Pushkin: The Invention of Russian Literature

Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837) was an acknowledged genius, the No. 1 writer during his lifetime, not because he wrote best-sellers (although he did), but because his work, and his personality and life, exemplified qualities that brought him recognition and fame. Pushkin traced his lineage to noble families and was the great grandson of Peter the Great’s Abyssinian general, Abram Petrovich Gannibal, born an African prince. Pushkin was the Russian Byron, the Russian Mozart of poetry.

After graduating from the elite Lycée, at age 21, the publication of his first major poem, Ruslan and Ludmila (1820), created a sensation, especially when he was exiled to the south at the same time for circulating poems about freedom. In 1826, back in St. Petersburg, where the Emperor Nicholas I was his personal censor, Pushkin became a professional man of letters and established a literary journal. His greatest work, the novel in verse Eugene Onegin (1833), was acclaimed as “an encyclopedia of Russian life” and was made into a beloved opera by Petr Tchaikovsky in 1878. Students copied his bawdy poetry in their albums. His reputation with women made mothers fear for their daughters. His marriage to the beautiful Natalia Goncharova led to a duel over her honor, in which he was killed.

Since then, his stature in Russian literature has only increased and he is Russia’s national poet, a literary saint with statues throughout Russia and streets named after him in every town. Pushkin is central to understanding Russian culture over the past 200 years, and is only less well known than Dostoevsky and Tolstoy in the West because of the difficulties of translating poetry.

This course examines a variety of Pushkin’s works in poetry and prose, and their translations into opera and song, in strict chronological order with attention to the development of his career and reputation. Works include: the mock-epic fairy tale Ruslan and Ludmila, the novel in verse Eugene Onegin, the historical drama Boris Godunov, the romantic tale The Queen of Spades, the Little Tragedies, The Tales of Belkin, and his love and erotic poetry. This course is in English.
Required Texts
Please buy these translations only. Highlighted abbreviations used in syllabus to indicate which book the selections are in. Call number indicate that the book is on reserve.

6. All other required texts, and optional texts in Russian (for those who know Russian) are on Blackboard (BB)

Reference Works on reserve
- *Onegin*, directed by Martha Fiennes, starring Ralph Fiennes (Onegin) and Liv Tyler (Tatyana), 2007, 106 min. PN1997 .O5593 2000 DVD
Web Resources
Russkaia virtual’naia biblioteka: Pushkin’s Sobranie sochinenii v 10 t. (Collected Works in 10 Volumes) (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literature, 1959)
http://www.rvb.ru/pushkin/toc.htm

Literatura
http://www.litera.ru/stixiya/authors/pushkin.html

Friends and Partners: Poetry, some in Russian and English, most in Russian, by year

Publichnaia elektronaia biblioteka

Requirements
This course includes three papers and no final exam. All papers can be revised for a better grade and I will average the grades. Please number pages and include the word count.

1. A four-page paper (1,000 words), due on February 1 in class in which you analyze one of the primary differences between Pushkin’s poem Ruslan and Ludmila and Glinka’s opera: the full characterization of the hero and heroine in the opera. How and why does Glinka do this? Why is Pushkin’s poem successful without fully developed characters? (20%)

2. An eight-page paper (2,000 words), due on March 22 in class in which you analyze some aspect of Eugene Onegin. You may include a comparison with the opera. (40%)

3. A six-page paper (1,500) due on April 12 in class in which you analyze the poem “The Bronze Horseman” and Pushkin’s views on Russian history, especially Peter the Great. You should draw on other works in the class. (30%)

4. Class participation includes attendance, sharing your ideas, and listening carefully to your classmates. (10%)

Goals
Students should learn the following information and skills:

1. Major works by Alexander Pushkin in poetry and prose, his biography, and his afterlife in Russian literature and culture, especially in music
2. How to identify, articulate, and write about key aspects of Pushkin’s works and life in Russian culture.
3. An appreciation of the challenges and choices involved in the adaptation of Pushkin’s works into songs and operas.
4. An understanding of the issues involved in the translation of Russian poetry and prose.
5. The ability to scan poetry and integrate the formal aspects of poetry with the content (as much as this is possible in translation).
Attendance
Attendance is mandatory. I take formal attendance. Let me know ahead of time if you cannot come to class. After 4 unexcused absences, your grade for the course will drop half a grade.

