

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

Course Information

RUSS0810: Masterpieces 20th Century

Spring 2019

Tu Thu 1:00PM - 2:15PM

CL317

Instructor Information

Kiun Hwang

CL 1218

kih12@pitt.edu

Office Hours (In-Office)

Tue 12:00-1:00, Wed 4:00-5:00; By Appointment

Credits, Prerequisites, Requirements, and Format

Upon successful completion of Masterpieces of 20th Century Russian Literature, 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 assignment 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 18, 2019**. 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 assignments is necessary. Please bear in mind that because the class will present a survey of the prolific Russian literature of the 20th century and will require that you write a minimum of 20 pages, the reading and writing assignments are large and will be difficult to finish satisfactorily if they are put off until the day before they are due.

Course Description

In the twentieth century, the people of Russian lived through a wide range of both historical events and everyday practices. The apocalyptic anticipations of the *fin de siècle* appeared to be realized in the 1917 revolutions, when the world as Russians knew it changed enormously. The decades that immediately followed this complete regime change saw policies of nationalization, industrialization and collectivization, compounded with famine, wars, and terror, all of which caused massive, often catastrophic, demographic shifts. Soviet leaders from Lenin through Gorbachev ran the nation more like tyrannical fathers than savvy politicians. The postwar decades could be characterized by policies that partially and opportunistically rejected the violent upheavals of the first half of the twentieth century and cultivated Soviet labor and consumption in a highly controlled fashion. The effectiveness of such strategies would be judged in the final, tumultuous decades of the twentieth century.

The place of literature in this history is complex, because the relationship between life and art, and specifically literature, can be embodied by a whole array of possibilities. From the Symbolists and social agitators of the early years of the century, through the utopian discourses of the Soviet avant-garde and Socialist Realism, to the idealistic and jaded postwar reflections on the past and present in dissident, conformist, and

postmodernist fashion, the relationship between life and art has always been a conscious, constantly-changing element of the creative act in the twentieth century.

This course will present students with masterpieces of Russian literature in more or less chronological order. Classroom lectures will provide the social and historical background necessary to position literature in relationship to its production history. Classroom discussions will focus on close reading and analysis of the primary literature. Acknowledgement of literary movements (Symbolism, Futurism, etc.) and aesthetic trends and methods (Modernism, Socialist Realism, and Postmodernism) will also guide our readings.

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

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

Required Texts

7 of the required texts for this course (listed below) are available from the Pitt Book Center. The instructor will post the remainder of required readings on Courseweb.

- Akunin, Boris. *The Winter Queen*. Trans. Andrew Bromfield. New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2003.
- Bulgakov, Mikhail. *The Master and Margarita*. Trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. New York: Penguin Classics, 1997.
- Olesha, Yuri. *Emy*. Trans. Marian Schwartz. New York: New York Review Books Classics, 2004.
- Pelevin, Victor. *Omon Ra*. Trans. Andrew Bromfield. New York: New Directions Books, 1994.
- Platonov, Andrei. *The Foundation Pit*. Trans. Robert Chandler, Elizabeth Chandler, and Olga Meerson. New York: New York Review Books Classics, 2009.
- Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. Trans. H.T. Willetts. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1991. Signet Books, 1974.
- Tertz, Abram (Andrei Siniavskii). *The Trial Begins and On Socialist Realism*. Trans Max Hayward and George Dennis. Berkeley and LA: U of CA P, 1982.
- Trifonov, Yuri. *Another Life and House on the Embankment*. Trans. Michael Glenny. Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 1999.

We will be using the following reference manual as a guide for all writing assignments. You are encouraged to buy or borrow a copy for your personal use.

- Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th ed. NY: MLA, 2009.

The instructor has also placed Victor Terras's *History of Russian Literature* and *Handbook of Russian Literature* on reserve at Hillman Library. They are good general reference and may help you position yourself as you begin research for your papers.

Attendance and Grading:

Students are expected to attend all classes in order to maintain a good record of participation and avoid the risk of missing important information. There are no excused absences. Each student gets **two "free" absences**. After two missed classes, each additional absence counts as a zero in class participation for that day. **More than 4 absences will result in an "F" for the course**. In the event of a serious emergency that results in an extended absence, please talk to the instructor as soon as possible. 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.

In the case of an absence, the student is responsible for the material covered, and should find out from classmates what important information was announced or passed out during the session he or she missed (this includes audio or visual material presented in class). Therefore, it is to your advantage to exchange email addresses or telephone numbers with another student in the class. Please be generous and considerate colleagues to one another. You may also see me during office hours to review these materials. I will NOT distribute my class notes.

