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Despair

In this book, acclaimed Dostoevsky biographer Joseph Frank explores some of the most important aspects of nineteenth and twentieth century Russian culture, literature, and history. Delving into the distinctions of the Russian novel as well as

the conflicts between the religious peasant world and the educated Russian elite, *Between Religion and Rationality* displays the cogent reflections of one of the most distinguished and versatile critics in the field. Frank's essays provide a discriminating look at four of Dostoevsky's most famous novels, discuss the debate between J. M. Coetzee and Mario Vargas Llosa on the issue of Dostoevsky and evil, and confront Dostoevsky's anti-Semitism. The collection also examines such topics as Orlando Figes's sweeping survey of the history of Russian culture, the life of Pushkin, and Oblomov's influence on Samuel Beckett. Investigating the omnipresent religious theme that runs throughout Russian culture, even in the antireligious Chekhov, Frank argues that no other major European literature was as much preoccupied as the Russian with the tensions between religion and rationality. *Between Religion and Rationality* highlights this unique quality of Russian literature and culture, offering insights for general readers and experts alike.

The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Literature

Lectures on Dostoevsky

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The Rehearsals

"Wendy Lesser's extraordinary alertness, intelligence, and curiosity have made her one of America's most significant cultural critics," writes Stephen Greenblatt. In *Why I Read*, Lesser draws on a lifetime of pleasure reading and decades of editing one of the most distinguished literary magazines in the country, *The Threepenny Review*, to describe her love of literature. As Lesser writes in her prologue, "Reading can result in boredom or transcendence, rage or enthusiasm, depression or hilarity, empathy or contempt, depending on who you are and what the book is and how your life is shaping up at the moment you encounter it." Here the reader will discover a definition of literature that is as broad as it is broad-minded. In addition to novels and stories, Lesser explores plays, poems, and essays along with mysteries, science fiction, and memoirs. As she examines these works from such perspectives as "Character and Plot," "Novelty," "Grandeur and Intimacy," and "Authority," *Why I Read* sparks an overwhelming desire to put aside quotidian tasks in favor of reading. Lesser's passion for this pursuit resonates on every page, whether she is discussing the book as a physical object or a particular work's influence. "Reading literature is a way of reaching back to something bigger and

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older and different," she writes. "It can give you the feeling that you belong to the past as well as the present, and it can help you realize that your present will someday be someone else's past. This may be disheartening, but it can also be strangely consoling at times." A book in the spirit of E. M. Forster's *Aspects of the Novel* and Elizabeth Hardwick's *A View of My Own*, *Why I Read* is iconoclastic, conversational, and full of insight. It will delight those who are already avid readers as well as neophytes in search of sheer literary fun.

Lectures on Russian Literature

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Nabokov

Essays probe the culture that spawned the great novels of Dostoevsky and explore the author's influence on world literature

Why I Read

The hero of John Updike's first novel, published when the author was twenty-six, is

ninety-four-year-old John Hook, a dying man who yet refuses to be dominated. His world is a poorhouse—a county home for the aged and infirm—overseen by Stephen Conner, a righteous young man who considers it his duty to know what is best for others. The action of the novel unfolds over a single summer's day, the day of the poorhouse's annual fair, a day of escalating tensions between Conner and the rebellious Hook. Its climax is a contest between progress and tradition, benevolence and pride, reason and faith.

The Brothers Karamazov

Russian literature refers to the literature of Russia and its émigrés and to the Russian-language literature of several independent nations once a part of what was historically Rus', Russian Empire or the Soviet Union. Roots of Russian literature can be traced to the Middle Ages, when epics and chronicles in Old Russian were composed. By the Age of Enlightenment, literature had grown in importance, and from the early 1830s, Russian literature underwent an astounding golden age in poetry, prose and drama. Romanticism permitted a flowering of poetic talent: Vasily Zhukovsky and later his protégé Alexander Pushkin came to the fore. Prose was flourishing as well. The first great Russian novelist was Nikolai Gogol. Then came Ivan Turgenev, who mastered both short stories and novels. Leo Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoyevsky soon became internationally renowned. In the second half of the century Anton Chekhov excelled in short stories and became a

