This course offers a general ethnographic overview to the diverse cultures of the former Soviet Union, concentrating particularly on the non-European peoples of the Caucasus, Central Asia and Kazakhstan, Siberia, and the Far North. The politics of language use between Russians and Ukrainians in Ukraine also will be examined. Other non-Russian ethnic groups within Russia and Ukraine, such as the Crimean Tatars and peoples of the Middle Volga briefly will be considered. Changes in Russian identity, particularly for Russians still living in non-Russian Republics of the former Soviet Union, will be discussed at the end of the class. Larger and smaller ethnic groups within the European part of the Soviet Union (including Moldovans, Belorussians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Russian Jews, etc.), which are not covered directly in the readings or class lectures, may be investigated individually by students as possible subjects for their final papers. The course will review how the ‘traditional’ cultures in the covered areas changed during the 70 years of Soviet rule and will examine the problems they face today that are associated with the dissolution of the USSR and their newly established independence or greatly enhanced autonomy. Current ethnic conflicts, such as those burning or simmering in Chechnya/Russia, Georgia/South Ossetia and Abkhazia and Armenia/Azerbaijan, and the rise of different Islamic militant movements in Central Asia that are connected with exploitation of natural resources (gas, oil) and political developments in Afghanistan and Pakistan to the south, also will be analyzed.

The course, however, is primarily an introduction to the societies and cultures of the vast area encompassed by post-Soviet space (or the Commonwealth of Independent States – SNG) and is not primarily focussed on contemporary political developments, nor structured around such controversies. The distinctive features of Soviet ethnography also will be introduced, including its inevitable political utilization by the Soviet state. Emphasis throughout will be placed on the history, literature, and reconstruction of the anthropology ‘traditional lifeways’ of the diverse peoples of Eurasia.

An open-book, take-home essay quiz will be distributed on March 17th, and returned on March 31st. Possibly an end-of-the-term, half-class (70 minutes) essay quiz may be given during the last class on May 5th. There is no final exam. Every student will be asked to make a short c. 15 minute oral presentation on a topic of her own choice (in consultation with Mr. Kohl) in the latter part of the course after the mid-term essay quiz (cf. Course Outline below). A final paper, due at the end of the Examination Period (May 17th) is required, and it is expected that students will continue to research and write on the same topic that they presented orally in class, though it is possible to write on another approved topic. The final grade for the course will be calculated roughly as follows:
1) Class Participation and Oral Presentation – 20%
2) Mid-Term (and possible end-of-term) Quiz – 30%
3) Final Paper – 50%
Students are urged to consult with Mr. Kohl early in the term for selection of a research/final paper topic (office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:45-4:00 PM; Pendleton East 345; extension 2146).

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BOOKS LISTED IN COURSE OUTLINE OR FOR GENERAL REFERENCE INFORMATION

The double asterisk** entries refer to the books NSNP and NPSSS (below). ** NSNP is a slightly revised and updated edition of NPSSS; if NSNP is unavailable, the corresponding chapters in NPSSS may substitute for those in NSNP)

BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT THE BOOKSTORE

ROP – Revenge of the Past by R.G. Suny
EON – Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union by F. Hirsch
CT - Contested Tongues: Language Politics and Cultural Correction in Ukraine by L. Bilaniuk
AN - Ali and Nino by K. Said
DB - Defending the Borders: identity, religion, and modernity in the Republic of Georgia by M. Pelkmans
CP – Caucasus Paradigms: anthropologies, histories and the making of a world area ed. by B. Grant and L. Yalcin-Heckmann
ELCA - Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present ed. by J. Sahadeo and R. Zanca
MEW – Museum at the End of the World: Encounters in the Russian Far East by A. Bloch and L. Kendall
OTHER BOOKS ON RESERVE AND/OR LISTED IN COURSE OUTLINE

IIF - Identity in Formation: the Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad by D. Laitin
NPSSS** - Nations and Politics in the Soviet Successor States ed. by I. Bremmer and R. Taras **
AAE – The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939 by T. Martin
NGG – The New Great Game: Blood and Oil in Central Asia by L. Kleveman
CLWTS – Chechnya: Life in a War-Torn Society by V. Tishkov
ENC - Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict In and After the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame by V. Tishkov
TE - The Tenacity of Ethnicity by M. Balzer
AFBM - At the Foot of the Blue Mountains: Stories by Tajik Authors
ABAI - Abai by M. Auezov
LTA - Looking Toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History by R.G. Suny
CARR - Central Asians Under Russian Rule: A Study in Culture Change by E. Bacon
PSN- Pride of Small Nations by S. Goldenberg
CI - Culture Incarnate: Native Anthropology from Russia by M.M. Balzer
MGN - The Making of the Georgian Nation by R. G. Suny
RIN - The Revolution in the North: Soviet Ethnography and Nationality Policy by K. E. Kuoljok
AM - Arctic Mirrors by Y. Slezkine
ISE - Introduction to Soviet Ethnography, ed. by S.P. and E. Dunn
TNSC - Transcaucasia: Nationalism and Social Change, ed. by R.G. Suny
SMS - The Soviet Multinational State: Readings and Documents, ed. by M.B. Olcott
NFSPS - The Nationalities Factor in Soviet Politics and Society, ed. by L. Hajda and M. Beissinger
VPMIPT – The Value of the Past: Myths, Identity and Politics in Transcaucasia by V. Shnirelman

