

Virtual Course: Orthodox Iconography

presented by Professor Raoul Smith

Syllabus

The course will be broken into four consecutive sessions on Wednesdays starting on September 22 and running through October 13 from 9:30 to 11:30 AM:

- Session 1:
 - General introduction to research tools at Museum of Russian Icons
 - What is an icon?
 - How an icon is made
 - Famous iconographers
 - Typical characteristics of icons
 - The most common icon types
 - Iconostases
 - An introduction to comparative iconography
 - Major centers of icon painting
 - Classic characteristics of personages
 - The historical development of icons
- Session 2:
 - The spread of early Christianity
 - The rise and fall of iconoclasm
 - Examples of paintings of major iconographers
 - The collecting of icons in the West
 - Iconoclasm redux
 - Sankir, oklads, and clothing
 - Palekh, Mstera, Fedoskino, and Kholuy regions in Russia
 - Rare icons
 - Translating the texts on icons (Old Church Slavonic, 9th century Slavic)
- Session 3:
 - Icons from the Balkans (Albania, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Northern Macedonia, Romania) and Crete, Cyprus, Ravenna, and Ukraine
- Session 4:
 - A comparative study of Icons from Turkey (including the Kariye Mosque and the Hagia Sofia), Armenia, Georgia, Ethiopia, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt.

Resources:

The Museum of Russian Icons in Clinton, MA offers a wide variety of resources on iconography. These include a web site at www.museumofrussianicons.org, which, under the *Icon Studies* tab will take you to, among other entries,

- *Journal of Icon Studies*, a research publication of the Museum
- Research on the Collection, a source of analyses of individual objects in the Museum collection
- British Museum Catalog, houses the official images of the forty orthodox icons in the British Museum and
- Resources, namely
 - Images of the Museum's complete collection,
 - A list of the Museum's over two thousand research books,
 - A dictionary of iconographic terms,

- A lexicon of Orthodox saints, and
- A presentation of the Museum's very rare Stroganov mineya images with descriptions

Suggested reading:

Zacchaeus (Wood), Archimandrite. 2002. *A History of Icon Paintings*, Moscow: Grand-Holding Publishers.
Ouspensky, Leonid, and Vladimir Lossky. 1989. *The Meaning of Icons*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press.

Suggested perusing:

Coomler, David. 1995. *The Icon Handbook*, Springfield IL: Templegate Publishers.
Hetherington, Paul, trans. 1989. *The 'Painter's Manual' of Dionysius of Fourna*. Torrance, CA: Oakwood Publications.