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leading dramatist. The beginning of the 20th century ranks as the Silver Age of Russian poetry. The poets most often associated with the "Silver Age" are Konstantin Balmont, Valery Bryusov, Alexander Blok, Anna Akhmatova, Nikolay Gumilyov, Osip Mandelstam, Sergei Yesenin, Vladimir Mayakovsky, Marina Tsvetaeva and Boris Pasternak. This era produced some first-rate novelists and short-story writers, such as Aleksandr Kuprin, Nobel Prize winner Ivan Bunin, Leonid Andreyev, Fedor Sologub, Aleksey Remizov, Yevgeny Zamyatin, Dmitry Merezhkovsky and Andrei Bely. After the Revolution of 1917, Russian literature split into Soviet and white émigré parts. While the Soviet Union assured universal literacy and a highly developed book printing industry, it also enforced ideological censorship. In the 1930s Socialist realism became the predominant trend in Russia. Its leading figure was Maxim Gorky, who laid the foundations of this style. Nikolay Ostrovsky's novel *How the Steel Was Tempered* has been among the most successful works of Russian literature. Alexander Fadeyev achieved success in Russia. Various émigré writers, such as poets Vladislav Khodasevich, Georgy Ivanov and Vyacheslav Ivanov; novelists such as Mark Aldanov, Gaito Gazdanov and Vladimir Nabokov; and short story Nobel Prize winning writer Ivan Bunin, continued to write in exile. The Khrushchev Thaw brought some fresh wind to literature and poetry became a mass cultural phenomenon. This "thaw" did not last long; in the 1970s, some of the most prominent authors were banned from publishing and prosecuted for their anti-Soviet sentiments. The end of the 20th century was a difficult period for Russian literature, with few distinct voices. Among

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the most discussed authors of this period were Victor Pelevin, who gained popularity with short stories and novels, novelist and playwright Vladimir Sorokin, and the poet Dmitry Prigov. In the 21st century, a new generation of Russian authors appeared, differing greatly from the postmodernist Russian prose of the late 20th century, which lead critics to speak about "new realism". Leading "new realists" include Ilja Stogoff, Zakhar Prilepin, Alexander Karasyov, Arkadi Babchenko, Vladimir Lorchenkov, Alexander Snegiryov and the political author Sergej Shargunov. Russian authors significantly contributed almost to all known genres of the literature. Russia had five Nobel Prize in literature laureates. As of 2011, Russia was the fourth largest book producer in the world in terms of published titles. A popular folk saying claims Russians are "the world's most reading nation".

Vladimir Nabokov's Lectures on Literature

This essays focus on Nabokov's lectures on European and Russian literature at American universities, and sheds new light on the relationship of his views on aesthetics to the development of his own oeuvre.

The Anna Karenina Fix

Lectures on Literature

Russia has a rich, huge, unwieldy cultural tradition. How to grasp it? This classroom reader is designed to respond to that problem. The literary works selected for inclusion in this anthology introduce the core cultural and historic themes of Russia's civilisation. Each text has resonance throughout the arts - in Rublev's icons, Meyerhold's theatre, Mousorgsky's operas, Prokofiev's symphonies, Fokine's choreography and Kandinsky's paintings. This material is supported by introductions, helpful annotations and bibliographies of resources in all media. The reader is intended for use in courses in Russian literature, culture and civilisation, as well as comparative literature.

Between Religion and Rationality

The widening gyre: crisis and mastery in modern literature

The Gift is the phantasmal autobiography of Fyodor Godunov-Cherdynev, a writer living in the closed world of Russian intellectuals in Berlin shortly after the First World War. This gorgeous tapestry of literature and butterflies tells the story of Fyodor's pursuits as a writer. Its heroine is not Fyodor's elusive and beloved Zina,

however, but Russian prose and poetry themselves.

Lectures on Literature

"This book collects twelve classroom lectures on seven major works by Dostoevsky--Crime and Punishment, The Brothers Karamazov, The Idiot, Notes from Underground, and three others--by Joseph Frank, the author of the definitive five-volume biography of Dostoevsky published by Princeton University Press. Frank's widow, Marguerite Frank, has worked with a Russian translator and former student of Frank's, Marina Brodskya, to compile the lectures--some of which Frank had written out in their entirety, others for which he left extensive notes. The book will contain a preface, introduction, seven chapters (each containing one or two lectures on a major work), and lists of further reading and stage and screen adaptations of Dostoevsky's works. Each lecture is about 4,000 words and is written in a conversational style that is accessible for undergraduates but also demonstrates Frank's unparalleled knowledge of the Russian author and his world, providing wide-ranging literary and historical context. The editors include notes to explain references and allusions. The book also will include some images of Joseph Frank, Dostoevsky, a couple of artworks discussed in the lectures, and a sample of Frank's handwritten lecture notes"--