Syllabus
1T Jan 18 Which Pushkin? Pushkin in Russian literature and culture; transitions from Classicism to Sentimentalism, Romanticism, and Realism; the development of a literary marketplace, patronage and professional writers; Russian poetry and versification

R Jan 20  Lyrics, 1813-1819 (5-35); “Liberty” (1817) PT/BB (3-5)
• “Appendix on Verse-Forms,” in The Cambridge Companion to Pushkin, ed. by Andrew Kahn (New York: Cambridge UP, 2006), 221-23, BB


R Jan 27 Opera: Ruslan and Lyudmila, (1842) by Mikhail Glinka (1804-57)
1. Mikhail Kit and Anna Netrebko, Valery Gergiev conducting the Kirov, 1995, 210 min. On-line access through library catalog (in Russian, no sub-titles) and on reserve M1500.G55 R47 2003 DVD
• Boris Gasparov, Ch. 2 “Farewell to the Enchanted Garden: Pushkin, Glinka’s Ruslan and Ludmila, and Nicholas’s Russia.” (23-57)

3T Feb 1 The Southern Poems: Pushkin in Exile from Moscow and St. Petersburg (May 6, 1820 to Sept. 8, 1826)
   Opera: César Cui (1835-1918), Prisoner of the Caucasus (1883)
2. Gabriliad (Apr. 1821; June-Oct 1828 questioned by police and Nicholas I; London, 1861; Berlin, 1861; 1st pub. in Russia, censored, 1908) CNLP/BB (223-39)
Paper #1 due

R  Feb 3  The Southern Poems
3. *The Fountain of Bakhchisaray* (Fall 1823; Mar. 1824, 1827, 1830, 1835) CNLP/BB (247-67)
4. *The Gypsies* (Oct. 20, 1824; fragment 1825 and 1826, as song 1825, 1827, 1835, 1853)
   PT/BB (59-80)
   Opera: Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943), *Aleko* (1892)

4T  Feb 8  *Lyrics* 1820-1829 (1820-24: 39-77)

   CNLP/BB (71)

5T  Feb 15  *Lyrics* 1820-1829 (1826-29: 102-52); “The Talisman” (1827)
   PT/BB (30-31)

R  Feb 17  Pushkin in Mikhailovskoe (Aug. 9, 1824-Sept. 8, 1826)
   *Eugene Onegin* (around Mar. 23, 1833)
   Ch. 1 (Oct. 22, 1823; Feb. 1825, Mar. 1829) (1-31)
   Ch. 2 (Dec. 8, 1823; Oct. 1826, May 1830) (33-54)
   Ch. 3 (Oct. 2, 1824; Oct. 1827) (55-81)
   Opera: Petr Tchaikovsky (1840-93), *Eugene Onegin* (1878)

6T  Feb 22  *Boris Godunov* (Nov. 7, 1825; 1831; first performed 1870)

R  Feb 24  *Opera*: Modest Mussorgsky (1839-81), *Boris Godunov* (1869)

7T  Mar 1  *Eugene Onegin* (around Mar. 23, 1833)
   Ch. 4 (Jan. 3, 1826; Jan. 31, 1828 (together with Ch. 5) (83-106)
   Ch. 5 (Nov. 26, 1826; Jan. 31, 1828) (107-29)
   Ch. 6 (Aug. 1826; Mar. 1828, “End of Part I) (131-54)
R Mar 3 *The Moor of Peter the Great* (1827-28; fragments 1829, 1830, 1834; all 6 chapters, unfinished, posthumously in 1837) CPT (3-42)

*Poltava* (Oct. 1828; Mar. 1829) CNLP/BB (311-69)
- Opera: Petr Tchaikovsky (1840-93), *Mazeppa* (1884)

*A Novel in Letters* (1829; 1857) CPT (45-59)

8T Mar 8 Pushkin, Journalist (*Literary Gazette*, Jan. 1, 1830-June, 1831; 1840-49)

