INTRODUCTION TO SLAVIC CIVILIZATION

“The Vampire in Slavic Cultures”
SLA 301 (45800), REE 302 (45235), CL 305 (33920), EUS 307 (36675)

COURSE SYLLABUS

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Class time: TTh 3:30-5 pm in CMA 2.306

Teaching Assistants: Elena Popan and Yekaterina Cotey
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Office hours: M 12-1:30 (HRH 4.190), T 12-1:30 (HRH 4.190), and by appointment

Required texts:
• The Vampire in Slavic Culture, Course Reader (abbr. CR in syllabus), T. J. Garza, ed., Cognella Press, San Diego: CA, 2010. [order copy online]

• The Vampire: A Casebook, Alan Dundes, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998. [at the UT Co-op]

Supplementary texts: [all available at the UT Co-op]
• The Darkling, Jan L. Perkowski, Columbus: Slavica Publishers, 1989.


I. General

Eight hundred years before Bram Stoker gave us the West's most memorable vampire in his novel *Dracula* (1897) and long before the real-life exploits of Vlad "the Impaler" Tepes horrified Europe (1431-46), the Russian Primary Chronicles wrote of a Novgorodian priest as *upyr’ likhij*, or "wicked vampire" (1047). The Slavic and Balkan worlds abound in histories, legends, myths and literary portraits of the so-called undead, creatures that literally draw life out of the living while ensuring their own eternal existence.

This course examines the vampire in the cultures of Russia and Eastern Europe, including manifestations in literature, religion, art, film and common practices from its origins to present day 2013. Texts – both print and non-print media – will be drawn from Slavic and other Eastern European sources. Participants will be asked to separate historical fact from popular fiction, and form opinions about the place of the vampire in Slavic and East European cultures, particularly in contrast to the more familiar portraits in US and Western European cultures.

The course is conducted in English with all source material in Russian or other languages subtitled in English. No knowledge of Russian required, though readings in Russian and other Slavic languages are available for majors and concentrators in these related fields on request.

II. Course Requirements

*Attendance and Participation:* You are expected to attend class meetings regularly, participate actively in discussions, do all assigned readings and film viewings, and prepare written assignments. While lecture slides and clips are posted on BlackBoard, class discussion of the live lecture material is crucial to earning a passing grade in the course. Because the readings and critical approaches covered in this course are cumulative in design, your regular participation is required. Also, discussion and commentary in this course will be facilitated by use of Twitter during class. The content and opinions express in the class tweets will necessarily affect the shape of the class lectures. Students missing more than three (3) class sessions will receive a reduction of their final grade based on the total number of classes missed. Students who miss more than five (5) classes, or who do not complete all four of the required components of the syllabus cannot pass the course. In extreme circumstances, the instructor may excuse absences.

*Short Essays:* Two brief (3-4 pages) reaction papers to one of the readings or media presentations covered in class are due by Thursday, October 3, and Thursday, November 7. While these essays are not research based, they may contain references or support from external sources. **NO LATE PAPERS, PLEASE!** Also remember: you MUST appropriately attribute and cite any words, thoughts, or ideas that are not your own, no matter how obtained (hard copy, lecture, website, etc.). Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and will result in failure of the assignment and possible failure in the course (See UT Honor Code below).

*Midterm Exam I:* A comprehensive midterm exam over all material covered (readings, films, slides, and lectures) in the first half of the course will be given on Thursday, October 24. The specific format of the midterm will be announced well before the exam date.
Midterm Exam II: An second midterm – comparable in format to the first midterm – covering the material (readings, films, slides, lectures) from the second half of the course -- will be given on the last day of class, December 5.

Special Accommodations: Any student with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259. Any necessary accommodations should be presented to the instructor in written form at the beginning of the course.

