SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

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http://slavic.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
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Associate Professor Molly Brunson

Assistant Professor Marijeta Bozovic

Senior Lectors II Irina Dolgova, Constantine Muravnik

Senior Lectors I Krystyna Ilłakowicz, Julia Titus, Karen von Kunes

FIELDS OF STUDY
The department offers the Ph.D. in Russian literature and culture and, by special arrangement, in medieval Slavic literature and philology.

SPECIAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS
An advanced-level command of the Russian language is required. A ten- to twenty-page writing sample, written in English, should be submitted with the application.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE
All graduate students are required to take four courses. RUSS 607, Topics in Russian Literature from Its Origins to the Eighteenth Century, is coordinated with the department’s graduate reading list of required works in Russian literature of the period. All students will take an examination in RUSS 607 that will also double as the medieval Russian literature examination for the doctorate (for more on examinations, see below). RUSS 608, Eighteenth-Century Russian Literature, follows the same pattern as RUSS 607. Its readings are also coordinated with the department’s graduate reading list of required works in Russian literature. All students will take an examination in RUSS 608 that will also double as the eighteenth-century Russian literature examination for the doctorate. The other required courses are SLAV 754, Old Church Slavonic, and RUSS 834, Aspects of Russian Grammar and Teaching Methodologies, which combines pedagogy with the structure of Russian. If possible, SLAV 754 should be taken before RUSS 607. RUSS 834 should be taken concurrently with or before a graduate student’s first term of teaching Russian language, typically during the seventh term of study.

The minimum number of graduate courses for the Ph.D. is sixteen, counting the above four required courses. Of the remaining twelve, at least two must be taken in nineteenth-century Russian literature and at least two in twentieth-century Russian literature, including poetry and prose or dramatic works.

Students who have done graduate work elsewhere may petition the department for up to three course credits toward their degree after one year’s residence at Yale.

A special curriculum may be arranged for students wishing to specialize in medieval Slavic literature and philology.

Minor field As part of their program of study, students will also be responsible for developing a minor field of specialization in one of the following: (1) a Western or non-Western literature; (2) film studies; (3) a topic in intellectual history; (4) one of the other arts; (5) another Slavic literature; (6) Slavic linguistics; (7) another discipline relevant to their primary interests in Russian literature. The student’s minor field of specialization will be determined in consultation with the director of graduate studies (DGS). The minor field can be developed most readily through reading courses in the Slavic department or by taking graduate courses in another department. Up to two graduate courses in other departments will count toward the sixteen for the doctorate if they are relevant to a student’s program of study. The successful completion of a course or courses in the student’s minor field taken in another department may double as the departmental examination in the minor.

Examinations The Ph.D. qualifying examinations comprise eight parts and will be completed during the third year of study: (1) medieval Russian literature; (2) Russian literature of the eighteenth century; (3) minor field; (4) nineteenth-century Russian prose and drama; (5) nineteenth-century Russian poetry; (6) twentieth-century Russian prose and drama; (7) twentieth-century Russian poetry; (8) pre-prospectus examination.

The first two examinations are taken in conjunction with courses offered during the first two years of course work, RUSS 607 and RUSS 608. Early in the fifth term of study, students will take (3), a forty-minute oral exam in their chosen minor field, administered by the DGS and relevant faculty within and/or outside the department; this examination will be waived if the student has successfully
completed one or two relevant graduate courses in another department. In October of the third year of study (typically during the second week), students will take two written examinations, (4) and (5), of two hours each, the first on Monday of the given week, the second on Friday. Each exam will consist of two or three passages drawn from well-known works of literature that will be identified and that are designated as required on the department’s reading list (which also includes additional works that are recommended but not required). Students will be expected to choose one passage and write an essay in which they analyze the text from as many of the following points of view as possible: versification (if relevant), style, structure, narrative point of view, themes, genre, period, place in the author’s oeuvre and in literary history, comparative context, and critical reception. Two additional written examinations, (6) and (7), which will follow the same format, will be held during one week at the end of the student’s fifth term of study (typically the first week of December), again on Monday and Friday. Each of these four written exams will be compiled and graded by two faculty members with expertise in the given century and genres. After each exam, students will be informed as to how they performed.

