



CIEE St. Petersburg, Russia

Course title:	The Cultural Myths and Realities of St. Petersburg: The Mirrored Myth
Course code:	RUSI 3001 RASP
Programs offering course:	Summer Russian Area Studies
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. semester credits:	3
Contact hours:	45
Term:	Summer Session I 2020

Course Description

In the course the “splendid yet tragic” city is recreated as a cultural “myth.” Architectural landmarks, works of poetry and literature, Russian opera and famous Soviet movies are transformed into the emblems of the city. The course examines the “Petersburg text”, which consists of the literary works, paintings and drawings, music and theatrical productions, philosophical and moral ideas connected with Petersburg’s special place in Russian past and present.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

Through a thorough examination of the many layers of legend that have been built upon St. Petersburg, students will at the end of the course be able to critically analyze the intersection of history and memory, while constructing their own vision of the Petersburg mythos through the series of discussions and debates.

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

Class meetings consist of question-and-answer sessions, lectures, student presentations, short quizzes, and class discussion. Students are required (1) to view films at home; (2) to complete reading assignments if necessary; (2) to give ONE presentation; (3) to take four quizzes administered throughout the term (the lowest grade to be dropped); (4) to participate actively and intelligently in class discussions.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Quizzes (lowst grade will be dropped)	30%
2. Essay	30%
3. In-Class Participation	40%
TOTAL	100%

Course Requirements

Quizzes (lowst grade will be dropped)

Essay



In-Class Participation

Attendance

This course combines lecture and discussion format. Since attendance is critical to course performance, more than ONE unexcused absences will result in a lower grade.

Course Requirements

Students are required (1) to participate actively, intelligently and regularly in class discussions; (2) to read 8-10 pages of a verbal text for each class meeting; (3) to take 2 quizzes; (4) submit one two-page essay.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Class

St. Petersburg: A Hero

Introduction: St. Petersburg as a time-machine

Syllabus, practical matters.

Chaos and Cosmos

Topic:

The Triton City and its Sacrificial Legend

Reading: Alexander Pushkin Bronze Horseman

TV project: Bronze Horseman (1974, Michail Tsarev, Illustrations by Alexander Benois)

Palmyra of the North

Topic:

Shoreless world awaiting discovery

Topic:

Minerva the Great

Reading:

Catherine's social rules for herself and her guests at the Hermitage, from Russia, abridged from the French of the Marquis de Custine

Week 2

Class

St. Petersburg: A Monster

Fatum

Topic:

Herman Hermann, Russian Gambler

Reading: Alexander Pushkin Dame of Spades (extracts)

Dance Macabre

Topic:

Opera: Dame of Spades, Pyotr Tchaikovskii;

Reading: Michael Lermontov Masquerade (extracts)

Film: Masquerade (1941, dir. by Sergei Gerasimov)

Chronos

Topic:

Imperial Petersburg Deconstructed

Reading: Nikolai Gogol Overcoat (selected extracts)

Film: Overcoat (1927) dir. By Kozintsev and Trauberg

Week 3

Class

St. Petersburg: A Rebel

Russian Superman

Topic:

A Rebel with a Cause: Rodion Raskolnikov

Reading: Feodor Dostoevsky Crime and Punishment (selected extracts)

Film: Crime and Punishment (1969, dir. by Lev Kulidzhanov)

Red Prophet

Topic:

Devil of the Swamps

Reading: Vladimir Mayakovsky Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (extracts)

Cartoon: 25th, the First Day (1967, Yuri Norstein)

Week 4

Class

. St. Petersburg: A Martyr

City Renamed



Topic:

After a saint, after a devil

Reading: Joseph Brodsky A Guide to a Renamed City

Terror Antiquus

Topic:

Revolution portrayed

Reading: Alexander Blok The Twelve

Film: The End of St. Petersburg (1927, dir. by Vsevolod Pudovkin)

New Troy, Undefeated

Topic:

Noble Heroism of the Siege

Reading:

Anna Ahmatova A Poem Without A Hero (extracts)

Conclusions

New Atlantis and the Art of Nostalgia

Film: Russian Ark (2003, dir. by Alexander Sokurov)

Course Materials

Readings

Required Texts

Hellberg-Hirn, Elena. Imperial Imprints: Post-Soviet St Petersburg. Finnish Literature Society Helsinki 2003

Volkov, Solomon. St. Petersburg: A Cultural History. Free Press, 2010

Recommended Texts

Brodsky, Joseph. Less Than One (Selected Essays). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006

Kelly, Laurence. St. Petersburg: A Travelers' Companion. New York: Atheneum, 1983

Nabokov, Vladimir. Speak, Memory New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999



Helena Goscilo and Stephen M. Norris, eds. *Preserving Petersburg: History, Memory, Nostalgia*. Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2008

George Gibian, ed. *The Portable Nineteenth-Century Russian Reader*. Penguin Books 2005