

RUSSIAN, EAST EUROPEAN, AND EURASIAN STUDIES (RSEE)

*** RSEE 219b / THST 233b, History of Russian Theater** Julia Titus

This seminar introduces students to the rich legacy of Russian theater, focusing specifically on the developments of Russian drama from the first third of the nineteenth-century to the early twentieth century. The readings and plays studied in the course are organized chronologically, starting with classic Russian comedies by Alexander Griboyedov and Nikolai Gogol, continuing with dramas by Alexander Ostrovsky and Ivan Turgenev, and ending with late nineteenth-century/early twentieth century plays by Leo Tolstoy and Anton Chekhov. Some readings from Stanislavsky are also included. This course will be taught in Russian, with some readings in English and others in Russian. HU

*** RSEE 222b / HIST 222Jb, Russia and the Eurasian Steppe** Paul Bushkovich

A study of Russia's interaction with the nomads of the Eurasian steppe. Topics include the Mongol invasion, the Mongol Empire in Asia and the Golden Horde, Islam, nomadic society, and the Russian state. Focus on conquest and settlement. May count toward either European or Asian distributional credit within the History major, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies. WR, HU

RSEE 225a / HIST 290a, Russia from the Ninth Century to 1801 Staff

The mainstream of Russian history from the Kievan state to 1801. Political, social, and economic institutions and the transition from Eastern Orthodoxy to the Enlightenment. HU o Course cr

*** RSEE 241b / HIST 240Jb, Government, Law, and Society in Modern Russia, 1853-1953** Sergei Antonov

Russian political culture from the Crimean War to the death of Stalin. Special attention to continuities, as well as changes, across the revolutionary divide of 1917, and to comparing official policies with daily experiences of ordinary Russians. Changing ideologies and ruling styles of tsars and early Soviet leaders (esp. Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin) and relations with aristocratic and bureaucratic elites; political dissent and protest, including popular and state-imposed violence; the problem of legality and the rule of law. All discussions and readings in English. WR, HU TR

*** RSEE 244a / FILM 369a / HUMS 186a / RUSS 222a, War Games** Marijeta Bozovic

Dismissed, mocked, feared or loved for decades, video games have become a staple of contemporary media, art, and popular culture, studied alongside traditional print media and film. They eclipse the global yearly revenue of both film and music industries combined, leaving their financial significance undeniable. What remains understudied, however, is the political and cultural significance of the medium. *War Games* is a seminar dedicated to the intersection of video games and political violence (both real and imaginary) in a global and particularly post-Cold War context. Students learn to recognize patterns of ideological communication in video games while developing close reading skills of literature and digital media alike. We combine the study of video games with broader inquiries into the media that circulate through the game mediaverse, including literature, social and news media, and film. Playing games and reading books, we pose the following questions: How do players “perform” war in

games, and how might they resist or subvert expected performances? How indeed are we as readers and players affected by the type of media we consume? What is an adaptation? How do adaptations influence or potentially reshape our relationships with the source material? What themes and ideas are revealed effectively through one medium versus another? Why do certain literary traditions (such as classical Russian literature) provide such fruitful ground for video game adaptation? What are the political implications for the ideologies present in a video game given the globalized position of the medium? Assigned readings include novels, short stories, news media, and internet forums alongside a range of secondary materials, including film and media theory, intellectual and media histories, digital anthropology, reception studies, and interviews. HU

* **RSEE 246b / RUSS 246b, Love and Death in the Russian Short Story** Edyta Bojanowska

A brilliant counterpart to the expansive Russian novel, the Russian short story is held in high esteem by the genre's connoisseurs and practitioners. This course explores both the classics and the hidden gems of the Russian short-story tradition from the 19th century to today, focusing on the most universal themes of story-writing: love and death. The course poses the following questions: What is distinctive about the short story form? How do stories "talk to" other stories in a tradition? What narrative twists and complications do authors use to keep readers hooked and spellbound? The readings cover most major Russian writers and movements, so the course provides a good overview of modern Russian literature. All readings and discussion in English.

