History #377
Russia in Asia

This course examines a very large chunk of territory over a very long period of time: the expanse of Eurasia from the 13th to the early 20th c. Beginning with the centuries-long interaction of sedentary and nomadic peoples across the Eurasian steppe, a structuring theme of the course is the long-term and evolving relationship between Rus'/Muscovy/Imperial Russia and the diverse peoples, cultures, religions and polities of Central Asia. From the Russian vantage point we will variously consider the nature of Russian expansion to the south and east; patterns of colonization and conquest, settlement and colonial administration; the articulation of policy toward various Muslim peoples; and conceptions of national identity within a multiethnic/multireligious empire. From the vantage point of the peoples of Central Asia we will variously consider the oasis economies and the overland trade routes which traversed the Eurasian landmass; Turco-Mongolian political traditions, Perso-Islamic cultural and religious influences; and various ways the incursion of "the West" might be understood.

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 of a 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 readings, 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 by 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 then be read carefully by the instructor, returned the following week, but not graded. 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. 5-6 typed pages) on a topic to be assigned by the instructor. The first essay will be due no later than noon, March 24 and the second will be due no later than noon, May 12. These essays will ask you to reflect on an aspect of the course readings and 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 thou preparation of the week's reading will be expected.

- Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor during office hours or by appointment to discuss any aspect of their 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.

Soucek, A History of Inner Asia
Foltz, Religions of the Silk Road
Morgan, The Mongols
Khalid, The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform, Jadidism in Central Asia
Feb. 8 Introduction

Feb 15: The natural setting and the subjectivities of geography
Christian, A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia, pp. 3-18 [ERES/RR]
McChesney, Central Asia--foundations of change, pp.15-37 [ERES]
Barfield, The Nomadic Alternative, pp.1-18, 131-150 [ERES]

Please spend time getting familiar with the physical geography of the region using the maps and exercises at:
http://depts.washington.edu/uwch/silkroad/maps/maps.html

Read for reference: Soucek, A History of Inner Asia, pp.1-45. This is very dry and slow going, but contains a wealth of basic information. [For purchase, RR]

Feb 22: Inner Asia (I): Merchants and Missionaries

Foltz, Religions of the Silk Road (entire) [For purchase/RR]
Denny, An Introduction to Islam Ch.5 (65-91) and Ch 7 (125-148) [handout]

March 1 The Origins and early history of the Rus’

Christian, A History of Russia, Central Asia, and Mongolia, pp. 327-348, 353-369 [ERES/RR]
Sunderland, Taming the Wild Field, pp. 11-15.[RR]

March 8 The Mongols

Morgan, The Mongols, Ch. 1-4 (pp. 5-111) [For purchase/RR]
JSOTR: Stable URL: http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0073-0548%28198606%2946%3A3%3C11%3ATMEASP%3E2.0.CO%3B2-B
Barfield, The Nomadic Alternative, 150-168.[ERES]
Spuler, History of the Mongols, pp. 29-39 [ERES]

March 15 The Mongols in the Rus’ lands

Morgan, The Mongols, Ch 6 (pp. 136-174) [For purchase/RR]
Zenkovsky, Medieval Russia's epics, chronicles, and tales pp. 193-207
[This appears on ERES as Zenkorsky, A Military Tale]
Martin, Medieval Russia, pp. 134-157 [ERES/RR]

March 22 Inner Asia (II) The Post- Mongol period

Soucek, A History of Inner Asia, Ch 8-9 (117-143) [For purchase, RR]
Selected readings from Gibb, The Travels of Ibn Battuta: vol 2, pp. 470-492 and vol. 3, pp. 539-574.[ERES/RR]
JSOTR: Stable URL: http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0020-7438(198811)20:4<479:SBOCPU>2.0.CO;2-B

Spring Break
April 5: Inner Asia (III): Global shifts and the question of decline
Soucek, A History of Inner Asia, pp. 149-166, 177-193. [For purchase, RR]
Foltz Mughal India and Central Asia pp. 12-51
Bayly, Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830, pp. 16-60

April 12 Muscovy/Russia: the creation of a multiethnic/ multireligious empire.
Kappeler, The Russian Empire, pp. 14-59, 185-190 [RR]
Sunderland, Taming the Wild Field, pp.15-220 [RR]

April 19 Russia in Central Asia: conquest and colonization
Kappeler, The Russian Empire, pp. 190-200 [RR]

[read for reference: Soucek, A History of Inner Asia pp. 195-208] [For purchase, RR]

April 26 Central Asia: confrontations with modernity, Patterns of resistance, reform and accommodation.
Khalid, The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform, Jadidism in Central Asia, Ch. 3-5 (pp.80-183) [For purchase, RR]

JSTOR: http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0036-0341(198707)46:3<267:CAUITN>2.0.CO;2-C

May 3 Empire and nation/identities -- whose nation?

Khalid, The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform, Jadidism in Central Asia, , Ch 6 –7 (p. 184 to p. 230). [For purchase, RR]

Slezkine, ‘Savage Christians or Unorthodox Russians? The Missionary Dilemma in Siberia,” Between Heaven and Hell, The Myth of Siberia in Russia Culture, ed. by Diment and Slezkine.[ERES/RR]

May 10 Last Class