This course will focus on close readings and analyses of poetic texts from the three most significant literary movements of 20th century Russian Modernism: Symbolism, Acmeism, Futurism (1890s-1930s). In addition to enjoying the unique poetic language and formal characteristics of new verse forms, we will consider how these poetic texts reflect or refute the manifestos of the major literary movements and their relationship to the historical, literary, cultural, and biographical contexts of the era.

Our readings will include Balmont, Sologub, Gippius, Blok, Ivanov, Annensky, Akhmatova, Mandelstam, and Gumilev, Mayakovsky, Khlebnikov, Pasternak, and Tsvetaeva.

Goals: to understand the cultural significance of poetry in Russia; to learn to read Russian poetic texts [specifically, 1890s-1930s] by identifying structurally meaningful elements, which produce themes and motifs as well as the images, verbal semantics, and intertextual references or subtexts; to understand how any formal element can acquire semantic meaning[s] in the creative production of verse in the Russian cultural context; to gain an understanding of how the formal elements of meter, rhyme, and other structural characteristics are combined to create or contribute to this extremely dense form of expression of the human imagination.

Required Readings: Primarily from Handouts.

Also: E. Draitser: Russkie Poety XX Veka [Pitt Bkstore]

See Verse handouts from last term. There will be additional ones as well.

You should also refer to Handouts from last term for Chronology, Manifestoes, etc.

Critical readings: See Reading List of New Handouts, parts I & II

Please pay Chris Metil for the New Handouts: available in her office

Recommended Website: www.Russianpoetry.net

This site provides background, poems, translations, and it allows you to listen to the reading of many poems!! An extremely useful source, which is still in process, so it is far more useful for some poets than others.

Readings for each class: Specific texts will be highlighted for each class meeting. However, you are also responsible for reading the more general materials, critiques, background information, and particular articles on the different poets we will be reading as we move through the course. See separate reading list of handouts. Poems marked “Markov anthology” refer to the handouts from last term taken from that collection, page numbers are given for reference purposes. Some poems will be provided as separate handouts; and you may have to locate some poems yourselves in the library or on the website listed above. For analyses of poems, see requirements below.

Week  Date  Subject
2 Jan 16 Gippius and Briusov: introduction of Dol’niki
Gippius “Pesnia” [dol’niki]
Ivanov and Briusov: “esthetics of beauty” 1904-05
“Griadushchie guny” [dolniki] response to Ivanov’s “Kochevniki krasoty”
Bal’mont poems from Liturgiia krasoty, 1905
Sound texture Trochaic tetrameter. Pushkin’s “Besy”
Sologub “Chertovy kacheli” Balmont “Lemury”
Venclova: “K demonologii russkogo simvolizma”

Briusov: trochaic tetrameter and the ballad ”Orfei”; classical references
Briusov, p. 3, in Gasparov #77 “Bliz medlitelnogo nila…” the East
Bal’mont “Pliaska atomov” [fr Liturgiia krasoty, 1905]

3 Jan 23 Decadence and Russian Symbolism: Sologub, Gippius, Briusov
Readings: appropriate bio-bibliographical materials for today’s poets
The following articles will be helpful, useful: both Clowes: “Lit Decadence”

And

“The Nietzschean Image…” Schmid on Sologub’s late verse;
2 articles on Sonnet form and Ivanov: by Etkind and Klimoff
Topics: Urban themes; eroticism; theme of sorcery; theme of ennui, etc.
(1) Urban themes, esp. on Peterburg: see page in handout after Annensky:
Includes Briusov, “Peterburg,” Blok “Petr,” Annensky “Peterburg”
Also Gippius, p 72 “Peterburg” (1909) [Pushkin’s Mednyi Vsadnik, as subtext]
(2) Eroticism p48 Briusov “Bessonitsa” (1909-10), p58 Gippius “Tsvety nochi”
And Briusov’s pp42,44 “V sklepe” and “V zastenke” [1905]
(3) More on theme of ennui: Briusov p 50 “Tsvetok zasokhshii”
(4) Sorcery and creative imagination, nature: Sologub “Okolodovai ia vsiu prirody” p 96 in contrast to “My plennye zvery” p98
(5) Also: poems emphasizing sound texture, more Sologub +
Sologub, in Gasparov, p.39 #113; p27, #17,
Sologub, Belyi, Briusov, #s36, 38, 39, pp 45-49
(6) Sonnets: Post-symbolist Sonnets: Bal’mont and Ivanov [Markov anthol]
Compare [all Marjov anthol] Bal’mont’s earlier “Podvodny rasten’ia” (1905)
and Ivanov “Perevodchiku” w later sonnets—both Bal’mont & Ivanov
Bal’mont: pp16,18,20 “Tsvet strasti,” “Tsveta dragotsennogo,” “Kover”
Ivanov pp140, 142, 144, 146, “Sfinsky nad Nevy”
“Sobor Sv Marka” “Tvoe Imenovanie” “Dvustvorku”

4 Jan 30 Ivanov and Annensky: As Symbolists, and as Mentors of Post-Symbolism
Readings: appropriate bio-bibliographical materials for today’s poets; & introductory articles on Ivanov, and Terras on Annensky
Religious themes, theurgy; Aesthetics of nature and death
Ivanov p130. “Al’piiskii rog” and Janacek article
Annensky “Verbnaia ned’el’ja” in Borker article and poe
Continue: Sonnets from last time + Annensky sonnets [separate Xerox]
Statue poems: Ivanov p136 “Nartsiss,” Annensky p122 “Pace”
A Wanner article, “Blok’s Sculptural Myth” [under Blok]
Annensky pp *112, 114, 116120, 126 “Iul’” “Sentiabr’” “Iamby”
“Chernaia vesna” “Maki” “Ametisty,” “Moia Toska”

