

## Nineteenth-Century Russian Poetry

Russian 2600  
CRN 18110  
T 1-3:20  
CL1221

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Fall 2006  
Office hours: T 3:30-5:30  
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### Course description:

This seminar examines nineteenth-century Russian poetry from the Sentimentalist/pre-Romantic works of V. Zhukovskii and K. Batiushkov, through A. Pushkin, M. Lermontov, and K. Pavlova, to F. Tiutchev, A. Fet, and N. Nekrasov.

### Selective bibliography:

Handout, plus items listed on this syllabus.

### Course requirements:

1. Complete the readings for each meeting indicated on the syllabus and be prepared to discuss them knowledgeably in class. [Question of weekly or other papers to be discussed at first meeting.]
2. Prepare an exhaustive analysis of 1-2 poems (depending on the assignments) for each class meeting.
3. Take the (a) occasional quizzes, (b) the oral midterm (for which, *inter alia*, you will have to recite two poems of your choice from memory), and (3) the written final.

### Schedule:

Week 1—August 29	Introduction. Michael Wachtel, <i>The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Poetry</i> Versification Heritage of eighteenth-century verse
Week 2—September 5	Versification (Wachtel; Unbegaun; Scherr; Silbajoris, <i>passim</i> )— theory and practice Rhetorical devices (e.g., anaphora, zeugma) and genre (e.g., ballad, elegy, <i>duma</i> ) Historical perspective (dominant literary tendencies and trends in poetry decade by decade)
Week 3—September 12	Vasilii Zhukovskii ( 1783-1852) <i>Svetlana</i> (1808-12), “Son” (1816), “Noch” (1823), “Ia Muzu iunuiu, byvalo” (1822-24)

Konstantin Batiushkov (1787-1855)  
“Ten’ druga” (1814), “Moi genii” (1815),  
“Probuzhdenie” (1815), “Podrazhaniia drevnim”  
(1821), “Zhukovskii, vremia vse progлотit” (1821)

\*Michael Wachtel, “The Russian ballad: passion, betrayal, Revenge, and the amphibrachic tetrameter line,” *The Development of Russian Verse* (Cambridge UP, 1998): 20-58

Week 4—September 19

Aleksandr Pushkin (1799-1837)  
early *poemy*: *Ruslan i Liudmila, Kavkazskii plennik*

\*Michael Wachtel, “Pushkin’s Long Poems and the Epic Impulse,” *Cambridge Companion to Pushkin* (ms.)

\*V.M. Zhirmunskii, *Bairon i Pushkin* (Leningrad: 1924 and 1978, *passim*)

Week 5—September 26

Pushkin (cont.)  
later *poemy*: *Tsygany, Mednyi vsadnik*

\*Luc Beaudoin, *Resetting the Margins: Russian Romantic Verse Tales and the Idealized Woman* (NY: Peter Lang, 1997): 135-56

\*David M. Bethea, “The Role of the *Eques* in Puškin’s *Bronze Horseman*,” *Puškin Today*, ed. David M. Bethea (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1993): 99-118

Week 6—October 3

Pushkin (cont.)  
metapoetry: “Muza” (1821), “Prorok,” “Poet” (1827),  
“Poetu” (1830)  
elegy: “Elegiia,” “Kogda dlia smertnogo...,” “Ia perezhil  
svoi zhelaniia...,” “Pora, moi drug, pora...,”  
“Vospominanie”

Week 7—October 10

Pushkin (cont.)  
philosophical verse: “Anchar,” “Besy,” “Angel,” “Demon,”  
“Telega zhizni”  
love poetry: “Ia pomniu chudnoe mgnovenie,” “Ia vas  
liubil...,” “Dlia beregov otchizny dal’noi”  
“Ia pamiatnik...” and Horace’s “Exegi monumentum”

Week 8—October 17

Mikhail Lermontov (1814-41)

“Smert’ poeta,” “Poet” (1838) (compare with Pushkin’s “Poet” and “Poetu”), *Demon* (compare with Pushkin’s “Otchizna,” “Duma,” “Borodino,” “Proshchai, nemytaia Rossiia”

\*Stephanie Sandler, “Pushkin Is Dead: The Elegies of Mikhail Lermontov, Vasily Zhukovsky, and Evdokia Rostopchina,” *Commemorating Pushkin: Russia’s Myth of a National Poet* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2004): 26-46

\*Vladimir Golstein, “*The Demon: How Not to Regain Paradise Lost*,” *Lermontov’s Narratives of Heroism* (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1998): 28-52

\*B. Eikhenbaum, *Lermontov: opyt istoriko-literaturnoi Otsenki* (L, 1924), *passim* [trans. *Lermontov* (Ardis, 1981)]

Week 9—October 24

Lermontov (cont.)

