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POSTCLASSICAL PERIOD

PART I -11th Century Russian Literature

Apocrypha, Sermon on Law and Grace, Life Feodosiya Pechersky, Legend of Boris and Gleb

Introduction:

The oldest translation to survive from the 11th century is a decorated religious manuscript written on parchment. This work, written by the deacon Gregory, is the *Ostromir Gospel* (*Ostromirovo evangelie*). Written between 1056-1057, this Gospel also includes rites arranged by the days of the week. The *Apostle* (*Apostol*), which includes 21 books of the New Testament, contains the epistles of Jesus' disciples and accounts of their lives. After these works comes the *Sermon on Law and Grace* (*Novgorodskie sluzhebnye chet'i i mnei*), written in the years between 1095-1097 and containing sacred songs and hymns arranged by day and month. With the acceptance of Christianity proverbs from religious works began to be translated into Old Russian. The most important of these is the *Book of Psalms* (*Psaltyr*), containing religious hymns.

At the same time during this period Byzantine historical works were translated into the Russian language. The best known of these is the *Alexandria* which contains legends and stories about Alexander the Great, his life and his victories. Another important translated work is the *Deeds of Devgeni* (*Devgenievo deyanie*), about the deeds of the Byzantine epic hero Digenis. All of these translated works were read by the princes, landowners, merchants and churchmen of that period, giving the Russian people the opportunity to become acquainted with other cultures. It is known that from the 11th century on wealthy families had their children, both boys and girls, taught to read and write. For example, Vladimir Monomakh's sister Yanka had a monastery built in Kiev and opened a school for girls' education there.

Apocrypha. The adoption of Christianity was brought about not only by the works cited above; apocryphal writings also played a major role in this process. *Apocrypha* is a Greek word meaning "things hidden away", and referred to a body of writings not accepted by the church as part of the Bible, but often claiming to be written by important religious figures. Groups considered heretical could spread their views by means of the Apocrypha; as a result, the church banned some apocryphal writings. The Apocrypha, translated first into Bulgarian and later into Russian, often treated the subjects of heaven and hell. The most famous of this category of writings is the *Travels of the Virgin around Hell* (*Khozhdenie bogoroditsy po mukam*), written in the 12th century.

Sermon on Law and Grace. Among the most important religious stories of the 11th century is the *Hilarion's Sermon on Law and Grace* (*Slovo o zakone i blagodati Ilariona*). The *Sermon* was written in the time of Yaroslav Mudriy by the first Russian bishop of Kiev, Hilarion, between 1037 and 1050, the Russian state's most brilliant period both politically and culturally. In the *Sermon* Hilarion compares the Old Testament with the New Testament.

The Life of Feodosiy Pecherskiy. In the second half of the 11th century and the beginning of the 12th century we see the appearance of original biographies in Russia. The most important of these is *The Life*

of *Feodosiy Pecherskiy (Zhitie Feodosiya Pecherskogo)* which relates the life of the abbot of the Pecherskiy Monastery in Kiev.

The Life of Feodosiy Pecherskiy was written by Nestor at the end of the 11th century. The subject of this work, written in the style of a hagiography, was the founder of the Pecherskiy Monastery in Kiev and its first abbot. The main purpose of the work is to praise the life of Feodosiy Pecherskiy.

The Legend of Boris and Gleb.

Another work written in the last years of the 11th century in the form of a biography is *The Legend of Boris and Gleb (Skazanie o Borise i Glebe)*, an anonymous work. However, in contrast to other biographies, instead of relating Boris and Gleb's entire lives it only describes how the two brothers died.

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Questions

What are the Apocrypha? How did they influence the Russian religious mind?

Describe the cultural and the religious life during the reign of Yaroslav the Wise.

What do Medieval Russian records from the 11th century reveal about the style of writing?
How do the writings about saints' lives differ from modern biographical stories?

PART II - 12th Century Russian Literature

Primary Chronicle, The Pilgrimage of the Russian Abbot Daniel, Testament of Vladimir Monomakh, The Tale of Igor's Campaign

Introduction:

The most important work written in the period between the end of the 11th century and the beginning of the 12th century is the *Primary Chronicle (Povest' vremennyh let)*. Other important works from the early 12th century are *The Pilgrimage of the Russian Abbot Daniel (Khozhdenie igumena Daniila)*, the *Testament of Vladimir Monomakh (Pouchenie Vladimira Monomakha)*, and *The Tale of Igor's Campaign (Slovo o polku Igoreve)*.

Primary Chronicle. The *Primary Chronicle* consists of manuscripts written by Nestor in the Pecherskiy Monastery in Kiev some time in the first half of the 12th century, and covers the history of Russia between the years 1040-1118. The *Chronicle* begins with the genealogy of the Slavs.

The Pilgrimage of the Russian Abbot Daniel. *The Pilgrimage of the Russian Abbot Daniel* is an account of the Abbot Daniel's journey to the Holy Land between 1106-1113.

Testament of Vladimir Monomakh. The *Testament of Vladimir Monomakh* holds an important place in the literature of the 11th and 12th centuries. The work is written in the form of a will addressed to Vladimir Monomakh's children shortly before his death.

The Tale of Igor's Campaign. Another significant work composed in the last years of the 12th century is *The Tale of Igor's Campaign*. The *Tale* was first brought to scholarly attention in the 18th century by the manuscript collector Musin Pushkin. It was written in the principality of Kiev-Chernigov in a period when the Kievan state was divided among feudal princes, its political and cultural importance had been lost, and campaigns against the Cumans ended in defeat.

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Questions

What different literary genres are found in the Primary Chronicle? What are the characteristics of the Chronicle?

Talk about the style and structure of the Tale of Igor's Campaign.

Talk about the period in which the Tale was written.

Read the Tale of Igor's Campaign and discuss how it is different from the earlier texts/

Why are the Russian travelers' accounts important?

PART III - 13th Century Russian Literature

Supplication of Daniil Zatochnik, The Battle on the River Kalka, The Tale of the Destruction of Riazan by Batu, The Tale of the Downfall of Russia, The Tale of Life of Aleksander Nevsky

Introduction:

Again, documents written on birch bark at the beginning of the 13th century have been found. The most important of these consists of the *Novgorod Birch bark Writings* (*Novgorodskaya berestyanyaya gramota*) from around the year 1200, and personal and commercial letters.

The most important works of this century are the *Supplication of Daniil Zatochnik* (*Molienie Daniila Zatochnika*), *The Battle on the River Kalka* (*Povest' o bitve na reke Kalke*), *The Tale of the Destruction of Riazan by Batu* (*Povest' o razorenii Ryazani Batyem*), *The Tale of the Downfall of Russia* (*Slovo o pogibeli Russkoy zemli*) and *The Tale of Life of Aleksander Nevsky* (*Zhitie Aleksandra Nevskogo*).

Supplication of Daniil Zatochnik. An important early manuscript written in the 13th century is *Supplication of Daniil Zatochnik*, in two versions, the *Supplication* and the *Address*, found in copies from the 16th and 17th centuries. Both are believed to derive from an original version composed in the last decades before the Tatar invasions.

The Tale of the Battle on the River Kalka. The consequences of the Mongol invasions are depicted in the *Tale of the Battle of the River Kalka*, which survives in four separate versions: 1 - Lavrent'yev chronicle, 2 – First Novgorod chronicle, 3 - Ipat'yev chronicle, 4 - Tverskiy manual.

The Tale of the Destruction of Riazan by Batu. Written in the mid-13th century, *The Tale of the Destruction of Riazan by Batu* centers on the historical events during the Tatar's invasion of Riazan on December, 1237.

The Tale of the Downfall of Russia. Another important composition from the same period is the *Tale of the Downfall of Russia*. It is an anonymous work focusing on the Tatar invasion of Russian territory. However, a complete version of the *Tale* does not exist.

