History 371

The Russian Intelligentsia In the Late Imperial Period

This course pursues several objectives. First, to explore aspects of Russian intellectual history during the 19th and early 20th century through a close reading of a variety of primary texts of social, literary, political commentary. Second, to examine the self-conceptions of the Russian intelligentsia and the in which they located themselves in the process of social and political change. Among the questions we will address are the following: How did various writers understand their relationship to “the people?” How did they live with the contrasts of poverty and privilege? How did issues of identity – European, Russian, Eurasian – shape their social and political philosophies? How did they conceptualize the challenges of “modernity?” A third objective is to develop critical thinking skills through the practice of exploratory writing.

Course Requirements:

- Students must attend every session of the colloquium or present a valid excuse to the instructor. Active student participation in the weekly sessions is vital to the success of the course.

- Students must complete the assigned readings for every session of the colloquium.

- A primary objective of this course is to develop the student's interpretive skills by a close reading variety of materials. To this end, each student will prepare a short "working paper" (1-2 typed pages) for each class session. These papers should articulate the major issues raised by the reading, define the author's point of view, draw out points of comparison between the week's readings, and include questions to be discussed in class. The papers will constitute an essential part of the written work for the course and will also help to structure the weekly discussions. The papers will be due noon each Wednesday and will be read briefly by the instructor prior to the session. They will be returned in class so that students may draw on their questions for the discussion. The papers will be read carefully by the instructor, returned the following week, and graded with a check-plus, check, check-minus. After completing the first three working papers, students are encouraged to meet with the instructor to discuss their progress on this assignment.

- Each student will write two more formal papers (each approx. 5 typed pages) on a topic to be assigned by the instructor. The first essay will be due no later than noon, Oct. 21 and the second will be due later than noon, Dec. 16. These essays will ask you to reflect on an aspect of the course readings discussions; they will not require additional reading or research. Working papers will not be required for the week in which the essay is due, but thoughtful preparation of the week’s reading will be expected.

- Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor during office hours or by appointment to discu
any aspect of the semester's work. The instructor hopes to facilitate intellectual inquiry within and outside the classroom setting and welcomes student input and criticism.

Readings:

The following books have been ordered at the Bookstore; they have also been placed on Reserve. Most of the articles and excerpts we will be reading will be available on ERes.

Turgenev, Fathers and Children
Dostoevsky, Notes From Underground
Raeff, ed. Russian Intellectual History, An Anthology

A final note: Please turn off cell phones, pagers, beeping watches and the like for the entire class period; once class has begun, please refrain from taking breaks and leaving the room until the designated break for everyone halfway through the session.

Sept. 7: Introduction


Turgenev, Fathers and Children pp. 61-118 [ERES and book]

Raeff, ed. Russian Intellectual History, An Anthology

Sept. 21: The Intelligentsia as a construct

Berlin, "A Marvelous Decade, 1838-48: The Birth of the Russian Intelligentsia" in Russian Thinkers, Parts I and II 114-149) [ERES]


Sept. 28: Slavophiles

Kireevskii, "On the Nature of European Culture and Its Relation to the Culture of Russia" in Raeff, Russian Intellectual History, An Anthology, pp. 174-207. [1852]


Oct. 5: Belinsky and Herzen

Berlin, "A Marvelous Decade, 1838-48: The Birth of the Russian Intelligentsia” Russian Thinkers Parts III and IV (pp.150-209) [ERES]
“Belinsky and Herzen” in Leatherbarrow and Offord, eds. A Documentary History of Russian Thought. Pages 111-116
Menzel, Critic of Goethe, 117-123
Letter to Gogol, 130-135
The Russian People and Socialism, 147-48
Robert Owen, 149-159

Herzen, My Past and Thoughts “My Father”, “My University” pp. 74-137. [ERES]

Oct. 12: Dilemmas of change

Turgenev, Fathers and Children [1862] (entire)

For context on the great reforms: Freeze, pp. 170-180

Oct. 19 Dostoevsky’s Emerging Critique of the Intelligentsia

Dostoevsky, Notes From Underground [1864] (entire -- Parts I and II)


FALL BREAK

Nov. 2: To the people: Populism and Terrorism in the Aftermath of the Great Reforms

“Revolutionary Populism” in Leatherbarrow and Offord, eds. A Documentary History of Russian Thought, pp 247-293. [ERES]


Nov. 9 Discovering the Industrial Working Class

Plekhanov “Our Differences” in Leatherbarrow and Offord, eds. A Documentary History of Russian Thought, pp 296-300 [ERES]

Gorky, "Chelkash" [ERES]

Lenin, “Basic Principles” in Lenin Reader, Selected and Edited by Stefan Possony, pp. 1-3, 8-9, 16-28. [ERES]


Nov. 16: Tolstoy’s confrontation with Modernity
Nov. 23: New Identities, new values?  [next day is Thanksgiving]

“Introduction” in M. Bohachevsky-Chomiak and Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal, eds. A Revolution of the Spirit: Crisis of Value in Russia, 1890-1918. [handout]

Chekhov, “Lady with a Dog” [handout]

Mikhail Artsybashev, Excerpts from “Sanin” in Entertaining Tsarist Russia [1908] [handout]

Nov. 30: Aspects of Russian Liberalism


M. Karpovich, “Two Types of Russian Liberalism” in Readings in Russian Civilization ed. by Sidney Harcave, pp.91-104. [Handout]


Dec. 7: Vekhi (Landmarks)


Struve “Intelligentsia and revolution” in Landmarks, At Collection of Essays on the Russian Intelligentsia, 1909 Ed Boris Shragin and Albert Todd [ERES]

Dec. 14: Last Class