

CERS Working Paper Racism in Russia

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It is evident that the concept of racialisation in Russia is an area subject to much discussion and debate concerning its manifestations, severity and construction. This essay will attempt to assess the concept of racialisation in Russia by first discussing the history of the Russian people and the reasons as to why this may have implications for Russian sense of racial identity. It is apparent that by applying critical theory within a Russian context, a significant assessment of racialisation in Russia can be established. It is evident that also by considering the influence which Western racial science has had on Russian concepts of race, the process of racialisation in Russia may be further scrutinised. It is also evident that the impact of Communism also had a significant effect on racialisation within the Russian context. It is also apparent that racialisation in Russia comes in many forms and against a multitude of ethnic groups, by examining the manifestation of racialisation against these groups, it is hoped that a greater understanding of racialisation in Russia may be established. The research which will be the focus for this essay is that which is provided by the studies on racialisation in Russia by the SOVA Centre for Information and Analysis (SOVA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Another key area of focus for this discussion will be the way in which Russian concepts of race have shaped those of the former Soviet nations surrounding it, such as Hungary and Slovakia. By discussing the issues which are occurring in the Ukraine at present concerning Russian relations, racialisation can be seen as radically changing which makes for highly topical discussion. The final area which this essay will discuss is how racialisation in Russia can move forward, given the upcoming World Cup in 2018 and the international scrutiny which Russia will face.

By examining the history of the Russian nation and its people, possible explanations for the construction of racialisation can be formed. It is evident that the strong construction of ethnic Russian racial identity can be traced back hundreds of years stemming from the Tartar-Mongolian invasions of Russia in the 13th Century. Many argue that it was this invasion which led to Russia being separated from Europe, “preserving the pluralism of the countries and people of Europe, at the cost of absolutism in Russia” (Fawn, R. 2004: 54). As a result of this it is evident that the Russian people faced adverse persecution and exploitation at the hands of a foreign enemy. This may have created a sense of social solidarity amongst ethnic Russians helping to generate a national sense of collective identity. The role of Islam in the historic invasions of Russia can also be viewed as creating a sense of national caution with regards to foreign cultures. The Ottoman Empire and Russia have had numerous altercations throughout history; the most significant can be viewed as the Crimean War. It is evident that the loss of this war by Russia to the Ottomans, backed by British and French troops, only served to further its segregation from Western Europe (Kelly, W. K. 1854: 411). This evidently made the Russian ethnic identity more concrete, as Russians were now united in animosity for their European counterparts, having supported an enemy which Russia have had numerous disputes with.

It can be argued that this sense of collective rebellion when under foreign control and exclusion from Western Europe, coupled with the role of Orthodox Christianity can be viewed as highly influential when developing racialisation in Russia. Ilya Prizel states that “The Russian Orthodox Church, much like the Polish Catholic Church played a pivotal role in shaping the national identity of its people” (Prizel, I. 2004: 155). It is therefore evident that Orthodox Christianity in Russia can be argued to have contributed to the creation of racialisation considerably. Most significantly the Orthodox Church can be argued to have perpetuated a sense of “Islamophobia, with Islam being seen as both a constant threat and a religion of violence” (Law, I. 2012: 4). This attitude towards those who practice the faith of Islam can be viewed to have had major consequences for racialisation, shaping Russian domestic and foreign policy considerably. This concept of Islamophobia can be traced back to relations with the Tartar-Mongolian and Ottoman Empires. However, it is the implications which this has had for the present which is of most concern. It is evident that the racialisation of Islamic peoples in Russia has been hugely influential in the “war on terrorism” which Russian authorities are carrying out in the

North Caucasus (Ramberg, I. 2004: 52). The topic of racialising the peoples of the Caucasus will be discussed in more depth later in this essay; however it is crucial to note how the Orthodox Church has been instrumental in shaping Russia's racialisation through domestic policy concerning those who practice Islam.

