

University of Pittsburgh
 Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
 RUSS 0810: Masterpieces of 20th c. Russian Literature

Spring 2010
 Time: Tue/Thur 4-5:15
 Room: 116 Victoria Building
 Class number: 10478

Instructor: Andrew Chapman
 Email: ahc12@pitt.edu
 Office hours: Tue 2-3; Mon 12-1
 Office: CL 1417

Two class contacts:

Name _____ Tel. _____ Email _____

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Credits, Prerequisites, and Format:

Upon successful completion of Masterpieces of 20th Century Russian Literature, students will receive 3 credits and have completed a University-designated writing (W) 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; and 3) to submit all papers and revisions on the dates listed on the syllabus. The final paper is due on **April 15, 2010**. 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 by attentively reading all necessary assignments. Please bear in mind that because the class will present a survey of major works of 20th century Russian literature and will require that you write a minimum of 25 pages, the assignments are large and will be difficult to finish satisfactorily if they are put off until the day or even week before they are due.

Course Description:

This course will attempt to acquaint students with a more or less chronological presentation of masterpieces of twentieth-century Russian literature. Lectures will provide the social and historical background relevant to the text, and class discussions will focus on textual analysis of primary literature. Acknowledgement of literary movements (Symbolism, Futurism, etc.) and aesthetic trends and methods (Modernism, Socialist Realism, and Post-Modernism) will also guide our readings.

The course will be centered on several questions that will be revisited throughout the semester:

- How does 20th century literature treat everyday life?
- What is the relationship between the author and the state during different periods, and how does this relationship reflect cultural production?

- Do Russian writers of the century chose to reflect the world around them in terms of the conventions demanded by various movements and methods of a particular time or by other means?
- What role does literature take in depicting/constructing Soviet space? How are questions of nationhood, urban/rural space, and other boundaries treated?
- How does literature/culture react to the intensive project of Soviet modernization?

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

- Train the student to read primary texts closely and analytically;
- Make connections among texts, authors, and cultural events;
- Assist students in improving their researching and writing skills.

Required Texts:

We will be using the assigned texts in class discussion and you therefore **must** procure the same editions listed above, available in the Book Center and online. All other readings will be emailed, linked or available for download at the course's CourseWeb site.

We will be using the following reference manual as a guide for all writing assignments:
Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6th ed. NY: MLA, 2003.
You are encouraged to buy or borrow a copy for your personal use.

Bulgakov, Mikhail. *Master and Margarita*. Trans. Diana Burgin and Katherine Tiernan O'Conner. NYC: Vintage Books, 1996.

Erofeev, Venedikt. *Moscow to the End of the Line*. Trans. H. William Tjalsma. Northwestern UP, 1992.

Gladkov, Fyodor. *Cement*. Trans. A. S. Arthur. Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 1994.

Olesha, Yuri. *Envy*. Trans. Marian Schwartz. NY: NYRB, 2004.

Pelevin, Viktor. *Omon Ra*. Trans. Andrew Bromfield. NYC: New Directions Books, 1994.

Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. Trans. Ralph Parker. NYC: Signet Books, 1974.

Trifonov, Iurii. *Another Life and House on the Embankment*. Trans. Michael Glenny. Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 1999.

Voinovich, Vladimir. *The Fur Hat*. Trans. Susan Brownsberger. Orlando, Harcourt. 1991

Course Requirements and Grading:

Your grade will be comprised of the following elements:

- 25% Participation
- 20% Short writing assignments (topic proposals, outlines, bibliographies)
- 25% Five-page paper and revision
- 25% Final paper
- 5% Quizzes

Please note that late assignments will not be accepted.

Grading scale:

97-100—A+	87-89—B+	77-79—C+	67-69—D+	
93-96—A	83-86—B	73-76—C	63-66—D	≥ 59 = F
90-92—A-	80-82—B-	70-72—C-	60-62—D-	

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all classes. Missing classes jeopardizes your participation record and puts you in danger of missing important information. **More than three unexcused absences will affect the final grade by one full notch with each absence (A goes to A-, B+ to B, etc.). More than six absences total will result in automatic failure of the course, regardless of the student's prior standing.** Excused absences, such as illness or death in the immediate family, must be documented no later than a week after the student's return to class. Although the location of the class (116 Victoria Building) is not as convenient as other class locations, please make all efforts to come to class on time. This will not be a valid excuse at any point throughout the semester.

