

# RUSS20842

## BETWEEN EAST AND WEST: CULTURE, EMPIRE AND NATION IN RUSSIA

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The Bronze Horseman, dedicated to Peter the Great by Catherine the Great (Etienne Maurice Falconet, 1768-1782)



Soviet Uzbek propaganda poster (early 1930s)

### What is the course unit about?

This module focuses on the intersection of culture and national identity in Russian and Soviet history. You will examine Russia's relationship with its 'others' – East and West – and their role in the construction of Russia's discourses around culture and nationhood. You will also explore the role of empire in Russian and Soviet history, analysing how Russian writers, artists and intellectuals have questioned, endorsed or contested it. Through the analysis of literary and visual primary sources, the module will provide you with a better understanding of Russia's conflicted identity and its consequences for the present day.

### How is it taught?

1x1-hour weekly lecture and 1x2-hour weekly seminar.

### How is it assessed?

An oral presentation (worth 30% of the final mark) and an essay (worth 70% of the final mark).

### Indicative List of Topics:

- Russia's Europeanisation and identity crisis;
- Russia's colonial expansion in the Caucasus and Central Asia;
- Russian populism and the radical intelligentsia;
- The nationality question in the Soviet Union;
- Russia's post-Soviet *ressentiment* towards the West and nationalism
- Russia's renewed imperialism and its consequences for Ukraine.

### **Recommended reading (core texts):**

Byford, Andy, Doak, Connor, Hutchings, Stephen (eds.) *Transnational Russian Studies*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. 2020 (Introduction and Chapters 1-5).

Greenfeld, Liah. *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1992 (Chapter 3).

Hosking, Geoffrey. *A History of the Soviet Union 1917-1991 (Final Edition)*. London: Fontana. 1992 (particularly Chapters 9 and 14).

Hosking, Geoffrey. *Russia: People and Empire, 1552-1917*. London: Fontana. 1998.

Kolstø, Pål, Blakkisrud, Helge (eds.) *The New Russian Nationalism: Imperialism, Ethnicity and Authoritarianism 2000–15*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 2016.

Leyton, Susan. *Russian Literature and Empire: Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1994.

Morozov, Viatcheslav. *Russia's Postcolonial Identity: A Subaltern Empire in a Eurocentric World*. London: Palgrave. 2015.

Tolz, Vera. *Russia: Inventing the Nation*. London: Arnold. 2001.