

## INTRODUCTION TO RUSSIAN LITERATURE I (20<sup>th</sup> century)

Russian V3334  
Spring 2005  
MWF 1:10-2:00  
Room 707 HAM

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Office hours: M 12:00-1:00, W 12:00-1:00,  
12:00-1:00 and by appointment

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This course provides an introduction to Russia's prose literature of the 20th century, while serving as a vehicle to your continued improvement in Russian language. Through close readings, presentations, and discussions, we will work on analyzing these works as literary constructions and set them in a larger literary and historico-cultural context; all the while, you will be improving your ability to function at the advanced level of Russian proficiency. In our work, we will be exploring such issues as the development and characteristics of modernism, the relation between the tumultuous events of the Russian 20<sup>th</sup> century and literature, and writers' use of the literary tradition.

The reading list for the spring includes:

А.П. Чехов, «Тоска» (1886), «Скрипка Ротшильда» (1894)  
И.А. Бунин, «Легкое дыхание» (1916)  
Исаак Бабель, «Мой первый гусь» (1926), «Иисусов грех» (early 1930s)  
Юрий Олеша, «Лиомпа» (1927)  
Михаил Зощенко, «Обезьяний язык» (1925), «Иностранцы» (1928)  
Андрей Платонов, «Семён» (1937)  
Владимир Набоков, «Весна в Фиальте» (1938)  
Сергей Довлатов, «Компромисс третий» (опубликован 1981)  
Людмила Петрушевская, «Такая девочка» (1988)  
Виктор Пелевин, «Ника» (1999)

Classes are conducted in Russian. In addition to the execution of readings in a timely manner and in Russian, course requirements consist of :

*the writing of discussion questions* for each class session (15%)  
*attendance* (5%) -- you may miss 4 class sessions without excuse or penalty; additional absences may be allowed for religious holidays and sickness, but must be cleared with the instructor.  
*participation in class discussions* (20%)  
*written compositions* (20%)  
*midterm* (15%)  
*final* (25%)

For each class session, you will be asked to write an extended discussion question (paragraph-length), in Russian, to present to your classmates; these will serve as the basis of our discussions. Other types of work will include short presentations and structured debates (part of your class discussion grade). Written compositions, in Russian, will be required roughly once every week or two; you will have a choice of topics. The midterm and final will consist of short identification essays, some translation, and longer essay questions (the latter in English).

The texts will be given out in class, and available for download on the Courseworks website. A good Russian-English dictionary (in hard copy) is a good and likely necessary investment – I recommend the Oxford dictionary line. Online dictionaries can likewise be useful; a few links will be posted in the “study tools” section on Courseworks.

A note on the class policy for plagiarism: your work in this class must be your own. No papers will require the use of outside research or sources, but if you choose to use any, you must provide a “Works Cited or Consulted” at the end of your paper. You may not consult native speakers of Russian for extensive grammar advice; and, considering that Russian word-processing proofing tools may not be available to all students in the class, I would like you to refrain from using those when writing papers.

Please feel free to come to me with any questions, issues, or concerns at any time during the semester – whether they be general ones or a question about vocabulary or grammar structure.