The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Poetry

The acclaimed author presents his unique insights into the works of great Russian authors including Tolstoy, Dostoevski, Gogol, Gorki, and Chekhov. In the 1940s, when Vladimir Nabokov first embarked on his academic career in the United States, he brought with him hundreds of original lectures on the authors he most admired. For two decades those lectures served as the basis for Nabokov's teaching, first at Wellesley and then at Cornell, as he introduced undergraduates to the delights of great fiction. This volume collects Nabokov's famous lectures on 19th century Russian literature, with analysis and commentary on Nikolay Gogol's *Dead Souls* and "The Overcoat"; Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*; Maxim Gorki's "On the Rafts"; Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* and *The Death of Ivan Ilych*; two short stories and a play by Anton Chekhov; and several works by Fyodor Dostoevski, including *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, and *The Possessed*. This volume also includes Nabokov's lectures on the art of translation, the nature of Russian censorship, and other topics. Featured throughout the volume are photographic reproductions of Nabokov's original notes. "This volume . . . never once fails to instruct and stimulate. This is a great Russian talking of great Russians." —Anthony Burgess Introduction by Fredson Bowers

The Gift

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Professor Timofey Pnin, late of Tsarist Russia, is now precariously perched at the heart of an American campus. Battling with American life and language, Pnin must face great hazards in this new world: the ruination of his beautiful lumber-room-as-office; the removal of his teeth and the fitting of new ones; the search for a suitable boarding house; and the trials of taking the wrong train to deliver a lecture in a language he has yet to master. Wry, intelligent and moving, Pnin reveals the absurd and affecting story of one man in exile.

In the Beauty of the Lilies

Vladimir Nabokov

In the Beauty of the Lilies begins in 1910 and traces God's relation to four generations of American seekers, beginning with Clarence Wilmot, a clergyman in Paterson, New Jersey. He loses his faith but finds solace at the movies, respite from "the bleak facts of life, his life, gutted by God's withdrawal." His son, Teddy, becomes a mailman who retreats from American exceptionalism, religious and otherwise, into a life of studied ordinariness. Teddy has a daughter, Esther, who becomes a movie star, an object of worship, an All-American goddess. Her neglected son, Clark, is possessed of a native Christian fervor that brings the story

full circle: in the late 1980s he joins a Colorado sect called the Temple, a handful of “God’s elect” hastening the day of reckoning. In following the Wilmots’ collective search for transcendence, John Updike pulls one wandering thread from the tapestry of the American Century and writes perhaps the greatest of his later novels.

Best Russian Short Stories

Nabokov at Cornell

Insomniac Dreams

For the first time in English, Vladimir Nabokov’s earliest major work, written when he was only twenty-four: his only full-length play, introduced by Thomas Karshan and beautifully translated by Karshan and Anastasia Tolstoy. The Tragedy of Mister Morn was written in the winter of 1923–1924, when Nabokov was completely unknown. The five-act play—the story of an incognito king whose love for the wife of a banished revolutionary brings on the chaos the king has fought to prevent—was never published in Nabokov’s lifetime and lay in manuscript until it

appeared in a Russian literary journal in 1997. It is an astonishingly precocious work, in exquisite verse, touching for the first time on what would become this great writer's major themes: intense sexual desire and jealousy, the elusiveness of happiness, the power of the imagination, and the eternal battle between truth and fantasy. The play is Nabokov's major response to the Russian Revolution, which he had lived through, but it approaches the events of 1917 above all through the prism of Shakespearean tragedy.

The Feud

The Black Russian is the incredible true story of Frederick Bruce Thomas, born in 1872 to former slaves who became prosperous farmers in Mississippi. After his father was brutally murdered, Frederick left the South and worked as a waiter in Chicago and Brooklyn. Seeking greater freedom, he traveled to London, then crisscrossed Europe, and—in a highly unusual choice for a black American at the time—went to Russia. Because he found no color line there, Frederick settled in Moscow, becoming a rich and famous owner of variety theaters and restaurants. When the Bolshevik Revolution ruined him, he barely escaped to Constantinople, where he made another fortune by opening celebrated nightclubs as the "Sultan of Jazz." However, the long arm of American racism, the xenophobia of the new Turkish Republic, and Frederick's own extravagance landed him in debtor's prison. He died in Constantinople in 1928.