5 Feb 6  No class. Add extra hour to both Feb 13 and Feb 20

6 Feb 13  Finish Annensky, above: pp *112, 114, 116120, 126
“Sentiabr’” “Iamby”
“Chernaia vesna” “Maki” “Ametisty,” “Moia Toska”
Blok Early and Middle verse, through 1908 [see Draitser, and handouts]
“Vkhoozu ia v temnye khramy” [web copy] w chronology of poems;
Markove, pp 152-172, Draitser, pp 9-17 Read in chronolog. Order.
+Blok in Gasparov, p24, #100 [1905], p43, #118 [1908]
Re-read Wanner on “Blok’s Sculptural myth,” & Kostich “Petr”
Articles: Lidiia Ginzburg. “Nasledie I otkrytiia” [fr O lirike];
Feinberg, “Of Two Minds”; Klenin “O doblestjakh, o podvigakh”
Sagatov, Blok’s “Nochnaia Fial’ka: Self thru dream”
Smirnova “Perception of Creativity”
Byrns, “Vrubel & Blok”
One report [Luba]: “Ia prigvozhden k traktirnoi stoike”

If time, begin: ”Rodina” poems. Read: ”Na kulikovo pole” [canto I]

7 Feb 20  Blok Middle and Late verse, 1909/10-1920, including “Dvenadtsat’”
Read “Rodina” cycle poems in our texts: “Na Kulikovo pole,”
“Rossiia,” “Rozhdennye v goda glukhie” [Report Samantha], “Korshun”

Read Draitser, pp18-27, Marjov pp172 [”Chernyi voron”] -182, +
One report [Michelle] [”Unizhenie” 1910

Read 4 articles on ”Dvenadtsat’” and of course, Dvenadtsat—a copy in articles

Articles: Etkind & Ivanov on “Shagi komandora”;
Lotman on 1913 poem to Akhmatova;
Kodjak, Vroon, Hughes, on cycles, etc.
Schwarzband “Blok & Gumilev”

Last hour: Begin Acmeism. Read Gumilev:
Read articles on Acmeism and on Gumilev
Gumilev shorter poems: Review “Giraffe” [Parnassian influence]
“Piatistopnye iamby” as manifesto poem; “Somnenie,” “Sovremennost’”
“Pamiati Annenskogo” “Voina” + Markov: “Rabochii” “Shestoe chustvo”
Articles on “Zabliudivshiiasia tramvai” and the longer poem
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Feb 27 | Post-symbolism: Acmeism: Akhmatova  
Readings: See handouts. See handouts for designated poems. |
| Mar 5 | Post-symbolism: Acmeism: Mandel’shtam  
Readings: See handouts. See handouts for designated poems. |
| Mar 12 | **Spring Break** |
| Mar 19 | Post-symbolism: Futurism: Khlebnikov, Kruchenykh, Guro  
Readings: See handouts. See handouts for designated poems. |
| Mar 26 | Post-symbolism: Futurism: Mayakovskii  
Readings: See handouts. See handouts for designated poems. |
| Apr 2 | Futurism and its influence: Pasternak  
Readings: Marburg, Sestra moia-zhizn’ and other handouts. See handouts.  
See handouts for designated poems. |
| Apr 9 | Futurism and its influence: Tsvetaeva  
Readings: See handouts. See handouts for designated poems. |
| Apr 16 | Catch-up day |
| Apr 23 | Final Papers due, Student Reports on final papers |

**Basic Requirements:**
- Reading of all class materials and Active participation in class
- 3 Class reports: Analyses of poems [15-20 minutes]. Each of these should be written up and handed in, subsequently, BUT within two weeks of the presentation.
  - 1-Weeks 5-6: Blok  
  - 2-Weeks 7-9: Acmeism  
  - 3- Weeks 11-14: Futurism  
- Final 20-25 page paper on poet and topic of your choice  
- Final Class report on Final paper [25-30 minutes]  
- An annotated bibliography on a poet of your choice should accompany your final paper  
- Final paper is due the last week of class.

**Analyses of Poems should include:**
- 1-Copy of poem with stresses marked  
- 2-Meter: written out  
- 3-Rhyme scheme  
- 4-References to significant elements of sound texture besides rhyme: assonance, alliteration, paronomasia, etc.  
- 5-Identify speaker or “lyric persona” and audience  
- 6-Identify key themes, motifs, thematic devices, and how they are expressed  
- 7-Identify key images, and how they are expressed
8-Identify any subtexts—references to previous poems or dialogue with other poets, writers, where you can
9-Pick a theoretical approach to the poem which can help to elaborate on its meaning, significance. This may involve a psychological, biographical, intertextual, linguistic, structural, political, philosophical, religious interpretation, or a gender critique, or any other critique which seems to suit the particular poem, poet, or topic.
10-Please refer to Sherr, Gasparov, and/or Lotman, etc. for help with identifying formal characteristics, versification patterns, etc.
11-Please refer to bio-bibliographical information and other handouts for suggestions, help, etc.

Final paper:
   Paper may be an outgrowth of one of the shorter analyses above, or it may be comparative, or a more elaborate investigation of one particular poet and his/her work, or of a particular theme or versification problem as presented by a variety of poets, or a particular cycle of poems, or… Consult handouts. Consult with me after you have thought about your topic.
   But DO NOT wait until the last minute.