After the final written exam, all students will have a one-hour oral pre-prospectus exam on a date to be specified by the department near the beginning of the sixth term (typically, during the first week of February). This examination will explore issues pertaining to the student’s future dissertation prospectus. Normally, preparation for the exam will entail a more focused reading of the departmental reading list. For example, a student who proposes to work on Pasternak would read not only the required and recommended works by Pasternak, but also the required and recommended works by other writers of the twentieth century. Students will also be expected to explore secondary and theoretical sources outside the reading list that are relevant to their chosen topic. Preparation for the examination will be done in consultation with two faculty advisers (see below), and students will be required to prepare in advance a seven- to ten-page text outlining their future dissertation topic, including a discussion of existing scholarship and the way they propose to structure their work. An annotated bibliography of primary and secondary works pertaining to their dissertation topic should also be appended. The pre-prospectus text will be distributed to all departmental faculty one week prior to the exam, and all faculty will attend the exam. The aim of this exam is for the student to take an intermediate step toward developing a dissertation prospectus and also to provide the student with feedback from the faculty about the project.

The departmental reading list is available on the department’s website.

**Article in lieu of examination** As a possible alternative to one of the four written examinations on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, students may choose to write an article that they will submit for publication to a scholarly journal. The work will be carried out in consultation with a faculty adviser and will focus on a work or works in either poetry or prose (or drama) of the given century. This article will be due on the date that the exam on the given genre is normally scheduled. It is expected that the article will be ambitious in its overview and in its conceptualization of the issue(s) being addressed. The faculty adviser will evaluate the work and will advise the student on publication.

**COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAM WITH FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES**

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures also offers, in conjunction with the Film and Media Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in Slavic Languages and Literatures and Film and Media Studies. For further details, see Film and Media Studies in this bulletin and the department’s website. Applicants to the combined program must indicate on their application that they are applying both to Film and Media Studies and to Slavic Languages and Literatures. All documentation within the application should include this information.

**MASTER’S DEGREES**

**M.Phil.** See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

**M.A.** The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures does not admit students for the terminal M.A. degree, nor does it award an M.A. en route to the Ph.D. degree. If, however, a student admitted for the Ph.D. leaves the program prior to completion of the doctoral degree, the student may be eligible to receive a terminal master’s degree. The student must have completed at least fifteen term courses in Russian literature and linguistics, chosen in consultation with the DGS. A grade of Honors in at least two term courses and an average of High Pass in the remaining courses must be attained. A reading knowledge of French or German is required, and candidates must pass departmental proficiency examinations in Russian.

More information is available on the department’s website, http://slavic.yale.edu.

**COURSES**

**RUSS 603a, Russian Realist Literature and Painting**  Molly Brunson

An interdisciplinary examination of the development of nineteenth-century Russian realism in literature and the visual arts. Topics include the Natural School and the formulation of a realist aesthetic; the artistic strategies and polemics of critical realism; narrative, genre, and the rise of the novel; the Wanderers and the articulation of a Russian school of painting; realism, modernism, and the challenges of periodization. Readings include novels, short stories, and critical works by Dostoevsky, Turgenev, Goncharov, Tolstoy, Chekhov, and others. Painters of focus include Fedotov, Perov, Shishkin, Repin, and Kramskoy. Special attention is given to the particular methodological demands of inter-art analysis.

**RUSS 630a / ANTH 430a / ANTH 630a / E&RS 531a / RUSS 430a, Post-Pravda: Truth, Falsehood, and Media in (post-)Socialism and Beyond** Dominic Martin

Following the election of Donald Trump, Brexit, and the Cambridge Analytica-Facebook scandal, it has been declared that Euro-America has entered a ‘post-truth’ era. Academics, politicians and the media use this term, often connecting it to Russia, without explicit
formulation of what it is or might be. This upper-level seminar discusses recent social scientific work in socialist and postsocialist countries to outline a coherent conceptual and empirical picture of a 'post-truth' situation. The works under discussion theorize the relationship between power and knowledge in socialism and postsocialism through the discursive productions of journalists, bloggers, actors, secret policemen, musicians, politicians, and others. Mapping the intricacies of knowledge, personhood, and expression within socialism and postsocialism, these authors present broader arguments about the epistemic roots of the collapse of state socialism in Eastern Europe and Russia and the rise of authoritarian populism. The seminar considers how socialist and postsocialist uses of media and linguistic productions foreshadowed, and latterly have come to intersect with, the production and consumption of media and information in Europe and the United States.