It is crucial to note the geography of Russia, and how the size and shape of the country has resulted in difficulties establishing ethnic Russian identity. The country itself is the world's largest in total area; due to this it contains a population of 143.5 million people (Britannica, 2008). The population of Russia being so vast has resulted in a multitude of different ethnicities residing within its borders where "ethnic minorities constitute more than 20 per cent of the population" (Protsyk, O. and Harzl, B. 2013: 3). It is evident that this assembly of ethnic minorities in Russia may face racialisation due to their non-native heritage. The geography and size of Russia evidently lends itself to including a multitude of differing cultures and customs, something which perhaps causes tensions amongst the Russian public concerning nationalist agendas.

To examine the process of racialisation in Russia it is evident that the impact of Western racial science must be explored as it is evident that this has had major implications for the development of racialisation in Russia. Following the advancements in western science such as Darwinism and the realisation that evolution and biology were the driving explanations behind differing ethnicities, Russian ethnography began to flourish. The use of craniology, first introduced by Western sociological positivists such as Lombroso, was initially used to "determine the nature of criminal behaviour as biological" (Strauss, L. 2002: 89). These methods of using biology to determine difference were also applied to the study of ethnography by Russian anthropologists. The work of Dmitry Nikolayevich Anuchin developed Western racial science such as craniology, but implemented it within a Russian context, forming the basis for ethnography in Russia (Avdeyev, V. 2011: 146), vastly contributing to the ethnographic research within the Department of Physical Anthropology in St. Petersburg. Ian Law states this form of western, cranial ethnography has been applied specifically within Russia to differentiate between those considered native Russians and those originating from the Caucasus. (Law, I. 2012: 8). It is evident that western racial science has played a key role in influencing racialisation in Russia as it has provided ample scientific ground on which those who consider themselves ethnic Russian have been able to differentiate themselves from other specific ethnic groups on a biological level.

By applying the concept of critical race theory to the Russian context, it is evident that racialisation in Russia is a highly complex issue. This theory ultimately argues that the construction of race and racial identity is ingrained in a society's culture, be it legally, economically or at the levels of power (Delgado, R. and Stefancic, J. 2012: 3). It is evident that applying this theory to Russia, the concept of whiteness can be viewed to be the most important of colour as laws, jobs and politics are governed by the largely white majority, catered towards the largely white population. Pioneered by intellectual activist such as W. E. B. Du Bois it is evident that attention can be drawn to the social construction of race in Russia "that is produced as a result of the cultural and political meanings ascribed to it through social interactions and relationships across multiple levels of social organisation" (Burke, R. H. 2001: 252). It is evident that by using critical race theory the construction of race in the Russian context can be partly explained as a result of socially constructed pre conceptions regarding colour and ethnicity. It is clear that social organisations within Russia have a significant effect on shaping this construction of race.

It is evident that to successfully assess racialisation in Russian, the implications which communism had on the construction of racial identity must be discussed. The driving agenda behind the concept of Soviet racial policy was the Leninist principle of 'proletarian internationalism', the belief that capitalism was a global phenomenon and that the working classes, regardless of skin colour, religion or ethnic origin should unite as a global class in order to defeat capitalism (Lenin, V. I. 1972 :156). It is evident that because of this principle, attitudes towards minorities during the Soviet era were largely neutral. The African population of communist Russia suffered little discrimination and an active sentiment of wanting to provide better education and employment. The creation of the Peoples Friendship University of Russia aimed at "providing Russian government scholarships" (Mangala, J. 2010: 77) to African students who wished to pursue further education but lacked the financial means. It is also evident however, that the anti-American agenda can be seen as a motive for Soviet compassion towards black Africans. During the civil rights movement of the 1960s Cold War

sentiments were palpable. “American racism became a staple of Soviet propaganda” (Law, I. 2012: 22) used to portray America as socially unjust and prejudice towards African Americans. This want to portray America poorly as a form of propaganda may have served to increase support for African Russians in order to emphasise an image of a land of equality to the globe, which the Soviet Union strived for. This demonstrates the extent to which the communist agenda positively impacted concepts of race as communist agendas attempted to remove race as a barrier to success, focusing more on equality and unification of the working classes, neutralising hostilities towards minorities, particularly the African population. However, it is evident that this sentiment of wanting to better the lives of African people has not been continued in modern day Russia, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of communist ideals.