In case of absence, it is your responsibility to obtain from your classmates any information passed out during the class you missed. You are, therefore, encouraged to exchange telephone numbers and e-mail addresses with your classmates (use the space provided on the first page of this syllabus to note down relevant contact information).

If you are experiencing special problems in the course, do not hesitate to make an appointment with me.

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 Arts and Sciences Academic Integrity guidelines regarding cheating and plagiarism, available at: <http://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policy/integrity.html>. Any infraction of this policy will result in automatic course failure. Students also agree to submit papers in both printed and email forms, and agree that their paper is subject to be analyzed using the anti-plagiarism software at www.turnitin.com

Disability Policy:

If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, you are required to notify both me and Disability Resources and Services by the second week of the term. You may be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. To notify Disability Resources and Services,

call 412-648-7890 (voice or TDD) to schedule an appointment. The Internet address is: <http://www.pitt.edu/~osaweb/drs/drs.html>. The office is located in William Pitt Union, Rm. 216.

Schedule of Assignments:

Your day-to-day reading assignments will be either from the texts required for purchase or they will be posted on CourseWeb in link form under the appropriate week. Other texts may be emailed as PDF or word documents. Online material must be printed and brought to class. You should get into the habit of checking CourseWeb regularly, as you will often find the reading assignment, documents and/or links, study guides, and grades for the respective sessions. Please note the following dates below when important writing assignments are due. You may refer to the writing assignment handout for more information and details about each particular assignment. I reserve the right to change assignments throughout the semester, but will notify you in advance if there are any changes.

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- January 28: one-page topic proposal
- February 4: half-page outline and half-page bibliography
- February 16: five-page paper due
- March 2: revised five-page paper
- March 16: one-page topic proposal
- March 23: one-page bibliography
- April 6: one-page outline
- April 15: ten-page paper
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WEEK 1 & 2: Early 20th Century Movements, The *Avant-Garde* of the *Fin de Siècle*

Thursday, January 7: Introduction to course

- Review syllabus, policies, requirements
- In class: Prologue to Andrei Bely's *Petersburg*.

Tuesday, January 12: The Beginning as an End:

- HW: Maksim Gorky's "Twenty-Six and One," "Chelkash"
- From realism to modernism

Thursday, January 14: Symbolism: The Aesthetics of Beauty

- HW: Aleksandr Blok's "The Stranger" and "In a Restaurant,"
- HW: Viacheslav Ivanov's "The Testaments of Symbolism"
- HW: Valerii Briusov's "To a Young Poet," "Twilight"

- HW: Konstantin Bal'mont's "I am the refinement of sluggish Russian speech..."
- In-class: the Symbolists and their era; other movements: Acmeism

WEEK 3: Leaping Forward to Forge a New Society

Tuesday, January 19: Futurism and the Coming of the Revolution

- HW: Maiakovskii selections
- HW: Aleksandr Blok's "The Twelve" and "The Scythians"
- In-class: the Futurists and their goals, outlook
- **Add/Drop period ends**

Thursday, January 21: Utopia/Dystopia and the "Soviet experiment"

- HW: Zoshchenko's "The Galosh"
- HW: Excerpts from Bulgakov's *Heart of a Dog*, Zamiatin's *We*

WEEKS 4-6: Modernism vs. Socialist Realism

Tuesday, January 26:

- HW: Yuri Olesha's *Envy*, 5-73
- Olesha's unusual writing style; modes of narration

Thursday, January 28:

- HW: Yuri Olesha's *Envy*, 77-152
- **One-page topic proposal due**

Tuesday, February 2: Forerunners of Socialist Realism

- HW: Gladkov's *Cement*, 1-56
- HW: Speeches from the 1934 Soviet Writers Congress
- In class: paper topic proposals; the master plot of Socialist Realism

Thursday, February 4:

