SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

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

Chair
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Director of Graduate Studies
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Professors Edyta Bojanowska, Marijeta Bozovic, John MacKay

Associate Professor Molly Brunson

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Senior Lectors II Constantine Muravnik, Julia Titus

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Lecturer Spencer Small

FIELDS OF STUDY

The graduate program of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures values interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives on Russian, East European, and Eurasian literatures and cultures. While maintaining a foundation in the study and teaching of language and literature, the department sees both as embedded in a global context and a broad network of cultural production. Students are encouraged to develop their primary fields of study as well as meaningful connections with other disciplines, including comparative literature, history of art, film and media studies, history and the social sciences, gender and sexuality studies, the environmental humanities, and the digital humanities.

The department’s primary doctoral track is the Ph.D. in Slavic and Eurasian Literatures and Cultures, with a strong emphasis on transnational and transmedial approaches. The department also offers a combined degree in Slavic and Eurasian Literatures and Cultures and Film and Media Studies (see below). By special arrangement, the department will consider individualized ad hoc programs with other departments. Students are encouraged to complement their research and teaching interests with one of Yale’s certificate programs, such as Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Film and Media Studies; Translation Studies; Environmental Humanities; or the MacMillan Center’s Councils on African, European, Latin American and Iberian, and Middle East Studies.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

Course Requirements All graduate students are required to take sixteen courses in their first two years of graduate study, which must include RUSS 851, Proseminar:
Theory and Methods. In addition to this one mandatory course, students must fulfill the following distributional requirements through graduate-level coursework:

- Minimum of one course on Slavic and/or Eurasian literature or culture before the eighteenth century
- Minimum of one course on eighteenth-century Slavic and/or Eurasian literature or culture
- Minimum of two courses on nineteenth-century Slavic and/or Eurasian literature or culture
- Minimum of two courses on twentieth-century Slavic and/or Eurasian literature or culture
- Minimum of one course on twenty-first-century Slavic and/or Eurasian literature or culture
- Minimum of two (but no more than four out of the required sixteen) courses outside the Slavic department.

Students who have done graduate-level coursework elsewhere may petition for up to three courses taken at another institution to count toward degree requirements, and may use any course slots freed through prior study to take additional elective courses at Yale. Language courses do not count toward the required sixteen courses.

**Language Requirements** Entering students are expected to have sufficient knowledge of Russian to allow for satisfactory work at the graduate level and are required to pass a departmental proficiency examination in Russian. Students must also demonstrate competence in a second foreign language, as soon as possible or by the beginning of the fifth term of study. Students may choose to pursue proficiency in a second East European or Eurasian language; in a language useful for broader access to scholarship; or in any language relevant for well-motivated comparative work. Competence in a second foreign language may be demonstrated through coursework or a reading examination.

**Minor Field** Students are responsible for developing a minor field of specialization in one of the following:

1. a second language or literature;
2. visual culture or one of the other arts;
3. a topic in intellectual history or a specific interdisciplinary approach; or
4. another discipline relevant to their primary interests.

To demonstrate competency in their chosen minor field, students are required to submit a minor field portfolio no later than September 1 of their third year of graduate study.

**Qualifying Paper** Students must submit a qualifying paper (7000–9000 words) no later than September 1 of their third year. The paper, which in many cases will be a revised version of a seminar paper, should be developed in consultation with a faculty adviser.

**Comprehensive and Qualifying Examinations** In early October of their third year, students will take a comprehensive examination on Russian literature and culture from the nineteenth century to the present. The comprehensive is split into two six-
hour take-home exams, to be completed several days apart. This exam is meant to test the students’ knowledge of the broad scope of Russian literature and culture, as well as their ability to analyze various kinds of cultural products and position specific works within their historical, cultural, and critical contexts. Students should use the departmental reading list as a guide in preparing for this exam, but they are also welcome to draw from beyond the list in their answers. In early December of their third year, students will also take a qualifying examination based on two specialized reading lists. This exam is a one-hour oral exam with twenty-five minutes allotted to each list, evaluated by two faculty advisers and the Director of Graduate Studies. The exam is meant to test the student’s knowledge of two specific areas of study, which often serve as important preparation for the development of a dissertation topic.