The Tale of Life of Aleksander Nevsky. *The Tale of the Life of Alexander Nevsky*, written at the end of the 13th century, relates the life of Alexander Nevsky (1221-1262) and the important events that occurred during his reign. The main subjects of this work written after the death of Alexander Nevsky are the wars with the Livonian knights at Lake Cud, with the Swedes at Lake Neva, and his victories in other wars.

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Questions

Are there any stylistic changes in writings after the Mongol conquest?

Which Medieval Russian sources talk about the Mongol conquest? How are the Mongols described in the tales?

Describe the major events which occurred in the 13th century and their significance.

PART IV -14th Century Russian Literature

Story about the Bloody Battle of Grand Prince Dmitrii Ivanovich with Mamai , Zadonshchina, Story about the Bloody Battle of Mamai, The Life of Metropolitan Peter, The Story about Timur Aksak

Introduction:

The most important literary works of the 14th century are the *Story About the Bloody Battle of Grand Prince Dmitrii Ivanovich with Mamai* (*Povest' o poboishche velikogo knyazya Dmitriya Ivanovicha na Donu c Mamaem*), *Zadonshchina* (*Zadonshchina*), *Story About the Bloody Battle of Mamai* (*Skazanie o Mamaevom poboishche*), *The Life of the Metropolitan Peter* (*Zhitie metropolita Petra*), and *The Story About Timur Aksak* (*Povest' o Temir Aksake*).

The themes of almost all works composed in this period is the establishment of the centralized Russian state, the unity of Russian territory, the struggles to re-establish the independence of the the lands invaded by the Tatars, and the crushing defeat inflicted on the leader of the Golden Horde, Mamai Khan, at the Battle of Kulikovo in the late 14th – early 15th centuries.

Story about the Bloody Battle of Grand Prince Dmitrii Ivanovich with Mamai. One of the first works of the 14th century, the *Story about the Bloody Battle of Grand Prince Dmitrii Ivanovich with Mamai* relates events prior to the Battle of Kulikovo. The epic ends with the murder of Mamai by Tokdamish, Tokdamish becoming the Golden Horde's new khan, the failure of the Russians (who had been weakened after the Battle of Kulikovo) to muster the courage to start a new war against the Golden Horde which was marching on Moscow, the siege of Moscow and the Russians' agreement to pay tribute.

Zadonshchina. Another work composed in the last years of the 14th century and whose subject is the Battle of Kulikovo is the *Zadonshchina*, written by Sofoniy. It relates how the failure of the princes in Kayala to unite owing to the disputes among them resulted in Prince Igor's defeat. Inspired by the rhetoric in *The Tale of Igor's Campaign*, this work seems to criticize the defeat described in *The Tale* and shows how victory should have been won.

Story about the Bloody Battle of Mamai. The main theme of this work written in the mid-15th century is the unity and integrity of the princes. The predominant idea in the work is the necessity for the Russian princes to unite in the war with Mamai for the sake of the Russian lands.

The Life of Metropolitan Peter. Prepared by Prokhor of Rostov and re-written by Kiprian in the 15th century, *The Life of the Metropolitan Peter* appears to be a work in which Kiprian defends himself through the personality of Peter.

The Story about Timur Aksak. Composed of two parts, the first part of *The Story about Timur Aksak* contains a legendary biography of Timur. The second part relates how an icon of the Virgin Mary was brought from Vladimir to Moscow after it was learned that Timur was on the borders of Russia, and Timur's withdrawal from Russian territory.

Readings

Zenkovsky, S.A., *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, Meridian, 1974, p. 211-223.

Skazanie o poboishche velikogo knyazya Dmitriya Ivanovicha na Donu c Mamaem
<http://www.vostlit.info/Texts/rus8/Mamaj/text.phtml?id=895>

Zadonshchina
http://www.shsu.edu/~his_ncp/Zadon.html

Zhitie metropolitana Petra people.ds.cam.ac.uk/jrh11/petmetpar.doc

5- Povest' o Temir Aksake
http://www.gumer.info/bibliotek_Buks/History/Article/pov_temir.php

Questions

What sources mention the battle of Kulikovo?

Was the battle of Kulikovo the end of Mongolian domination?

What is the connection between the *Zadonshchina* and the *Tale of Igor's Campaign*? What similarities do you see to the *Tale*?

EARLY MODERN PERIOD

PART I : 15th – 17th Centuries : Early Muscovite Period

Outline

Muscovite Period, The Life of Stephen Permsky, The Life of Sergiy Radonezhsky, Nestor Iskander's Tale on the Taking of Tsargrad, Afanasy Nikitin's, Journey across Three Seas, 16th century literature consists of popular literature on socio-political subjects. Writers both within and outside of the church dealt with the most important state and societal issues in their works, The Life of Avvakum, The Tale of Ersh Ershovich, The Tale of Woe and Misfortune, The Tale of Savva Grudtsyn

15th Century

In the works written in the last years of the 14th century and the early years of the 15th century, when patriotic consciousness reached its peak, reflections of this consciousness are clearly seen in the works of writers such as Epifaniy Premudriy, Maksim Grek and Andrey Rublev. Biographies maintained their place in the literature of this period.

Important works from the 15th century include *The Life of Stephen Permsky (Zhitie Stefana Permskogo)*, *The Life of Sergiy Radonezhsky (Zhitie Sergiya Radonezhskogo)*, *Nestor Iskander's Tale on the Taking of Tsargrad (Povest' Nestora Iskandera o vzyatii Tsar'grada)*, Afanasy Nikitin's *Journey across Three Seas (Khozhenie za tri morya Afanasiya Nikitina)*.

The Life of Stephen Permsky. *The Life of Stephen Permsky*, written by Epifaniy Premudriy, was composed in the early years of the 15th century. The subject of the work is the canonization of Stephen Permsky, who faithfully served the prince of Moscow and who, in addition to his church duties, played a major role in the efforts to unite the Russian territories around the Moscow state.

The Life of Sergiy Radonezhsky. *The Life of Sergiy Radonezhsky*, also written by Epifaniy Premudriy, relates the struggle to prevent Sergiy from being included in the ranks of the saints.

Nestor Iskander's Tale on the Taking of Tsar'grad. The conquest of Constantinople by Mehmet II brought an end to the almost 600-year-long religious and cultural relations between the Russians and the Byzantine Empire, and the subsequent transfer of the political sovereignty of Rome's successor the Byzantine Empire to its successor, Moscow, and Moscow's status as the Third Rome became subjects of debate.

The theme of Constantinople's fall was the subject of a number of manuscripts. The most important of these was *Nestor Iskander's Tale on the Taking of Tsar'grad'*. Beginning with an explanation of how Constantinople was founded, it ends with a description of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine XI's defense of the city.

Afanasy Nikitin's Journey across Three Seas. In addition to tales and biographies, travelogues were also written in this century. The most significant of these is *Afanasy Nikitin's Journey across Three Seas*. It describes the journeys a

16th Century

The most important works of 16th century literature are *The Tale of the Princes of Vladimir (Skazanie o knyazyakh Vladimirkikh)*, *Legend of Sultan Mehmet (Skazanie o Magmete-saltane)*, *Great Monthly Readings (Velikie Chet'i - Minei)*, *The Book of Degrees of the Tsars' Genealogy (Kniga stepennaya tsarskogo rodosloviya)*, *Chronicle of Kazan (Skazanie o Kazanskom tsarstve)* and *Domostroy (Domostroy)*.

The most important reform carried out in the mid-16th century during the time of Ivan the Terrible who took the throne after the death of Vasiliy III was the start of printing. The first Russian book *Apostol* was printed by Ivan Fedorov in 1564. In these years in which the rate of literacy outside the church increased greatly,

Ivan Fedorov's first grammar book *Alphabet (Bukvar')*, and Lavrentiya Zilzaniya's *Grammar (Grammatika)* were published in 1574 and 1596 respectively.

