# Syllabus: Comparative History of Empire in Modern and Contemporary History

Instructor: Prof. Alexander Semyonov

2014-15 AY

Brief Description: The course introduces students to the range of methodologies and theories dealing with nationalism and nation-sate, empire, colonialism and imperial formations, and comparative and entangled history. The course starts with the discussion of modernist and constructivist theories of nationalism that at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries helped scholars de-naturalize the phenomenon of nation and nation-state. It is important for the course on empires in Modern and Contemporary history for the major challenge to imperial formation in the west and east was the popular sovereignty and political claims made on behalf of dominant and dominated nations. Critical examination of theories of nationalism helps differentiate between empire as a category of political practice (when used for polemical purposes) from empire as an analytical category. Situating the emergence of nationalism at the birth of modern world the course proceeds with examination of empires as an ideal type which is different from nation and nation-state. Taking empire seriously on a theoretical level the course examines the nature of imperial formations as different from the logic of nation and nation-state, it looks at empire as a context for emergence of dominant and non-dominant group nationalism and helps explain the logic of these types of nationalism through the imperial context. The course asks the question of whether there was a repertoire of authoritative language of empire and if historians need to become anthropologists to recover the habitus and practices of imperial formations that only partially express themselves in authoritative languages and epistemes of politics, social sciences, and culture of modernity. The course then proceeds to examination of the comparative history of empires before and after the challenge of modernization and nationalism. It examines empires as elements of the world order, as regimes of expansion and governing and constructing cultural and ethnic difference in the ruled population. Special attention is paid to ideologies of imperial reform, moments of rupture and reproduction of imperial rule, the role of knowledge about human diversity in the governance of empire, legal pluralism and institutions of imperial rule. The course critically revisits the existing typologies of empire suggesting the entanglement of imperial imagination and practice across historical types in modern history. In geographic and historical span the course covers the British Empire (second empire after the American War of Independence, the Habsburg Empire, the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, the Ottoman Empire, the Japanese Empire through the WWII). The course concludes with the review of new approaches to comparative history and analysis of the phenomenon of the legacy of imperial formations.

Prerequisites: A survey of modern European history equivalent or a survey of global history equivalent and a survey course on Russian-Soviet history.

Grade Calculation:

1. Class participation (20%)
2. First written assignment (20%)
3. Second written assignment (20%)
4. Written exam (40%)

Core literature:

Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010);

Dominic Lieven, *Empire: The Russian Empire and its Rivals from the 16th Century to the Present* (London: Pimlico, 2002)

# First written assignment: Examine the typologies and comparative dimensions on nationalism as they are present in theoretical literature on nationalism. Length:

Second written assignment (in class together with exam): Examine and assess the argument and analysis of empire and nationalism of the key contributions to the study of nationalism and comparative history of empire.

# Classes and readings

Part 1. Theoretical approaches to empire and nationalism. Comparative and entangled histories of empire and nationalism

1.1 Historical semantics of key concepts of the course. Traditional approaches to the history of empire. Modern state and empire. Orientalism in modern definition of empire. Polemics on imperialism in the context of the WWI. New approaches to the phenomenon of empire. Power, difference, and connexity. Imperialism as a new analytical and political concept which is different from empire, the historical logic of Marxist analysis of capitalism and imperialism as its offspring, the historical logic of legacy of feudalism and modern sovereign state in the sociology of Joseph Schumpeter, the context of the highest stage of imperialist division of the world and WWI for ideological framing of imperialism in the early 20th century. The insight about malleable historical forms of power and empire. Limitations of ideological discussions of the early 20th century for understanding the persistence of rule over difference in history.

Core reading: Extracts from Joseph Schumpeter *Sociology of Imperialism* (1919) and Vladimir Lenin *Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916).

1.2 Sociological and political ideal types of empire and nation. The importance of juxtaposition of empire and nation in modern history. The problem of legitimacy of imperial order in Modern history and the factors of delegitimizing of empire.

Core reading: Ronald Grigor Suny, “The Empire Strikes Out: Imperial Russia, “National” Identity, and Theories of Empire” in Ronald Grigor Suny and Terry Martin (eds.) *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

1.3. Empire and the world order. European medieval histories of empire. Political traditions of empire and *Translatio imperii*. Empires and the shaping of international relations and world order. European and peripheral empires. The European traditions of empire and the competition between different imperial actors in medieval Europe. The phenomenon of translatio imperii in European political traditions. Modern sovereign states and imperial traditions in modern history. The impact of empire on the creation of international relations and world order. How important is the category of peripheral empire for understanding the modern history of empire? Is it a relational category? What are the essential characteristics of peripheral empire?