**Pre-Prospectus Colloquium and Prospectus Presentation** In early February of their third year, students will present a preliminary version of their dissertation prospectus (the pre-prospectus) at a one-hour colloquium attended by all Slavic ladder faculty. At the colloquium, students will present a brief introduction to their prospective dissertation, which will be followed by discussion and feedback. After the pre-prospectus colloquium, students will ask two faculty members to serve on their dissertation committee. These committee members will oversee the revision of the preliminary prospectus into a final draft (approximately 5000 words plus a detailed bibliography). In early April, students will present the final version of their dissertation prospectus to all students and faculty in the department. The prospectus presentation will take one hour, beginning with a brief introduction by the student and followed by discussion.

**Dissertation** The dissertation committee should include at least three faculty members: a chair (who must be a ladder faculty member from Slavic), one additional ladder faculty member from Slavic, and one faculty member either from Slavic, another department, or outside Yale. Students can petition to add additional committee members. Students must determine the constitution of their committee by October 1 of their fourth year. The dissertation is the culmination of the student’s work in the doctoral program and an important emblem of professional competence, intellectual rigor, and academic potential. As such, it should demonstrate mastery of a defined field of research and should articulate an original and substantive contribution to knowledge. While all dissertations should have clearly defined empirical and theoretical stakes and be grounded in appropriate methodological choices, each project will approach its central questions in necessarily distinct ways: some based more heavily in archival research, others shaped more profoundly by theoretical discussions, and still others determined by entirely different disciplinary or interdisciplinary demands.

**First-Chapter Talk** During the spring semester of the fourth year, students will deliver a forty-five-minute talk on their first chapter to the entire department. Students will revise their chapter after the talk, submitting a final draft to their dissertation committee no later than May 1.

**Teaching** All graduate students are expected to teach for a minimum of four semesters, typically in the third and fourth years of study. Teaching is required to receive additional sixth-year funding. Students are usually assigned at least two semesters of language teaching and two semesters of literature/culture teaching.
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 and Eurasian Literatures and Cultures 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 Slavic and/or Eurasian literature and culture, 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. Candidates must pass a departmental proficiency examination in Russian, and prove competency in a second foreign language.

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

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 interart analysis.

RUSS 605a / CPLT 612a / EALL 588a / EAST 616a / RSEE 605a, Socialist ’80s: Aesthetics of Reform in China and the Soviet Union Jinyi Chu
This course offers an interdisciplinary introduction to the study of the complex cultural and political paradigms of late socialism from a transnational perspective by focusing on the literature, cinema, and popular culture of the Soviet Union and China in 1980s. How were intellectual and everyday life in the Soviet Union and China distinct from and similar to that of the West of the same era? How do we parse “the cultural logic of late socialism?” What can today’s America learn from it? Examining two major socialist cultures together in a global context, this course queries the ethnographic, ideological, and socio-economic constituents of late socialism. Students analyze cultural materials in the context of Soviet and Chinese history. Along the way, we explore themes of identity, nationalism, globalization, capitalism, and the Cold War. Students with knowledge of Russian and Chinese are encouraged to read in original. All readings are available in English.
RUSS 606b / RSEE 606b, Socialist Realism and Its Legacies  Claire Roosien
Socialist Realism was promulgated in the 1930s as the sole mode for cultural production in the Soviet Union. Since that time, it has been maligned as totalitarian, lauded as emancipatory, dismissed as hackish, and reappropriated in a variety of ways—from homage to parody. This course offers an introduction to Socialist Realism and its legacies, beginning with its prehistory in the early Soviet avant-garde and other cultural movements, tracing its official adoption under Stalin, its reassessment in the late Soviet period, and its legacies after the fall of the Soviet Union. Special attention is paid to the interpretations of Socialist Realism in the emerging national cultures beyond the Russian SFSR. The course also examines select examples of the impact of Socialist Realism beyond the Soviet Union, particularly in the “Third World” during the era of Cold War cultural diplomacy. Questions for discussion include: How did Socialist Realism imagine, enforce, and unsettle hierarchies of gender, race, and ethnicity? What did Socialist Realism look like beyond literature: in film, visual art, architecture, and music? How did the imperative to use Socialist Realism connect to the Soviet project to create minority cultures that would be “national in form, socialist in content”? How did people outside the Second World co-construct and appropriate Socialist Realism?