It is evident that today within modern Russia, sentiments towards African minorities have changed greatly. Following recent events involving highly publicised cases of racism against black footballers within Russia more research has been conducted into the persecution of African minorities. A recent study from 2009 found that “Nearly 60% of black and African people living in Russia’s capital Moscow, have been physically assaulted in racially motivated attacks” (BBC News, 2009). This statistic is alarming as it highlights a clear issue involving the racialisation of African people coupled with the use of violence. This sentiment of changing attitudes towards black minorities in Russia is echoed by Charles Quist-Adade who states that “as Russia now finds itself in economic turmoil, Africans have become the convenient scapegoats” (Quist-Adade, C. 2001: 77), with the state blaming minorities for the lack of employment and economic prosperity. Paradoxically however, Russia has recently begun donating large sums of humanitarian monetary aid to the African continent. In 2008, Russian announced a \$500 million aid package for Africa that included funding to fight hunger, poverty and diseases such as HIV (Mangala, J. 2010: 77). This juxtaposition of sentiments towards African minorities at home compared to African populations abroad highlights Russia’s apparent paradoxical attitude towards race, highlighting racism as an active and visible aspect of Russian culture.

A key area for focus when assessing racialisation in Russia is the relationship between the Russian nation and the people of the North Caucasus. Ethnic and racial tensions have existed within these regions for a number years, causing considerable issues involving the Russian state and the people of the region. As previously mentioned, early racial science was used to distinguish difference through craniology between those of the North Caucasus and mainland Russia. The most significant manifestation of ethnic tensions within the Caucasus is the proliferation of the Chechen wars in which numerous Chechens were tortured, imprisoned and killed. Quite contradictory to western views of the word ‘Caucasian’ meaning white, in Russia individuals from the Caucasus are often referred to as ‘blacks’ (Baum, B. 2006: 229). It is evident that issues surrounding the racialisation of people from the Caucasus can be viewed to stem from religious difference, namely Islamophobia. As previously discussed, Orthodox Christianity in Russia has been instrumental in creating an anti-Islam agenda which can be viewed to have transferred somewhat considerably into domestic policy.

The Russian Federations ‘war on terror’ (Simons, G. 2010: 3) has been used as a valid excuse for a multitude of domestic policies which can be viewed as highly discriminatory towards people of the Caucasus and those who practice the Islamic faith. The most significant result of the anti-Islamic, anti-Caucasus agenda in Russia was the perpetration of the Chechen wars “remarkable for its brutality on both sides” (Oliker, et al. 2009: 39). These wars made apparent to the globe issues involving ethnic difference and rampant Islamophobia within Russia. It is evident that the wars waged in the North Caucasus had dire consequences for racial and religious tolerance. Hunter states that they served to contribute to the rise of Islamic extremism in Chechnya and other parts of the Northern Caucasus, intensifying anti-Muslim sentiments and fear of an Islamic threat to Russia (Hunter, S. 2004: 228). This therefore states the Russian state is partly responsible for perpetuating the concern around religious extremism and the people of the North Caucasus as a result of its domestic policies in particular, the ‘war on terror’ which has radicalised certain Muslims and fostered a culture of hostility and fear in the Russian people towards those from the North Caucasus region.

