

RUSS 0800: 19th Century Russian Literary Masterpieces
Instructor: Dawn Seckler
Fall 2003

Room: CL 337

Time: Tues. and Thurs. 1-2:15

Instructor's email: dasst125@pitt.edu

Office hours: Tues. 12-1 and Thursday 2:15-3:15 or by appointment

Office: CL 1417

Required Primary Texts:

Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Crime and Punishment*. Trans. Couslon. Ed. George Gibian. NYC: W. W. Norton and Company, 1964. 3rd edition.

---. *Notes from Underground*. Trans. and ed. Michael R. Katz. NYC: W. W. Norton and Company, 2001. 2nd edition.

Gogol, Nikolai Vasilevich. *Overcoat and Other Tales of Good and Evil*. Trans. David Magarshack. NYC: W. W. Norton and Company, 1965.

Lermontov, Mikhail. *A Hero of Our Time*. Trans. Paul Foote. NYC: Penguin Books, 1966.

Pushkin, Aleksander. *The Captain's Daughter and Other Great Stories*. Trans. Natalie Duddington and T. Keane. NYC: Vintage Books, 1936.

Tolstoy, Leo. *Great Short Works of Leo Tolstoy*. Trans. Louise and Aylmer Maude. NYC: Harper and Row. 1967.

Turgenev, Ivan Sergeevich. *Diary of a Superfluous Man*. Trans. David Patterson. NYC: W. W. Norton and Company, 1984.

*** The required texts listed above are available for purchase at the bookstore and for two-hour loan at the reserve desk in Hillman Library.

Additionally, I have also placed Victor Terras's *History of Russian Literature*, which is a good general reference, on reserve.

*** There will be additional secondary material distributed in class.

Course Descriptions:

This course, organized more or less chronologically, is designed to present a survey of 19th-century Russian prose that emphasizes the progression of major literary movements (sentimentalism, preromanticism or the Gothic, romanticism, and realism) throughout the century. The texts selected will not only highlight the dominant stylistic trends of each of the above-named movements, but will also acquaint the student with some of Russia's best writers. Furthermore, because particular themes will extend from one literary period into others, the class will operate in part by mode of comparison: for example, we will examine the shift of principle aesthetic, philosophical, and social tendencies in literature from the early to the late 19th century.

In addition to offering the student a rich array of literature, the class will also attempt to accomplish the following:

- comment on each author's distinctive style and contribution to national (and world) literature;
- train you to read primary and secondary texts closely and analytically;
- make connections among texts, authors, and cultural events;
- and, of no less importance, will aim to improve students' writing.

Credits, Prerequisites, Requirements, and Format:

Upon successful completion of 19th Century Russian Masterpieces students will be awarded 3 credits and will have completed a University-designated writing course. This course is intended for undergraduate students and has no formal prerequisites. Students are required 1) to complete all assignments scheduled for each class meeting, and to be prepared to summarize and intelligently discuss them in class on the pertinent day; 2) to participate actively on a regular basis in classroom discussions; 3) to take unannounced quizzes administered throughout the semester; 4) to submit all papers and revisions on the dates listed on the syllabus. The final paper is due on December 4th. The topic will be formulated in consultation with me.

This class will employ a mixture of lecture and discussion format. Discussion may take the form of group work, open discussion, or question-and-answer exchanges between instructor and students. In order to participate actively in the class it is essential that all students come to class prepared; that is to say, completing all reading assignments is necessary. Please bear in mind that because the class will present a survey of 19th century Russian literature and will require that you write a minimal of 20 pages, the assignments are large and will be difficult to finish satisfactorily if they are put off until the day before they are due.

Attendance Policy:

This class meets every Tuesday and Thursday from 1 to 2:15 from August 26th until December 4th with the exception of Nov. 27th, when you have off for Thanksgiving. Although attendance is not mandatory, it will be of crucial importance to your success in the course. Missing class jeopardizes your participation records and puts you in danger of missing quizzes and important information. **However, be aware that 4 unexcused absences automatically translate into an F for the course.** Should serious illness of you or a family member prevent your presence in class, documentation of that fact is required in the form of a letter from a doctor, stating that ON THE DAY AT THE TIME THE CLASS MEETS you were too ill to attend; this situation will be considered an "excused absence" and will not affect your grade (at least not directly).

Students who miss class are responsible to find out from classmates what important information was announced or passed out during the session they missed (this includes audio or visual material presented in class). Therefore, it is to your advantage to exchange e-mail addresses or phone numbers with another student in the class. You may also e-mail me or see me during office hours to review material. I will NOT, however, distribute class notes.

Special Concerns:

Students experiencing problems in the course are strongly encouraged to make an appointment with me during office hours (see the times above). I will be more than happy to discuss any aspect of the class with you including paper topics, study habits, reading strategies, additional literary interests, or Russian culture in general.

