are drawn from a number of media, including but not limited to “high arts.” Instead of offering a historical survey of constitutive processes observed through key “events,” the course focuses on the major *variables* of Russian identity: institutions, actors, and culture, and samples their complex dynamics in fourteen selected sites of Russian historical, cultural and everyday life that provide the structural backbone of the fourteen-week syllabus.

From a pedagogic point of view, the course is primarily oriented to a conference format. Class discussions will revolve around reading assignments of primary and secondary sources as well as around case-studies of “canonical” Russian texts – from philosophy of history and language ideology to politics of literature and performing Russianness in daily life. The course is addressed to students with some knowledge of Russian and thus its basic reading list contains texts in English supplemented with assignments in Russian, mainly of primary historical sources. The readings will be distributed electronically.

Evaluation and Grading

The requirements for the course include a short (20 minutes) oral presentation in class on a topic by choice, active participation in class discussions, one-page biweekly essays, a take home midterm exam, and a final paper (12-15 pages; 20-25 for seniors). Attendance and active participation are required at all class meetings and are preconditions for passing the course. There are 28 class meetings during the semester, and students who have not attended them cannot be considered as having completed the course. Students with more than one absence will have their final grades lowered, with multiple absences resulting in a significant lowering of the final grade.

The Roth Writing Center provides one-to-one peer tutoring free of charge to help student writers of all abilities during all stages of the writing process. To make an appointment, call x2173 or stop by the Writing Center at 214 Blaustein, or visit <http://write.conncoll.edu/>.

Students with disabilities. If you have a physical or mental disability, either hidden or visible, which may require classroom, test-taking, or other modifications, please let us know. If you have not already done so, please register with the Office of Student Disability Services in Crozier Williams (#221) or e-mail barbara.mcllarky@conncoll.edu or lillian.liebenthal@conncoll.edu.

Office Hours and Advising. Office hours will be held in Blaustein 330 on Wednesdays from 1:15-2:15 or by appointment. Sign-up sheets will be posted on my door, and I will see students on a first-come-first-serve basis. Questions or concerns addressed via e-mail will be answered within 24 hours of receiving your message.



Class Schedule

** This schedule is subject to change as required
by unforeseen circumstances.*

Week I (Jan. 24 & 26)

Constructing Identities: Nation

“A nation is...” + predicates

Narrating the nation

*Readings: **

Joseph Stalin “Marxism and the National Question” (1913) (excerpts, pp. 300-313)

Ernest Renan “Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?” (1882) (excerpt)

Benedict Anderson “Imagined Communities” (1983) (Introduction, pp. 1-7)

Max Weber “Structures of Power: The Nation” (1910/1921) (excerpt) *optional*

Homi Bhabha “Nation and Narration” (1990) (Introduction, pp. 1-7) *optional*

* The full bibliographic entries are available at the end of the syllabus.

Week II (Jan. 31 & Feb. 2)

Constructing Identities: Empire

What’s in an empire?

Empire & imperialism

Readings:

Dominic Lieven “Empire” (2001) (Ch. 1: “Empire: A Word and its Meanings”)

Vladimir Lenin “Imperialism” (1916) (excerpt, pp. 254-267)

Edward Said “Orientalism” (1978) (excerpts, pp. 1-28)

Week III (Feb. 7 & 9)

Russian identities: Geographies

Ideological constructions of geography

Centers and peripheries; Moscow vs. Petersburg

Readings:

Dominic Lieven "Empire" (2001) (Ch. 6: The Russian Empire: Regions, Peoples, Geopolitics)

Ladis Kristof "The Russian Image of Russia" (1968)

Sidney Monas "St. Petersburg and Moscow as Cultural Symbols" (1983)

Joseph Brodsky "A Guide to a Renamed City" (1979)

Frederick Turner "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893) *optional*

Week IV (Feb. 14 & 16)**Russian identities: Civilization**

Slavophiles & Westerners

Geopolitics & the Eurasian project

"The Russian idea"

Readings:

Ivan Kireevsky "On the Nature of European Culture" (1852)

Nikolai Danilevsky "The Slav Cultural-Historical Type" (1868)