The Tale of the Princes of Vladimir. In *The Tale of the Princes of Vladimir*, written at the beginning of the 16th century, significant ideas related to the autocracy's official doctrines are presented. It is recorded in the *Tale* that the Russian princes are from the line of the Roman emperor Augustus, and that Vladimir Monomakh received the symbol or tsardom from the Byzantine emperor. Writers of the period began to debate in their works such subjects as the structure of the state and its development; laws and justice; the role of the church in the state and its acquisition of property; and the problems of the peasants.

Legend of Sultan Mehmet. In the first half of the 16th century, when the autocracy of the landowners was at its height, the writer and ideologue Ivan Peresvetov, who came to Moscow from western Russia, found himself in the midst of a political war. He depicted the dangerous effects of the landowners' system determining the fate of the state in his work titled the *Legend of Tsar Constantine*. In his work the *Legend of Sultan Mehmet*, written as a type of satire, Peresvetov compared the Byzantine Empire with Sultan Mehmet's rule.

Great Monthly Readings. One of the most important works written in the mid-16th century is the 12-volume *Great Monthly Readings* prepared according to the order of the months by the Metropolitan Makariy. He became Metropolitan during the time of Ivan the Terrible, and in this book that he wrote to strengthen the church's authority includes saints' lives, tales, monks' writings and readings from the Gospels arranged according to Christian holidays and saints' days. Makariy, with the exception of those not approved by the church, by including all the books read in Russia in his work, formed, in a sense, the first compilation of Russian literature.

The Book of Degrees of the Tsars' Genealogy. *The Book of Degrees of the Tsars' Genealogy*, written by the priest Andrei Afanasiy through the initiative of Metropolitan Makariy, presents the genealogical order of 17 generations of tsars, beginning with Rurik up to Ivan the Terrible. In addition to the lives of the tsars, biographies of the metropolitans and saints are also given in the book.

Chronicle of Kazan. The *Chronicle of Kazan*, written in the mid-16th century is a tale in 100 chapters. It covers all historical events from the founding of the Kazan Khanate to its fall in 1552.

Domostroy. The *Domostroy* is an anonymous work composed in the mid-16th century which contains household rules, instructions and advice on the various religious, social and family matters of Russian society. Rather than a didactic work, the *Domostroy* is more of a record of the social and political structure of the Russian people in the medieval period.

17th Century

The continuing social conflicts, foreign interventions, changes in the socio-economic life of the country, and the unavoidable influence of western European culture all played a major role in the development of 17th century Russian culture. In this century we see that the attempts of Russian culture, which was beginning to become more universal, to free itself from the influences of church become more important.

In this period, called by contemporaries as the *Time of Troubles (Smutnoe vremya)*, works whose subjects were the period's stormy events were written by both churchmen and lay authors. Of these, one group of writers wrote works such as *The Tale of the Year 1606 (Povest' 1606 goda)*, and *Metaphor (Inoe skazanie)* claiming that the ruling landowner class would save the Russian people from this confusion. Another group of writers produced works whose topics were the people's hopes, behavior and psychology, such as *The Tale of the Death of Mihail Vasil'yevich Skopin-Shuyskiy (Povest' o predstavlenii ry Mihaila Vasil'evicha Skopina-Shuyskogo)*, *The New Tale of the Orthodox Russian Tsardom (Novaya povest' o preslavnom Rossiyskom tsartsve)*.

In the second half of the 17th century for the first time a history book, *Synopsis (Sinopsis)*, written by the monk Innokentiy Gizel was published. This was followed by Andrei Lizlov's *History of the Scythians (Skifskaya istoriya)* and S.U. Remezov's *History of Siberia (Istoriya Sibirskaya)*.

The most important works written in this period were *The Life of Avvakum (Zhitie protopopa Avvakuma)*, *The Tale of Ersh Ershovich (Povest' o Ershe Ershoviche)*, *The Tale of Woe and Misfortune (Povest' o Gore-Zlochastii)*, and *The Tale of Savva Grudtsyn (Povest' o Savve Grudtsyne)*.

The Life of Avvakum. In the second half of the 17th century the abbot Avvakum defended the position that only religion held a higher position than the tsar, and opposed the Patriarch Nikon who had caused the church to split into factions by making small changes in the rituals and practices of the church. Not only did he oppose the Patriarch and struggle against him, he opposed the use of overly elaborate language, and by his masterful use of the simple language of the people, put his mark on the development of Medieval Russian literature.

The Tale of Ersh Ershovich. The writer of *The Tale of Ersh Ershovich*, written as a satire at the beginning of the 17th century, is unknown. The subject of the tale is the case between Ersh Ershovich, a member of the landowning class who was attempting to maintain his hold on Lake Rostov by force, and the lake's long-time owners the villagers Leshch and Golavl.

The Tale of Woe and Misfortune. The main subject of the anonymous *Tale of Woe and Misfortune*, written in the second half of the 17th century in the form of a poem, is the tragic fate of the young generation which was struggling to free itself from old dogmas. In this work the conflict between old generation, made up of good people who say that the family and the young return home, and the new generation, who see freedom superior to everything else, oppose the patriarchal family and break their bonds with this family and the bitter fate that eventually awaits this new generation are presented.

The Tale of Savva Grudtsyn. The anonymous *Tale of Savva Grudtsyn*, like *The Tale of Woe and Misfortune*, has the conflict between two generations as its subject. *The Tale of Savva Grudtsyn* is considered to represent a transition period between the literature of medieval and modern Russia.

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Questions

How does Ivan Peresvetov describe Sultan Mehmet in his Legend on Sultan Mehmet? Why does he compare the Sultan with the Emperor?

To what other books in history can we compare Domostroy (the rules of domestic discipline)?

How are gender roles described in the Domostroy?

In what ways did Muscovite literary style differ from the style of the Kievan period?

Does Nikitin's work demonstrate a religious framework? Why?

How would you compare Nikitin's *Journey* to Ibn Fadlān's story of *his Journey to Russiyyah*?

Discuss the conflict between the two generations in the *Tale of Woe and Misfortune*.

Why does the *Tale of Savva Grudtsyn* represent a transitional period between medieval and modern Russian literature? Can we talk about a transition from religious to secular themes in the *Tale*?

What is the impact of the *Tale of Savva Grudtsyn* in Russian literature?

PART II : 18th Century

Early 18th Century Russian Literature

Neoclassicism, Western Influence, Rise of a Secular Literature

Introduction:

18th century Russian literature is noted for being a century which borrowed the forms, themes, and expertise of the West, initially from Protestant Europe and later from France. In contrast to the present, which prizes originality, in the 18th century borrowing, translating, or imitating another culture's works was not considered mere imitation as reason and human nature were assumed to be universal. Neoclassic poetry, predominant across Europe, was based on an idealized imitation of ancient Greek and Roman forms. However, by the middle of the 18th century the search for national identity was emerging as a value in Russian upper-class culture. This was partly due to the fact that major historical events of the previous two centuries in Western Europe, events such as the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Counter-Reformation, had bypassed Russia, a state on the distant borders of Europe. Russia would have to show how her history and culture reflected universality, if she were to enter what was regarded as civilized history in the West.

Western influence in Russia first becomes noticeable in the 17th century, both by the numerous translations made from western European languages and in the establishment in 1662 of Russia's first theater. This process of westernization increased pace during the reign of Peter I the Great; it was accompanied by a revision of the Russian alphabet and the publication of Russian works in the spoken language. This increasing familiarity with European culture initiated a century of applying of Western literary forms to Russian works.

The poet Prince A. D. Kantemir combined European neoclassicism with his depictions of Russian life and utilized the syllabic system then common to French and Polish poetry. On the other hand, V. K. Trediakovsky wrote poetry in a manner more suitable to Russian, by using tonic form. Poetry of this type was perfected by the poet M. V. Lomonosov. The founder of Russian drama, A. P. Sumarokov, wrote fables and stage plays which blended European forms with Russian themes. Among Sumarokov's other works are the "Letters to Writers", in which he elucidates the principles of Classicism. Sumarokov was the first Russian writer who, due to his personality and style, was able to attract a group of followers around him who viewed themselves as pupils of a famous teacher. The Classicism espoused by Sumarokov's was like that in western Europe, namely: literature was a form of communication, a craft that could be learned through effort and practice; imitation of the proper models (and the best models were the works written by classical authors) would ensure success; and that intellect and moral clarity were the most important characteristics of any composition.