“Angel” (compare with Pushkin’s “Angel”), “Vykhozhu odin ia na dorogu,” “I skuchno, i grustno,” “Son” (compare with Zhukovskii’s “Son”) “Kogda volnuetsia...,” “Tuchi” (compare with Pushkin’s “Tucha”), “Parus,” “Kazach’ia kolybel’naia”

\*Vladimir Fisher, “Poetika Lermontova,” *Venok M. Iu. Lermontovu: Iubileinyi sbornik* (M-Petrograd, 1914): 196-236

Week 10—October 31

Karolina Pavlova (1807-93)

[“Jeanne d’Arc” (1839)], “Duma” (1840) (compare with Lermontov’s “Duma”), “10 noiabria 1840” (1840), “Tri dushi” (1845), “My sovremennitsy, grafina” (1847), “O bylom, o pogibshem, o starom” (1854), “Kogda karatelem velikim” (1855)

\*Judith Vowles, “The inexperienced muse: Russian women and poetry in the first half of the nineteenth century,” *A History of Women’s Writing in Russia*, eds. Adele Marie Barker and Jehanne M. Gheith (Cambridge UP, 2002): 62-84

\*Alexander Lehrman, “The Poetics of Karolina Pavlova,”

*Essays on Karlina Pavlova*, ed. Susanne Fusso and Alexander Lehman (Northwestern UP, 2001):3-20

**\*\*ORAL MIDTERM\*\***

Week 11—November 7      Fedor Tiutchev (1803-73)  
philosophical verse: “Silentium,” “Videnie,” “Son na more,” “Den’ i noch’,” “O veshchaia dusha moia!”  
“Dva golosa”  
nature: “Vesna” (1838), “Veseniaia groza,” “Utro v gorakh”

\*Richard Gregg, *Fedor Tiutchev: The Evolution of a Poet* (Columbia UP, 1965), *passim*

Week 12—November 14      Tiutchev (cont.)  
love: “Posledniaia liubov’,” “O kak ubiistvenno my liubim,” “Predopredelenie”  
political verse: “More i utes” “Eti bednye selen’ia” (1855), “Nad etoi temnoiu tolpoi” (1857), “Umom Rossiiu ne poniat”

Iurii Tynianov, “Vopros o Tiutcheve,” *Arkhaisty i novatory* (1928) (Priboi, 1929): 367-85.

Week 13—November 21      Afanasii Fet (1820-92)  
love: “Ia prishel k tebe s privetom,” “Shepot. Robkoe dykhan’e”  
nature: “Smerti” (1884) “Na stoge sena noch’ei iuzhnoi,” “Maiskaia noch’,”  
art/beauty: “Muza” (1887; compare to Pushkin’s “Muza”) “Muze” “Sredi zvezd” “Vse, vse moe, chto est’ i prezhdde bylo” (1887)

\*Richard Gustafson, *The Imagination of Spring: The Poetry of Afanasy Fet* (Yale UP, 1966), *passim*

Week 14—November 28      Nikolai Nekrasov (1821-77)  
“Rodina” (1846), “Muza” (compare with other Muza poems), “Poet i grazhdanin” (1856), “Muze” (1876), “Edu li noch’iu...,” “Plach detei” (1860), “Mat” (1868)

Iurii Tynianov, “Stikhovye formy Nekrasova,” *Arkhaisty i novatory* (1921/8) (Priboi, 1929): 399-411

Week 15—December 5

FINAL EXAM

Week 16—December 12

Valerii Briusov (1873-1924)

“Ia” (1899), “Poetu” (1907)

Konstantin Bal’mont (1867-1942)

“Ia–izyskannost’ russkoi medlitel’noi poezii” (1901/2),

“Bezglagol’nost’” (1903), “Kak ia pishu stikhi”(1906)

“Larets” (1916)

Aleksandr Blok (1880-1921)

“Neznakomka” (1906), “V restorane” (1910), “Noch’,

ulitsa, fonar’, apteka” (1912), “K muze” (1912),

*Dvenadtsat’* (1918)

Preface to *Modern Russian Poetry*, ed. V. Markov & M. Sparks  
(Indianapolis/NY: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966, 1967): li-lxxx