III. Grading

In addition to regular attendance and active participation, there are four graded components of the final course grade. These components and their relative weights in determining the final course grade are:

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Short essay I (3-4 pp.)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm exam I</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short essay II (3-4 pp.)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm exam II</td>
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All grades for this course will be assigned using the plus/minus system based on the UT Registrar’s scale and posted in a timely manner on the class BlackBoard site:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94–100</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90–93</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59 or less</td>
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For assistance with the writing assignments in the course, in addition to working with our TAs, you are strongly encouraged to use the Undergraduate Writing Center, FAC 211, 471-6222: http://www.uwc.utexas.edu/. The Undergraduate Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Any undergraduate enrolled in a course at UT can visit the UWC for assistance with any writing project. Their services are not just for writing that has "problems." Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a successful writing project. Consultants help students develop strategies to improve their writing. The assistance they provide is intended to foster independence. Each student determines how to use the consultant’s advice. The consultants are trained to help you work on your writing in ways that preserve the integrity of your work.
IV. UT HONOR CODE

The University of Texas Honor Codes reads:

“The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness and respect toward peers and community.”

Each class participant is expected to adhere to these principles throughout the course, in dealing with the instructors, fellow students, and in completing all written assignments for the course. Your instructors will do the same.

V. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside. Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office. Other important Emergency Information:

http://www.utexas.edu/safety/preparedness/

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Thursday, August 29   Introduction to SLA 301
Overview of syllabus, requirements, and course structure
• Definition of terms: “Slavic” and “Vampire”
• Establishment of scene: the Carpathians and the Balkans
  View scene from Coppola’s Bram Stoker’s ‘Dracula.’

For next meeting, read definitions of term “vampire” in the CR pp. 5-28, and “The History of the Word Vampire” in Dundes, pp. 3-11.

Tuesday, September 3  On Vampires and Upyri
• The relationship between Slavic upyr and European vampire

For next session, read “Heretics as Vampires and Demons in Russia” by Oinas, “Vampirism: Old World Folklore” by McNally & Florescu, “The Need Fire” by Fraser and “‘Spoiling’ and ‘Healing’” by Ivanits in the CR pp. 29-66.

Thursday, September 5   Origins of Vampire Beliefs in the Slavic World
• Understanding the place of the vampire in the Slavic world


Tuesday, September 10   From Folktales and Myths: Harpies and Sirin
• Folk belief, folklore and demons in the Slavic world
• Relationship between religion, paganism, and the vampire


Thursday, September 12   Are Werewolves Vampires, Too?
• Werewolves, the undead and vampires
• The meaning behind the “vukodlak” in Slavic


Tuesday, September 17   Finding the Real “Dracula”
• Getting to know Transylvania
• The life and times of Vlad Tepes

For next meeting, read “Crusader Against the Turks” by McNally and Florescu, and “Epilogue: The Imprisonment and Final Reign of Dracula” in CR pp. 137-158.
Thursday, September 19  Vlad “The Impaler” Dracula
• Who was the real Dracula?
• Why does the “myth” live on in Transylvania?


Vlad Tepes Dracula

Tuesday, September 24  Elizabeth Bathory
• How “vampirization” reports became part of the European tradition
• View scenes from Daughters of Darkness and I Vampiri

For next meeting, read “Vampires and the Slavs” in CR pp. 181-186.

Elizabeth Bathory

Thursday, September 26  Vampires in the Slavic Lands
• The Balkans as backdrop for the vampire
• The vampire myth behind nationalism


Tuesday, October 1  South Slavic Vampires
• The vampire as part of Balkan identity
• The Age of Reason and Enlightenment and the “Vampire Epidemic”

For the next meeting, read “Gypsies, Vampires and the” in CR pp. 205-210. First Reaction Paper is due on Thursday!

Thursday, October 3  Gypsies (Roma) and Vampires
• Roma: A culture within a culture
• Dispelling and creating racial prejudices
• Short Essay I due today

For the next meeting, read Oinas’ “East European Vampires” in Dundes, pp. 47-56; and “Vampires in Russia,” by Melton, and “Tale of a Russian Vampire” by Blavatsky in CR pp. 211-220.
Tuesday, October 8  
**Russian Vampires**
- Differences in East Slavic from the South Slavic Balkans
- Listen to part of Oinas’ lecture on vampires

For next meeting, read Summers’ “Russia, Roumania and Bulgaria,” and Melton’s “Vampires in Romania” in CR pp. 221-262.

Thursday, October 10  
**Central European Vampires, I**
- The vampire in its historical home
- Issues of language and culture difference

For next meeting, read Murgoci’s and Perkowski’s “The Roumanian Folkloric Vampire” in Dundes pp. 12-34; and “Vampires in Hungary,” “Vampires in the Czech Republic and Slovakia” by Melton, and “The Golem” by DeBartolo in CR pp. 263-276.

