Sl.4: Russian Literature and Culture from the Golden Age to the Silver Age

Chekhov and Tolstoy in Crimea (1901)

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Handbook 2015-16
(updated September ‘15)
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Introduction

The nineteenth century saw the rapid development of Russian literary culture – from the emergence of the modern Russian literary language, to the rise of the great Russian novel, and, by the end of the century, the launch of modernism in Russia. Bold in their formal and aesthetic innovation, the works of this period pose the decisive questions of Russian modernity and pursue urgent issues of social, political and theological import.

The course is a study of Russian literature from the beginning of the nineteenth century through the very early twentieth century and introduces students to a range of authors, genres and issues. In order to achieve a balance of depth and breadth, the paper is organized around the study of two set texts, two prescribed authors, and three topics. (There are suggested pathways through the texts and topics tailored to Part IB, option A (ex-<i>ab initio</i>) students, but students should not feel limited to these).

**Overview of Texts and Topics for 2015-16**

**Set Texts:**
A1. Aleksandr Pushkin, <i>Evgenii Onegin</i> (1825-32)
A2. Lev Tolstoi, <i>Anna Karenina</i> (1873-77)

**Prescribed Authors:**
B1. Nikolai Gogol’
B2. Anton Chekhov

**Topics:**
C1. The Elegy (1800s-1830s)
C2. Fiction and Ideology in the 1860s
C3. The Drama in the Nineteenth Century
**Teaching**

Weekly lectures in Michaelmas and Lent; weekly (2hr) revision seminars in Easter. Ten fortnightly supervisions throughout the year.

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* an additional seminar will be scheduled on the 1860s topic.

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* ordering of revision sessions subject to change – but all topics will have one dedicated hour of review.

**Assessment**

Assessment by Long Essay instead of final examination is available in this paper for students in Part IB (Options A & B).

The examination is structured as follows: **Section A** will consist of a commentary on one of the set texts and essay questions on the other. **Section B** will offer several questions on each of the prescribed authors, for which candidates are required to make reference to more than one text. **Section C** will offer several questions on each of the prescribed topics as well as more open questions that might be answered with reference to a wide range of texts and periods. All questions in Section C will require candidates to write about at least two texts of which at least one must be a literary text.

All candidates must answer three questions.

**Students for Part IB (Options A & B) answer:**

1 question from Section A
any other 2 questions (which may include 1 further question from Section A)

**Students for Part II answer:**

1 question from Section A
1 question from Section C
EITHER 1 further question from Section C OR 1 question from Section B.
Preparatory Reading and General Background
Students are urged to buy and read both Set Texts during the summer (or Year Abroad), as well as, in particular, any optional longer texts they wish to cover (e.g. Mertvye dushi, Besy).

The following reading list serves as an introduction to the subject.

Caryl Emerson, *The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Literature* (esp. chs 1, 4, 5, 6)
William Mills Todd, III, *Fiction and Society in the Age of Pushkin: Ideology, Institutions and Narrative* (chs. 1,2,3)
Malcolm V. Jones and Robin Feuer Miller (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Classic Russian Novel*
Michael Wachtel, *Cambridge Introduction to Russian Poetry* (chs 1,2,3,4)
Andrzej Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought* (esp. chs 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11)

Students should read through a scholarly history of 19th-century Russia such as: Gregory Freeze, *Russia: A History* (chs 5, 6, 7, 8) or Nicholas Riasanovsky and Mark Steinberg, *A History of Russia* (8th edition; Chs 24-30)

Reading Lists

Using the Reading Lists
The lists below specify Primary and Secondary texts, organised by Section and Topic. The lists are extensive but not exhaustive: in other words, you should feel neither daunted not limited by them!

Sections B & C (Prescribed Authors & Topics)
- Remember that you will be making selections from among the primary texts here; they are not all compulsory reading.
- In particular, students are reminded that the long novels *Mertye dushi* by Gogol (B1) and *Besy* by Dostoevsky (C2) are optional, and you should plan ahead if you want to read one or both.
- Students should consult with their supervisor to select primary texts from the suggested options according to their interests and experience in Russian. Students may also choose to read relevant primary texts that are not listed here.

