This course offers an introduction to the rich and multifaceted literary and cultural achievements of medieval and early modern Russia. Students will explore the worldview of medieval Orthodox Slavs by delving into such topics as religion, spirituality, art, literature, history and popular culture. We will read and discuss fundamental texts from Kievan and Muscovite Rus’ that reveal a vibrant and thriving literary and cultural life. These texts include notable examples of historical writing, military tales, saints’ lives, homilies, adventure tales and miracle tales. We will also examine regional differences in cultural production, particularly in art and iconography. In addition, we will watch several famous Russian films and operas based on medieval motifs: *Alexander Nevsky, Andrei Rublev, Tsar, Boris Godunov,* and *Prince Igor* and discuss how composers and directors re-imagined medieval Russian culture in their own times. At the end of the course we will explore the effects of the Petrine Reforms on Russian culture of the eighteenth century as Russia abandoned its medieval ways in favor of Westernization.
Week 1: Kievan Rus’ – An Introduction to History and Culture

Tuesday, 1/15 - Overview of Course
Readings:
Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind*, Ch. 1 (Pre-Christian Paganism) - Required
Zenkovsky, *Medieval Russia’s Epics, Chronicles and Tales*, 1-17 – Req
Ivanits, *Russian Folk Belief*, Ch. 1 - Req
Schenker, *The Dawn of Slavic*, Chapter 1 (Historical Setting) - Recommended

Thursday, 1/17 – Historical Overview: Early History of the Eastern Slavs through Kievan Rus’
Readings:
Zenkovsky, 43-73 - Req
Butler, *Enlightener of Rus’: The Image of Vladimir Sviatoslavich across the Centuries*, Chapter 2 (25-55) - Req
Likhachev, *History of Russian Literature, 11-17th c.*, 69-109 - Rec

Week 2: Kievan Rus’ – An Introduction to History and Culture

Tuesday, 1/22 – Russian Chronicles – The Christianization of Rus’
Readings:
Franklin, *Sermons and Rhetoric of Kievan Rus’, xvi-xliv, 3-29*
(Ilarion, *Sermon on Law and Grace*) - Req
Butler, Chapter 1 (3-23) - Req
Fennell/Stokes, 40-64 - Req
Poppe, “The Christianization and Ecclesiastical Structure of Kyivan Rus’ to 1300”, 311-338 - Req
Freeze, Russia: A History, 1-17 - Rec

Thursday, 1/24 – Vladimir Christianizes Rus’ (continued) and Metropolitan Ilarion’s Sermon on Law and Grace
Readings:
Hollingsworth, *Hagiography of Kievan Rus’, xxvi-lxivii, 3-32, 97-116*
(Tales of Boris and Gleb) - Req
Fennell/Stokes, *Early Russian Literature*, Hagiography, 11-32 - Req

Week 3: Literature of Kievan Rus’

Tuesday, 1/29 – Kievan Hagiography: The Cult of St. Boris and Gleb
Readings:
Hollingsworth, lviii-lxvii, 33-95 - Req
(*Life of Feodosij Pecherskij*)
Thursday, 1/31 – Kievan Hagiography: *Life of Feodosii;* Selections from *Kievan Caves Paterikon* (Demons wreaking havoc!)
Readings (all Req):
Zenkovsky, 92-100  
*(Instruction of Vladimir Monomakh)*
Veder, *The Edificatory Prose of Kievan Rus’*, 3-30  
(Selections from the *Izbornik of 1076*)
Fennell/Stokes, 64-79
Likhachev, 114-117
*Jaroslav’s Statutes* (electronic resource, Eve Levin)

**Week 4: Literature of Kievan Rus’**

Tuesday, 2/5 – Edificatory Prose of Kievan Rus’
Readings:
Zenkovsky, 167-190 - Req  
*(The Lay of Igor’s Campaign)*
Goldblatt/Picchio, “On the Religious Significance of the Igor Tale” - Req
Likhachev, 134-161 - Rec
Fedotov, Chapter 11 *(The Tale of Igor’s Campaign)* - Rec
Fennell/Stokes, 191-206 - Req