Literature written in the time of Catherine II clearly shows the influence of the European Enlightenment. The combination of satire and classical style is found in a number of works, among them the odes of G.R. Derzavhin, N.I. Novikov's journals and the dramas penned by Catherine. D. I. Fonvizin, the author of Russia's first truly national drama *The Minor*, wrote plays which combined satire and realistic motifs, as do the fables of I. I. Khemnitser.

Reading Assignments:

Kantemir, "Satire I: To My Mind". <http://www.rvb.ru/18vek/kantemir/toc.htm>

Wiener, L., *Anthology of Russian Literature, From the Earliest Period to the Present Time*, The Knickerbocker Press, New York, 1902, p. 224.

Trediakovskii, "Solemn Ode on the Surrender of the City of Danzig".

<http://www.klassika.ru/stihi/trediakovskij/>

Wiener, L., *Anthology of Russian Literature, From the Earliest Period to the Present Time*, The Knickerbocker Press, New York, 1902, p. 230.

Lomonosov, "Ode to the Seizure of Khotin", "Ode on the Ascension of Elizabeth Petrovna".
<http://max.mmlc.northwestern.edu/~mdenner/Demo/poetpage/lomonosov.htm>

Wiener, L., Anthology of Russian Literature, From the Earliest Period to the Present Time, The Knickerbocker Press, New York, 1902, p.246.

Lomonosov, "Evening Meditation on the Majesty of God," "Morning Meditation on the Majesty of God," "Letter on the Use of Glass".

<http://max.mmlc.northwestern.edu/~mdenner/Demo/poetpage/lomonosov.htm>

Wiener, L., Anthology of Russian Literature, From the Earliest Period to the Present Time, The Knickerbocker Press, New York, 1902, p. 252, 253.

Sumarokov, "*The False Dimitrii*"

<http://archive.org/details/demetriusimposto00sumarich>

Fonvizin, "Brigadier". <http://www.klassika.ru/proza/fonvizin/>

Fonvizin, "*The Minor*". <http://www.klassika.ru/proza/fonvizin/>

Derzhavin, "On the Death of Prince Meshcherskii".

<http://www.klassika.ru/stihi/derzhavin/>

Derzhavin, "Ode to Princess Felitsa". <http://www.klassika.ru/stihi/derzhavin/>

Derzhavin, "Invitation to Dinner". <http://www.klassika.ru/stihi/derzhavin/>

Derzhavin, "Country Life". <http://www.klassika.ru/stihi/derzhavin/>

Wiener, L., Anthology of Russian Literature, From the Earliest Period to the Present Time, The Knickerbocker Press, New York, 1902, p. 255.

Wachtel, M., The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Poetry, Cambridge University Press, 2004, Ch.2.

Leatherborrow, W., & Offord, D., A History of Russian Thought, Cambridge University Press, 2010, Ch. 4, p. 73-83.

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The Routledge Companion to Russian Literature, Edited by Neil Cornwell, 2001, Ch. 3.

Wachtel, A.B. & Vinitsky, I., Russian Literature, Polity Press, 2009, Ch. 2.

Handbook of Russian literature. Edited by Victor Terras. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1985, articles on Neoclassicism, Sentimentalism, and Karamzin.

Segel, B. H., The literature of eighteenth-century Russia; an anthology of Russian literary materials of the age of classicism and the Enlightenment from the reign of Peter the Great, 1689-1725, to the reign of Alexander I, 1801-1825, New York, Dutton, 1967.

Wiener, L., Anthology of Russian Literature, From the Earliest Period to the Present Time, The Knickerbocker Press, New York, 1902.

Questions

DISCUSS about the period of Peter the Great and Western influence in Russian Literature. How was the Russian language affected?

Read Kantemir's "Satire I. To My Mind" and Trediakovskiy's "Solemn Ode on the Surrender of the City of Danzig". In his satires what does he criticize and why?

Read Lomonosov's "Evening Meditation on the Majesty of God," "Morning Meditation on the Majesty of God," "Letter on the Use of Glass". Talk about Lomonosov's role in Russian history and culture.

Read Fonvizin's "The Minor". Why does it have an important place in 19th century Russian Literature?

Late 18th Century Russian Literature

Sentimentalism Enlightenment Ideas, Complete Change in Spirit, Censorship

Introduction:

Although Catherine II had originally been quite open to Enlightenment ideas, had corresponded with some of the most important Enlightenment thinkers such as Voltaire and Diderot, and had made efforts at internal reform, the violence which emerged in the French Revolution made her reject these earlier inclinations. At one point, she even entertained the idea of restoring the French monarchy by sending an army to France.

During Catherine's reign, more works were published in Russia than ever before and the contemporary Russian language was used in place of the much older "Church Slavonic". This period also saw the founding of Moscow University, and Catherine was known for encouraging the construction of elementary and intermediate schools in Russia.

Like Frederick the Great and Joseph II of Austria, considered Enlightened monarchs, Catherine was willing to allow a degree of reform to take place, primarily in the areas of civic and social life, as long as it did not affect her power. In fact, a number of trends that could hardly be considered enlightened occurred during her reign: serfdom expanded and became more rigid; and the publication of books criticizing either her reign or the autocratic system was prohibited. This rationale behind this censorship was that the "intellectual elite" were able to read Western philosophies and political works. Many in the elite were attracted by republican ideals, seeing them as an alternative to the autocratic controls found in Russia. Some even imported printing technology as a means to spread these new political ideas. Catherine approved the first official board of censors prior to her death in 1796.

Earlier Catherine had authored a work entitled *Nakaz*, based on the ideas of Montesquieu and Beccaria. It was considered so liberal that *Nakaz* was banned by the censors in France. However, the Pugachev rebellion cooled Catherine's enthusiasm for liberalism, and by the end of her reign, in light of the course of events in the French Revolution, she abandoned all pretense of being a liberal and became an outright reactionary.

Catherine was considered by her detractors as a "Tsar-slayer, usurper, and whore", in part due to her scandalous private life and tendency towards self-promotion. Voltaire only changed his skeptical views about Catherine due to her persistent correspondence. He later declared her work *Nakaz* "the finest monument of the age". While her role in Russian history and political acumen had long been recognized, Catherine's literary talents and status as a figure of the Enlightenment were disregarded. For example, K. Waliszewski, G. A. Gukovskii, and others claimed that as a ruler Catherine was a reactionary conservative, and a mediocre amateur as an author. Specifically, Gukovskii pointed out that Catherine's spoken Russian was excellent, but in print required extensive editing to be considered acceptable. Critics in the west tended to be more interested in her literary patronage, and were only interested in her own works as reflections of European trends and her attempts to import Enlightenment ideas into Russia.

Despite having initiated the publication of satirical journals in Russia in 1769, Catherine ended their publication four years later when these journals became too independent for her liking and too critical of the political and social conditions in Russia at that time. Arrest and exile to east Siberia was the eventual fate of critical writers such as N. I. Novikov and A. N. Radishchev.

Toward the end of the 18th century the works of Radishchev expressed the beginning of political radicalism was given expression combined with Rousseauian sentimentalism. In drama, V.A. Ozerov employed Sentimentality, and was best seen in *Poor Liza* by N. M. Karamzin.

The beginnings of the literary movement of Sentimentalism appeared only in the last years of Catherine's reign. Reform of the literary Russian language was a continuation of Peter the Great and Lomonosov's reforms. However, the gap between the written and the spoken language, between the educated classes and the ordinary people, between the new and the old Russia was increased by Karamzin's language reform. On the other hand, his language reforms would also help to usher in an age of classical poetry.