Hans Kohn (ed.) "The Mind of Modern Russia" (1955) (Pogodin, pp.60-68; Havlíček, pp.83-90)

Nikolai Trubetzkoy "Pan-Eurasian nationalism" (1927)

Petr Savitsky "A Turn to the East" (1921) *optional*

Nikolay Berdyaev "The Russian Idea" (1947) (Ch.1) *optional*

Week V (Feb. 21 & 23)**Russian identities: History**

Philosophies of History: Chaadaev

Divided by a common past: Ukraine

Readings:

Petr Chaadaev "The Philosophical Letters" (Letter I, 1836)

Petr Chaadaev "The Apologia of a Madman" (1837)

Vesa Oittinen "Russian 'Otherness': From Chaadaev to the Present Day" (2012) *optional*

Mykola Kostomarov "The Books of Genesis of the Ukrainian Nation" (1845/6) *optional*

Mihailo Hrushevsky "The Traditional Scheme of 'Russian' History" (1904)

Taras Kuzio "Competition over the Legacy of Kyiv Rus" (2005)

Week VI (Feb. 28 & Mar. 1)**Russian identities: Language**

Russian (+ Soviet) Language Ideologies

Genres of Russian Talk

Readings:

Boris Gasparov "Identity in Language?" (2004)

Mikhail Epstein "The Linguistic Games of Soviet Ideology" (1995)

Joseph Stalin "Marxism and Problems of Linguistics" (1950) (excerpts) *optional*

Katerina Clark "Promethean Linguistics" (1995) *optional*

Nancy Ries "Russian Talk: Culture and Conversation" (1997) (excerpts, pp. 15-41, 83-125)

Lara Ryazaniva-Clarke "The 'West' in the Linguistic Construction of Russianness" (2012) *optional*

Week VII (Mar. 6 & 8)**Russian identities: Literature**

Literary imperialism, incl. domestic "Orientalisms"

National poet: The cult of Pushkin

Readings:

Susan Layton "Russian Literature and Empire" (1994) (Intro, Ch.5, Conclusions)

Peter Scotto "Ideologies of Imperialism in Lermontov's *Bela*" (1992)

Katya Hokanson "Pushkin's Invention of the Caucasus" (1994)

Stephanie Sandler "'Pushkin' and Identity" (2004)

Mikhail Lermontov "A Hero of Our Time" (1839/40) ("Bela" in Russian) *optional*

Alexander Pushkin "The Captive of the Caucasus" (1821) *optional*

Tomi Huttunen "Autogenesis in Russian Culture: An Approach to the Avant-Garde" (2012)

Spring Break (Mar. 10-25)

Week VIII (Mar. 27 & 29)**Russian identities: (The) People**

The construction of narod

The official nationality

Ethnicities and nationalities

Who (& what) is intelligentsia?

Readings:

Maureen Perrie “*Narodnost*: Notions of National Identity” (1998)

Nicholas Riasanovsky “Nikolas I and Official Nationality in Russia” (1976)

Martin Malia “What Is the Intelligentsia?” (1961) *optional*

Elise Wirtschafter “*Raznochincy*, Intelligentsia, Professionals” (2006) *optional*

Marc Raeff “Patterns of Russian Imperial Policy toward the Nationalities” (1971)

Ronald Suny “Old Histories for New Nations” (2001)

Alexei Miller “The Empire and the Nation in the Imagination of Russian Nationalism” (2004) *optional*

Week IX (Apr. 3 & 5)**Russian identities: Government**

Tsar & the legitimation of power

Personality cult: Lenin, Stalin, Putin

State Patriotism

Readings:

Elena Hellberg-Hirn “The Tsar: Father of the People” (1998)

Michael Cherniavsky “Tsar and People: Studies in Russian Myths” (1961) *optional*

Peter Kenez “The Birth of the Propaganda State” (1985) (Intro & Conclusion)

Nina Tumarkin “The Lenin Cult in Soviet Russia” (1997) (excerpts) *optional*

Nikita Khrushchev “De-Stalinization Speech” (1956) (excerpts)

Ronald Grigor Suny “The Empire Strikes Out” (2001)