Core reading: Dominic Lieven, *Empire. The Russian Empire and Its Rivals from the Sixteenth Century to the Present* (London: John Murray, 2000), 3-25.

1.4. Critical theory of nationalism. Structuralist approaches to nation-formation. Modernist thesis in understanding nations and nationalism. Socio-economic factors. Dependence of politics and ideology of nationalism on structural socioconomic transformations. Varieties of nationalism in structuralist account of nation-building. The different between the social structure of the pre-modern and modern society, semiotic labor and the transformation of social structure, the wrong address theory, the role of ideology of nationalism and its utility in studying nation-formation. Marxist understanding of nationalism and the limits of Marxist approach to understanding nationalism. The analytical model of national movement, the links of this model to the social history theories.

Core reading: Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

Additional reading: Hans Kohn, “Western and Eastern Nationalisms,” John Hutchison and Anthony Smith, eds., Oxford Readers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 162-165.

Ernst Renan, “What is Nation,” John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith, eds., *Nationalism*. *Oxford Readers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 17-8.

Michael Mann, “Nation-states in Europe and Other Continents: Diversifying, Developing, Not Dying,” in; John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith, eds., *Nationalism. Critical Concepts in Political Science*, vol.1 (Routledge, 2002), 353-374.

Miroslav Hroch, “From National Movement to the Fully Formed Nation: The Nation-Building Process in Europe,” Ronald Suny and Geoff Eley (Eds.), *Becoming a National. A Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 59-77.

1.5. Nation as an imagined community and post-structuralist approaches to nation-formation and nationalism. Pre-national forms of community and the novelty of nation as an imagined community. Print capitalism and the Reformation as factors of emergence of imagined communities. Historical typology and entanglement of historic forms of imagined communities: from Creole pioneers through post-colonial nationalism.

Core reading: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), introduction, Chs. 1-7.

1.6. Critical exploration of the tension between the categories of practice and categories of analysis in the field of nationalism studies. Epistemological nationalism. Nation as a cognitive form. Critique of groupist ontology. Politics of identity and historical scholarship. The problem of empire as seen from the vantage point of de-naturalized nation.

Core reading: Rogers Burbaker, “Myths and Misconceptions in the Study of Nationalism,” John Hall, ed., *The State of the Nation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 272-306

Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond Identity," *Theory and Society*, vol. 29, no. 1 (Feb., 2000): 1-47

Part 2. Imperial Trajectories and Entanglements

2.1. The British Empire. Modern nation-building and national identity in Britain. Citizenship and nationalism. Composite polity and civic nationalism of the moder state. The role of external foe in building a national identity. The role of wars in the 18th century for identity-formation. Composite national identity in the British case. The role of colonial empire in making the British national identity possible. Possible comparative perspectives on the history of hte British national identity.

Core reading: Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation,1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 1-9, 101-45, 155-77.

For an example of comparative approach: Thomas R. Metcalf. "From One Empire to Another: The Influence of the British Raj on American Colonialism in the Philippines." *Ab Imperio* 2012, no. 3 (2012): 25-41. (http://muse.jhu.edu/).

2.2. The Habsburg Empire.The dynastic empire and forms of dynastic expansion. Legal regimes and imperia sovereignty. Imperial subjecthood and political allegiance of the Habsburg subject in the 19th century. The rupture of 1867 and new imperial order. German and non-German nationalisms. Imperial legacy of the Habsburg Empire in the interwar Europe.

Core reading: Dominic Lieven, *Empire. The Russian Empire and Its Rivals from the Sixteenth Century to the Present* (London: John Murray, 2000), chapter the Habsburg Empire; Daniel L. Unowsky, "Nasz Pan Kajzer: Imperial Inspection Tours of Galicia 1851, 1868," in: Idem, *The pomp and politics of patriotism: imperial celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848-1916*. West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2005. Pp. 33-51.