Reading

The Literature of 18th Century Russia, Karamzin, Poor Lisa,
<http://www1.umn.edu/lor-russ/hpgary/Russ3421/Karamzin.pdf>
<http://www.klassika.ru/proza/karamzin/>

Karamzin, "Letters of a Russian Traveler".
http://az.lib.ru/k/karamzin_n_m/text_0320.shtml

Karamzin, "A Few Words About Russian Literature," "On Love for the Fatherland and National Pride," "On the Book Trade and the Love for Reading in Russia," "Why Are There So Few Talented Authors in Russia"? http://az.lib.ru/k/karamzin_n_m/text_0300.shtml
http://az.lib.ru/k/karamzin_n_m/text_0950.shtml
<http://www.karamzin.net.ru/>

Radishchev, "A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow"
<https://www2.stetson.edu/secure/history/hy10302/radishchev.html>

Leatherbarrow, W., & Offord, D., *A History of Russian Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, Ch. 4, p. 83-94

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Catherine the Great http://departments.kings.edu/womens_history/catherine2.html

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Cross, A.G., *N.M. Karamzin's Messenger of Europe*,
<http://www.heraldofeurope.co.uk/Article.aspx?ArticleID=2092212088>

Cizevski, D., *History of 19th Century Russian Literature, The Romantic Period*, Vol.1, 1974, Ch. 2.

Questions

Discuss the intelligentsia in Russia in the Age of Enlightenment.

Discuss Catherine the Great as an empress and a woman of letters.

To what extent did Catherine accept the progress and reform associated with Enlightenment belief?

Discuss the beginning of Russian literary criticism.

Discuss the effects of the European literary movement 'sentimentalism' on 18th century Russian literature.

Why did Catherine the Great consider Radishchev a threat to the state and pronounce him a rebel worse than Pugachev? Read his "A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow" and explain why he was very critical about Russian life.

Discuss why Karamzin's "Poor Liza" is considered the best example of Sentimentalism.

Discuss Karamzin's journalism experience.

19TH CENTURY

PART I - Early 19th Century Russian Literature - Romanticism

Introduction:

Alexander I's era was a period of creativity when Russian literature produced independent, original and authentically national works. It was a period in which literature moved from neoclassicism to Romanticism and from the writing of imitative works to ones which would be the basis of a national cultural model.

Golden Age of Literature. Known as the Golden Age of Russian literature, the first forty years of the 19th century the literature of this period was the outcome of two developments in the 18th century. One was the creation of a literary language that acted as a bridge between the daily speech of educated Russians and the official Church Slavonic. The other was the solution in the mid-18th century of technical issues of poetic form. One noticeable trend of the Golden Age was the abandonment of literary genres serving the state and patron, such as the ode.

Romanticism. A new literary movement, Romanticism, emerged in the early 19th century. A reaction to Neoclassicism, which had dominated art and literature in the mid-18th century, Romanticism spread throughout Europe in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Romanticism is not seen in Russia until the early years of the 19th century, and only became a major movement in Russian literature from 1810 to 1840. Russia soon adopted the main Romantic prose genres: the society-tale, novel-in-letters, travel notes, memoirs and historical romance. Although Russian romanticism was initially seen in poetry, it shifted to prose in the course of its development.

Poetry. A.S. Pushkin was one of the first proponents of this new literary style, which was both realistic and nationally conscious. The poetic works of M. Y. Lermontov's were able, briefly, to maintain this level of stylistic excellence.

Prose. Poetry remained the dominant literary form until Lermontov's death in 1841. However, the displacement of poetry by prose began at the end of the 1820s, and by 1830 prose was clearly becoming the dominant form.

Gogol. Although unsuccessful as a poet, N. V. Gogol did become a successful prose writer. Regarded as the pioneer of realistic prose, Gogol's stories contained elements of romantic and the grotesque.

Romantic literature often extolled the extraordinary man who somehow rose above society, seeing such a person representing the individual spirit.

Professional Writers. Writers in the romantic era came to see their normal position in society as one in opposition to the existing order, but also came to see writing as a profession. Previously writers had not expected to earn their livelihood from writing, but in the 19th century literature became more commercialized. In the 18th century writers were either landowning aristocrats, or had some form of government support. However, writers increasingly relied on the reading public to earn their living as the 19th century progressed.

Repression. In 1848 the view that Europe was degenerating was driven home to the Russian government, as revolutions convulsed most of continental Europe, with the notable exception of Russia. Tsar Nicholas I responded to this revolutionary turmoil by harshly suppressing all forms of free expression in Russia. The period from 1848 until Nicholas I's death in 1855 came to be known as the gloomy seven years, and constituted a bleak period in Russian literature and culture. In 1849 F. M. Dostoevsky, M. Saltykov-Shchedrin, I. S. Turgenev and A. N. Ostrovsky, all members of the Petrashevky circle, were arrested and put on trial.

Readings

Pushkin, Eugene Onegin

<http://archive.org/details/eugeneoneguineon23997gut>

The Captain's Daughter or the Daughter of a Commandant

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/13511>

<http://www.online-literature.com/alexander-pushkin/daughter-of-the-commandant/>

Lermontov, *A Hero of Our Time*

<http://www.eldritchpress.org/myl/hero.htm>

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/913>

Gogol, *Dead Souls* <http://www2.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/gogol/deadsouls.pdf>

The Cambridge History of Russian Literature, Edited by Charles A. Moser, 1992, Ch.4.

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The Routledge Companion to Russian Literature, Edited by Neil Cornwell, 2001, Ch. 8.

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Lunacharsky, A., *Pushkin as Critic*,

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/lunachar/works/puskin.htm>

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Fencher, N., *Pushkin's Politics*

<http://it.stlawu.edu/~rkreuzer/pfancher/Pushkin%20Final%20webpage.doc>

Driver, S., *Pushkin: Literature and Social Ideas*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.

Debreczeny, P., *The Other Pushkin: A Study of Alexander Pushkin's Prose Fiction*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1983.

Questions

Discuss the Age of Revolutions and discuss how the Russians were affected.

As you read the reading assignments for this class, consider in what respect the beliefs of the Romantics are reflected in their works.

Read Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* and talk about Pushkin's concepts of poets and style of writing.

Read Pushkin's "The Captain's Daughter" and discuss how cultural diversity is reflected in the novel.

Read Pushkin's "Ode to Liberty" and discuss why Pushkin was exiled from St. Petersburg by Alexander I. Talk about his political views.

Read Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time* and discuss the concept of the superfluous man in 19th century Russian literature. Can you say that Pechorin fits the description of the superfluous man? How?

Read Gogol's *Overcoat* and *Dead Souls* and discuss how Gogol portrays his time.

PART II - Late 19th Century Russian Literature – Realism

Introduction:

Realism. Russian realism flourished between 1855 – 1880, a period which coincided with the reign of Alexander II, a period of reforms which came to be known as the Age of Realism.

The emergence of Russian realistic literary works in latter half of 19th century took place in the context of the political unrest which had begun during the reign of Nicolai I in the 1840s. Writers, under the influence of the literary critic V. G. Belinsky, came to view themselves as social critics and took a realistic approach to social problems in Russia such as serfdom. In the 1860s the critics N. G. Chernyshevsky and N. A. Dobrolyubov carried on Belinsky's activity. However, these reformers were among the Westerners, those who held that Russia should develop in the manner Western European civilization. Opposing them were the Slavophiles, a group committed to old Russian traditions – Orthodoxy and imperial autocracy.

Novelists. Of the numerous novelists from this period the three most important figures are I. S. Turgenev, F. M. Dostoyevsky and L. N. Tolstoy. Another lesser, but still important figure is I. A. Goncharov, the author of *Oblomov*.

Through the first half and into the mid-19th century Russia was increasingly tense as it underwent dramatic political, economical, and social changes. Vast inequalities in wealth and the formation of new social classes which transformed the old aristocratic power system into a plutocratic one were two results of industrialization. Urban growth was accompanied by the decimation of traditional agrarian lifestyle. In addition, an unexpected result of Russian participation in the effort to defeat Napoleon was the introduction of into Russia of western ideas on constitutions, representative government. In 1825, following the death of Tsar Alexander I, a regiment of soldiers refused to swear allegiance to the Tsar, calling instead for the establishment of a Russian constitution. Although these soldiers, who came to be known as the 'Decembrists', were finally suppressed, the possibility of great social change was in the air throughout the century.