Week X (Apr. 10 & 12)**Russian identities: War**

1812: The Patriotic War

WW2: The Great Patriotic War

Afghanistan

Readings:

Lev Tolstoy "War and Peace" (1869) (read the *entire* novel in *Russian*, minus the passages in French :)

Ewa Thompson "Imperial Knowledge" (2000) (Ch. 3 "War & Peace")

Alexander Martin "Russia and the Legacy of 1812" (2006) *optional*

Harrison Salisbury "The 900 Days: The Siege of Leningrad" (1969) (Ch. 38-46)

Nina Tumarkin "The Cult of World War II in Russia" (1994) (excerpts) *optional*

Leonid Brezhnev "Remarks on Afghanistan" (1980)

Rodric Braithwaite "*Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan 1979-1989*" (2011) (excerpts; please read Ch.11, if nothing else)

Week XI (Apr. 17 & 19)**Russian identities: Everyday Practices**

At home with Putin (or whoever is the current ruler)

Ethnography of the "Russian soul"

Consumerism: Selling and buying Russianness

Readings:

Catriona Kelly "*Byt: Identity and Everyday Life*" (2004)

Svetlana Boym "Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia" (1994) (excerpts)

Gennady Obatkin "200 Years of *poshlost*: A Historical Sketch of the Concept" (2012)
optional

Christine Ruane "Shopping in Imperial Russia" (1995)

Dale Pesmen "Russia and Soul: An Exploration" (2000) (Intro, ch.2, 5, 8)

Yurii Lotman "The Poetics of Everyday Behavior in 18th c. Russian Culture" (1977)
optional

Ilya Utekhin "Social Networking on the Internet: Is the Russian Way Special?" (2012)
optional

Week XII (Apr. 24 & 26)**Russian identities: Alcohol**

Alcohol nationalization: history & mythology

“Moscow to the End of the Line”

Readings:

Boris Segal “Russian Drinking” (1987) (excerpts, pp. 68-79, 138-152)

Kate Transchel “Swimming in a Drunken Sea” (2006)

Patricia Herlihy “The Alcoholic Empire” (2002) (Intro & Epilogue)

Patricia Herlihy “Rites and Rituals of Russian Drinking” (1991) *optional*

Venedikt Erofeev “Moskva - Petushki” (1969) (Available both in Russian & English)

Screening:

“From Moscow to Pietushki” (BBC2’s Bookmark Documentary, dir. Paul Pawlikowski, 1990)

Week XIII (May 1 & 3)**Russian identities: Subjectivities, Sex Included**

Social construction of emotions

Discourses and practices of sexuality

Sport and the state-expropriation of the body

Readings:

M.V. Rodzianko “Ras-Putin: The Holy Devil” (1927)

Costlow, Sandler & Vowles “Sexuality and the Body in the Russian Culture” (1993) (Intro)

Banting, Kelly & Riordan “Sexuality” (1998)

Aleksandra Kollontai “Make Way for Winged Eros” (1923)

Sheila Fitzpatrick “Sex and Revolution” (1976)

Frances Lee Bernstein “The Dictatorship of Sex” (2007) (Intro & Ch.4) *optional*

Simon Karlinsky “Russia’s Gay Literature and Culture” (1991) *optional*

George Mosse “Nationalism and Sexuality” (1985) (excerpts) *optional*

James Riordan “Soviet Sport and Soviet Foreign Policy” (1974) *optional*

Week XIV (May 8 & 10)**Russian identities: Civil Society***The culture of dissidence**August 1991 and October 1993**Current events**Readings:*

Rudolf Tökés “Varieties of Soviet Dissent: An Overview” (1975)

