Course Description: This course will trace a question that has troubled Russians for centuries: what is Russia? What does it mean to be "Russian"? Certainly, most nations engage in such soul-searching at one time or another, but Russia, thanks to special historical circumstances, has been obsessed with the problem of its own identity. Central to this issue is an issue that would appear to be more geographical than cultural: is Russia apart of Europe (the West), or of Asia (the East)? Or is it some hybrid that must find its own unique destiny? As we trace the development of this problem throughout Russia's history, we will also become acquainted with the major characteristics and achievements of Russian culture, from its very beginnings to the present day.

Course requirements: No knowledge of any foreign language is expected, as all works will be read and discussed in English. It is essential that you keep up with the reading assignments and come to class prepared. Attendance is, of course, mandatory. Sleeping in class is punishable by dismemberment.

Assignments: Throughout the semester, you will be given short writing assignments. At times these assignments will consist of preparing questions for class discussion, writing brief (3-5 page) essays. There will also be an in-class midterm exam on Monday, June 5, and a final exam on Thursday, June 22 which will consist of both essay and short-answer questions.

Blackboard and the Internet. Blackboard, which is accessible through the "Academics" tab of NYU Home, is an important part of course, facilitating announcements and the distribution of course materials. Please keep in mind that, by default, Blackboard uses your NYU email account. Many of you may have other email accounts that you use. If so, it is a quite simple matter to arrange for your email from one account to be forwarded automatically to the other. I strongly urge you to do so. It is your responsibility to make sure that you are receiving official email sent to your NYU account.
Final Grade. Your final grade will be determined according to the following formula:

- Participation: 20%
- 3 Writing Assignments: 30%
- Midterm Exam: 25%
- Final Exam: 25%

Required Texts, Part One
(NYU Book Store):

Required Texts, Part Two
(On Blackboard)
The rest of the readings for this class will be available in two formats on Blackboard: Rich Text Format (.rtf), which can be read and printed using virtually any word processing program on any platform, and .pdf, which treats the articles as images rather than texts. Occasionally, the files are in .html format rather than .rtf. In addition, some of the texts are available on Blackboard in the original Russian.

Please also note that the first five readings on Blackboard are not assigned for specific days; rather, they are ancillary materials designed to help you perform well in the class. I expect you to familiar yourself with the first two ("Advice for Student Writers" and "Citation") before you turn in any written assignment. The next three are timelines of Russian history, included purely for your convenience.

Finally, please note that you must bring the texts with you to class. The bulk of the reading for this class comes from handouts on Blackboard.

A-1 Advice for Student Writers.
A-2 Citation
A-3 Chronology 1: Pre-Petrine
A-4 Chronology 2: Peter the Great to the Fall of the Romanovs
A-5 Chronology 3: Soviet and Post-Soviet Period
A-6 From Pagan Deity to Christian Saint
A-7 Church and Family in Medieval Russia
A-14 Pushkin Handout
A-17 Karmazin Handout
A-22 Mikhail Lermontov. A Hero of Our Time. ("Author's Preface"; "Bela") http://www.namdar.dirccon.co.uk/aaRussian/Lermon/lermonov.htm A-23 Tolstoy Handout
A-25 Gogol Handout


http://max.mmlc.northwestern.edu/~mdenner/Demo/texts/scythians_blok.html


[A-32 has been omitted]


A-34. Simonov, Konstantin. "Kill Him."