It is evident that these anti-Caucasus beliefs and racialisation have manifested themselves in numerous incidents around Russia, not just in the North Caucasus. In 2010, 5500 football fans rioted near the Kremlin’s walls as a reaction to the murder of a Spartak Moscow fan, attacking North Caucasus natives and shouting racial slogans, chanting ‘*Russia for Russian*’ (Van Herpen, M. 2013: 95). The Moscow

Human Rights Bureau estimated that about 300 xenophobic attacks occurred in Russia in 2008, the majority directed towards those from ethnic Caucasus decent (Nichol, J. 2009: 11-12). These incidents and statistics emphasise the extent to which those of the North Caucasus are discriminated against within Russia. It is evident that although Islamic extremism is on the increase, Russian domestic policy only serves to further the fear of the Islamic faith and therefore perpetuate the racialisation of people of this region.

It is evident that anti-Semitism is also a factor of Russian racialisation which can be used to emphasise racial discourse in the Russian context. The Jewish peoples of Russia have been present for centuries. A century ago the Russian Empire contained one of the largest communities of Jewish people in the world numbering around five million, today following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Jewish population has fallen to around half a million (Gitelman, Z. Y. 1988: 11). It is evident that anti-Semitism has been a frequent occurrence within Russian policy following the introduction of Bolshevism in the wake of the Russian revolution. Due to the nature of successful Jewish businesses many were dissolved with the wealth being absorbed by the state, with a policy of 'Sovietising' the Jews and the Jewish faith. Being the victims of targeted pogroms, "Poverty, exclusion, confinement, murder and rising ideological anti-Semitism characterised the Jewish experience" (Law, I. 2012: 12), this emphasises the persecution of Jews throughout the history of Russia, offering a possible explanation for the massive reduction in the population of Russian Jews. It evidently also offers a potential reason as to why an engrained anti-Semitic attitude within the country still exists. "The number of attacks and acts of vandalism against synagogues, Jewish cemeteries and community centres grew in 2013" (World Jewish Congress, 2014) these acts of racial discrimination may be a direct result of the ingrained historic anti-Semitic dogma which existed in Russia throughout the Soviet and pre-Soviet era.

When examining racialisation in Russia, it is evident that there exists a strong negative attitude towards Roma peoples. The history of the Romani people in Russia is one of increasingly juxtaposed opinions. Before the collapse of the Russian Empire, Romani-Gypsy culture was embraced and celebrated, "Lev Tolstoy described Russia's nineteenth century as a time when 'no music was loved more than Gypsy'" (O'Keefe, B. 2013: 6). However, it is evident that during the Soviet era, Stalinism resulted in numerous Gypsy's being displaced, imprisoned and murdered. It is further evident that in recent years numerous cases have come to light involving the persecution of Romani peoples within Russia, particularly attitudes towards Romani-Gypsy settlements, viewing them largely as hotbeds of crime and a burden to Russian society. "Very high-profile destructions of entire Roma neighbourhoods have taken place in recent years" (Council of Europe. 2012: 151), showing a complete disregard for the Romani peoples and their way of life. The work of the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) has made explicit recommendations for the improvement of Russian-Romani relations in order to decrease growing anti-Romani sentiments. The ERRC states that the media in Russia is largely to blame for perpetuating hostilities towards the Roma stating that the Roma are largely depicted in the press as "thieves", "deceivers", and "drug dealers" (ERRC, 2003) which only serves to create a culture of racial suspicion and discrimination towards Romani people. It is evident that the nomadic lifestyle and lack of any official Roma nation with a military and government structure leaves them vulnerable to being made scapegoats for all manner of national issues (Law, I. 2012: 38) across not only Russia but Europe also.

To successfully examine racialisation in Russia it is imperative that a discussion is had concerning the extent to which Russian racial agendas and opinions have served to influence those of the former Soviet countries surrounding its borders, particularly Hungary and Slovakia. It is evident that manifestations of racialisation which occurred in Soviet Russia can be viewed as leaving their mark on former Soviet states, particularly involving anti-Roma policies and attitudes. Hungary has recently adopted numerous policies that can be viewed as highly racially motivated and discriminatory towards Romani people. Gabor Daróczy, director of the Romaversitas Foundation, aimed at bettering the lives of Romani people around Europe states that "The Roma in Hungary are systematically discriminated against, they can't find work and children don't get an education" (Spiegel Online, 2014). Being excluded from labour and denied housing they are marginalised by Hungarian society where like Russia, a degree of suspicion and fear concerning Romani-Gypsy's and their links with criminality is fostered. This anti-Roma racism can clearly be linked to Russia's policies towards Roma people,

indicating a sort of ex-colonial influence on Hungarian attitudes towards race, stemming from Russian Soviet occupation.