*Eugene Onegin* (around Mar. 23, 1833)
- Ch. 7 (Nov. 4, 1828; Mar. 1830) (155-82)
- Ch. 8 (Sept. 1830, originally Ch. 9; Jan. 1832) (183-212)
- Appendix (Sept. 18, 1830, originally Ch. 8; first pub?) (215-27)
- Ch. 10 (burned Oct. 19, 1830)

R Mar 10 Opera: Petr Tchaikovsky (1840-93), *Eugene Onegin* (1878)
- 2. Mirella Freni (Tatiana), Bruno Bartoletti conducting the Lyric Opera of Chicago, 1985, 159 min.) M1500.T29 E8x 1985 VIDEO
  - Boris Gasparov, Ch. 3, “Eugene Onegin in the Age of Realism,” (58-94)

Spring Break

9T Mar 22 Pushkin in Boldino (Sept. 3 to Dec. 5, 1830)

*The Tales of the Late Ivan Petrovich Belkin* (anonymously, 1831) CPT (61-140)
- 1. From the Editor (Sept. 14, 1830)
- 2. The Shot (Oct. 14, 1830)
- 3. The Blizzard (Oct. 20, 1830)
- 4. The Undertaker (Sept. 9, 1830)
- 5. The Postmaster (Sept. 14, 1830)
- 6. The Squire’s Daughter (Sept. 20, 1830)

*The Little House in Kolomna* (Oct. 10, 1830; Feb. 19, 1833) CNLP/BB (399-410)

*The History of the Village of Gorukhino* (Nov. 1, 1830; posthumously 1837) CPT (141-61)

Paper #2 due

R Mar 24 *The Little Tragedies* (1832-39) BGODW (99-175)
- 1. *The Miserly Knight* (Oct. 23, 1830; Apr. 11, 1836, inaugural volume of *The Contemporary*)
  - Opera: Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943), *The Miserly Knight* (1906)
- 2. *Mozart and Salieri* (October 26, 1830; 1832)
3. The Stone Guest (Nov. 4, 1830; 1839)
   Opera: Alexander Dargomyzhsky (1813-69), The Stone Guest (Kamennyi gost’)
   (1872); finished by Cui and Rimsky-Korsakov
4. A Feast in the Time of Plague (Nov. 6, 1830; Dec. 1, 1831)
   Opera: César Cui (1835-1918), A Feast in the Time of Plague (1901)

10T Mar 29  Opera: Alexander Dargomyzhsky (1813-69), The Stone Guest (Kamennyi gost’)
   (1872); finished by Cui and Rimsky-Korsakov
   1. Vladimir Atlanov as Don Juan, B. Khaikin conducting the Bolshoi, 2000, 83 min.) M1500.D24 K36 2000 DVD (Music Library) in Russian with French subtitles

R Mar 31  Lyrics 1830-1837 (155-203); “Autumn” (1833) CNLP/BB (109-12)

11T Apr 5  Roslavlev (fall 1831; posthumously 1837) CPF (135-44) BB
   Rusalka (1832; posthumously 1837) BGODW (177-201)
   Opera: Alexander Dargomyzhsky (1813-69), Rusalka (1856)
   Dubrovsky (Feb. 6, 1833; 1841) CPT (181-271)
   Opera: Eduard Napravnik (1839-1916), Dubrovsky (1895)

R Apr 7  The Bronze Horseman (Oct. 31, 1833; fragment Dec. 1834, in full, but censored, posthumously 1837) PT/BB (128-44)

12T Apr 12  Pushkin in Boldino (Oct. 1 to mid-Nov. 1833)
   The History of Pugachev (Nov. 2, 1833; Dec. 1834) CPF/BB (361-438)

Paper #3 due

R Apr 14  The Queen of Spades (Nov. 1833; Mar. 1834) CPT (273-305)

13T Apr 19  Opera: Petr Tchaikovsky (1840-93), The Queen of Spades (1890)
   1. Pique Dame, with Yuri Marusin as Herman, Andrew Davis conducting the London Philharmonic, 1992, 169 min.) on-line access through library catalog
      • Boris Gasparov, Ch. 5 “Lost in a Symbolist City: Multiple Chronotopes in Chaikovsky’s The Queen of Spades,” (132-60).