Secondary Readings
The suggestions for secondary reading represent a collection of resources and menus of possibilities: no one expects you to do all of the reading below! Your supervisor will help you to orientate yourself within the bibliography, and to use your time efficiently, by suggesting those texts which most closely relate to the themes and approaches that interest you.
Section A: Set Texts

A1. A. S. Pushkin, Evgenii Onegin (1825-32)
- Former ab initio students (i.e. those in Part IB, Option A) are only required to read chapters 1, 2, 5 and 8 in Russian; they must read the entire novel in English in order to follow the plot.
  - Recommended translation: James E. Falen
  - In addition, although it does not make for 'smooth reading', Nabokov's literal translation, read side by side with the original, is very helpful: it makes for an excellent primer in reading Russian verse, understanding the flexibility of word order etc...
  - Students in Part IB, Option B and Part II read the entire novel in Russian.

Background, Biography, Reference
Bethea, David, ed. The Pushkin Handbook (University of Wisconsin Press, 2006).

Commentary

Other Secondary Readings
(i) Introductory/student survey studies:

(ii) Seminal Russian scholarship:
Lotman (see ‘Commentary’ above)

(iii) Seminal/extensive studies in western scholarship:

(iv) Articles with useful, specific focus:
Ketchian, S. I. “‘What’s Hidden in My Name?’: Names as a Window into Pushkin’s ‘Evgenij Onegin’.” Russian Literature 60, no. 2 (August 2006): 159–183.

A2: L. N. Tolstoi, Anna Karenina (1873-77)
- Former ab initio students (i.e. those in Part IB, Option A) read at least the extracts specified below in Russian (roughly one third of the novel); they read the entire novel in English in order to follow the plot: Part I: 1-4, 7-11, 13, 16-23, 26-34; Part 2: 7-12, 21-29; Part 3: 1-5, 13-16, 22-25, 31-32; Part 4: 1, 3-5, 9-13, 15-23; Part 6: 3, 7-16, 19-20, 31-33; Part 7: 9-16, 23-31; Part 8: 8-19.
- Recommended translations: either Rosemary Edmonds OR Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky.
- Students in Part IB, Option B and Part II read the entire novel in Russian.
Background, Biography, Reference
trans. Albert Kaspin. Ardis, Ann Arbor. (Masterful blend of biographical, philological and textual analysis by leading 'formalist' critic.)
Knapp, Liza and Amy Mandelker, eds. Approaches to Teaching Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina (MLA: 2003). Excellent, very useful anthology of short critical texts.

Relevant Theoretical Works (not dealing with AK explicitly):

• for wrestling with 'Realism': see also entries for Gustafson, Kliger and Kovarsky below.

Works which promote something approaching a “comprehensive” reading of the novel, through extensive engagement with the text and/or by dint of interpretative approach:

On the epigraph:
Holland, Kate. ‘The Opening of Anna Karenina’ in in Knapp, Liza and Amy Mandelker, eds. Approaches to Teaching Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina (MLA: 2003). 144-149.
Other Secondary Readings: use the titles to navigate issues that interest you, or consult your supervisor for recommendations.

- a number of articles appear in editions of the *Tolstoy Studies Journal* (abbreviated below: *TSJ*) [in UL: North Front, Fl 5, P576.b.29 ]


Emerson, Caryl.!'Prosaics in *Anna Karenina:* Pro and Con,' *TSJ* VIII: 150-76.

Evdokimova, Svetlana.!'The Drawing and the Grease Spot: Creativity and Interpretation in *Anna Karenina,*' *TSJ* VIII: 33-45

Goscilo, Helena. 'Tolstoyan Fare: Credo a la Carte,' *Slavonic and East European Review* 62:4 (October 1984), 481-495. [Jstor]

Herman, David. 'Allowable Passions in *Anna Karenina,*' *TSJ* VIII: 5-32.