Think, Write, Speak

Gerald Janecek describes the experiments in visual, literature conducted from 1900 to 1930, the heyday of the Russian Avant Garde. Focusing on an aspect of Russian literary history that has previously been almost ignored, he shows how Russian writers of this period tried unusual methods to make their texts visually interesting or expressive. The book includes 183 illustrations, most from rare publications and many reproduced for the first time. The author discusses such figures as the Symbolist Andrey Bely, the Futurists Aleksey Kruchonykh, Vasili Kamensky, and Vladimir Mayakovsky, and the post-Futurist Ilya Zdanevich, and their use of devices ranging from unorthodox layouts and florid typography to roughly done lithographed or handmade books. Originally published in 1984. The Princeton Legacy Library uses the latest print-on-demand technology to again make available previously out-of-print books from the distinguished backlist of Princeton University Press. These editions preserve the original texts of these important books while presenting them in durable paperback and hardcover editions. The goal of the Princeton Legacy Library is to vastly increase access to the rich scholarly heritage found in the thousands of books published by Princeton University Press since its founding in 1905.

The Poorhouse Fair

A Reader of Classical Arabic Literature

"In 1940 Edmund Wilson was the undisputed big dog of American letters. Vladimir Nabokov was a near-penniless Russian exile seeking asylum in the States. Wilson became a mentor to Nabokov, introducing him to every editor of note, assigning reviews for The New Republic, engineering a Guggenheim. Their intimate friendship blossomed over a shared interest in all things Russian, ruffled a bit by political disagreements. But then came Lolita, and suddenly Nabokov was the big (and very rich) dog. Finally the feud erupted in full when Nabokov published his hugely footnoted and virtually unreadable literal translation of Pushkin's famously untranslatable verse novel Eugene Onegin. Wilson attacked his friend's translation with hammer and tong in the New York Review of Books. Nabokov counterattacked in the same publication. Back and forth the increasingly aggressive letters volleyed until their friendship was reduced to ashes by the narcissism of small differences"--

Bech at Bay

As Viv Groskop knows from personal experience, everything that has ever happened to a person has already happened in the Russian classics: from not being sure what to do with your life (Anna Karenina), to being hopelessly in love

with someone who doesn't love you back (Turgenev's *A Month in the Country*), or being socially anxious about your appearance (all of Chekhov's work). In *The Anna Karenina Fix*, a sort of literary self-help memoir, Groskop mines these and other works, as well as the lives of their celebrated creators, and her own experiences as a student of Russian, to answer the question "How should you live your life?" This is a charming and fiercely intelligent book, a love letter to Russian literature and an exploration of the answers these writers found to life's questions.

Nikolai Gogol

Russian literature arrived late on the European scene. Within several generations, its great novelists had shocked - and then conquered - the world. In this introduction to the rich and vibrant Russian tradition, Caryl Emerson weaves a narrative of recurring themes and fascinations across several centuries. Beginning with traditional Russian narratives (saints' lives, folk tales, epic and rogue narratives), the book moves through literary history chronologically and thematically, juxtaposing literary texts from each major period. Detailed attention is given to canonical writers including Pushkin, Gogol, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Bulgakov and Solzhenitsyn, as well as to some current bestsellers from the post-Communist period. Fully accessible to students and readers with no knowledge of Russian, the volume includes a glossary and pronunciation guide of key Russian terms as well as a list of useful secondary works. The book will be of

great interest to students of Russian as well as of comparative literature.

Lectures on Literature

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The Look of Russian Literature

Three brothers and their relations in 19th century Russia provide the base for a sweeping epic overview of human striving, folly and hope. First published in 1880, *The Brothers Karamazov* is a landmark work in every respect. Revolving around shiftless father Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov are the fates of his three sons, each of whom has fortunes entwined with the others. The eldest son, Dimitri, seeks an inheritance from his father and becomes his rival in love. Ivan, the second son, is so at odds with the world that he is driven near to madness, while the youngest, Alexi, is a man of faith and a natural optimist. These personalities are drawn out and tested in a crucible of conflict and emotion as the author forces upon them fundamental questions of morality, faith, reason and responsibility. This charged situation is pushed to its limit by the addition of the unthinkable, murder and possible patricide. Using shifting viewpoints and delving into the minds of his characters, Dostoevsky adopted fresh techniques to tell his wide-reaching story

with power and startling effectiveness. The Brothers Karamazov remains one of the most respected and celebrated novels in all literature and continues to reward readers beyond expectation. With an eye-catching new cover, and professionally typeset manuscript, this edition of The Brothers Karamazov is both modern and readable.