R Apr 21  Kirdjali (fall 1834; Dec. 1834) CPT (309-15)
   Egyptian Nights (fall 1835; posthumously 1837) CPT (319-34)
The Tale of Tsar Saltan (1831) PT/BB (100-27)
Opera: Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908), The Tale of Tsar Saltan (1900)
The Tale of the Golden Cockerel (Sept. 20, 1834, at Boldino; Apr. 1, 1835) CNLP/BB (411-22)
Opera: Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908), The Tale of the Golden Cockerel (1907)

14T Apr 26 Pushkin, Journalist (The Contemporary, Apr. 11, 1836-66)
The Captain’s Daughter (Oct. 19, 1836; Dec. 1836), Ch. 1-7, CPT (335-402)

R Apr 28 The Captain’s Daughter, Ch. 8-14, CPT (402-75)

15T May 3 Afterlife Begins: Pushkin wounded in a duel (Jan. 27, 1837) and dies (2:45 am, Jan 31, 1837)
  • Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-81), Pushkin (A Sketch), Delivered on June 8 at the Meeting of the Society of Lovers of Russian Literature,” August 1880, in A Writer’s Diary, by Fyodor Dostoevsky, trans. and annotated by Kenneth Lantz (Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 1994), 1281-95. BB
  • Pushkin Prize established (1881)

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is bad scholarship with serious consequences. Do not do it. It is the equivalent of being caught doping in athletics: an attempt to gain a competitive advantage by illegal means. Here are some ASU guidelines that you will have covered or will cover in ASU101:
http://clte.asu.edu/firstYrSeminar/core/integrity/
http://clas.asu.edu/files/AI%20Flier.pdf
We will review proper ways to acknowledge ideas and quotations by others before you write your first paper. Papers for this course do NOT require research, just that you read the texts carefully, think about how they work and what that means, and articulate YOUR ideas clearly.

Guidelines for Papers
Papers must be double-spaced and responsive to all aspects of the assignment, including length (provide a word count on the first page), and prepared according to the Modern Language Association or Chicago Manual of Style. Make sure you document every reference--in quotation or paraphrase--including page numbers. A paper is a professional piece of work that should look professional. You must proofread your papers for spelling and grammar. Feel free to write in the first person. Most important, a paper is an argument: no argument, no paper. Support your thesis with evidence. Please read the handouts on writing.

Paper grades
An “A” paper demonstrates that the writer has not only mastered the concepts of the course, but also has applied them in an imaginative and incisive way. The paper shows a command of language that allows the writer to express worthwhile ideas or
perceptions clearly, effectively, in detail and with virtually no mechanical errors. There is grace to the sentence structure, which is clear and varied throughout. The paper consistently includes adequate argumentation and documentation. The “A” grade is reserved for exceptional papers; “A-” papers tend to be exceptional in part but marred by one or two problems.

A “B” paper demonstrates that the writer has understood the concepts of the course, and has applied them with some originality. The paper shows the writer can organize a coherent essay with few mechanical errors. The thesis statement is clear and is responsive to the assigned topic. It is supported with strong, logical argumentation and use of evidence. The paper for the most part includes adequate documentation.

A “C” paper demonstrates that the writer has understood most of the concepts of the course, but needs to pay more attention to details in reading or writing. Thesis statement and topic sentences are weak, and documentation is erratic. Descriptive paper without a thesis.

A “D” paper demonstrates that the writer has only a minimal understanding of the concepts of the course. Significant gaps in the writer's comprehension indicate the need for more study. Moreover, the writer's basic compositional skills are below satisfactory for university work. Documentation is unsatisfactory.

An “E” paper demonstrates that the writer has little, if any, understanding of the concepts of the course. Because of the writer's lack of skill or concern, the work includes gross errors as well as a conspicuous lack of content. Documentation is negligible. The paper may also fail to address parts of the assignment.

A paper may combine different levels of work. In that case, the grade will depend on the paper's overall demonstration of knowledge of the material and of writing skills.

**Emails**

You should regard all writing for this class as professional writing, including your emails to me. You can address me as “Dear Professor Hoogenboom,” and you should put your name at the end. My emails to you will have this format too.