Student performance will be evaluated in every session of the course and assigned a letter grade based on participation in classroom discussion, intellectual contribution to discussion, and the results of in-class activities.

Disruptively tardy arrivals and early departures will count against participation as absences unless the instructor is informed of appropriate reasons before class. Inappropriate, distracting, inattentive, rude, and disruptive classroom behaviors, e.g. talking out of order, surfing the internet, texting, sleeping, etc., are potentially serious infringements of the University's Academic Integrity Code (see below) and will not be tolerated.

Grading Policy

Grades will be calculated based on the following percentages:

- 15% Short Writing Assignments (topic proposals, outlines, bibliographies)
- 25% Participation
- 25% Short Paper and Revision
- 35% Final Paper

****Late papers will not be accepted.**

Final grades will be determined on the following scale:

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

Letter grades assigned over the course of the semester are converted to the median numeric grade (e.g. A = 94.5), from which the final grade is calculated. If you feel you are experiencing special problems in the course, or would like to consult about your progress in the class, do not hesitate to make an appointment with me or drop into the Slavic Department during office hours. I will be happy to discuss any aspect of the class with you, including paper topics, study habits, reading strategies, additional interests, or Russian culture in general.

Academic Integrity

By remaining enrolled in the course, students not only agree to abide by the above stipulations, but also understand that the instructors will follow rigorously the rules regarding cheating, plagiarism, etc. spelled out in the University's *Guidelines on Academic Integrity – Student and Faculty Obligations and Hearing Procedures* (Policy 02-03-02, <http://www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/02/02-03-02.html>). It is the students' responsibility to familiarize themselves with these regulations and to observe them. Any infraction will be penalized according to these rules.

Special Accommodations

Students who require special accommodations for testing or other classroom situations should notify me and Disabilities Resources and Services by the second week of the term. I will then work with Disability Resources and Services to meet those requirements for accommodation. Anyone who needs to register a disability should contact DRS at 412-648-7890, or visit their office in William Pitt Union, Room 216. Further information about DRS is available at <http://www.drs.pitt.edu/>.

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.

The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus at any point in the semester, as circumstances demand. Any changes will be announced in class and through e-mail in advance of implementation.

Schedule of Assignments

Your day-to-day assignments may be from the texts required for purchase, linked through CourseWeb, or e-mailed as PDF or word documents. Online material must be printed and brought to class. You should check CourseWeb and your e-mail regularly, as these will be the main modes for distributing information. Please note the following dates below, when important writing assignments are due.

I reserve the right to change assignments throughout the semester, but I will notify you in advance if there are any changes. Assignments are to be completed by the date beside which they appear.

Each specific writing assignment will be described by the instructor in class, in oral and written form, one week before the assignment is due.

Short Paper

January 22: One-Page Topic Proposal
 January 29: Half-Page Outline and Half-Page Bibliography
 February 12: Four-Page Paper
 February 26: Revision Assignment

Final Paper

March 19: One-Page Topic Proposal
 March 28: One-Page Bibliography
 April 4: One-Page Outline
 April 18: Ten-Page Paper

Week 1	Jan 8	Introduction and Syllabus
	Jan 10	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modernity, Decadence, Aestheticism <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maksim Gor'kii: "Twenty-Six and One" (1899) - Fedor Sologub: "Beauty" (1899)
Week 2	Jan 15	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Symbolism: From the Forest of Symbols to Life-Creation and the Revolution <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Viacheslav Ivanov: "The Testaments of Symbolism" (1910) - Valerii Briusov: "To a Young Poet" (1896) - Aleksandr Blok: "The Stranger" (1906); "The Twelve" (1918); "The Scythians" (1918)

	Jan 17	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Polemics with Symbolism: Acmeism and Futurism <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Burluk, Aleksei Kruchenykh, Vladimir Maiakovskii, and Velimir Khlebnikov: "A Slap in the Face of Public Taste" (1912) - Osip Mandel'shtam: "The Morning of Acmeism" (1913) - Vladimir Maiakovskii: "The Backbone-Flute" (1917) - Osip Mandel'shtam: "Hagia Sophia" (1922); "Notre Dame" (1922) - Anna Akhmatova: "He loved three things in the world" (1910); "Song about a Final Meeting" (1914)
Week 3	Jan 22	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Zaum</i>: Trans-Sense Poetry - The Formalists <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shklovsky: "The Resurrection of the Word" (1914); "Art as Technique" (1917) - Velimir Khlebnikov: "Incantation of Laughter" (1908-09); "Proposals" (1915) - Aleksei Kruchenykh: "Dyr bul shy!" (1912) <p>***One-Page Topic Proposal Due***</p>
	Jan 24	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Civil War - Babel' Stories from <i>The Red Cavalry</i> (1920-1925) <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Isaak Babel': from <i>The Red Cavalry</i> (w. 1920-1925; p. 1927), "Gedali"; "My First Goose"; "The Rebbe"; "Salt"