Kovarsky, Gina. 'Mimesis and Moral Education in *Anna Karenina,*' *TSJ* VIII: 61-80

Kujundzic, Dragan, 'Pardoning Woman in *Anna Karenina,*' *TSJ* VI: 65-86.


Morson, Gary Saul. 'Poetic Justice, False Listening, and Falling in Love, Or, Why Anna Refuses a Divorce,’ *TSJ* VIII: 177-197.


Section B: Prescribed Authors: Gogol’ and Chekhov

B1. Nikolai Gogol’ (Michaelmas)
- Part IB, Option A students should select, as a minimum, 2 short stories to read.
- Part IB, Option B & Part II students should read, as a minimum, 3 works (from among the short stories, with the option of Revizor also) OR they may choose to focus on Gogol’s novel, Mertvyе dushi and at least 1 other shorter work.

from Vechera na khutore bliz Dikan’ki, Part One (1831)
  Chast’ pervа: ‘Predislovie’
  ‘Sorochinskaia iarmarkа’
from Mirgorod, Part Two (1835)
  ‘Vii’
  ‘Povest’ o tom, kak possorilis’ Ivan Ivanovich s Ivanom Nikiforovichem’
Petersburg Tales
  ‘Nevskii Prospekt’
  ‘Portret’
  ‘Zapiski sumashshedshego’
  ‘Nos’
Revizor (for Drama topic also)
Mertvyе dushi (Part One; Part Two may also be read)

Secondary readings


Lotman, Iurii. ‘Problema khudozhestvennogo prostranstva v proze Gogolia’ (1968)


Nabokov, Vladimir. *Nikolai Gogol.* [various editions]

De Oliveira, Cassio. ‘Skuka and the Absurd in Gogol’s Tale of the “Two Ivans”’. *Canadian Slavonic Papers,* Vol. 51 NO.2/3 (2009), 287-303. [JSTOR]


Links to critical works on Gogol in Russian:


Collections of essays on Gogol can be found in the journal editions *Essays in Poetics,* (2003 & 2004), Vols. 28 & 29.

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B2. Anton Chekhov (Lent)
The stories marked * are suggested for the attention of Part IB, Option A students.

Early stories:
*Smert’ chinovnika’
*Meliuzga’
‘Eger’
‘Aniuta’
‘Neschast’e’

Novella: ‘Step’

Later stories: ‘Skuchnoe istorii’ ‘Palata nomer 6’
‘Chernyi monakh’ ‘Student’
‘Dom s mezzaninom’ ‘Chelovek v futliare’
‘Kryzhovnik’ ‘O liubvi’
*‘Dama s sobachkoi’

Theatre: 
*Chaika
*Vishnev’yi sad (plays for Drama topic also)

Secondary Reading (General)

Secondary Readings on Prose

Secondary Readings on Drama:
(See also Drama topic in Section C)


Section C: Topics

C1: The Elegy (Michaelmas)
Selected poetry by Zhukovskii, Batiushkov, Pushkin, Baratynskii, Lermontov.

- The poems marked * are suggested for the attention of Part IB, Option A students.
- The poems are listed by poet, and then by—loose—sub-categories of the genre. In many instances the designation is not clear-cut, and is as much a point for discussion as clear categorization. If you decide that you want to make an excursion into ‘historical’ or ‘exilic’ elegy, say, then these categories will guide you.
- In all cases, students should read elegies from more than one category.

V.A. Zhukovskii
   *‘Sel’skoe kladbishche,’ *‘Na smert’ Andreia Turgeneva,’ ‘K K. M. Sokovninoi,’ ‘Vecher (elegii)’

K.N. Batiushkov
   *‘Vyazdorovlenie,’ ‘Ten’ druga,’ ‘Na razvalinakh zamka v Shvetsii,’ *‘Moi genii,’ ‘Perekhod cherez Rein’

A.S. Pushkin
   *‘Probuzhdenie,’ ‘Naezdniki,’ *‘Pogaslo dnevnoe svetilo,’ *‘Ia perezhil svoi zhelaniia,’ ‘Umolknu skoro ia!...,’ ‘Prostish’ li mne revnivye mechty,’ *‘K moriu,’ *‘Vospominanie,’ ‘Brozhui li ia v dol’ ulits shumnikh’

