Lectures on Russian Literature

According to Fredson Bowers’ introduction, Lectures on Russian Literature “preserves all that has come down to us from [Nabokov’s] own manuscripts of the lectures on Russian authors” given in the Cornell Russian Literature in Translation courses. In addition,

[the fact cannot and need not be disguised that the texts for these essays represent Vladimir Nabokov’s written-out notes for delivery as classroom lectures and that they cannot be regarded as a finished literary product such as he produced when he revised his classroom lectures on Gogol for publication as a book. (The Gogol essay published here is excerpted from Nikolai Gogol…)]

For more information on Nabokov’s lectures, see the introduction to the Lectures on Literature A-item entry.
Lectures on Russian Literature

A53.1

First printing (BRUCCOLI CLARK)

First printing, 2-Nov-1981

Collation: (25.2 X 19 cm), [1–11][16], 176 leaves, pp. [i–vi] vii–xvii [xviii–xx]


[322] 323–324 [325–332]


Covering: White dust jacket. Front cover: red background. Two lines of white lettering with gold highlighting. VLADIMIR NABOKOV. Gold.


Price: $19.95

Additional Works: Editor’s introduction by Fredson Bowers

Works:

1) [introductory survey of Soviet literature]
   – According to the editor of Lectures on Russian Literature, “This is a single untitled leaf, numbered 18, that appears to represent all that survives of an introductory survey of Soviet literature that VN prefixed to his lectures on the great Russian writers.”.

2) Russian Writers, Censors, and Readers
   – Read at the Festival of the Arts, Cornell University, 10-Apr-1958. Includes the opening page of the lecture and the last page with Nabokov’s translation of the Pushkin poem, “(Из Пиндемонти)”.

3) Excerpt: Nikolay Gogol (1809–1852): Dead Souls (1842)
   – Includes a page from Nabokov’s lecture on the book. This is an excerpt from Nikolai Gogol, chapter 3, from part 2, p. 70 through part 9, and all of chapter 4.

4) Excerpt: Nikolay Gogol (1809–1852): “The Overcoat” (1842)
   – Includes a page from Nabokov’s lecture. The final two paragraphs of the previous lecture, separated from it with a rule, and this lecture, are taken whole from Nikolai Gogol, chapter 5.

5) Ivan Turgenev (1818–1883)
   – Includes the essay Fathers and Sons (1862). Also includes the opening page of Nabokov’s Turgenev notebook.

6) Ivan Turgenev (1818–1883): Fathers and Sons (1862)
   – Includes a reproduction of Nabokov’s chart of the journeys in the novel and a page from his lecture on the novel.

7) Fyodor Dostoevski (1821–1881)
   – Includes essays on Crime and Punishment, “Memoirs from a Mousehole”, The Idiot, The Possessed, and The Brothers Karamazov. Also includes reproductions of a page from discussion Nabokov’s discussion of sentimentalism.

8) Fyodor Dostoevski (1821–1881): Crime and Punishment (1866)
– Includes a reproduction of the opening page of Nabokov’s lecture on the novel and his notes on denunciation of the novel’s “moral and artistic stupidity”.

9) Fyodor Dostoevski (1821–1881): “Memoirs from a Mousehole”
10) Fyodor Dostoevski (1821–1881): The Idiot (1868)
11) Fyodor Dostoevski (1821–1881): The Possessed (1872)
12) Fyodor Dostoevski (1821–1881): The Brothers Karamazov (1880)
13) Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910): Anna Karenin (1877)
– Includes the essay on The Death of Ivan Ilyich. Also includes reproductions of the opening page of Nabokov’s lecture on the novel, a page from the beginning of his discussion of Tolstoy’s life, his outline of the plot, part one, the opening pages of his teaching copy, his corrections for the first pages of Garnett’s translation, pages from his teaching copy, his notes on part eight, chapter 12, the final page in his teaching copy, his comparison of Anna’s and Vronski’s dreams, his account of the events preceding Anna’s decision to commit suicide, his folder cover of notes for his projected textbook edition of the novel, his drawing of a skating costume, his sketch of the sleeping car, and his sketch of a tennis costume.

14) Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910): The Death of Ivan Ilyich (1884-1886)
15) Anton Chekhov (1860–1904)
– Includes the essays “The Lady with the Little Dog” (1899), “In the Gully” (1900), and Notes on The Seagull (1896). Also includes a reproduction of Nabokov’s assignment list for his lectures on Chekhov.
16) Anton Chekhov (1860–1904): “The Lady with the Little Dog” (1899)
– Includes a reproduction of the opening page of Nabokov’s lecture on the story.
17) Anton Chekhov (1860–1904): “In the Gully” (1900)
– Includes reproductions of the opening page of Nabokov’s lecture on the story, pages from his teaching copy, and the final page of the story in his teaching copy.
19) Maxim Gorki (1868–1936)
– Includes the essay on “On the Rafts”. Also includes a reproduction of a page from Nabokov’s lecture on the story.
– Includes a reproduction of the page of the conclusion of his lecture on the story.
21) Philistines and Philistinism
– Includes reproductions of a page with Nabokov’s definition of “philistine” and a 1950 ad selected by Nabokov to illustrate philistinism.
22) The Art of Translation
23) L’Envoi [from Lectures on Russian Literature]
– As found in Lectures on Russian Literature.
24) Appendix: Nabokov’s notes for an exam on Russian literature
– The contents are five holograph pages of notes.

A53.2

FIRST BRITISH EDITION (WEIDENFELD & NICOLSON)
¶ First printing, 28-Jan-1982

As first edition, except

Title page: \\
| Vladimir | Nabokov | LECTURES ON | RUSSIAN | LITERATURE | EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, | BY Fredson Bowers | Weidenfeld and Nicolson | London


Binding: Red cloth over boards with headband. White endpapers. All edges trimmed. Front cover: gilt stamping of author’s signature. Back cover: blank. Spine: all gilt stamping, one rule each running down the inner and outer edges. Running down NABOKOV LECTURES ON RUSSIAN LITERATURE, running across WEIDENFELD & NICOLSON


Price: £16.50
Description: Part of a boxed set of first printings of the wrappers issues of *Lectures on Literature* and *Lectures on Russian Literature* included in a slipcase.

**A53.4**
First printing, 1983

**FIRST BRITISH WRAPPERS EDITION (PICADOR, IMPRINT OF PAN)**

*¶ First printing, 1983*

*As first edition, except*

**Collation:** (19.5 X 12.8 cm)

**Title page:** Vladimir | Nabokov | LECTURES ON | RUSSIAN | LITERATURE | EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, | BY Fredson Bowers | PICADOR | published by Pan Books

**Copyright page:** … | This Picador edition published 1983 by Pan Books Ltd, …

**Binding:** White wrappers with pastel green background with red design and black lettering


**Price:** £3.95

**Description:**

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