- HW: Gladkov's *Cement*, 57-112
- HW: Excerpt from Katerina Clark's *The Soviet Novel*
- In-class: Images and concepts of Socialist Realism; go over paper proposals
- **Half-page outline and half-page bibliography due**

Tuesday, February 9: Reforging and Remaking the Soviet Man

- HW: Gladkov's *Cement*, 113-263
- In-class: Clips from Nikolai Ekk's *Road to Life*

Thursday, February 11: Soviet Collectivity and Inclusiveness

- HW: Finish Gladkov's *Cement*
- HW: Watch Grigorii Alexandrov's *Circus* (Video 2672, 89 minutes)

WEEKS 7 & 8: Fantastical Worlds and Grotesque Realities

Tuesday, February 16:

- HW: Mikhail Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*, chapters 1-10
- In-class: Bulgakov's biography and work; structure of the novel
- **Five-page paper due**

Thursday, February 18:

- HW: Mikhail Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*, chapters 11-18
- In-class: Stalinism and the fate of authors

Tuesday, February 23:

- HW: Mikhail Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*, chapters 19-25
- In-class: The role of the devil

Thursday, February 25:

- HW: Mikhail Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*, chapters 26-Epilogue
- In-class: Discussion of ending, viewing of miniseries

WEEK 9: Narratives of Survival (Purges and The Great Patriotic War)

Tuesday, March 2: WW2:

- HW: Excerpts of Boris Polevoi's *Story of a Real Man*
- HW: Excerpts from Lidiia Ginzburg's *Blockade Diary*
- **Revised five-page paper due**

Thursday, March 4:

- HW: Anna Akhmatova's *Requiem*
- HW: Excerpts of Lidiia Chukovskaia's *Sofia Petrovna*
- In-class: Stalinism and the purges

WEEK 10: Spring Break

WEEK 11: The Thaw, Camp Literature, and Performance in the Public Sphere

Tuesday, March 16: The Gulag as Microcosm: Camp Literature and its Legacy

- HW: Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, 1-70
- HW: Selections of poetry by Yevtushenko, Voznesenskii
- In-class: Introduction to camp literature and memoirs
- **One-page topic proposal**

Thursday, March 18:

- HW: Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, 71-139

WEEK 12: Stagnation

Tuesday, March 23: Urban Literature, the Contemporary and the Exploration of the Everyday

- HW: Yuri Trifonov's *The House on the Embankment*, 187-280
- In-class: Trifonov's life and work
- **One-page bibliography due**

Thursday, March 25: Continuities in Soviet Historiography or Bringing Things Up to Date

- HW: Yuri Trifonov's *The House on the Embankment*, 280-350
- In-class: the intelligentsia in Soviet culture

WEEKS 13-15: Late Soviet Satire: Fashioning the Voice of the Individual vs. the Collective

Tuesday, March 30:

- HW: Erofeev's *Moscow to the End of the Line*, 1-65
- HW: Ryan-Hayes, "Introduction" to *Contemporary Russian satire*

Thursday, April 1:

- HW: Erofeev's *Moscow to the End of the Line*, 66-125
- In class: redrawing Soviet topography

Tuesday, April 6:

- HW: Finish Erofeev's *Moscow to the End of the Line*
- In class: inconclusive endings
- **One-page outline due**

Thursday, April 8:

- HW: Voinovich: *The Fur Hat*, 1-50
- In-class: Émigré literature

Tuesday, April 13:

- HW: Voinovich: *The Fur Hat*, 50-122
- In class: Talent vs. bureaucracy

Thursday, April 15:

- No class
- **Ten-page papers due in 1417 CL by 4 pm**

WEEK 16: Post-Modernism: The Breakdown of Morals and Meaning

Tuesday, April 20:

- HW: Viktor Pelevin's *Omon Ra*, 1-91

- In-class: the legacy of the Soviet experiment and post-modernism; informal paper presentations

Thursday, April 22:

- HW: Viktor Pelevin's *Omon Ra*, 92-154
- Film clips from *Hammer and Sickle*, *First on the Moon*
- In-class: conclusions and wrap-up