E.A. Baratynskii *(Option A: pick any one poem)
   ‘Razluka’ (“Rastalis’ my; na mig ocharovanie”), ‘Razuveren’e,’ ‘Priznanie’

M. Iu. Lermontov
   *‘Gliazhu na budushchnost’ s boiazn’iu’ (Option A: OR ‘Duma’), *‘Duma,’ ‘Son,’ *‘I skuchno i grustno’
‘Foundational’ elegy for 19th C Russian tradition: ‘Sel’skoe kladbishche’ (1802)

Gloomy elegy: Zhukovskii, ‘Vecher (elegia)’


Historical elegy: Batiushkov, ‘Na razvalinakh zamka v Shvetsii’, ‘Perekhod cherez Rein’

Byronic elegy: Pushkin, ‘Ia perezhil svoi zhelan’ia’; Lermontov, ‘I skuchno i grustno’


Exilic elegy: Pushkin, *’K moriu’

Secondary Readings

Theoretical Reading


On versification


(Chapters 1-3 are about reading a poem; Chapter 1 gives a good overview of versification; 

*See also: Ch4 ‘From the Ode to the Elegy’

For more detail on poetic meter see:


On poetry and elegy


Works on individual poets

For a quick, well-written overview of each poet, in terms of both poetry and biography, see Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era, 1760-1850 (ed. Christopher John Murray). Includes entries on Batiushkov, Baratynskii, Zhukovskii, Pushkin, Lermontov, Tiutchev. Neil Cornwell’s
Reference Guide to Russian Literature is similarly useful and includes entries on all the poets in the topic.

Zhukovskii
Eikhenbaum, B. M. “Zhukovskii” in Melodika: russkogo liricheskogo stikha, pp 27-71

Batiushkov

Baratynskii

Pushkin
Eikhenbaum, Boris. “Pushkin, Tiutchev, Lermontov” in Melodika: russkogo liricheskogo stikha, pp 72-118
------. Pushkin’s Lyric Intelligence (Oxford: OUP 2008). [for consultation on individual poems.]

**Lermontov**


-----.* Becoming Mikhail Lermontov: The Ironies of Romantic Individualism Nicholas I’s Russia.* Evanston: Northwestern UP, 2005. [selections]

Ginzburg, L. Ia. ‘Poetika lichnosti’ in *O lirike*.


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**C2: Fiction and Ideology in the 1860s (Lent)**

**Core Texts:**

Ivan Turgenev, *Otsy i deti* (1862)

Nikolai Chernyshevskii, ‘Chetvertyi son Very Pavlovny’ (excerpt from *Chto delat’?*, 1863)

Fedor Dostoevskii, *Zapiski iz podpol’ia* (1864) **Part IB, Option A** students should read Part I in Russian; Part II may be read in English.

Dostoevskii, *Besy* (1872) – this long novel is optional, but should be read in the vacation/year abroad by those with a particular interest in Dostoevskii.

**Secondary Readings**


**Turgenev**


Paperno, Irina. *Chernyshevsky and the Age of Realism* [“Introduction”: on the reception of
Ottsy i deti in the 1860s]


Chernyshevsky («Четвертый сон Веры Павловны» from Что делать?)

Dostoevsky
• Записки из подполья

• Besy

• General/both texts

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C3: The Drama in the Nineteenth Century (1 lecture end of Michaelmas, 1 lecture end of Lent)

Core texts

Griboedov  
*Gore ot uma* (1822-23)

Gogol  
*Revizor* (1836)

Ostrovsky  
*Groza* (1859)

Chekhov  
*Chaika* (1896)

*Vishnev’yi sad* (1904)

*[Diadia’Vania* (1899) / *Tri sestry* (1901) - as addition/alternatives, if you wish, though lectures will focus on the other two plays]*

See readings lists for Gogol and Chekhov in Section B.

**Griboedov**


**Ostrovsky**


**General**