This post-Soviet anti-Roma legacy can also be seen when examining racialisation within Slovakia. It is evident that unlike it was with the situation in Russia and Hungary; communist policy was somewhat favourable to the plight of Roma people living in Slovakia. Provisions were made to improve education, training, employability and settlement (Fedorová, L. 2011: 155). This is the most significant institutional support than any other Soviet state given to the Romani people. It is evident however, that these investments in Roma welfare were not to last as following the collapse of communism, the scapegoating of Romani-Gypsy's began to emerge as Slovakia faced increasing economic hardship. Ultimately, state theft of Roma land, racialised policing, displacements and segregation has begun to emerge (Law, I. 2012: 52), following the racial attitudes of Russia and Hungary, emphasising a clear link between racialisation within Russia and its impact on shaping the racial views of surrounding ex-Soviet states.

It is evident that the most significant, non-governmental research institution in Russia is the SOVA Centre for Information and Analysis. It is evident through this research that unfortunately whilst racial violence had been on the decrease there has been a recent surge in ethnically motivated attacks. The SOVA centre conducts research on nationalism, racism, xenophobia, relations between the churches and secular society and political radicalism. The findings of SOVA serve to create a modern, up-to-date research ground on which to assess racialisation in Russia. A particular issue which SOVA statistics highlight is the rise of extremist, far right neo-Nazi organisations and the implications this has for racial relations within Russia. This nationalism has been on the increase since the late 90's with skinhead gangs being associated with attacks on Jews, gays, blacks and other non-Russians (Adams, S. 2010: 27).

Although reports of racially motivated violence had been on the decrease in Russia SOVA states that in 2013 "The decline in street racist violence, which lasted from 2009 to 2012, evidently came to an end. The past year was characterized by a notable surge in ethnic violence, evident even to casual observers" (SOVA, 2014). The most notable incidents have involved attacks on those from the North Caucuses even involving group raids on Tajikistan-bound trains. The number of deaths involving far-right racially motivated murders has risen from 19 in 2012 to 21 in 2013 (SOVA, 2014) demonstrating a clearly increasing number of incidents. The rise of far right groups in Russia is sadly ironic as it seems as though the state, still clinging on to loose communist ideals, does all in its power to combat the rise of what could be deemed fascist ideologies. The National Socialist Society in 2005 attempted to organise the mobilisation of political racism however, this was stamped out by Russian police due to its fascist philosophy and over estimation of its significance (Law, I. 2012: 31-32). It is evident however that these far-right opinions continue to be prevalent as SOVA's research indicates, demonstrating the Russian states inability to reduce fascist thought, despite numerous state sponsored court cases involving the prosecution of far-right extremists. The work of SOVA is highly significant as it sheds light on the extent of xenophobia and increasingly radical far right organisations that are responsible for numerous attacks on ethnic minorities. It also serves to provide ample pressure for state authorities to be seen as combatting racial violence as SOVA's data is global in its publication.

The other most reliable source on racialisation in Russia is the data provided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The UN Report published by UNESCO states that the racialisation issue in Russia, mirrors that of the entire globe, therefore it is not an issue which should be held as more significant as other countries. However, the report also notes that in Russia there are a number of serious conditions for further spread of racism, including socio-economic situation, lack of understanding of the problem at the government level, deeper cultural and ideological roots, as well as criminalisation of ethnic minorities supported by Russian media (UNESCO, 2006). This report evidently draws attention to the socio-economic climate which may provide ample ground for racial tensions to be exacerbated, resulting from low employment and low living standards. Also, the realisation of the UN that the Russian state media is perpetuating these racial tensions provides greater international pressure and global scrutiny of Russian institutions, encouraging their resolve. The international aspect of the UN hopefully carries weight in its findings causing Russia to address issues which may exacerbate ethnic tensions. However, it is crucial to note that the UN sees racism in Russia as just as bad as elsewhere, not a particularly unique case of excessive racialised opinions, this raises questions about the levels of racism elsewhere globally.