Nihilism. Taken together, these events prepared the way for the appearance Nihilism. Russian monarchs in this period found themselves facing a terrible dilemma. They realized that serfdom and the existing social structure could not be sustainable and would likely result in a violent rebellion. There was a pressing need to carry out reforms that were effective and politically realistic. However, by the mid-19th century resolving these problems was almost impossible due to a combination of state repression combined with the length of time that these problems had been allowed to fester. For many Russians, Nihilism presented the only reasonable answer to their situation. In addition, Russia was in the position of having to carry out reform following its defeat in the Crimean war, a factor which the Nihilism movement even more urgent. Finally, although Russia had in many ways become a brutal and violent police-state, still it was unable to effectively hinder the Nihilists and other dedicated revolutionaries, with the result that the Nihilism movement began to spread in Russia.

A number of realist novels show the influence of the Nihilism movement, among them *Notes from the Underground*, *Crime and Punishment*, and *The Devils* by Dostoevsky; *Fathers and Sons* by Ivan Turgenev; *War and Peace* by Tolstoy; and *What is to be done?* by Chernyshevsky. In particular, Bazarov's depiction of the tension between generations in *Fathers and Sons* as the rejection of both the romantic and idealistic movements made him an icon of the Nihilist movement; the Nihilism movement even took its name from this novel. The publication of Chernyshevsky's *What is to be Done?* practically became the guidebook of the movement. It provided a portrayal of Nihilism's socialist values, showed how to live and keep one's radical values intact, and even showed how Nihilist non-monogamy worked. As a result, the Russian novel took on new religious and philosophical significance by incorporating both the Nihilists' sense of cultural

crisis and the desire for new, absolute societal values. In addition, in the same way that many Russian literary works from this period were influenced by Russia's social condition, these works, in turn, had a great impact on Russian society and culture. For example, it has been claimed that Tsar Alexander's emancipation of serfs was, at least partially, a reaction to the depiction of peasant life found in Ivan Turgenev's collection of *Sportsman's Sketches*.

Dostoevsky. In the 1860s Dostoevsky's became convinced that Western civilization had an unhealthy, narrow focus on the ego or self, and that this pathological condition threatened Russia. He viewed this Western egoism as a direct result of the Westernization of Russia, and believed that it constituted a grave danger to his country. This opinion was only confirmed by a tour of Europe that Dostoevsky made in 1862.

Chernyshevsky. In contrast to Dostoevsky, Chernyshevsky's novel *What Is to Be Done?*, published in 1863, heartily approved of egoism, and viewed it as not only a model of desirable individual behavior, but absolutely necessary for harmonious social relations. In the novel, Chernyshevsky's principal characters view themselves as complete egoists, and claim that their behavior is guided solely by informed calculations of their own interests. However, while doing so they benefit others and generally behave quite virtuously, demonstrating the benign effects of "enlightened" or "rational" egoism. For Dostoevsky this was an extreme, gross distortion of the reality he saw in Russia. Chernyshevsky's fictional character were just that – fictional, and not the real-life egoists Dostoevsky feared. As Dostoevsky saw it, the doctrine put forth in Rational Egoism was dangerous; by glorifying the self over others it had the potential to divert the minds of impressionable young people from true values and turn them toward a true, immoral, and destructive egoism.

Utilitarianism. Nonetheless, despite Dostoevsky's reservations, Chernyshevsky and the movement that crystalized around his work *What Is to Be Done?*, would also come to play a major role in popularizing utilitarian ideas among the intelligentsia in Russia.

Utilitarianism can lead an ordinary man into thinking that he is extraordinary, not bound by the same constraints as ordinary men, and it can justify murder and the subjugation of others through simple mathematics. This is precisely the situation that the main character in Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* finds himself in since he has adopted a utilitarian morality, acting under the presumption of personal grandeur and utilitarian responsibility. In the *Brothers Karamazov*, rather than satirize Chernyshevsky's utilitarianism Dostoevsky presents a tragedy depicting the suffering that awaits the Russian people should they adopt an alternative to the morality and worldview of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Crime and punishment. The main character in *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov, behaves according to utilitarian precepts. In his mind, the commission of what he regards as a simple crime he will be of great benefit to humanity as a whole. He is utterly convinced that he can be extraordinary, but if only he can act upon a mathematical equation of human happiness. Using an equation provided by a student and an officer, Raskolnikov will justify homicide. What Dostoevsky attempts to demonstrate in this novel is that this utilitarian morality can lead to the belief that one is extraordinary; as a result, life-and-death decisions can be made solely on the basis of their estimated mathematical impact on the population as a whole. However, these "extraordinary" men and women are nothing more than criminals, unable to cope with the consequences of their espoused morality. In the end, *Crime and Punishment's* Raskolnikov is far from being an extraordinary individual; rather he appears to be a self-deluded utilitarian who believed he was extraordinary.

Readings

Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/t/turgenev/ivan/index.html>
<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/30723>

Dostoyevsky's *Notes from the Underground*
<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/DosNote.html>
<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/600>
Crime and Punishment <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/2554>

Tolstoy's "Resurrection" or "The Awakening" <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/17352>

Goncharov's "Oblomov" <http://www.eldritchpress.org/iag/oblomov.htm>
<http://archive.org/details/oblomovivan00goncuoft>

Chernyshevsky's *What Is to Be Done?*
<http://archive.org/details/whatstobedonerom00cher>

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<http://sarahjyoung.com/site/tag/crystal-palace/>

Venturi, F., *Roots of Revolution, A History of the Populist and Socialist Movements in 19th Century Russia*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960, p. 316.

Cizevski, D., *History of 19th Century Russian Literature, The Age of Realism*, Vol.2, 1974, Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6.

Bortnes, J., "The Poetry of Prose", *Readings in Russian Literature*, Bergen, 2007. Ch. 9.

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Questions

Discuss the Russian intelligentsia (Westerners and Slavophiles) in the early 19th century.

Read Dostoyevsky's novel *The Notes from Underground* and compare the underground man with the unhappy 19th century intelligentsia. What are the differences between them?

Explain how Dostoyevsky treated the Russian intelligentsia in his works, and why Dostoyevsky was against Westerners. Discuss why Dostoyevsky was critical of utopian socialists.

What are his major objections to living in a perfect world? Why does he criticize the Crystal Palace?

Discuss rational egoism and utilitarianism.

Discuss what makes the main character, the underground man Nihilist.

Dostoyevsky's was said to be a devout Christian. Can you find any evidence for his religious beliefs in this novel?

Read Tolstoy's *The Brothers Karamazov* and talk about the religious motifs in the novel.

Read Goncharov's *Oblomov* and compare the novel's main character Oblomov with the main character the underground man from the novel *Notes from Underground*. Are they stereotypical characters in nineteenth-century Russian literature. Why?

20TH CENTURY

PART I - Early 20th Century Russian Literature – Symbolism, Acmeism, Futurism

Introduction:

Silver Age. The period known as the Silver Age of Russian Literature lasted from the 1890s to 1917. The Silver Age is distinguished by the poetic works of V. Y. Bryusov, I. F. Annensky, and K. D. Balmont among others. The term Silver Age was first suggested by the renowned philosopher N. A. Berdyaev.

1915 marks the pinnacle of the Silver Age, which was characterized by a deep crisis in the government, and an unsettled, turbulent political atmosphere which called for radical change in the country. In the same way that Russian society desperately sought new paths to social order, writers and poets likewise struggled to master new artistic forms and ways of expression, to put forward bold, new ideas. Mere realistic portrayal of life was no longer satisfactory, and new literary movements, such as symbolism, acmeism and futurism emerged from their criticisms of 19th century literature.