2.4 The Russian Empire. The problem of dynastic empire and centralized state in the Russian history. The expansion to the west in the 18th century as compared with the eastward expansion of Muscovy in the 17th century. Imperial bureaucracy and governance. The ruptures of the Catherine the Great reign and the emergence of Well-Ordered State Concept. Confessional state and its development from the 18th century. The rupture of the Great Reforms and the emergence of modern citizenship in the Russian Empire. Russian and non-Russian nationalisms. The revolutions of the early 20th century: the reform or collapse of empire?

Core reading: Eric Lohr, *Russian Citizenship: From Empire to Soviet Union* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012); Ilya Gerasimov, Sergei Glebov, Jan Kusber, Marina Mogilner, Alexander Semynov, "New Imperial History and the Challenges of Empires," in: Ilya Gerasimov, Jan Kusber, and Alexander Semyonov, eds., *Empire Speaks Out: Languages of Rationalization and Self-Description in the Russian Empire* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 3-32; Charles Steinwedel, "Tribe, Estate, Nationality? Changing Conceptions of Bashkir Particularity Within the Tsar's Empire," *Ab Imperio*, no. 2 (2002): 249-278.

2.5 The Soviet Union. Comparison of imperial ends with the Habsburg Empire: union vs the break up into independent states. Indigenization policies. Ethno-federal solution to the problem of post-imperial diversity. West-East gradient of the Soviet nationality policy. The combination of class and nationality as politics of strategic relativism. The legacy of Soviet nationality policy in the post-Soviet period.

Core reading: Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Revenge of the Past. Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993); Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2001), introduction.

2.6 Nationalism and colonialism in the Third World. Colonial power and creation of colonial diversity. Nationalism as a western import in the colonial world. The tensions of modern nationalism in the colonial world. Rival Asian universalisms, the case of post-Meiji reform Japan.

Core reading: Prasenjit Duara, “Imperialism of ‘Free Nations’: Japan, Manchukuo and the History of the Present,” Carole McGranahan, Peter C. Perdue, and Ann Stoler, eds., *Imperial Formations and Their Discontents* (Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, 2007, 211-239

Part 3. Newest approaches to historical comparative studies of imperial formations and colonialism. The examination of the phenomenon of the legacy of empire and colonialism in comparative perspective.

3.1. The impact of empire and colonial systems of changing norms of the international order and international relations architecture. The ideological origins of the Leagues of Nations. The League of Nations as seen emerging form the Real Politik perspective. The continuity and discontinuity between the League of Nations and the UN.

Core reading: Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Place. The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009)

3.2. The legacy of empire and colonialism. Identity and historical justice politics after colonialism and empire. The politics of comparison and new forms of asymmetric politics and domination. How important is to focus on historic forms of empire and their alleged endpoint in the 20th century with collapse of some imperial formations and decolonization? What can we learn from extending the analysis of imperial formation beyond the modernity moment to legacies of early modern empires? Is there an authoritative discourse of modern empires?

Core reading: Ann Stoler, “Considerations on Imperial Comparisons,” in: Ilya Gerasimov, Jan Kusber, and Alexander Semyonov, eds., *Empire Speaks Out: Languages of Rationalization and Self-Description in the Russian Empire* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2009), 33-55.

Additional reading: Ann Laura Stoler, Carole McGranahan, "Refiguring Imperial Terrains," Ann Stoler, Carole McGranahan, and Peter C. Perdue, eds., *Imperial Formations and their Discontents* (Santa Fe: School of American Research, 2007);

“Interview with Frederick Cooper and Jane Burbank. The Serendipity of Writing World History Through the Prism of Empire,” *Ab Imperio* 2 (2010): 22-45.

Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, “Between Metropole and Colony. Rethinking a Research Agenda” in Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper (eds.) *Tensions of Empire. Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World,* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997).

Final attestation.

Written exam and final written assignment in class:

Give definitions to the following concepts and terms:

Peripheral empire

Creole nationalism

Translatio imperii

Groupist ontology in studies of nationalism

Manichean dichotomy in studies of nationalism

Architectonic illusion in studies of nationalism

Print capitalism

Center (Metropole) and colony (imperial periphery)

Modigliani- and Kokoschka-like social reality in development of nationalism

Drawing on lectures and core readings studied in the course, describe and analyze:

