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Beauty, Power and Pride  
RUSS 307L, fall 2019  
Tues and Thurs, 2-3:20pm, LA 334

Office Hours: Mon 12-1 and Tues 1-2pm in LA 330 (or by appointment)

### **Beauty, Power and Pride in Russian Lit**

Beauty, Power and Pride are major themes explored in many of the masterpieces of Russian literature, from Pushkin's "The Queen of Spades" to Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*. This course will trace how themes are reflected in the works of classic 19th century writers including Pushkin and Dostoevsky through more modern 20th and 21st century writers like Mikhail Bulgakov, Viktor Pelevin & Liudmila Petrushevskaya.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students in this course will read, discuss and critically analyze a wide array of classic texts in Russian 19th and 20th century Russian literature in which the themes of beauty, power and pride play a vital role. Students will learn to distinguish among various ideas and theories about the nature of beauty, power and pride and to describe and evaluate the connection between beauty and power and their relation to pride as both a positive and negative cultural force. Moreover, students will explore the vital link between notions about beauty, power and pride as reflected in a specific text and the historical and cultural contexts in which the text was originally conceived. Both in class discussions and debates as well as in written analytical papers, students will define, analyze and evaluate the perceived role of beauty, power and pride in Russian culture in disparate historical periods and in the work of specific Russian writers. By exploring conceptions of beauty, power and pride as reflected and explored in Russian literary classics, students will equip themselves to analyze and evaluate more critically and contextually contemporary notions about beauty, power and pride as reflected in mass culture of the twenty-first century.

### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:**

Regular attendance, timely reading of assigned works, participation in class discussion.  
Two in-class response papers (approximately 1-2 pages)  
Midterm  
One 7-8 page analytical paper (minimum of two outside sources, only one web-based).

### **DHC (Honor's College) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:**

In addition to the GENERAL REQUIREMENTS listed above, students taking the course for DHC Honors credit will be required to sign up for a **class presentation for one class period**. Each class presentation should last for approximately 15 minutes. I recommend that you prepare the presentation using Powerpoint or a similar program, but you should be prepared to present something even if you experience a technical glitch with Powerpoint. In your presentation you should: 1) introduce the assigned theme or topic; 2) familiarize the class with at least one key secondary source or piece of scholarship related to the assigned theme or topic; 3) lead a very short class discussion on this theme or topic (suggested: prepare 2-3 discussion questions in advance and link your questions directly to your topic or theme). As part of preparation for these mini-presentations, **DHC students are expected to meet with the instructor during an office hour at least one full week prior to the date of the presentation** in order to discuss expectations.

Within a period of one week after making this presentation, DHC students are expected to turn in a two-page typed self-evaluation of their presentation exercise. The evaluation should address three main questions: 1) what did you learn from this presentation experience? 2) what do you feel you did especially well? 3) where do you feel you could improve in future presentations of material and/or in acting as a facilitator of classroom discussion?

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Coursepack (including Russian fairy tales and works by Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev, Blok, Solzhenitsyn, Shalamov, etc)

Books (available at reduced cost from your instructor or, if you prefer, you may purchase them yourself)

*Great Russian Short Stories* edited by Norris Houghton  
*Symposium* by Plato  
*Favorite Russian Fairy Tales*  
*Anna Karenina* by Lev Tolstoy  
*The Portable Chekhov* by Anton Chekhov  
*Heart of a Dog* by Mikhail Bulgakov  
*Happy Moscow* by Andrei Platonov

Omon Ra by Victor Pelevin

**GRADING:**

- 25% Attendance and Class Participation, including daily preparation for class discussions
- 20% In-Class Response Papers (two @ 10% for each paper)
- 25% Midterm
- 30% Final Analytical Paper\* (7-8 pages)

\*An outline and bibliography will constitute 10% of your final grade for the long paper.

**GRADING SCALE**

A = 93-100	B- = 80-82	D+ = 68-69
A- = 90-92	C+ = 78-79	D = 65-67
B+ = 88-89	C = 73-77	F = 64 and below
B = 83-87	C- = 70-72	

**PAPER GUIDELINES:**

The analytical paper should be typed or done on a computer. Respect your work—give your paper a title and include your name and the date! Use a standard 12 point font (Times New Roman recommended) and double-space. **Proofread each assignment for typos, poor wording, mechanics, etc.** Late work will be penalized one letter grade per day except in the case of a real emergency. NB – Computer problems, etc. are not valid emergencies. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. Please ask if you have a question about what constitutes plagiarism, but on the whole, if you consult another work or source for ideas, copy or paraphrase from another source, etc., then you need to acknowledge the source in your paper with a footnote. Include the name of the work you consulted, the publisher, and the page numbers. If you cite directly from the work, be sure you place the citation in quotation marks and give the page on which it appears.