WR, HU

* **RSEE 257a / LITR 205a / RUSS 267a, Memory and Memoir in Russian Culture** Jinyi Chu

How do we remember and forget? How does memory transform into narrative? Why do we read and write memoirs and autobiography? What can they tell us about the past? How do we analyze the roles of the narrator, the author, and the protagonist? How should we understand the ideological tensions between official historiography and personal reminiscences, especially in 20th-century Russia? This course aims to answer these questions through close readings of a few cultural celebrities' memoirs and autobiographical writings that are also widely acknowledged as the best representatives of 20th-century Russian prose. Along the way, we read literary texts in dialogue with theories of memory, historiography, and narratology. Students acquire the theoretical apparatus that enables them to analyze the complex ideas, e.g. cultural memory and trauma, historicity and narrativity, and fiction and non-fiction. Students finish the course with an in-depth knowledge of the major themes of 20th-century Russian history, e.g. empire, revolution, war, Stalinism, and exilic experience, as well as increased skills in the analysis of literary texts. Students with knowledge of Russian are encouraged to read in the original language. All readings are available in English. WR, HU

RSEE 271a / HIST 271a / HUMS 339a, European Intellectual History since Nietzsche Staff

Major currents in European intellectual history from the late nineteenth century through the twentieth. Topics include Marxism-Leninism, psychoanalysis, expressionism, structuralism, phenomenology, existentialism, antipolitics, and deconstruction. HU o Course cr

* **RSEE 313a / LITR 210a / RUSS 313a / SLAV 313a and SLAV 613a / THST 314a, 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. HU

* **RSEE 316a / EALL 288a / EAST 316a / LITR 303a / RUSS 316a, 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 languages. All readings are available in English. WR, HU TR

* **RSEE 322b / RUSS 324b, The Master and Margarita: Money, Sex, and Power in Stalin's Russia** Nariman Shelepkayev

Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* is the most popular Russian novel of the twentieth century. Its plot, which describes the Devil's visit to Moscow in the 1930s, has no analogues in modern Russian literature: it mixes ingeniously the elements of adventure, romance, history, philosophy, fantasy, and satirical novels. Bulgakov worked on his magnum opus for twelve years, from 1928 and until his death in 1940. The novel, however, was not published until 1966, when the first section appeared in the magazine *Moskva*, which sold out within hours. For contemporary readers, Bulgakov's text is a treasure trove of insight about society, culture, morality, economics, power, religion, entertainment, politics, police, and everyday life in the Stalin era. But Bulgakov also raises deep philosophical issues: the various chapters of *The Master and Margarita* are case studies dealing provocatively and in depth with the meaning of life and the fear of death, good and evil, love and loyalty, ethics and responsibility, and so much more. As a bonus, the final chapters offer us Bulgakov's own recipe for happiness. During the semester, we dive into the intricacies of Bulgakov's narrative, studying not only the

structure, content, and characters of the novel, but also – through some visual sources and scholarly articles – the history of Stalinist Moscow, and the textual sources that permeate the book, from the Bible, Goethe's *Faust*, and Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, to Gogol and Pushkin, to Bulgakov's fellow writers and philosophers. WR, HU, SO

* **RSEE 325a / HIST 293a / RUSS 325a / URBN 303a, Ten Eurasian Cities** Nariman Shelekpayev

This course explores histories and identities of ten cities in Northern and Central Eurasia. Its approach is based on an assumption that studying cities is crucial for an understanding of how societies developed on the territory of the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and post-Soviet states. The course is structured around the study of ten cities – Kyiv, Saint Petersburg, Moscow, Odesa, Baku, Magnitogorsk, Kharkiv, Tashkent, Semey (former Semipalatinsk), and Nur-Sultan (former Astana) – that are located on the territory of modern Ukraine, Russia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus. We study these cities through the prism of various scholarly approaches, as well as historical and visual sources. Literary texts are used not only as a means to illustrate certain historical processes but as artifacts that were instrumental in creating the identity of these cities within and beyond their territories. The ultimate goal of the course is to acquaint all participants with the dynamics of social, cultural, and political development of the ten Eurasian cities, their urban layout and architectural features. The course also provides an overview of basic conceptual approaches to the study of cities and ongoing urbanization in Northern and Central Eurasia. HU, SO

* **RSEE 355a / EVST 294a / HUMS 294a / RUSS 355a, Ecology and Russian Culture** Molly Brunson

Interdisciplinary study of Russian literature, film, and art from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries, organized into four units – forest, farm, labor, and disaster. Topics include: perception and representation of nature; deforestation and human habitation; politics and culture of land-ownership; leisure, labor, and forced labor; modernity and industrialization; and nuclear technologies and disasters. Analysis of short stories, novels, and supplementary readings on ecocriticism and environmental humanities, as well as films, paintings, and visual materials. Several course meetings take place at the Yale Farm. Readings and discussions in English. HU

* **RSEE 470a or b, Individual Writing Tutorial** Staff

* **RSEE 490a or b, The Senior Essay** Staff

Preparation of the senior essay under faculty supervision. The essay grade becomes the grade for both terms of the course. Required of all seniors majoring in Russian and East European Studies. Credit for RSEE 490 only on completion of RSEE 491.