

**Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies  
School of International Studies, JNU**

Course :	Ph.D
Course Title:	Siberia and Russia's Far East: Society, Politics and Security
Course Type:	Optional
Course Teacher:	Prof. Archana Upadhyay and Dr. Dinesh Kumar
Credits:	Four
Course Code:	SE621
Semester:	Winter Semester
Contact Hours:	Two per week

### **Course Objectives**

Siberia and Russia's Far East is located at the interstices of conventionally defined regions and lacks a clearly defined periphery. At once within and distinct from the Russian Republic and separate from Kazakhstan, Mongolia, China, Japan and Korea, the region is a matrix of overlapping borderlands. Its geographical architecture can best be described as an expanse where Europe, Asia and America come together. Although from the point of view of metropolitan Russia, the region has been historically viewed as a distant periphery, a colony and a strategic base, the distinct political, social, economic and strategic dynamics of the area profoundly impacts its identity both in the Russian and Asian contexts.

Geographically, the area comprises of three zones — West Siberia, East Siberia and the Russian Far East. While West Siberia is the region east of the Ural mountains, East Siberia includes much of the central Siberian plateau and the southern region around lake Baikal. The Russian Far East includes the Pacific coastline and the main peninsulas of the northeast. The entire region has an area of 13 million kilometres and is characterised by harsh climate and a small and diminishing population. Significantly, the enormous natural and mineral endowments of the region gives Russia the unique advantage of possessing nearly all strategic resources required for a modern industrialised economy. The political and strategic challenges that spring from this area are primarily rooted in its history, resource base and a sense of distance (both geographical and psychological) from Moscow. In addition, the long

international borders with Kazakhstan, Mongolia and China, the short border with North Korea, the proximity with Japan as well as other Pacific Rim countries, coupled with the level of interest in the region shown by other powers such as United States and South Korea, present paradoxes and conflicting choices to the Russian leadership.

The course will dwell into the historical, political, economic, foreign policy and security issues that define the landscape of the region both in its relationship with Moscow and with the outside world. The course structure is divided into lecture topics, each dealing with significant aspects of the socio-political, economic and strategic processes impacting the destiny of the region.

### **Learning Outcomes**

On completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Comprehend and analyse the interplay of the national, regional and global factors in shaping the dynamics of Russia's engagement with Siberia and its Far East
2. Make informed judgements about the role and influence of Russia in the contemporary geopolitics of the Asia-Pacific region
3. Interpret current developments in Russian national policy making in regard to its development strategies for Siberia and its Far East.

### **Evaluation Methods**

Class performance (10%) /Assignments: Term paper, Book review, Seminar presentation (30%) /End Semester Exam (60%)

### **Course Content**

#### **History and Demographics**

- Siberia and the Far East in the imagination of Russia and the world
- Russian engagement in the region: directions, methods and ideology
- Foundation of geopolitical orientation; the political, economic and socio-cultural integration of the region into Russia

## **The Siberian and the Far East ‘questions’ in government policy**

- The ‘centre-periphery’ discourse
- The region as a strategic asset: reserves, resources and bastion; Industrial and transport assimilation of Siberia
- The Federal discourse: centralisation verses local autonomy
- Development of regional self -consciousness (Oblastnichestvo): sources, influences and manifestations

## **Contemporary Geopolitics of the Region**

- The region as a bridge to the neighbourhood and beyond
- Conflict and cooperation in Asia -Pacific regional interactions
- Key regional players: Russia, China, Japan, the Koreas
- The United States as an actor
- Resource and Energy politics

## **Geo-strategic Challenges**

- Demographic crisis
- Cross-border population influx and inter-ethnic hostility
- Territorial disputes and Environmental issues
- The Military-Industrial Complex

## **Essential Readings for a comprehensive background of the Region**

### **Books**

Davis, Sue (2003). *The Russian Far East: The Last Frontier?*, London and New York: Routledge

Dienes, Leslie (1987). *Soviet Asia: Economic Development and National Policy Choices*, Boulder and London: Westview Press

Forsyth, James (1992). *A History of the Peoples of Siberia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Hartley, Janet M. (2014). *Siberia, A History of the People*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press

Hill, Fiona and Clifford Gaddy (2003). *The Siberian Curse. How Communist Planners left Russia out in the Cold*, Washington DC : Brookings Institution Press

Kotkin, Stephen and David Wolff (eds.) (1995). *Rediscovering Russia in Asia: Siberia and the Russian Far East*, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe

Mote, Victor, L. (1998). *Siberia: Worlds Apart*, Westview Press

Suslov, S.P. (1961). *Physical Geography of Asiatic Russia*, San Francisco; W.H . Freeman

Wood, Alan (2011). *Russia's Frozen Frontier: A History of Siberia and the Russian Far East 1581-1991*, London: Bloomsbury

Wood, Alan (ed.) (1987). *Siberia: Problems and Prospects for Regional Development*, London, New York and Sidney: Croom Helm

————— (ed.) (1991). *The History of Siberia: From Russian Conquest to Revolution*, London: Routledge