Thursday, 2/7 – *The Tale of Igor’s Campaign*
Screening of selections from Alexander Borodin’s opera: *Prince Igor*
Readings:
Zenkovsky, 192-223 - Req  
*(Battle on River Kalka, Orison on the Downfall of Russia, Tale of the Destruction of Riazan, Zadonshchina)*
Fennell/Stokes, 80-107 - Req
Likhachev, 192-208 – Req

**Week 5: Epics and Military Tales – From The Lay of Igor’s Campaign to Zadonshchina**

Tuesday, 2/12 – Military Tales of the Mongol Campaigns
Readings:
Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde*, 44-130 (selections) - Req
Zenkovsky. 224-236; 243-248 - Req
Fennell/Stokes, 107-121 - Req

Thursday, 2/14 – Life of Alexander Nevsky and Serapion’s Sermon on the Merciless Heathens
Selections from film: Alexander Nevsky
Readings:
Zenkovsky, 315-322 - Req
(Orison on the Life and Death of Grand Prince Dmitry Ivanovich)
Goldblatt, “Discourse on the Life and Death of Dmitry Donskoy” - Req
Fennell/Stokes, 121-138 - Req
Likhachev, 261-279, 286 - Rec
Cherniavsky, “Saintly Princes and Princely Saints” - Rec

FIRST RESPONSE PAPER QUESTIONS DUE 2/19

Week 6: Rise of Muscovy and Defeat of the Mongols

Tuesday, 2/19 – Defeat of the Mongols: Orison on the Life and Death of Dmitry Ivanovich; Kulikovo Field Cycle
Readings:
Zenkovsky, 259-290 - Req
(Works of Epiphanius the Wise)
Likhachev, 279-285 - Req
Nil Sorskii, The Predanie - Rec
Rock, “Russian Piety and Orthodox Culture 1380-1589” (Cambridge History of Christianity: Eastern Christianity) - Req
Miracle Tales (electronic resource, Eve Levin) - Req

Thursday, 2/21 – Muscovite Hagiography: Epiphanius the Wise, St. Sergius and Nil Sorskii
Readings:
Bird, Andrei Rublev, 1-81 - Req

Week 7: Rus’ Art and Architecture

Tuesday, 2/26 – Screening of film Andrei Rublev in class!
Selections from Uspensky, The Semiotics of the Russian Icon - Req
Selections from Grierson, Gates of Mystery: The Art of Holy Russia, 11-71 - Req

Thursday, 2/28 – How to Read an Icon
Readings:
Hughes, “Art and Liturgy in Russia: Rublev and his Successors” (Cambridge History of Christianity: Eastern Christianity)
Selections from Brumfield, A History of Russian Architecture

Week 8: Muscovite Literature and Culture
Tuesday, 3/5 – Art and Architecture of Medieval Muscovy
Readings:
Zenkovsky. 290-300
(Tale of Peter and Fevroniia of Murom) - Req
Tale of Dracula (electronic resource)
Zenkovsky, 333-353 - Req
(Afanasy Nikitin's Journey Across the Three Seas)
Likhachev, 336-340, 331-333, 353-359 - Req

Thursday, 3/7 – Three Muscovite Tales (Peter and Fevronia, Dracula, and Afanasii Nikitin)
Readings:
Selection from the Domostroi (trans. Pouncy) - Req
Penitential Questions (electronic resource, Eve Levin) – Req

Week 9: Spring Break

Week 10: Muscovite Autocracy and Local Traditions

Tuesday, 3/19 – Domostroi – Instructions for Keeping a Muscovite Household
Readings:
Freeze, Russia: A History, 17-54 - Req
Zenkovsky, 300-313; 323-332 – Req
Articles on Moscow- Third Rome - Req
Likhachev, 312-315; 288-294, 344-353 - Rec

Thursday, 3/21 – Moscow-Third Rome and Local Traditions: Life of Michael of Klopsk, Story of John, Archbishop of Novgorod, Tale of the Novgorod White Cowl
Readings:
Selections from Fennell, The Correspondence between Prince A. M. Kurbsky and Tsar Ivan IV of Russia, 1564–1579 - Req
Crummey, The Formation of Muscovy, “The Reign of Ivan the Terrible” - Req