A particularly significant aspect of the racialisation in Russia discussion which must be noted is the implications which recent events involving the Ukraine and Crimea have had on informing the wider world about Russian racial thought. It is evident that the annexation of the Crimea by Russia, somewhat mimics the events which occurred involving the Nazi occupation of the Rhineland in 1945, this is ironic as throughout history Russia has always viewed itself as a combatant against fascism (Shenfield, S. D. 2001: 262). The recent military annexation of Crimea by Russia has appeared to have intensified racial tensions throughout the Ukraine, indicating a potential link between Russian influence and increased racialisation. Anti-Semitic attitudes in particular have increased greatly in recent months. A Jewish Synagogue was fire bombed in the city of Nikolayev where “two Molotov cocktails were thrown at the door and window” (The Jerusalem Post, 2014). This racially motivated incident is not isolated as numerous other Jewish sites such as graves have also been vandalised. Anti-Semitic leaflets have also been found to have been distributed throughout the city of Donetsk, advocating that Jewish people all sign a register to make their faith apparent and pay special racial taxations (The Guardian, 2014). These rising incident of increasing hostile opinions towards particular races demonstrates a potential transferal of anti-Semitic Russian beliefs, to those of the Ukraine, influencing the views of members of the public. However, it is evident that this could purely be coincidental with the socio-economic strain of such events manifesting itself in nationalist, scapegoating of minorities.

It is evident that looking to the future much still needs to be done to combat racialisation in Russia. Russia has recently been selected to host the 2018 World Cup which will bring much international scrutiny and highlight any domestic issues involving racialisation which may cause concern. Racism in Russian football has been a constant source of public demonstrates of intolerance towards ethnic minorities. Manchester City footballer Yaya Toure claims he was the subject of monkey chants from CSKA Moscow fans during a recent Champions League game, threatening to boycott the World Cup if Russia fails to adequately address this issue (CNN, 2013). This threat of black footballers publically boycotting the World Cup would serve as a huge embarrassment for Russia if followed through. The head of Fifa Sepp Blatter has stated recently that educational provisions have been put in place in order to make Russian fans aware and more understanding of other cultures (The Guardian, 2013). This, it is hoped will reduce the likelihood of any racially motivated football hooliganism.

It is also evident that recent cases of hate crime persist in Russia with numerous examples of brutality and violence against activists which promote racial understanding. In 2005 the murder of anti-far right activist Nikolai Girenko highlighted the extent of racial and political intolerance. Girenko was a prominent ethnographer and adviser on over 15 successful prosecutions of far right activists for racially motivated hate crimes (The Telegraph, 2008). His shooting emphasised to the world the issues which Russia face promoting racial tolerance. Also in 2005, the murder of Timur Kacharava, an anti-fascist activist of Georgian decent highlighted further the issues which equality activists face promoting racial acceptance (SOVA, 2007). Instead of galvanising the Russian public and government into action, these murders have gone largely ignored with only some prosecutions being brought against the culprits. This raises questions concerning Russia’s apparent lack of urgency to combat crimes motivated by xenophobic or political agendas.