## **Topic wise Assigned Readings**

### **History and Demographics**

Basin, Mark (1991). "Inventing Siberia: Visions of the Russian East in the Early Nineteenth Century", *American Historical Review*, Vol.96, No.3, pp.763-794

————— (1993). “Russia Between Europe and Asia: The Ideological Construction of Geographical Space”, *Slavic Review*, Vol.50, No.3, pp.1- 17

Gibson, Janes R., (1990). “The Rush to Meet the Sun: An Essay on Russian eastward Expansion”, *Siberica*, Vol.1, No.1, pp.68-77

Mote, Victor, L., ( 1998). *Siberia: Worlds Apart*, Westview Press, pp. 1-31

Weiss, Claudia ( 2007). “Representing the Empire: The Meaning of Siberia for Russian Imperial Identity”, *Nationalities Papers* 35, No.3, pp. 439-456

Wood, Alan (1990). “Siberian Exile in the Eighteenth Century”, *Siberica*, Vol.1, No.1, pp. 38-63

Collins, David (1982). “ Russia’s Conquest of Siberia : Evolving Russian and Soviet Interpretations”, *European Studies Review*, Vol.12, No.1, pp.17-43

Erlich Victor (1957). “Images of Siberia”, *The Slavic and East European Journal*, Vol.1, No.4, pp. 243-250

Kabuzan, V.M. (1991). “The Settlement of Siberia and the Far East from the Late 18th to Early 20th Century (1795-1917)”, *Soviet Geography*, Vol. 3, No.9, pp. 616-632

Kennan, George (1882). “Siberia: The Exiles’ Abode”, *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York*, Vol. 14, pp.13-68

Kirby, Stuart, E. (1985). “Siberia: Heartland and Framework” *Asian Perspective* Vol.9, No.2, pp.301-331

————— (1971). “The Soviet Far East: A Broad View”, *International Affairs*, Vol. 47, No. 1, pp.63-78

### **The Siberian and the Far East ‘questions’ in government policy**

Allison, Anthony,P. (1990). “Siberian Regionalism in Revolution and Civil War, 1917-1920” *Sibirica*, Vol 1, No.1, pp.78-97

- Baievsky, Boris (1927). "Siberia-The Storehouse of the Future", *Economic Geography*, Vol.3, No.2, pp.167-192
- Bradshaw, Michael (1992). *Siberia at a Time of Change*. Special Report No. 2171. London: Economist Intelligence Unit
- Chebankova, Elena, A. (2005). "The Limitations of Central Authority in the Regions and the Implications for the Evolution of Russia's Federal System", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.57, No.7, pp.933-947
- Dienes, Leslie (1987). *Soviet Asia: Economic Development and National Policy Choices*, Boulder and London: Westview Press
- Duncan, Peter J.S. (1994/1995). "The Politics of Siberia in Russia", *Siberia: The Journal of Siberian Studies* , Vol. 1, No.2, pp.13-23
- Fondahl, Gail (1997). "Siberia: Assimilation and Discontents". In Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras (eds.) *New States, New Politics: Building the Post-Soviet Nations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 190-232
- Gill, Graeme, (ed.) (2007). *Politics in the Russian Regions*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 188-203
- Goryushkin, L.M., (1990/1991). "Late-Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth-Century Siberian Regionalist:Views on the Economic Independence of Siberia",*Sibirica, Journal of Siberian Studies* , Vol.1, No.2, pp. 152-168
- Hausladen, Gary (1989). "Russian Siberia: An Integrative Approach", *Soviet Geography*, Vol. 30, No. pp. 223-246
- Hughes, James, (1994). "Regionalism in Russia: The Rise and Fall of Siberian Agreement", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.46, No.7, pp.1133-1161
- Marks, Steven, G (1991). *Road to Power: The Trans-Siberian Railroad and the Colonization of Asian Russia, 1850-1917*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press
- Moses, Joel C. (1985). "Regionalism in Soviet Politics", *Soviet Studies*, Vol.37, No. 2, pp.184-211
- Mote, Victor, L (1998). *Siberia: Worlds Apart*, Westview Press, pp.31-105
- Shabad, Theodore and Victor I. Mote (eds.) *Gateway to Siberian Resources*, New York: Wiley, pp. 1-61

Shevtsov, Vyacheslav, V. (2013). “The Regional Identity of the Siberian Community: major formation factors and reconstruction problems”, *euroPolis* Vol. 7. No.1, pp. 77-92

Treadgold, Donald, W. (1956). “Siberian Colonization and the Future of Asiatic Russia”, *The Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 25, No.1, pp.14-51

Wood. Alan (1993/1994). ‘Siberian Regionalism Resurgent’, *Siberia: The Journal of Siberian Studies*, Vol.1, No. 1, pp. 71-86

Zhdanov, Vladimir A., (1995). “Contemporary Siberian Regionalism”. In Stephen Kotkin and David Wolff (eds.) *Rediscovering Russia in Asia*, Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, pp. 120-132