RUSS 613a / CPLT 689a / E&R 629a / RSEE 613a / SLAV 613a, Art and Resistance in Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine  Andrei Kureichyk
This interdisciplinary seminar is devoted to the study of protest art as part of the struggle of society against authoritarianism and totalitarianism. It focuses on the example of the Soviet and post-Soviet transformation of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine. The period under discussion begins after the death of Stalin in 1953 and ends with the art of protest against the modern post-Soviet dictatorships of Alexander Lukashenka in Belarus and Vladimir Putin in Russia, the protest art of the Ukrainian Maidan, and the anti-war movement of artists against the Russian-Ukrainian war. The course begins by looking at the influence of the “Khrushchev Thaw” on literature and cinema, which opened the way for protest art to a wide Soviet audience. We explore different approaches to protest art in conditions of political unfreedom: “nonconformism,” “dissidence,” “mimicry,” “rebellion.” The course investigates the existential conflict of artistic freedom and the political machine of authoritarianism. These themes are explored at different levels through specific examples from the works and biographies of artists. Students immerse themselves in works of different genres: films, songs, performances, plays, and literary works.

RUSS 692b, The Russian Fin de Siecle  Jinyi Chu
This course offers an interdisciplinary overview of modernist culture in Russia. Focus is on how poets, prose writers, artists, intellectuals, and politicians (from Merezhkovsky to Stravinsky, from Diaghilev to Lenin) interacted with each other and how imperial Russia developed its own modernist culture in global context. Topics include close readings of poetry and prose; institutions of art and media; literary journals and groups; translation and book market; European thoughts in Russia; theosophy and literature; modernist sexuality; prerevolutionary urban culture; gentry life; dance, music, costume design; Russia between East and West; revolution and modernism. Students establish an in-depth understanding of the cultural milieu in Russia from the 1890s to the 1910s and are introduced to the scholarly discourses on Russian modernism.
RUSS 714b / FILM 630b, Russian and Soviet Film  John MacKay
Overview of Russian, Soviet, and post-Soviet cinema, from prerevolutionary Russia to the present. Theoretical writings and canonical films of important figures such as Sergei Eisenstein, Dziga Vertov, Andrei Tarkovsky, Kira Muratova, Aleksei German, and Alexander Sokurov. A variety of film genres and modes are investigated, as well as non-Russophone Soviet film.

RUSS 834a, Aspects of Russian Grammar and Teaching Methodology  Olha Tytarenko
The course examines various aspects of Russian grammar and the use of different teaching methodologies. Special emphasis is placed on the connection between linguistic knowledge and its application for teaching Russian in an English-speaking classroom. Different types of language learners, diverse teaching strategies, and existing resources for teaching Russian are discussed.

SLAV 610a / E&RS 619a / RSEE 610a, Eurasian Ecomedia  Claire Roosien
This course explores the relationship between Eurasian environments and popular media (film, photography, television, literature, and other media). Conversations about environmental humanities and ecomedia have thus far centered capital as the operative category; this course asks what we might gain from considering state socialism and postsocialism in conversation with that broader scholarship. The goal is to tell the environmental and cultural history of Eurasia as part of the connected history of the Anthropocene. Questions for discussion include: how do Eurasian publics engage with the mass media and how does that engagement shape environmental subjectivities in the region? How can we think about media histories in dialogue with material histories? How do narratives of the environment and ecological catastrophe correlate with broader Eurasian political discourses (socialist construction, collapse, post-Soviet nation-building)? Discussions comprise close analysis of cultural artifacts alongside relevant theory and scholarship about environmental and cultural histories of the region. Case studies focus on Central Asia, with transregional engagement with Siberia, the Caucasus, and Eastern Europe, focusing on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Major assignments include a translation/curatorial project and a final, polished conference-style presentation. Knowledge of Russian or another Eurasian language is required.

SLAV 613a / CPLT 689a / E&RS 629a / RSEE 613a / RUSS 613a, Art and Resistance in Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine  Andrei Kureichyk
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of artists. Students immerse themselves in works of different genres: films, songs, performances, plays, and literary works.

**SLAV 745b / FILM 744, Yugoslav Film**  Marijeta Bozovic
TBD.

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