Week 11: Muscovite Autocracy and Ivan the Terrible

Tuesday, 3/26 – The “Kurbsky – Ivan the Terrible” Correspondence
Screening of selections from Tsar
Crummey, The Formation of Muscovy, “The Time of Troubles” - Req
Pushkin, Boris Godunov – Req

SECOND RESPONSE PAPER QUESTIONS DUE 3/28

Thursday, 3/28 – Boris Godunov: Opera and Play
Screening of selections from Mussorgsky’s opera Boris Godunov
Readings:
Week 12: Time of Troubles and Troubled Women

Tuesday, 4/2 – Time of Troubles
Readings:
Zenkovsky, 391-399 *Life of Yuliania Lazarevsky* - Req
*Tale of the Demon Possessed Woman Solomonii* (electronic resource, Eve Levin) - Req
Ziolkowski, *Tale of Boiarynia Morozova* - Req
Fennell/Stokes, 226-231

Thursday, 4/4 – Three 17th century Women's Lives
Readings:
Zenkovsky, 399-452 *Life of Archpriest Avvakum Written by Himself* - Req
Fennell/Stokes, 231-249 - Req
Likhachev, 518-527 - Req

Week 13: Russian Literature of the 17th Century

Tuesday, 4/9 – Archpriest Avvakum and the Old Believer Schism
Readings:
Zenkovsky, 441-501 (Secular Tales) - Req
Likhachev, 478-487; 491-493; 494-496 - Rec
Fennell/Stokes, 249-268 - Req

Thursday, 4/11 – 17th Century Secular Tales: *Shemiaka's Judgment, Frol Skobeev, Savva Grudsyn, Misery-Luckless Plight*
Readings:
Bushkovitch, *Peter the Great*, 1-105 - Req
Lotman/Uspenskii “The Role of Dual Models in the Dynamics of Russian Culture” – Req
Pushkin, *Bronze Horseman* - Req

Week 14: The Petrine Revolution

Tuesday, 4/16 – Peter the Great Embraces the West: Founding of St. Petersburg
Readings:
Bushkovitch, *Peter the Great*, 109-173 - Req
Feofan Prokopovich, “Sermon on the Internment of Peter the Great” (The literature of 18th-century Russia) - Req
Selection of Odes by Trediakovsky and Lomonosov (The literature of 18th-century Russia) - Req
Lincoln, Sunlight at Midnight, Chapter 1 - Req

Thursday, 4/18 – Russian Literature and Culture in the Middle of the 18th Century
Readings:
Lincoln, Sunlight at Midnight, Chapter 2 - Req
Catherine the Great – Selected works - Req
Fonvizin, The Minor - Req
Selected poems of Derzhavin - Req

Week 14: From Peter the Great to Catherine the Great

Tuesday, 4/23 - Russian Literature and Culture from the Time of Catherine the Great
Readings:
Karamzin, Poor Liza - Req
Karamzin, The Island of Bornholm - Req
Selections from Radishchew, Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow – Req

THIRD RESPONSE PAPER QUESTIONS DUE 4/25

Thursday, 4/25 – From Classicism to Sentimentalism and Romanticism

Week 15: Class Presentations (on Final Paper topic)

Tuesday, 4/30 – Class Presentations

Thursday, 5/2 – Class Presentations

Final Papers Due Thursday, 5/9

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:

1. Regular attendance in class. More than 3 unauthorized absences over the course of the semester will lower your attendance/participation grade.

2. Keeping up with the readings. Make sure to have read all assigned readings before the start of class.

3. Completing all assignments in a timely manner. Deadline extension for assignments will only be given in cases of medical emergency with prior authorization.
GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

1. Attendance and Participation – 10%
2. Response Paper 1 – 20%
3. Response Paper 2 – 20%
4. Response Paper 3 - 20%
5. Oral Presentation – 10%
6. Final Paper – 20%