Students with disabilities who require special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications are encouraged to notify me and must notify the Office of Disability Resources and Services *no later than the end of the first week of classes*. Students may be asked to provide documentation of their disabilities to determine the appropriateness of their requests. The Office of Disability Resources and Services is located in 216 William Pitt Union and is available by telephone (voice or TTY) at 412-648-7890.

Grading:

Class Participation: 20%

Unannounced Quizzes: 15%

Short Writing Assignments: 30%

8-page Final paper: 35%

Please be aware that missed quizzes cannot be made up. Late papers will be penalized.

Academic Integrity:

By remaining enrolled in the course, you not only agree to abide by the above stipulations, but also understand that I will follow rigorously the rules spelled out in the *Handbook on Integrity* regarding cheating, plagiarism, sexual harassment, etc. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with these rules and observe them. An infraction will be penalized accordingly.

Week One: Russian Literary Culture at the Beginning of the Century

August 26: Introduction to the class.
Russian's literary environment at the beginning of the 19th century.
Pick up Xeroxes of "Poor Liza" and "The Island of Bornholm"

August 28: **N.M. Karamzin, "Poor Liza" (1792)**
Sentimentalism.

Week Two: PreRomanticism and The Russian Gothic

September 2: **N.M. Karamzin "The Island of Bornholm" (1793);**
From Melancholic Graveyards to the Horrifying Spirits in Them

September 4: **N.V. Gogol "Introduction" and "A Terrible Vengeance" (1835) (pages 1-63)**
Gothic, the fantastic, and folk belief.

Week 3. Gothic (II)

September 9: **N.V. Gogol "Portrait" (1835 not 1842) (pages 93-161)**
The Power of Aesthetics

September 11: **A.S. Pushkin "The Queen of Spades" (1834) (pages 227-260)**
The humorous gothic
Life imitating art

Week 4. Romanticism

September 16: **A. S. Pushkin "The Tales of Belkin" (1831): "Editor's Foreword"; "The Shot"; "The Snowstorm"; and "The Undertaker." (pages 140-186)**
First 3-page Paper Due
Story cycles and the proto-novel.
Exotica

September 18: **A. S. Pushkin "The Tales of Belkin" (1831): "The Postmaster" and "Mistress into Maid" (pages 187-226)**
Love, family, Russian country life, and fate

Week 5: Romanticism (II)

September 23: **M. I. Lermontov "A Hero of Our Time" (1840): "Author's Preface" and Part I (pages 19-61)**
Romanticism: Exoticism and the East
The Psychological Sketch

September 25: **M. I. Lermontov "A Hero of Our Time" (1840): Part II (pages 62-185)**
Novel or not?
Cyclization and the Open End

Week 6: Romanticism's shift to Real

September 30: **N. V. Gogol "The Nose" (1836) (approx. 20 pages)**

Revisions of first 3-page paper due (Turn in original with the revision)

The Surreal butts the Real

Pick up Xerox of Eichenbaum article

October 2: **N.V. Gogol "The Overcoat" (1842) (approx. 20 pages)**

Boris Eichenbaum "How *The Overcoat* is Made"

Pick up copy of Turgenev's "Khor and Kalinych"

Week 7: The "Real" Individual

October 7: **I. S. Turgenev "Khor and Kalinych" (1847-51) (Xerox, pgs 15-28); "Diary of a Superfluous Man" (1850) (approx. 40 pages)**

"Real" people; The interaction of "life" and "art"

October 9: **F. Dostoevsky "Notes from the Underground" (1864): Part 1 (pg 3-29)**

Philosophic schizophrenia

Week 8:

October 14: **"Notes" continued: Part 2 (pgs 29-91)**

The Anti-Hero

Polyphonia

The redemptive prostitute introduced

October 16: **Ralph E. Matlaw "Structure and Integration" (pgs 162-178)**

*** Second 3-page paper due***

Weeks 9 and 10: The Novel: F. Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment (1866)

October 21: **Parts 1, 2 (pages 1-165)**

Atmosphere and character; narration; plot structure

October 23: **Part 3 (pages 166-236)**

October 28: **Part 4 (237-303)**

October 30: **Part 5 (304-369)**

Revision of second 3-page paper due (Turn in original with revision)

Week 11:

November 4: **Part 6 + epilogue (370-465)**

November 6: **L. Tolstoy “Family Happiness” (1858-59)**

Week 12:

November 11: **L. Tolstoy “Death of Ivan Ilych” (1886)**

November 13: **TBA**

Week 13:

November 18: **L. Tolstoy “Kreutzer Sonata” (1887-89)**

November 20: **TBA**

Week 14

November 25: **A. P. Chekhov “Lady With a Lap Dog” (1899), “The Darling” (1899), et. al.**

November 27: **NO CLASS- Thanksgiving**

Week 15

December 2: **Maxim Gorky “Twenty-six and One” (1899)**

In class: Evaluations

December 4: **FINAL 8-PAGE PAPERS DUE**