Through the Russian Prism

Those who demand of fiction more than mere diversion turn inevitably to the works of the great Russian writers. In this volume the men who gave their country an unexcelled art and a redeeming conscience are represented by such short stories as no other nation has yet paralleled. Here are names to conjure with--Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorky, Andreyev, Artzibashev, Kuprin, Bunin--writers of such compassion and profundity as to have changed the scope and meaning of the short story as a form of art and an expression of life. This volume contains twenty-two short stories by seventeen famous Russian writers.

An Anthology of Russian Literature from Earliest Writings to Modern Fiction

The Black Russian

Nikolai Gogol was the most idiosyncratic of the great Russian novelists of the 19th century and lived a tragically short life which was as chaotic as the lives of the characters he created. This biography begins with Gogol's death and ends with his birth, an inverted structure typical of both Gogol and Nabokov. The biographer proceeds to establish the relationship between Gogol and his novels, especially with regard to "nose-consciousness", a peculiar feature of Russian life and letters, which finds its apotheosis in Gogol's own life and prose. There are more expressions and proverbs concerning the nose in Russian than in any other language in the world. Nabokov's style in this biography is comic, but as always leads to serious issues—in this case, an appreciation of the distinctive "sense of the physical" inherent in Gogol's work. Nabokov describes how Gogol's life and literature mingled, and explains the structure and style of Gogol's prose in terms of the novelist's life.

Pnin

The story of Nabokov's life continues with his arrival in the United States in 1940. He found that supporting himself and his family was not easy--until the astonishing success of *Lolita* catapulted him to world fame and financial security.

Vladimir Nabokov

First publication of an index-card diary in which Nabokov recorded sixty-four dreams and subsequent daytime episodes, allowing the reader a glimpse of his innermost life.

The Tragedy of Mister Morn

Analyzes Nabokov's ten novels, describes recurrent themes and features, and discusses his use of structure

Vladimir Nabokov

A rich compilation of the previously uncollected Russian and English prose and interviews of one of the twentieth century's greatest writers, edited by Nabokov experts Brian Boyd and Anastasia Tolstoy. "I think like a genius, I write like a distinguished author, and I speak like a child": so Vladimir Nabokov famously wrote in the introduction to his volume of selected prose, *Strong Opinions. Think, Write, Speak* follows up where that volume left off, with a rich compilation of his uncollected prose and interviews, from a 1921 essay about Cambridge to two final interviews in 1977. The chronological order allows us to watch the Cambridge

student and the fledgling Berlin reviewer and poet turn into the acclaimed Paris émigré novelist whose stature brought him to teach in America, where his international success exploded with *Lolita* and propelled him back to Europe. Whether his subject is Proust or Pushkin, the sport of boxing or the privileges of democracy, Nabokov's supreme individuality, his keen wit, and his alertness to the details of life illuminate the page.

Lectures on Russian Literature

In this, the final volume in John Updike's mock-heroic trilogy about the Jewish American writer Henry Bech, our hero is older but scarcely wiser. Now in his seventies, he remains competitive, lecherous, and self-absorbed, lost in a brave new literary world where his books are hyped by Swiss-owned conglomerates, showcased in chain stores attached to espresso bars, and returned to warehouses just three weeks later. In five chapters more startling and surreal than any that have come before, Bech presides over the American literary scene, enacts bloody revenge on his critics, and wins the world's most coveted writing prize. It's not easy being Henry Bech in the post-Gutenbergian world, but somebody has to do it, and he brings to the task his signature mixture of grit, spit, and ennui.

Lectures on Godmanhood

This introduction presents the major themes, forms and styles of Russian poetry. Using examples from Russia's greatest poets, Michael Wachtel draws on three centuries of verse, from the beginnings of secular literature in the eighteenth century to the present day. The first half of the book is devoted to concepts such as versification, poetic language and tradition; the second half is organised along genre lines and examines the ode, the elegy, love poetry, nature poetry and patriotic verse. This book will be an invaluable tool for students and teachers alike.

The Garland Companion to Vladimir Nabokov

“Wonderful, compulsively readable, delicious” personal correspondences, spanning decades in the life and literary career of the author of *Lolita* (The Washington Post Book World). An icon of twentieth-century literature, Vladimir Nabokov was a novelist, poet, and playwright, whose personal life was a fascinating story in itself. This collection of more than four hundred letters chronicles the author’s career, recording his struggles in the publishing world, the battles over *Lolita*, and his relationship with his wife, among other subjects, and gives a surprising look at the personality behind the creator of such classics as *Pale Fire* and *Invitation to a Beheading*. “Dip in anywhere, and delight follows.” —John Updike

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