Week 4	Jan 29	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fellow Travelers - Modern(-ist) Concerns - Unusual writing style; modes of narration <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Iurii Olesha: <i>Emvy</i> (1927): 5-73 <p>***Half-Page Outline and Half-Page Bibliography Due***</p>
	Jan 31	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Iurii Olesha: <i>Emvy</i> (1927): 74-15
Week 5	Feb 5	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Urban Discourses of Utopia/Dystopia <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evgenii Zamiatin: “The Cave” (1920) - Mikhail Zoshchenko: “Nervous People” (1924); “The Galosh” (1927)
	Feb 7	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Cannibalization of the Soviet Avant-Garde <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Andrei Platonov: <i>The Foundation Pit</i> (1930): 1-80
Week 6	Feb 12	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Andrei Platonov: <i>The Foundation Pit</i> (1930): 81-152 <p>***Four-Page Paper Due***</p>

	Feb 14	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Images and Concepts of Socialist Realism <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Katerina Clark: Excerpt from <i>The Soviet Novel</i> - Nikolai Ostrovskii: Excerpt from <i>How the Steel Was Tempered</i> (1932-34)
Week 7	Feb 19	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fantastical worlds and grotesque realities <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mikhail Bulgakov: <i>The Master and Margarita</i> (w. 1931-40; p. 1966): chapters 1-10
	Feb 21	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mikhail Bulgakov: <i>The Master and Margarita</i>: chapters 11-18
Week 8	Feb 26	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mikhail Bulgakov: <i>The Master and Margarita</i>: chapters 19-25 <p>***Revision Assignment Due***</p>
	Feb 28	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mikhail Bulgakov: <i>The Master and Margarita</i>: chapters 26- Epilogue
Week 9	Mar 5	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Narratives of Survival (The Great Patriotic War) <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Excerpts from Boris Polevoi's <i>Story about a Real Man</i> (1946) - Excerpts from Lidiia Ginzburg's <i>Blockade Diary</i>

	Mar 7	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uncovering Stalin's Crimes - Rehabilitating the Social Sphere - Reaching Back to Modernism <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evgenii Evtushenko: "Babi Yar" (1961); "The Heirs of Stalin" (1962) - Andrei Voznesenskii: "Fire at the Architectural Institute" (1957); "Goya" (1959) - Anna Akhmatova: <i>Requiem</i> (1935-40, p. 1963 in Munich)
Week 10	Mar 12	Spring Break
	Mar 14	
Week 11	Mar 19	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Camp Literature <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: <i>A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich</i> (1962) <p>***One-page Topic Proposal Due***</p>
	Mar 21	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Double Life of Art - End of the Literary Thaw <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Andrei Siniavskii: "What is Socialist Realism?" (w. 1959) - Abram Tertz: "Pkhents" (1966)
Week 12	Mar 26	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Village Prose: The Radiant Past <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vasilii Shukshin: "Snowball Berry Red" (1973)

	Mar 28	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Urbanists <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Iurii Trifonov: <i>The House on the Embankment</i> (1976): 187-280 <p>***One-Page Bibliography Due***</p>
Week 13	Apr 2	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Iurii Trifonov: <i>The House on the Embankment</i> (1976): 280-350
	Apr 4	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Breakdown of Morals and Meaning <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liudmila Petrushevskaiia: “Our Crowd” (w. 1979; p. 1988) - Viktor Erofeev: “The Parakeet” (p. 1988) <p>***One-Page Outline Due***</p>
Week 14	Apr 9	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Postmodernism <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Victor Pelevin: <i>Omon Ra</i> (1993): 1-91
	Apr 11	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informal presentation of papers - The Nineties <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Viktor Pelevin: <i>Omon Ra</i> (1993): 92-154

Week 15	Apr 16	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post-postmodernism? - Questions of genre <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boris Akunin: <i>The Winter Queen</i> (1998): Ch. 1-11
	Apr 18	<p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Into the Twenty-First Century - Conclusions and Wrap-Up <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boris Akunin: <i>The Winter Queen</i> (1998): Ch 12-17 <p>***Final 10-Page Paper by 5pm***</p>