### **Contemporary Geopolitics of the Region**

Blakkisrud and Elana Wilson Rowe (2018). *Russia's Turn to the East, Domestic Policy making and Regional Cooperation*, Palgrave Macmillan

Denisov, Igor, Oleg Paramonov, Ekaterina Arapova, Ivan Safranchuk (2021). “Russia, China and the concept of Indo-Pacific”, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol.12 (1), No. 1, pp.72-85

Efimov, Valerii, S. and Alla V. Lapteva (2017). “Siberia and the Russian Far East in the 21st Century”, *Journal of Siberian Federal University, Humanities & Social Sciences* 11, pp. 1669-1686

Lee, Rensselaer (2013). “The Russian Far East: Opportunities and Challenges” Foreign Policy Research Institute, available at <https://www.fpri.org/article/2013/04/the-russian-far-east-opportunities-and-challenges/>

Lewis, David (2019). “Strategic Culture and Russia’s ‘Pivot to the East’: Russia, China and ‘Greater Eurasia’”, *Marshall Centre Security Insight*, No 34, July 2019 available at <https://www.marshallcenter.org/en/publications/security-insights/strategic-culture-and-russias-pivot-east-russia-china-and-greater-eurasia-0>

Lewis, David (2019) “Strategic Culture and Russia’s ‘Pivot to the East’: Russia, China and ‘Greater Eurasia,’” *Marshall Center Security Insight*, No. 34, July, <https://www.marshallcenter.org/en/publications/security-insights/strategic-culture-and-russians-pivot-east-russia-china-and-greater-eurasia-0>

Lo, Bobo (2020). The Return, Russia and the Security Landscape of Northeast Asia, *Russia. Nei. Reports* 29, available at <https://www.ifri.org/en/publications/etudes-de-lifri/russieneireports/return-russia-and-security-landscape-northeast-asia>

Makarychev, Andrey (2017). “Russia’s Engagement with Asia Pacific: International Socialization, Multipolarity and Regionalism”, *Rising Powers Quarterly*, Vol.2, Issue 1, pp.105-119

Melvin, Neil (2021) “Russia and the Indo-Pacific Security Concept”, *RUSI*, London at [https://static.rusi.org/277\\_russia\\_ip.pdf](https://static.rusi.org/277_russia_ip.pdf)

Muraviev, Alexey D. (2019) “Understanding Russia’s Strategic Engagement with the Indo-Asia-Pacific”, *Asia Pacific Bulletin*, No 475, May 6

Shagina, Maria (2020) “Russia’s Pivot to Asia: Between Rhetoric and Substance”, *Orbis*, vol. 64, no. 3, pp. 447-460

### **Geo- strategic challenges**

Alexseev, Mikhail, A and C. Richard Hofstetter (2006). “Russia, China and the Immigration Security Dilemma”, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 121, No.1, pp. 1-32

Buznik, V.M (2001). “Russian Far East Environmental Problems”, In *The Role of Environmental NGOs: Russian Challenges, American Lessons: Proceedings of a Workshop*, pp. 125-132, available at <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/read/10240/chapter/15>

Dmochowski, Tadeusz (2019). “Demographic changes in the Russian Siberia and the Far East in 1989-2019”, *Review of Nationalities* 9 (1), pp. 223-236

Karakin, Vladimir (2012). “Forest, Tigers and Flyways: Protecting Biodiversity in the Russian Far East” *Global Asia*, Vol. 7, No.2 available at [https://www.globalasia.org/v7no2/cover/forests-tigers-and-flyways-protecting-biodiversity-in-the-russian-far-east\\_vladimir-karakin](https://www.globalasia.org/v7no2/cover/forests-tigers-and-flyways-protecting-biodiversity-in-the-russian-far-east_vladimir-karakin)

LUKIN, Artyom (2008). “Environmental Security of the Russian Far East: Domestic, Transnational and Regional Dimensions”, available at: [https://en.apu.ac.jp/rcaps/uploads/fckeditor/publications/journal/RJAPS\\_V26\\_Lukin.pdf](https://en.apu.ac.jp/rcaps/uploads/fckeditor/publications/journal/RJAPS_V26_Lukin.pdf)

Murdock, Ryan (2022). "Climate Change and Siberia: No Time for Climate Inaction", *Harvard International Review* available at <https://hir.harvard.edu/climate-change-and-siberia-no-time-for-continued-climate-inaction/>

Sacko, David, Micah Winkley (2020). "All Quiet on the Eastern Front? Japan and Russia's Territorial Dispute", *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, pp.22 - 42

Shaolei, Cui Heng (2019). *Developing the Far East and Chinese- Russian Relations: New Perceptions and New Practices*, Valdai Papers, available at: <http://valdaiclub.com/a/valdai-papers/>

Vitkovskaya, Galiba, S. (1997). "Cross-Border Migration in the Russian Far East," WRITENET, 1 October, available at <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6a6b90.html>

Young, Oyunchimeg (2018). *Development of the Russian Far East: Challenges Facing Russia's Pivot to Asia*, Calhoun: The NPS Institutional Archive Space Repository