“The trial of Joseph Brodsky” (1964) *optional*

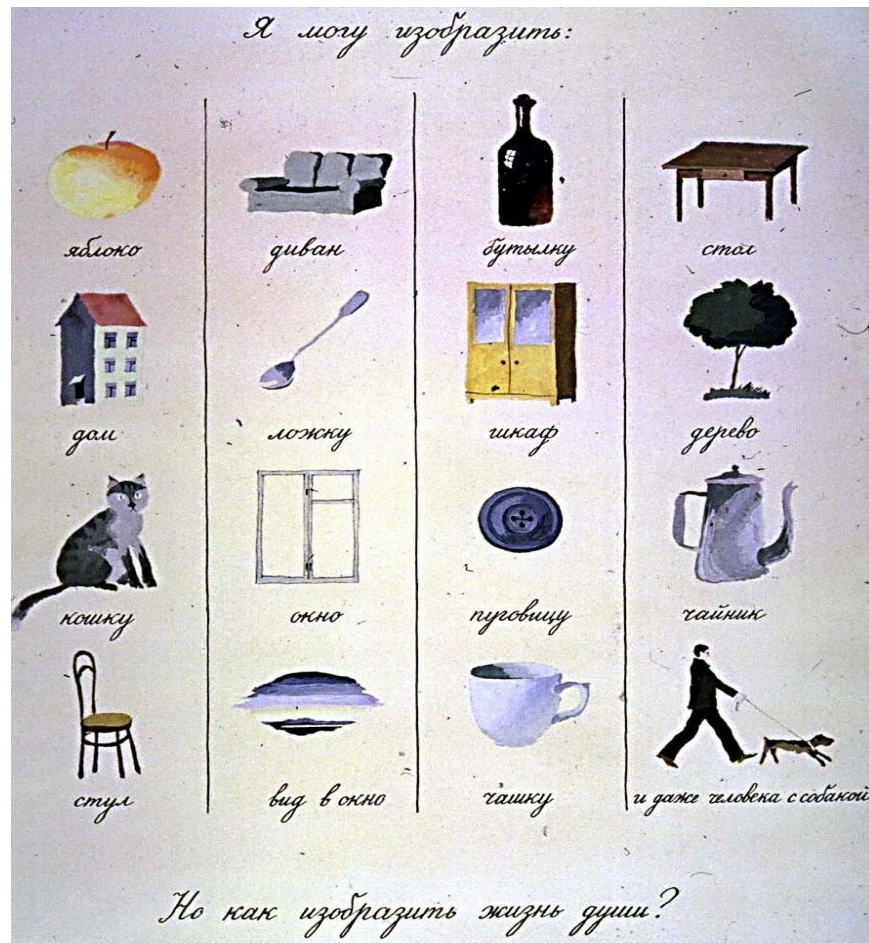
Bonnell & Freidin “Televorot: TV Coverage of August 1991 Coup” (1995)

Michael Urban “The Nation against Itself” (1994) *optional*

Vera Tolz “Forging the Nation” (1998)

Anna Politkovskaya “Akaky Akakievich Putin II” (2007)

Vladimir Putin “Russia: The National Question” (2012)



Viktor Pivovarov “How to Depict the Life of a Soul?” (1975)

Midterm Essay

Please, write an essay (5 double-spaced pages, open-book policy) on **one** of the following topics (due Tuesday, April 3).

I. In 1904 Vasilii Kliuchevskii, Russia's paramount historian, posed colonization as "*the* basic fact of Russian history," and claimed that "the history of Russia is the history of a country that colonizes itself."* With the assigned readings in hand, provide and analyze evidence in support of and/or in opposition to this statement.

*"История России есть история страны, которая колонизуется." (В.О. Ключевский. *Курс русской истории*. Часть 1. Москва: Синодальная типография, 1904, стр. 24.)

II. Bearing in mind the question "Where in the world is Russia?," compare and contrast the visions of the country and its peoples as presented in the works of Ivan Kireevsky ("On the Nature of European Culture") and Petr Chaadaev ("The Philosophical Letters" and "Apologia of a Madman").

III. In his programmatic article "The National Question" (Feb. 2012) Vladimir Putin described the Russian people and culture as "the linchpin (*стержень*), the glue that binds together the unique civilization of Russia," and argued that Russian sovereignty is the shortest way to destroying the Russian people "with their own hands." Analyze the political implications of this statement on the background of the linguistic ideologies that underline its peculiar formulation.

Удачи!

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“You do not represent nor can imagine us!”

Moscow, Dec. 2011