RUSS 651b, Chekhov
Edyta Bojanowska
Detailed study of Anton Chekhov's writing in all genres: fiction, nonfiction, and drama. Focus on Chekhov's formal innovations, literary polemics with contemporaries and predecessors, and his works' embeddedness within the social contexts of late imperial Russia and late Victorian Europe. Attentive close reading of texts is combined with interdisciplinary approaches to the study of Chekhov, such as ecocriticism, performance studies, gender studies, postcolonial studies, theories of the spatial turn, and medical humanities. Prerequisite: students without reading knowledge of Russian need permission of the instructor.

RUSS 689b, Russian Symbolist Poetry
Marijeta Bozovic
This graduate seminar explores Russian Symbolist poetry in cultural and international contexts. We study the philosophical foundations (Nietzsche, Solovyov); the preoccupation with various temporalities (modernity); the longing for total art (Wagner) bounded by lyric form; aestheticism; utopianism; decadence; and other topics. Our readings include the works of Vladimir Solovyov, Valery Bryusov, Konstantin Balmont, Fedor Solougub, Zinaida Gippius, Mikhail Kuzmin, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Andrei Bely, and Aleksandr Blok—as well as of "post-Symbolists" Nikolai Gumilyov, Anna Akhmatova, Osip Mandelstam, and Marina Tsvetaeva. Our approach emphasizes prosody, genre, and medium as well as the dissemination of ideas across media and cultures. Weekly practices involve close reading, research, theoretical reframing, and ongoing collaborative participation and presentations.

RUSS 696a / FILM 775a, Post-Stalin Literature and Film
Katerina Clark
The main developments in Russian and Soviet literature and film from Stalin's death in 1953 to the present.

RUSS 699b / CPLT 677b, The Performing Arts in Twentieth-Century Russia
Katerina Clark
Covers ballet, opera, theater, mass spectacle, and film. Theory of the performing arts, including selections from the writings of some of the most famous Russian directors, such as Stanislavsky, Meyerhold, Eisenstein, and Balanchine. Their major productions and some of the major Russian plays of the twentieth century (e.g., by Chekhov, Mayakovsky, Bulgakov, and contemporary dramatists). No knowledge of Russian required. Students taking the course for credit in Comparative Literature can write their papers on texts in other languages.

RUSS 714b / FILM 630b, Soviet Cinema and the Distribution of Perception
John MacKay
Soviet filmmakers and theorists in the 1920s were preoccupied with the way that the established cinema harnessed perception in socially determined, class-specific ways, and sought a variety of alternatives. This course examines those alternatives and their limitations, as postulated in theory and realized on film, as well as their long-term, global influence on theoretical and moving image practice. We examine films and writings by such figures as Vertov, Eisenstein, Shub, Pudovkin, Kuleshov, Room, Ruttmann, Liu Na'ou, Grierson, Buñuel, Cavalcanti, Peixoto, Deren, Jacobs, Dorsky, Godard, Farocki, Burnett, Akerman, and Wang Bing.

SLAV 752a, The Slavic Peoples and Their Languages: From Unity to Diversity
Harvey Goldblatt
Examination of the linguistic and cultural history of the Slavs from their prehistoric period up to the formation of the diverse Slavic languages, the individual Slavic states, and their national literatures.

SLAV 754a, Church Slavonic
Harvey Goldblatt
A study of the long history of Church Slavonic, with special attention given to “New” or “Synodal” Church Slavonic, the language used in the “Elizabeth” or “Synodal” Bible (first published in 1751), which remains even today the authorized version of the Russian Orthodox Church. Special emphasis is placed on the reading of representative New Testament excerpts from this Synodal Bible, comparing them to equivalent textual portions written in both earlier forms of Russian Church Slavonic and Modern Russian. Prerequisite: knowledge of Modern Russian. Conducted in English.

SLAV 900a or b, Directed Reading
Staff
By arrangement with faculty.