Symbolism. Theorists of symbolism stated that an artist should create new art by means of symbolical images that would allow the poet to express his feelings, sensations and thoughts in a subtler and more general way than before. The symbolist movement united a number of diverse poets, among them K. D. Balmont, V. Y. Bryusov, A. Bely, and A. A. Blok.

Symbolic poets succeeded in depicting their era with all its instability, fluctuations and transitivity.

Acmeism. In the same way that symbolism emerged from the discontent with realism, a new literary movement – acmeism – emerged from the debate over symbolism. It was characterized by rejection of the symbolists' inclination towards the unknown, as well as their focus on one's one soul.

Acmeism did not aim at attaining the unknown; rather it focused on things that could be perceived, i.e. reality, and attempted to fully comprehend the world's diversity. Through such an approach the acmeist poet, in contrast to the symbolists, participated in the world rhythms, while at the same time considering the phenomena he was describing. The most prominent acmeist poets were N. S. Gumilev, A. Akhmatova, and O. E. Mandelstam.

Futurism. Typical of acmeism was total political indifference and disregard of important current issues. It is perhaps for this reason that acmeism gave way to futurism, characterized by revolutionary rebellion and opposition to bourgeois society, its morals and aesthetics, as well as the overall system of social links and relations. Some of the best known Russian Futurists were V. Khlebnikov, A. E. Kruchenykh and V. V. Mayakovsky.

Futurist poets attempted to combine poetry with political struggle, and poets such as Mayakovsky, Khlebnikov, V. V. Kamensky, etc. perceived a unique spiritual state for their era and tried to find new rhythms and images for poetic portrayals of revolutionary life.

Reading Assignments:

Blok, "The Scythians", "The Twelve"

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

<http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/isj/1961/no006/blok.htm>

Trotsky, L., Literature and Revolution, Ch. 3, Alexander Blok

http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/lit_revo/ch03.htm

Gumilev, "The Word", "The Lost Tram", "The Giraffe", "The Street Car Gone Astray"

<http://max.mmlc.northwestern.edu/~mdenner/Demo/poetpage/gumilev.html>
<http://www.ualberta.ca/~lmalcolm/poetry/acmeists.html>

Mayakovsky, “**At the Top of My Voice**”, “**A Cloud in Trousers**”, “A Slap in the Face of Public Taste”, “Our March”, “Vladimir Ilyich Lenin”

<http://www.marxists.org/subject/art/literature/mayakovsky/>
<http://max.mmlc.northwestern.edu/~mdenner/Demo/poetpage/mayakovsky.html>
<http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/x/Mayakovsky.php>
<http://www.ualberta.ca/~lmalcolm/poetry/futurists.html>
<http://en.bookfi.org/s/?q=Mayakovsky+Vladimir+%3Flyich+Lenin&t=0>

The Routledge Companion to Russian Literature, Edited by Neil Cornwell, 2001, Ch.12.

Emerson, C., *The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Literature*, Cambridge University Press, 2008, Ch. 7.

The Cambridge History of Russian Literature, Edited by Charles A. Moser, 1992, Ch.7, 8.

The Silver age of Russian culture : an anthology / edited by Carl Proffer & Ellendea Proffer

The Cambridge Companion to Classic Russian Novel, Edited by Malcolm V. Jones and Robin Feuer Miller, Cambridge University Press, 1998, Ch. 11.

Pyman, A., *A History of Russian Symbolism*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, Part 3, 5.

Trotsky, L., Futurism, http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/lit_revo/ch04.htm

Dadswell, S., Re-approaching Russian Futurism: The Inter-Revolutionary Years, 1908-1915
<http://www.pitt.edu/~slavic/sisc/SISC4/dadswell.pdf>

Questions

Blok in his poem “The Scythians” was comparing Russians and Europeans. Discuss how.

Read Gumilev’s “The Word” and discuss the religious symbolism in Gumilev’s poems.

Read Mayakovsky’s *At the Top of My Voice* and talk about Mayakovsky’s thoughts on the Russian revolution.

Talk about Mayakovsky’s views on Futurism. According to the Futurist Manifesto what were the goals of the Russian Futurists? What was LEF?

What is the difference between Cubo-Futurism and Ego- Futurism?
Mid 20th Century Russian Literature – Socialist Realism

PART II - Mid 20th Century Russian Literature – Socialist Realism

Introduction:

Following the Bolsheviks’ seizure of power in 1917 Russian literature witnessed radical changes. Although the 1920s remained comparatively open, literature soon became merely another form of state propaganda. Writers found themselves forbidden to create works that the Communist Party considered dissident or objective; they were also expected to obey the Party’s orders when told to produce propaganda on specific, limited themes that were of interest to the Party at that time.

Avant-garde Literature. A number of avant-garde literature groups flourished during the first years of the Soviet regime. Of these groups, one of the most important was the *Oberiu* (Union of the Real Art) movement which counted N. A. Zabolotsky, A. I. Vvedensky, K. K. Vaginov and the most famous Russian absurdist D. I. Kharmis among its followers. Other notable writers who experimented with language were the novelists A. Platonov and Y. K. Olesha and short story writers I. E. Babel and M. M. Zoshchenko.

Socialist realism. Socialist realism became the dominant trend in Russian literature during the 1930s. The leading figure of this trend was M. Gorky, the forerunner of this style with his work *The Mother*. According to Gorky, socialist realism was the realism of the people who were rebuilding the world. The main task of writers in Gorky's view was to aid in the development of the new man in socialist society.

The new proletarian literature is often considered to begin with Gorky's novel *The Mother*. This would be the literature of socialist realism, reflecting the assaults of and the rising struggle of the Russian proletariat.

Besides Gorky, other leading figures of socialist realism were the novelists M. A. Sholokhov, and A. N. Tolstoy; and the poets K. M. Simonov, A. T. Tvardovsky, A. Serafimovich, N. A. Ostrovsky, A. A. Fadeyev, and F. V. Gladkov.

A major example of socialist realism was N. A. Ostrovsky's novel *How the Steel Was Tempered*, a work depicting the struggle of the Soviet peoples for the victory during the course of the October Revolution.

Repression. Stalin's rise to power in the late 1920s ushered in a decade of unprecedented repression. The struggle to collectivize agriculture in the countryside resulted in the loss of more than 10 million lives, almost half from starvation. All independent literary groups were dissolved in 1932 and replaced by the Union of Soviet Writers, an institution without parallel in the West.

The Union of Soviet Writers became the means by which the state maintained control over literature; being expelled from the Union was tantamount to literary death. Socialist Realism was officially proclaimed the only acceptable form of writing in 1934. All literature would now be governed by official directives on the details of style and content to guarantee that each work presented a truthful depiction of reality in its revolutionary development. Soviet literature would now be party-minded and typical, depicting the triumph of heroes who were entirely positive.

Some writers directed their talents to writing that was less regulated, such as children's literature and translation. Others, such as V. P. Katayev, attempted to make official writing more interesting, as seen in his production novel *Time, Forward!* A. N. Tolstoy, a writer who returned to the Soviet Union from abroad, became a favorite of Stalin. He praised those tsars particularly admired by Stalin in his unfinished novel *Peter the Great* and his stage play *Ivan the Terrible*.

Very few Soviet writers before the Second World War would be published unless they closely adhered to the guidelines of Socialist realism.

Writers who held that authors had the right to write independently of political ideology, like those of Serapion Brothers group, were compelled by the authorities to renounce their views and accept the principles of Socialist realism. There were a few writers, among them M. A. Bulgakov with his novel *The Master and Margarita* and B. L. Pasternak with his novel *Doctor Zhivago*, who continued the classical tradition of Russian literature. However, these writers knew that there was almost no chance that these works would be published in the USSR at the time of their writing. Publication of their major works would not be possible until the Khrushchev Thaw, but even then Pasternak would be forced to decline his Nobel prize for literature.