1. The main differences between agro-literate and industrial society in the theory of Ernst Gellner
2. The peculiar characteristics of imagined community in the understanding of Benedict Anderson
3. The imperial traditions in Medieval and Early Modern Europe
4. The impact of empire on the development of British identity
5. The specific configuration of the center (metropole) and periphery in continental empires
6. Specific features of Japanese empire and imperialism and its main internal tension
7. Specific features of the Bolshevik nationality policy as a response to inherited imperial diversity

Describe the main argument of the following theoretical works and the main thesis and contribution to the historiography of the comparative history of empire of the following historical works:

Ernst Gellner, Nations and Nationalism

Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities

Rogers Brubaker, Myths and Misconceptions in the Study of Nationalism

Ann Stoler, Considerations on Imperial Comparisons

Dominic Lieven

Ronald Suny

Joseph Schumpeter *Sociology of Imperialism* (1919)

Appendix 1. A list of select internet resources:

Journal *Ab Imperio* [www.abimperio.net](http://www.abimperio.net)

American Association for the Study of Nationalities -- ASN (with a primary focus on Eastern Europe) http://www.nationalities.org/

**The Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism (ASEN**) http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/ASEN/

Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization – UNPO (a political advocacy site) <http://www.unpo.org/>

Appendix 2. General reading list

Hutchinson John and Anthony Smith, eds., *Nationalism. Critical Concepts in Political Science*. Vols 1-5 (Routledge, 2002).

Hutchinson John and Anthony Smith, eds., Nationalism. Oxford Readers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Suny, Ronald and Michael Kennedy (Eds.) *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation.* Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 1999.

Appendix 3. Recommended further reading:

General theoretical works:

Hall, John. Ed. The State of the Nation. Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Armstrong, John. Nations before nationalism. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.

Berlin, Isaiah, Sir. *Three critics of the Enlightenment: Vico, Hamann, Herder*. Edited by Henry Hardy. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, c2000.

Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983.

Hobsbawm, Eric. *Nations and nationalism since 1780. Program, myth, reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Kohn, Hans. *The Idea of Nationalism. A Study in Its Origins and Background*. New York, 1944.

Smith, Anthony D. *Chosen peoples: sacred sources of national identity*. Oxford University Press, 2003.

Smith, Anthony D. *Myths and memories of the nation*. Oxford UP, 1999.

Smith, Anthony D. *National Identity*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991.

Smith, Anthony D. *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford/Cambridge, Mass.,: Blackwell, 1986.

Smith, Anthony D. *Nation in History. Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism* Waltham, Mass.: University Press of New England, 2000.

Smith, Anthony D. *Nationalism and Modernism A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Suny, Ronald and Michael Kennedy (Eds.) *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation.* Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 1999.

Walicki, Andrej. *Philosophy and Romantic Nationalism: The Case of Poland*. Notre Dame, 1982.

Hastings, Adrian. *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*(Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Nationalism and nation-formation in Europe:

Colley, L. *Britons: Forging a Nation, 1707-1837.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.

Weber, E. *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914.* London, 1979.

Applegate, Celia. *A Nation of Provincials. The German Idea of Heimat*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe:

Hroch, Miroslav. *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe.* Trans. Ben Fowkes. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1985.

Davies, Norman. *God's playground: a history of Poland*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981.

**Banac, Ivo, ed. *Eastern Europe in revolution*.** Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1992.

**Sugar, Peter, ed. *Nationalism and religion in the Balkans since the 19th century*.** Seattle, WA. : Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies (University of Washington), 1996.

**Sugar, Peter, ed. *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*.** Seattle : University of Washington Press, 1969.

Sugar, Peter. ed. *Eastern European nationalism in the twentieth century*. Washington, 1995.

**Sugar, Peter. *Nationality and society in Habsburg and Ottoman Europe*.** Brookfield, Vt. : Variorum, 1997.

Szűcs, Jenő. *The three historical regions of Europe: an outline*. Budapest: Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1983.

Verdery, Katherine and Ivo Banac, eds. *National character and national ideology in interwar Eastern Europe*. New Haven, 1995.

Roshwald, Aviel, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, the Middle East, and Russia, 1914-1923* (Routledge, 2000)

Nationalism beyond Europe and Post-colonial theory:

Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and PostColonial History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993)

Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986)

Bhabha, Homi, ed., *Nation and Narration* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

Nationalism and empire in Russian history:

Suny, R. *The Revenge of the Past. Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.

Szporluk, Roman. *Russia, Ukraine and the Breakup of the Soviet Union.* Hoover Institution Press, 2000.