It is evident however, that Russia can in some instances, be viewed as actively attempting to reduce racialisation. The recent election of Jean Gregoire Sagbo, the first Afro-Russian to be elected to public office, is clearly a step in the right direction for promoting racial tolerance. “In a country where racism is entrenched and often violent, Mr. Sagbo’s election as one of Novozavidovo’s 10 municipal councillors is a milestone” (The Washington Times, 2010). This most significant election highlights a clear changing attitude towards minorities as it is evident that in the town of Novozavidovo, as long as the people believe the politician is honest and will be effective at their job, ethnicity is not a significant issue. It is evident however, that this is an exceptional circumstance and the vast majority of Russian politicians still remain ethnic white Russians. Another way in which Russia can be viewed as actively attempting to address racism and xenophobia is through the introduction of educating its people against ignorance of other cultures. It is evident that “educational programs about racism and xenophobia are virtually non-existent despite a large immigrant population” (NBC, 2013). It is for this reason and the upcoming World Cup that Russia need to be viewed as doing all its power to reduce xenophobic sentiments, through the introduction of educational classes for schools and football fans in particular it is hoped that racial tolerance can be improved.

A key way in which the Russian Federation could combat racialisation further would be through the use of the Orthodox Church. It is evident that the Church is perfectly placed to influence the state into promoting racial tolerance and understanding. Chumachenko argues that throughout Russian history the church has had a very significant influence over matters involving the state (Chumachenko, T. A. 2002:14). As previously discussed, it is apparent that due to this fact, the church in Russia has been instrumental in perpetuating Islamophobia, through portraying Islam as backwards and violent thus creating grounds on racial tensions and suspicions are fostered. Through the Russian Orthodox Church reducing its Islamophobia stance and instead encouraging acceptance and empathy towards other cultures it is evident that this may perhaps influence individuals and the state to be more tolerant, reducing racialisation. Szporluk states that “neither in tsarist Russia nor in the Soviet Union has the Orthodox Church played an active role in the protection of human rights or religious tolerance” (Szporluk, R. 1994: 85). Hopefully, this will change and in the future the Orthodox Church will begin to promote racial and religious understanding to help reduce racialisation in Russia.

To conclude, it is evident that Russia still has a long way to go to successfully tackle racialisation and xenophobia. The history of Russia has served to highlight the racial and ethnic divisions engrained in Russian culture. Particularly anti-Semitism and anti-Roma attitudes have persisted throughout. Attitudes towards African minorities have been paradoxical, changing from a paternal, supportive stance to one of scapegoating and racially motivated violence. The most significant form of racialisation in Russia however is evidently that of those from the North Caucasus. Ethnography as early as the 19th Century attempted to use Western racial science in the form of craniology to distinguish between those from the North Caucasus and those from mainland Russia. The racialisation of those from the North Caucasus can be viewed as having strong links with religious intolerance and Islamophobia, resulting in the creation of fear and scepticism surrounding those who practice Islam. The increasingly centralising domestic policies of Russia and its war on terror have perpetuated these anti-Caucas, anti-Islam beliefs creating grounds on which those from the region are often the subjects of racially motivated attacks. A particularly interesting aspect of racialisation in Russia is the implications which this has had for the construction of racialisations in former Soviet countries such as Hungary and Slovakia. It is evident that the anti-Roma attitudes of Russia have been transferred quite significantly to these former Soviet states, demonstrating the extent to which Russian racial legacy has had for Eastern Europe. The events which are taking place in the Ukraine involving the annexation of the Crimea highlight this further with a notable rise of anti-Semitic sentiments following the introduction of Russian troops into the area, this could purely be coincidental but given the patterns of anti-Semitism in Russia it is likely that these attitudes have exacerbated those already within the Ukraine and Crimea. Before the lifting of the iron curtain after the collapse of communism, research regarding racism and xenophobia in Russia was practically non-existent. It is crucial therefore, to emphasise the significance of the research conducted by SOVA and UNESCO as it has been instrumental in shedding light on the extent of xenophobia and racial intolerance within Russia. Ultimately, it is evident that Russia is attempting to address racialisation as seen by the election of its first black politician and the emphasis being placed on education to help promote racial and political understanding. However, it is also evident that if Russia is to appear a beacon of tolerance for the upcoming 2018 World Cup much still needs to be done.

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