[A-36 - A-38 have been omitted]


Films

We will be viewing the following films in class, either as excerpts or in their entirety:


*She Defends the Motherland* (No Greater Love) (1943). Dir. Fridrikh Ermler.
## CLASS SCHEDULE

**May 15 (M) Introduction**

**May 16 (T) Russia Between Christians and Pagans: Baptizing a Nation**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oThompson Chapter One
  - o"Vladimir Chooses a Faith" (A-8)
  - o"Yaroslav and St. Sophia" (A-9)
  - oThe Lay of Igor’s Campaign (A-10)

**May 17 (W) Enemy from the East: the “Uninvited Guests”**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oThompson Chapter Two

**May 18 (Th) The Orthodox Church**
- Film: Andrei Rublev
- ▼ For Today:
  - oThompson Chapter Three

**May 22 (M) The Time of Troubles**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oThompson Chapter Four
  - oLife of Sviatosh (A-11)
  - oLife of Yuliania (A-12)

**May 23 (T) The Schism**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oThompson Chapter Five
  - oThe Life of Archpriest Arvukum (excerpt: 134-160) (A-13)

**May 24 (W) Peter the Great / Peter the Antichrist**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oThompson Chapter Six
  - oAlexander Pushkin (A-14)
  - oPushkin, The Bronze Horseman (A-15)
  - oPlatonov, “The Epifan Locks” (A-16)

**May 25 (Th) Sentimental Journeys**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oThompson Chapter Seven
  - oNikolai Karamzin (A-17)
  - oRadischev, A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow (excerpt) (A-18)

**May 29 (M) Identity Crisis**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oThompson Chapter Eight
  - oChaadaev, Letter 1, (A-19)

**Second Essay Due**

**May 30 (T) Slavophiles and Westernizers**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oDanilevsky, “The Slav Role in World Civilization“ (A-20)

**May 31 (W) Constructing Siberia**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oDostoevsky, Memoirs from the House of the Dead (excerpt)

**June 1 (Th) Caucasus (1)**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oMikhail Lermontov (A-21)
  - oLermontov, “Bela” (A-22)

**June 5 (M) MIDTERM EXAM**

**June 6 (T) Caucasus (2)**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oLev Tolstoy (A-23)
  - oTolstoy, Hadji-Murat (A-23a)

**June 7 (W) Jews**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oThompson Chapter Nine
  - oDostoevsky, A Writer’s Diary (A-24)

**June 8 (Th) Cossacks**
- ▼ For Today:
  - oNikolai Gogol (A-25)
  - oGogol, Taras Bulba (A-26)
June 12 (M) Revolutionary Fervor
▼ For Today:
○ Thompson Chapter Ten
○ Gogol, Troika Scene (A-27)
○ Blok, “The People and the Intelligentsia” (A-28)
○ Blok, “The Intelligentsia and the Revolution” (A-29)
○ Blok, “The Scythians” (A-30)

June 13 (T) Revolutionary Culture
▼ For Today:
○ Thompson Chapter Eleven
○ Revolutionary Songs (A-31)
○ Von Geldern (3-6, 13-17, 36-52, 56-71, 74-84, 86-114)

June 14 (W) The Terror/The Cult (1)
Film: Circus
▼ For Today:
○ Thompson Chapter Twelve
  (through 231)
○ Isakovsky, “A Word to Comrade Stalin” (A-33)
○ Von Geldern (153-156, 163-172, 216-227, 234-238, 257-268, 271-272, 327-328)

June 15 (Th) The Great Patriotic War
Film: She Defends the Motherland
▼ For Today:
○ Thompson Chapter Twelve
  (finish)
○ Simonov, “Kill Him” (A-34)
○ Von Geldern (315-318, 341-344, 371-386, 401-405, 416-421)

June 19 (M) The Thaw and Stagnation
○ Thompson Chapter Thirteen
○ Trifonov, "The Exchange" (A-35)
○ Von Geldern (450-453)
Third Essay Due

June 20 (T) Perestroika and Moral Panic
Film: Little Vera
Intergirl
▼ For Today:
○ Borenstein, "Introduction" (A-39)
○ Borenstein, Chapter 3 (A-40)

June 21 (W) The Yeltsin Era
▼ For Today:
Film: Brother
○ Thompson Chapter Fifteen
○ Borenstein, Chapter 7 (A-41)

June 22 (Th) Final Exam