Reading Assignments:

Gorky, *The Mother* <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3783>

Ostrovsky, *How the Steel Was Tempered*

Book 1

<http://www.cpa.org.au/resources/cpa-presents/how-the-steel-was-tempered-book-1.pdf>

Book 2

http://ciml.250x.com/archive/literature/english/ostrovsky_how_the_steel_was_tempered_2.pdf

Emerson, C., *The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Literature*, Cambridge University Press, 2008, Ch. 8.

Wachtel, A.B. & Vinitsky, I., *Russian Literature*, Polity Press, 2009, Ch. 8.

The Cambridge History of Russian Literature, Edited by Charles A. Moser, 1992, Ch. 8, 9, 10, 11,.

The Routledge Companion to Russian Literature, Edited by Neil Cornwell, 2001, Ch. 15.

The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century Russian Literature, Cambridge University Press, 2011, Ch. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Clark, K., "Socialist Realism in Soviet Literature", *The Routledge Companion to Russian Literature*, Edited by Neil Cornwell, 2001, Ch. 15.

Questions

Read Gorky's *The Mother* and discuss how the proletariat is depicted in the novel. Does the proletariat act according to socialist ideas?

Discuss Gorky's life. Can you see any reflections from his childhood in the novel?

Why did Gorky name his novel *The Mother*? Talk about women and their role in society as described in the novel.

Read Ostrovsky's *How the Steel Was Tempered* and discuss why it is called a true dedication to revolution. Talk about the Stalin era and Stalin's approaches to the novel.

PART III - Late 20th Century Russian Literature – Anti-Soviet Ideology

Introduction:

Emigration. Emigration of Russian writers began as early as the 16th century when Prince Andrei Kurbsky escaped Ivan the Terrible's regime. It continued through the 19th century, especially under the repressive regime of Nicholas I. For instance, A. I. Herzen established a Russian press abroad, in London, and from there he smuggled his journal *The Bell (Kolokol)* into Russia.

Emigration of writers who opposed the Soviet regime increased dramatically after the Bolshevik Revolution. Among the prominent writers who fled to the West were I. A. Bunin, V.V. Nabokov, M. I. Tsvetaeva, V. F. Khodasevich, J. A. Brodsky, B. L. Pasternak, A. D. Sinyavsky and A. I. Solzhenitsyn.

All Soviet artists and writers were required to follow the party line in their works, and failure to do so could result in severe persecution. Between 1946 and Stalin's death in 1953, in a period known as *Zhdanovism* (a cultural doctrine developed by the secretary of Andrei Zhdanov in 1946), Soviet writers and artists endured severe repression.

Dissident writers were unable to publish their works in the Soviet Union until the 1960s. There was also a campaign against older literary styles which was led by the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers who vehemently criticized O. E. Mandelshtam, B. L. Pasternak, and V. V. Mayakovsky. For this reason, Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago* was surreptitiously taken out of the Soviet Union and published in Milan,

Italy in 1957. Despite winning the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1958 for *Doctor Zhivago*, Pasternak was forced by the Soviet government to decline the prize.

Thaw. From Stalin's death until Khrushchev's removal from office in 1964 several *thaws* in official restrictions on artists and writers occurred. The term *thaw* was applied to literature following the publication of I. G. Erenburg's novel *The Thaw*. Used to describe a period of relative liberalism during Khrushchev's time, it did not survive his political career by long. By the 1970s, some famous writers had been prohibited from publishing, and others were even put on trial for alleged anti-Soviet propaganda.

Underground Literature. During the Brezhnev era, writers of the Soviet *underground* whose works are distributed by hand (*Samizdat* was the name given to *underground* literature. *Samizdat* writers works were secretly written and distributed within the Soviet Union by dissidents. *Underground* literature lasted until the fall of the Soviet Union), among them prominent writer A. D. Sinyavsky, were arrested, prosecuted and imprisoned. After having served a 7-year camp sentence, he was released from prison. In 1973 Sinyavsky immigrated to France and there he published his critical essays *Walks with Pushkin* and *In the Shadow of Gogol*, and his camp memoirs *A Voice from the Chorus*.

There were also other underground writers who were trying to publish anti-Soviet propaganda abroad (*Tamizdat*). A number of writers were arrested and expelled from the Soviet Union during the Brezhnev era like A. I. Solzhenitsyn.

Solzhenitsyn. Solzhenitsyn, some of whose works described life in prisons (*One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*) and conditions in the Gulag camps (*The Gulag Archipelago*), was among the *underground* writers with the courage to oppose the Soviet regime. After winning a Nobel prize for literature in 1970 Solzhenitsyn became the subject of official persecution. The KGB even tried to kill him with poison, and in 1974 Solzhenitsyn was expelled from the Soviet Union and came to the West, settling in the United States in 1976.

1960s and 1970s. In the decades of the 1960s and 1970s, new satirical and prose writers emerged. These were F. A. Iskander, V. N. Voinovich, Y. P. Kazakov, Y. A. Yevtushenko, A. A. Voznesenskiy and J. A. Brodsky. These writers struggled against government restrictions on artistic expression, sometimes at great personal cost. For example, in 1964 Brodsky was arrested on charges of *social parasitism* and exiled within Russia for refusing to have a state job. He was sentenced to five years labor on a farm in the north of the country, but released after serving only 18 months in 1965. He returned to Leningrad and continued to write poetry, but his increasing fame as a poet did not save him from being forced to leave the Soviet Union in 1972. Brodsky emigrated to the United States. While living abroad he received the 1987 Nobel Prize for Literature.

Reading Assignments:

Pasternak, "Doctor Zhivago" <http://en.bookfi.org/s/?q=pasternak+doctor+zhivago&t=0>
<http://gen.lib.rus.ec/search?req=boris+pasternak&nametype=orig&column%5B%5D=title&column%5B%5D=author&column%5B%5D=series&column%5B%5D=periodical&column%5B%5D=publisher&column%5B%5D=year>

Solzhenitsyn, "The Gulag Archipelago"
<http://en.bookfi.org/s/?q=Solzhenitsyn%2C+%E2%80%9CThe+Gulag+Archipelago&t=0>
"One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich"
<http://gen.lib.rus.ec/search?req=solzhenitsyn&nametype=orig&column%5B%5D=title&column%5B%5D=author&column%5B%5D=series&column%5B%5D=periodical&column%5B%5D=publisher&column%5B%5D=year>

Emerson, C., *The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Literature*, Cambridge University Press, 2008, Ch. 9.

Lanin, B., *Experiment and Emigration: Russian Literature, 1917-1953*, The Routledge Companion to Russian Literature, Edited by Neil Cornwell, 2001, Ch.16.

The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century Russian Literature, Cambridge University Press, 2011, Ch. 10.

The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century Russian Literature, Cambridge University Press, 2011, Ch. 11.

Brown, D., *Soviet Russian Literature since Stalin*, Cambridge University Press, 1978, Ch. 11.

Wakamiya, L.R., *Locating Exiled Writers in Contemporary Russian Literature*, Palgrave, MacMillan, 2009, Ch. 3.

Dmitriyev, A., *European Exile for Russian Westernizers: The Logos Circle, The Limits of Exile*, Journal of the Interdisciplinary Crossroads, Vol. 3, No.1, 2006, p.79-95.

Russia and Western Civilization, Edited by Russell Bova, ME Sharpe, New York, 2003, Ch. II, Sect. 4.

Questions

Discuss the response of émigré Russian writers to being exiled and living abroad as reflected in their works.

Read Pasternak's "Doctor Zhivago". Can we consider Dr. Zhivago as a "Superfluous Man" in his time? Compare him with the main character, the Underground Man in Dostoyevsky's "Notes from the Underground". Determine the differences between them.

Read Solzhenitsyn's "The Gulag Archipelago" and "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich"
Explain what the main concepts are in "The Gulag Archipelago". Do we see the same ideas in "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich"? How can you characterize them?

What is the difference between Russian Classical literature and the literature of socialist realism? How can we characterize Solzhenitsyn's novels? Can we trace both traditions in his novels?