RUSN 308: Encountering the Other in Russian Literature and Film

Department of Modern Languages and Literatures       College of William & Mary
Instructor: John Lyles       Class Time: MW: 3:30 – 4:50       Washington Hall 312
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Purpose of Course
This course will look at the way Russian literature and film participate in the creation of identity, both Russian and otherwise. Through close readings of a variety of texts from both the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as a discussion of several films, we will address questions of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, status, and more. Who is the Other? What form does the Other take? How is the Other defined and who makes these determinations and why? Lecture and discussion.

Schedule of Readings/Screenings
Note: BB = available on Blackboard. Readings should be completed before the day scheduled and read in the order listed. Thus, for Monday, January 23rd, you should read Pushkin’s “The Prisoner of the Caucasus,” and the chapter “Conquest and Resistance,” in that order.

Jan. 18th: Introduction.
           2. “Conquest and Resistance,” Chechnya: Calamity in the Caucasus, Carlotta Gall and Thomas de Waal, (BB)
           6. Said, Orientalism (BB)
Feb 1st: 7. Lermontov, A Hero of Our Time, “Bela” and “Maxim Maximych”
Feb. 6th: 8. Lermontov, A Hero of Our Time, “Taman” and “Princess Mary”
Feb. 13th: 11. Tolstoy, Hadji Murad
Feb. 15th: 12. Tolstoy, Hadji Murad
           14. Bodrov, Prisoner of the Mountains (on reserve at Swem; screening to be held Sunday evening, Washington 201, 7 – 9 pm)
Feb. 22nd: 15. Bodrov, Prisoner of the Mountains (on reserve at Swem)
           16. Politkovskaya, “It’s Nice to Be Deaf” (pages 32-38), and “The Hundredth Grozny Blockade” (pages 62-73), A Small Corner of Hell: Dispatches from Chechnya (BB)
Feb. 27th: 17. Sokurov, Alexandra (on reserve at Swem, screening to be held Sunday evening, Washington 201, 7 – 9 pm)

Feb. 29th: 18. Pushkin, Eugene Onegin (Chapters 1 – 3)

March 3rd – 11th: SPRING BREAK

March 12th: 20. Pushkin, Eugene Onegin (Chapter 4 – 6)

March 14th: 22. Pushkin, Eugene Onegin (Chapters 7 – 8)

March 19th: 23. Pushkin, Eugene Onegin

March 21st: 24. Pushkin, Eugene Onegin, Pavlova, A Double Life (Chapters 1 – 5)

March 26th: 25. Pavlova, A Double Life (Chapters 6 – 10)


April 2nd: 27. Nagrodskaia, The Wrath of Dionysus


April 9th: 29. Akhmatova, “Requiem” (BB)
30. Alexandrov, Circus (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ia4DyErYhAs&fearture=watch-now-button&wide=1)

April 11th: 31. Baranskaya, “A Week Like Any Other”

April 16th: 32. Menshov, Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears (screening to be held Sunday evening, 7 – 9 pm)

April 18th: 33. Tolstaya, “Hunting the Wooly Mammoth”; Petrushevskaya, “Our Crowd” (BB)

April 23rd: 34. Fedorchenko, Silent Souls (screening to be held Sunday evening, Washington 201, 7 – 9 pm)

April 25th: Remaining three group projects. Conclusion.

May 7th: FINAL EXAM: 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

TEXTS
The following have been ordered through the College of William and Mary Bookstore:

Pushkin, A. Eugene Onegin (Oxford World’s Classics)
Lermontov, L. A Hero of Our Time (Penguin Classics)
Pavlova, K. A Double Life
Tolstoy, L. Great Short Works of Leo Tolstoy (Perennial)
Nagrodskaia, E. The Wrath of Dionysus
Baranskaya, N. A Week Like Any Other (Seal Press)
Grading and Assignments
1. Participation and attendance 10%
2. First writing assignment 20%
3. Second writing assignment 20%
4. Group project/paper 25%
5. Final 25%