Tuesday, October 15  
**Central European Vampires, II**
- Beginnings of a literary tradition in vampire tales
- View and discuss scenes from *The Golem*

For next meeting, read “Peter Plogojowitz,” “The Shoemaker of Silesia,” and “Visum et Repertum” by Barber, and “Russian Stories” in CR pp. 277-306.

Thursday, October 17  
**Early Vampire Stories**
- Connections between Vlad Tepes and European literature
- How the vampire legend reached Stoker in literature

For next meeting, read Polidori’s/Byron’s “The Vampyre,” Chapter 2 from Stoker’s *Dracula*, and “From Dracula to Nosferatu” in CR pp. 309-330.

Tuesday, October 22  
**The Literary Vampire: From Byron to Bram Stoker’s Dracula**
- Connections between Vlad Tepes and European literature
- How the vampire legend reached Stoker in literature

For next meeting, prepare for Midterm Exam (No new reading.). Midterm covers material from the beginning of the course up to The readings from 10/13.
Thursday, October 24  
**Midterm Exam**  
- In-class written exam over material covered (texts, films, slides, lectures)

For next meeting, read Gibson’s “Dracula and the Eastern Question” in CR pp. 337-348, and watch F.W. Murnau’s *Nosferatu*.

Thursday, October 29  
**The Literary Vampire: Film and the Slavic Tradition**  
- Orientalism and the vampire as the “Other” in film
- View scenes from *Nosferatu* (1922) and *Gothic* (1986)

For next meeting, read Neruda’s “The Vampire” in CR pp. 349-352; and watch Todd Browning’s film *Dracula* (1931) with Bela Lugosi.

Thursday, October 31  
**The Best of the Worst: Bad Vamps and Doggies**  
- Sampling of filmic vampire portraits that didn’t make the syllabus
- What makes “bad” films so good?

**Happy All Hallow’s Eve!!**

Tuesday, November 5  
**The Vampire and Sexuality**  
- Question of sexuality and gender in vampire literature
- View scenes from Browning’s *Dracula* (1931)


Thursday, November 7  
**The Vampire in Russian Literature, I**  
- Creating a literary standard for Russian for horror
- The works of Karamzin, Pushkin, and Zhukovsky

For next meeting, read Tolstoy’s “The Family of the Vurdalak” in CR pp. 383-400.  
**Second Reaction Paper is due on Tuesday!**

Tuesday, November 12  
**The Vampire in Russian Lit., II**  
- A return to folk motifs in literary Russian
- View selection from Bava’s *The Wurdalak*
Thursday, November 14  **The Vampire in Russian Lit., III**
- The connection between death in 19th c. Russian literature
- View selection from Ptushko’s *Viy*

For next meeting, read Bulgakov’s “When the Dead Rise from the Grave,” and “News from Yalta” from *The Master and Margarita* in CR pp. 457-470.

Tuesday, November 19  **The Vampire in Russian Literature, IV**
- Fantasy moves from the 19th to the 20th century
- View selection from Bortko’s *Master and Margarita*

For next meeting, read Pelevin’s “A Werewolf Problem in Central Russia,” and selection from *Night Watch* by Lukyanenko in CR pp. 471-508.

Thursday, November 21  **Russian Vampires for the New Century**
- The Postmodern Slavic vampire in literature and film

For next meeting, read Barber’s “Forensic Pathology and the European Vampire” in Dundes, and “Protection from Blood Drinkers,” by Konstantinos and “The Rational Slayer” by McClelland in CR pp. 511-536.

Tuesday, November 26  **How to Kill a (Slavic) Vampire**
- Death of the undead?

For next meeting, read song lyrics for Vysotsky, Lika, Linda, Detsl, The Leg Cramps, B-2, Uma2rman, Night Snipers, Serioga, Grigoriy Leps and others in CR pp. 539-571.
Happy Thanksgiving!

Tuesday, December 3   Vampires and Russian Pop Music
  • View Russian music videos of the 1990s and 2000s
  • Incorporating vampires into pop culture
  • Final exam format
  • Course-Instructor Survey

Prepare for Second Midterm.

Thursday, December 5   Second Midterm in class

Have a safe and very vampiric holiday season!