

**Russ. 2630 The Russian Novel (35631)
Spring 2009**

**M 4:30-7:15
CL 229**

**Helena Goscilo
Office hours: W 2-3; 4:15-5:15**

Course description:

This course investigates (1) Mikhail Bakhtin's theories of the novel, with some attention paid to commentary on the genre by the Marxist Gyorgy Lukács and other critics, and (2) five "mainstream"/malestream nineteenth-century Russian examples of the genre in light of those theories. Topics structuring the course include the traditional comparison of the epic with the novel; novelistic discourse and psychological paradigms; history and the novel; the conventions and functions of the *Bildungsroman*; novelistic chronotopes (e.g., the idyll, the threshold); and narrative voice. "The family" and generational issues serve as the overarching framework for our discussions, since they materialize history in domesticated form, provides a meta-view of novelistic development [Harold Bloom's contestable "anxiety of influence"], and prefigure more than a half-century of Soviet cultural rhetoric.

All primary readings are in Russian; most secondary readings (including Bakhtin, for the sake of convenience) are in English. Although the course emphasizes issues of genre, it takes into account the cultural and historical context that both incubated and responded to the Russian works of fiction we shall be reading. The twofold goal of the course is to acquire (a) a sound understanding of the novel as a genre and (b) a thorough familiarity with historically important instances of, and debates around, the nineteenth century's dominant fictional form.

Readings:

Theory and Criticism:

Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination* (U of Texas P, 1981) [DI]

_____. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (U of Minnesota P, 1984/1985) [PoDP]

Various articles and items, some to be distributed, others to be read/xeroxed in Hillman

Novels:

Aleksandr Pushkin, *Kapitanskaia dochka* (1836)

Mikhail Lermontov, *Geroi nashego vremeni* (1840)

Ivan Turgenev, *Ottsy i deti* (1862)

Fedor Dostoevskii, *Besy* (1877)

Lev Tolstoi, *Anna Karenina* (1877)

Materials:

I have not ordered any Russian materials, on the assumption that most of you own all the required primary texts, of which there are multiple copies in Hillman. The two Bakhtin volumes you can purchase more cheaply through amazon.com or half.com than in the bookstore.

Requirements (subject to modification):

- *completion of assigned readings for the day specified;
- *regular participation in class discussions;
- *class presentations (15 mins. each);
- *critiques of fellow grads' presentations (10 mins. each);
- *a 1-page paper on an assigned topic for most class meetings;
- *two 5-page papers
- *unannounced quizzes

Schedule:

1st session (Jan. 5) Practical matters.
Definitions of the novel; approaches to the genre (NB: French and Russian "*roman*," Italian "*romanzo*," German "*Roman*"(romance); English "novel," Spanish "*novela*" (novelty)
Susan Sontag, "Pay Attention to the World" (2004/2007)
Bakhtin, "Epic and Novel" (1941) (DI: 3-40)

2nd session (Jan. 12) **G. Lukács, from *The Theory of the Novel* (1920) [xerox]**
Bakhtin, "From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse" (1940) (DI: 41-83)
Michael Aucouturier, "The Theory of the Novel in Russia in the 1930s: Lukács and Bakhtin" [xerox]
1 class presentation; 1 critique

NO CLASS JAN. 19—MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

3rd session (Jan. 26) **Bakhtin, "Forms of Time and the Chronotope in the Novel" (1937-38) (DI: 84-258)**
1 class presentation; 1 critique

4th session (Feb. 2) **Pushkin, *Kapitanskaia dochka* (1836)**
G. Lukács, from *The Historical Novel* (1955) [xerox]
F. Moretti, from *The Way of the World: the "Bildungsroman" in European Culture* (1987) [xerox]
2 class presentations; 2 critiques

5th session (Feb. 9) ***Kapitanskaia dochka (cont.)***
FILM: Aleksandr Proshkin, *Russkii bunt (2000)*
S. Freud, from *The Interpretation of Dreams; Family Romances (1909)*[xerox]
Caryl Emerson, “Grinev’s Dream: *The Captain’s Daughter* Father’s Blessing,” *Slavic Review*
and a
(Spring 1981): 60-76
2 presentations; 2 critiques

7th session (Feb. 16) ***Geroi nashego vremeni (1840)***
Bakhtin, “Discourse in the Novel” (1934-35) (DI: 259-422)

1 class presentation; 1 critique

8th session (Feb. 23) ***Ottsy i deti (1862)***
Bakhtin, “Forms of Time and the Chronotope in the Novel”

[again] (DI: 224-36; 243-58)
1 presentation; 1 critique

9th session (Mar. 2) ***Ottsy i deti (cont.)***
F. Moretti, from *The Way of the World: the “Bildungsroman...”* [again]
Bakhtin, “The *Bildungsroman* and Its Significance in the History of Realism (Toward a Historical Typology of the Novel)” [xerox]
Bakhtin, DI: 315-20; PoDP: 285-86
David A. Lowe, *Turgenev’s “Fathers and Sons” (Ardis, 1983), esp. 114- 40*
Peruse Jane Costlow, *World within Worlds: the Novels of Ivan Turgenev*

(Princeton UP, 1990)
1 class presentation; 1 critique

NO CLASS MARCH 9—SPRING BREAK

10th session (Mar. 16) ***Besy (1877)–Parts I & II***
V. Ivanov, “Osnovnoi mir v romane *Besy*,” “*Besy*”: *Antologiiia russkoi kritiki: 508-513* [xerox]

Bakhtin, *PoDP 5-180*
1st 5-page paper due

11th session (Mar. 23) ***Besy (cont.)–Part III***
Michael Holquist, “The Biography of Legend: *The*

Possessed,” Michael Holquist, *Dostoevsky & the Novel* (Northwestern UP, 1977): 124-47

L. Grossman, “Stilistika Stavrogina,” “Besy”: *Antologïia russkoi kritiki*: 606-614 [xerox]

A. Bem, “Evoliutsiia obraza Stavrogina” “Besy”: *Antologïia russkoi kritiki*: 638-62 [xerox]

1 class presentation; 1 critique

12th session (Mar. 30) ***Anna Karenina* (1877)—Parts I & II**

Bakhtin, PoDP: 181-302

Readings in MLA volume; Alexandrov; Morson; Schultze

13th session (Apr. 6) ***Anna Karenina* (cont.)—Parts III-V**

Caryl Emerson, “The Tolstoy Connection in Bakhtin,” *Rethinking Bakhtin: Extensions and Challenges*, eds. G. S. Morson & C. Emerson (Northwestern UP, 1989): 149-70

1 class presentation; 1 critique

14th session (Apr. 13) ***Anna Karenina* (cont.)—Parts VI-VIII**

Caryl Emerson, “Problems with Baxtin’s Poetics,” *SEEJ*

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(1988): 503-525

15th session (Apr. 20) **FILM: Aleksandr Zarkhi, *Anna Karenina* (1967)**

Conclusion; general discussion

2nd 5-page paper due