**IN-CLASS RESPONSE PAPERS (2 total):**

Two times during the course of the semester you will be asked to write a short in-class response paper based on the reading for the day. You will have a choice of topics and will have about 20 minutes to write on one of them. You may use your books and notes for reference, but no extra time will be given. If you have done the reading, 20 minutes will be plenty of time to respond to one of the topics. The response papers will be graded on a scale of 1-10, with ten being the highest grade. NB – If you miss class the day of an in-class response, you will get no credit for that day's response. The in-class response papers are intended to emphasize the importance of coming to class prepared for discussion and to reward those who attend regularly and keep up with the reading assignments and take notes on the readings. I realize students sometimes miss class for valid reasons. Therefore, a typed one-page review of certain approved Russian films may be substituted for ONE of the in-class response papers (see me for details on some Russian films that would classify as acceptable for this course).

**Classroom Etiquette**

It is essential to the learning process that students treat each other and the instructor with respect. Under the Student Conduct Code, students who are found to be disruptive may be asked to leave the classroom. Disruptive behaviors may include but are not limited to:

- Using electronic communication devices, including cell phones and laptops for purposes unrelated to ongoing class activities.
- Carrying on side conversations that are distracting to the instructor and other students.
- Verbally interrupting the class with comments or questions not relevant to the course or to the current discussion.
- Failure to participate in assigned group activities.
- Significantly interfering with instructor's work activities during or outside of class.

**Syllabus**

August

Tues 27 Introduction, Discussion of Syllabus

Thurs 29 "Baba Yaga," "Sadko," "The Firebird, the Horse of Power, and the Princess Vasilissa" in *Favorite Russian Fairy Tales*

September

Tues 3 Plato, *Symposium*; "Vasilisa the Beauty," "The Frog Queen" (coursepack)

	Thurs	5	Pushkin short lyric poems; "The Miserly Knight" (coursepack)  <b>Topic for DHC Presentation: Red Square (including the Kremlin, St. Basil's Cathedral)</b>
	Tues	10	Pushkin "The Stationmaster," "The Lady Peasant" (coursepack)
Stories	Thurs	12	Pushkin, <i>The Bronze Horseman</i> (coursepack); "The Queen of Spades" in <i>Great Russian Short Stories</i>  <b>Topic for DHC Presentation: Decembrists' Square/Bronze Horseman</b>
	Tues	17	Gogol, "Viy" (coursepack); "Nevsky Prospect" (coursepack)
	Thurs	19	Gogol, "Diary of a Madman," "Taras Bulba" (in <i>Diary of a Madman and Other Short Stories</i> )
	Tues	24	NO CLASS
	Thurs	26	Turgenev, "First Love" (coursepack)
October			
	Tues	1	Dostoevsky, "A Gentle Spirit" (in <i>Great Russian Short Stories</i> )
	Thurs	3	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part One (pp. 1-115)
	Tues	8	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Parts Two and Three (pp. 117-352)
	Thurs	10	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Parts Four and Five (pp. 353-549)  <b>Topic for DHC Presentation: The Bolshoi Theater in Moscow</b>
	Tues	15	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Parts Six and Seven (pp. 551-768)
	Thurs	17	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> , Part Eight (pp. 769-the end of the novel)
	Tues	22	Tolstoy, <i>Anna Karenina</i> (overview of the novel)
	Thurs	24	<b>MIDTERM</b>
	Tues	29	Chekhov, "Lady with the Dog," "Anna on the Neck," "In the Ravine" (in <i>Portable Chekhov</i> )
Thurs	31		Chekhov, <i>The Cherry Orchard</i> (in <i>Portable Chekhov</i> ); poetry by Blok (coursepack)
November			
	Tues	5	Bulgakov, <i>Heart of a Dog</i> , Parts I-V (pp. 1-65)
	Thurs	7	Bulgakov, <i>Heart of a Dog</i> , Parts VI-Epilogue (pp. 66-123)
	Tues	12	Platonov, <i>Happy Moscow</i> , Parts 1-9 (pp. 7-73)

**Topic for DHC Presentation: The Moscow Metro**

Thurs 14 Platonov, *Happy Moscow*, Parts 10-13 (pp. 73-117)

Tues 19 Solzhenitsyn, "Matryona's Home" (coursepack);  
Shalamov, "Prosthetic Appliances," "A Child's Drawings" (coursepack)

**Topic for DHC Presentation: Solovetsky Monastery**

Thurs 21 Petrushevskaya, "Barbie Smiles," "The Girl-Nose" (coursepack)

**1-2 page Outline for the Analytical Paper (7-8pp) Due Today**

Tues 26 *Omon Ra* by Victor Pelevin

Thurs 28 **THANKSGIVING BREAK – No Class**

December

Tues 3 *Omon Ra* by Victor Pelevin

Thurs 5 Course Wrap Up

Your **Analytical Paper (7-8pp)** will be due on **Tuesday, Dec 10** by 5pm in LA 330.