

# *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

## *Syllabus*

### *Philosophy of the Novel: Bakhtin versus Lukacs - 26904*

*Last update 17-08-2019*

*HU Credits: 2*

*Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)*

*Responsible Department: Russian and Slavic Studies*

*Academic year: 0*

*Semester: 2nd Semester*

*Teaching Languages: Hebrew*

*Campus: Mt. Scopus*

*Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Tatiana Karachentseva*

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*Coordinator Office Hours: 13.00-14.00, Wednesday*

*Teaching Staff:*

Course/Module description:

The main problem that will be discussed during the course is the problem of the relationship between philosophy and theory in the conceptualization of the novel as a genre. We will focus on the discussion of two versions of the conceptualization of the novel: one of them is presented by Lukács, the second - by Bakhtin. Although both Lukács and Bakhtin called their approach to the analysis of the novel a theory, modern researchers of the novel define (and rightfully) both of these approaches as philosophical. We will try to distinguish between two components (philosophical and theoretical) in the conceptualization of the novel proposed by each one of these two thinkers, and explain their relationship. We use this distinction as the basis for reconstructing the implicit dispute that Bakhtin has held with Lukács throughout his career.

We will combine the discussion of abstract terms with the discussion of the interpretations of specific works of literature that were given by Lukács and Bakhtin. We will start with Dostoevsky's novels, which played a decisive role in the crystallization of Lukács's Theory of the Novel, on the one hand, and on the other, - determined the formation of Bakhtin's concept of dialogue. We will show that the difference in the interpretation of these novels by Lukács and Bakhtin is isomorphic to the difference in their ways of distinguishing between the epic and the novel. We will also compare their interpretations of Goethe and show that in this case too there is an isomorphism between the difference in interpretation and the difference in understanding of the form of time that is characteristic of the novel. In addition, we will try to read the interpretation of Rabelais's novel by Bakhtin as an answer to Lukács's concept of "reification".

Course/Module aims:

The goals of the course are:

- to clarify the meaning of the distinction between 'philosophy' and 'theory' as applied to the discourse about the novel and show that the philosophy of the novel does not always take the form of a theory;
- to articulate the structure of the disagreement between the two philosophies of the novel (Lukács and Bakhtin), point out the basic elements of this structure and show that the structure of this disagreement reproduces the structure of the novel as a problem (both philosophical and theoretical);
- to compare Lukács's solutions to this problem with Bakhtin's one, elucidate the grounds for each one of two solutions, explain how these solutions expressed in interpretative practice of Lukács and Bakhtin, and determine the degree of relevance of each of them to the current situation.

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Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- master a methodology that allows to distinguish between philosophical and theoretical components in any conceptualization of the novel in general and in the conceptualizations of Lukács and Bakhtin in particular;
- show the structure of the problem that the novel posed for researchers and determine the spectrum of possibilities for its solution;
- localize the solutions of Lukács and Bakhtin in this spectrum, and explain the essence of the disagreement between them;
- determine the degree of relevance of the approaches of Lukács and Bakhtin for the contemporary research of the novel and the practice of its interpretation.

Attendance requirements(%):

100%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Discussion, dialogue, and close reading will be the main methods of this course.

Course/Module Content:

Bakhtin and Lukács: two versions of the philosophy of the novel  
The role of Dostoevsky in the crystallization of Lukács's Theory of the Novel  
The role of Dostoevsky in the history of Western European aesthetics, according to Bakhtin's Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics  
The distinction between 'epic' and 'novel': Bakhtin vs. Lukács  
Goethe in the interpretation of Lukács  
Goethe in the interpretation of Bakhtin  
Time in the novel: Bakhtin vs. Lukács  
Bakhtin's "Rabelais" and Lukács's "reification"  
The correlation of philosophy and theory in the approach to the novel: Bakhtin vs. Lukács

Required Reading:

Mikhail Bakhtin, *Epic and Novel (The dialogic Imagination: Four Essays)*  
Mikhail Bakhtin, *From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse*  
Mikhail Bakhtin, *Forms of Time and the Chronotope in the Novel*  
Mikhail Bakhtin, *Discourse in the Novel*  
Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Bildungsroman and Its Significance in the History of Realism (Toward a Historical Typology of the Novel)*  
Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*

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*Georg Lukacs, Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat (From: Georg Lukacs, History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics)*  
*Georg Lukacs, The Theory of the Novel: A Historico-philosophical Essay on the Forms of Great Epic Literature*  
*Georg Lukacs, Goethe and His Age: Collection of Lukacs's essays on Goethe, Schiller and Holderlin written in the thirties*  
*Georg Lukacs, The Historical Novel*  
*Georg Lukacs, The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*  
*Georg Lukacs, Expressionism: Its Significance and Decline*  
*Georg Lukacs, Dostoevsky (From: Marxism and Human Liberation: Essays on History, Culture and Revolution by Georg Lukacs)*

*Additional Reading Material:*

*Berstein J.M. Philosophy of the Novel: Lukacs, Marxism, and Dialectics of Form*  
*Bewes T. and Hall T. Georg Lukács: The Fundamental Dissonance of Existence*  
*Cascardi A.J. The Theory of the Novel as Philosophy: Lukács, Unamuno, Ortega*  
*Duff D. (ed.) Modern Genre Theory*  
*Feher F. Is the Novel Problematic? Telos, No. 15, 1973, p. 48.*  
*Griffiths, F.T. & Rabinowitz S.J. Epic and the Russian novel: from Gogol to Pasternak*  
*Jha P. Lukacs or Bakhtin? Some Preliminary Considerations toward a Sociology of the Novel*  
*Lange V. Goethe: A Collection of Critical Essays*  
*Lowy M. Georg Lukacs - From Romanticism to Bolshevism*  
*Lukacs G. Soul and Form*  
*Lukacs G. Writer and Critic and Other Essays*  
*Lukacs G. The Destruction of Reason*  
*Miller T. The Non-Contemporaneity of György Lukács: Cold War Contradictions and the Aesthetics of Visual Art*  
*Neubauer J. Bakhtin versus Lukács: Inscriptions of Homelessness in Theories of the Novel*  
*Penny J. Two Streams: Lukács, Bakhtin, and the Apocalypse of Self in the Modern Novel*  
*Stocker B. Philosophy of the Novel*  
*Thompson M.J. (ed.) Georg Lukacs Reconsidered: Critical Essays in Politics, Philosophy and Aesthetics*  
*Tihanov G. The Master and the Slave: Lukacs, Bakhtin, and the Ideas of their Time*  
*Westerman R. Lukacs's Phenomenology of capitalism: Reification Revalued*

*Course/Module evaluation:*

*End of year written/oral examination 0 %*  
*Presentation 0 %*  
*Participation in Tutorials 20 %*

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*Project work 80 %*  
*Assignments 0 %*  
*Reports 0 %*  
*Research project 0 %*  
*Quizzes 0 %*  
*Other 0 %*

*Additional information:*