COURSE OUTLINE

Action Empire’ or ‘State-Sponsored Evolutionism’; the Bolsheviks and the Ethnographers: maintaining the Empire without making it a ‘prison of peoples’

A. Week 1: Jan.27th – view on your own full-length video – “Prisoner of the Mountains” (on reserve for course – Knapp Center, Clapp Library) for discussion in class on Feb. 3rd

B. Week 2: Feb. 3rd

Readings:
ROP – entire;
EON – Introduction, Part One, pp. 1-98

Recommended readings:
Enc part 1, pp. 1-114
"The Crisis in Soviet Ethnography" by V.A. Tishkov, Current Anthropology, vol. 33, no. 4, August-October 1992

II. Ukrainian/Russian Distinctions and the Politics of Language Use in Ukraine: Week 3: Feb. 10th –

Readings: CT - entire

III. Peoples of the Caucasus (Weeks 4-7, readings through March 10th):
A. Week 4: Ethnic stereotyping and an overview to the history of the Caucasus; use and abuse of the past:

Readings for Feb. 17th:
AN – entire;
CP – chapters 1-3

B. Weeks 5 and 6: Feb. 24th and March 3rd – Georgia and Armenia

Readings:
CP – chapters 7, 8, and 10 (recommended chapters 11 and 12)
DB – entire

C. Week 7: March 10th – Azerbaijan and the Peoples of the Northern Caucasus; the Russian-Chechen War

Readings:
CP – chapters 4-6 and 9
"The North Caucasus: The National Situation and Ethnic Problems" by Anchabadze, Arutiunov, and Volkova in Anthropology and Archeology of Eurasia, vol. 31, no. 4, spring 1993 (Xerox on reserve)
Recommended readings for Part III Peoples of the Caucasus:

PSN – entire
NSNP - article by Stephen Jones, "Georgia: the Trauma of Statehood";
NSNP - article by N. Dudwick, "Armenia: Paradise Lost?"
NSNP - article by S. Hunter, "Azerbaijan: Searching for New Neighbors;
CLWTS - entire
NGG – chapters 1-5: introduction and chapters on Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Chechnya
NSNP - chap. 10 by R.G. Suny
"Crisis and Response in Soviet Nationality Policy: the Case of Abkhazia" by D. Slider in Central Asian Survey, vol. 4, no. 4 (xerox)
LTA – entire
TNSC - article by Swietochowski
short stories of F. Iskander in Sandro of Chegem (I) and The Gospel According to Chegem (II):
L.N. Tolstoy - Prisoners of the Caucasus and Hadji Murat
Video: Return to Samashki by T. Goltz;

IV. Ethnography and the Making of Nations under the Soviets (Week 8 March 17th): cultural technologies of rule: census, maps, and museums; initial attempts at nation-making prior to World War II; the advent of the Nazi threat;

Reading:
EON – Part Two, pp. 101-227, chapter 6, pp. 231-272

MID-TERM TAKE-HOME ESSAY QUIZ DISTRIBUTED WEEK 8 (MARCH 27TH)

V. Peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan (Weeks 9-11)

A. Week 9 (March 31st) – Historical Overview and a Consideration of Turkmens under the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and today in post-Soviet Times

Readings:
ELCA – introduction and chapters 1, 2, 17

B. Week 10 (April 7th): Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan and a focus on religious practices:

Readings:
NSNP – chaps. 15 and 19;
“Jamila” and "Goodbye Gyulsary" in Tales of the Steppes by C. Aitmatov (e-reserve/xerox);
ELCA – chapters 10, 11, 14, 21, and 22

1st student oral presentation(s): April 7th

C. Week 11 (April 14th): Uzbekistan and Tadjikistan with a focus on gender relations:

Readings:
NSNP - chaps. 16-18;
AFBM - The Road to Bukhara by S. Aini;
ELCA – Part 3 and chapters 13, 16, 19, and 20

2nd student oral presentation(s): April 14th

Recommended readings for Part IV Peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan:

NGG – chapters on Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan
JRMI – entire
ENC – chapters 6-7
SMS - pp. 143-163
ABAI - entire

VI. The Peoples of the Far North and Siberia and the Middle Volga Region; Russians in Post-Soviet Times (Weeks 12 and 13)

A. Week 12 (April 21st):
Peoples of the Far North and Siberia

Readings:
MEW – entire;
Film: Dersu Uzala (view on your own - full-length video – on reserve Knapp Center, Clapp Library);

3rd student oral presentation(s): April 21st

B. Week 13 (May 5th):
Peoples of the Middle Volga and Russians outside Russia: Russian identity in a post-imperial (?) age; and the Soviet Experiment in Nation-Building and Its Legacy

Readings:
NSNP – chap. 4, by A. Frank and R. Wixman, "The Middle
Volga: Exploring the Limits of Sovereignty"
EON – Epilogue, pp. 309-325

4th student oral presentation(s): May 5th

Recommended Readings for Part VI:
NSNP - chap. 5, article by G. Fondahl, "Siberia: Assimilation and Its Discontents";
TE –entire
AM
RIN
NQSU - chaps. 18-19
ISE - vol. 1, article by A.V. Smoliak on the Nivkhi of the Amur Sound
ENC - part 3 and Conclusion
CI - article by R.G. Kuzeev and S.F. Mukhamediarov, "Ethnogenesis and Ethnocultural Relationships of the Turkic Peoples of the Volga and Urals: Problems and Tasks"
NSNP - chaps. 6-11
IIF - entire

POSSIBLE (??) END-OF-TERM QUIZ – MAY 5TH