RUS5015 RUS6015 COM5015 COM6015
Modern Russian Literature II: Beyond the Monolith

Pre-requisite: None
Assessment: One 2000 word essay (50 per cent) One two hour examination (50 per cent)
Value: 15 credits
Level: 5 (RUS208)/ 6 (RUS308)
Semester: 3 or 5
Organiser: Dr J. Hicks
Contact details: email: j.g.hicks@qmul.ac.uk; Phone: 020 7882 8306 Arts 1 (2.43);
Office hours: tbc

All students must ensure that they obtain a copy of the School handbook and follow the School's guidelines and regulations in all matters regarding this module. Students must note that failure to do so may result in de-registration from the module, which may have a significant impact on their overall degree classification.

DESCRIPTION
This module examines developments in Russian fiction of the period 1953 to the present. Students analyse the works of Solzhenitsyn, Valentin Rasputin, Liudmilla Petrushavskaya and Pelevin in relation to the historical events and social phenomena they narrate, their technique and their place in debates about Russian literature and cultural policy. You will explore the relation of cultural politics to the developments in Russian society and develop an understanding of the role of literature in the political and historical process.

Timetable: Lecture and Seminar Tuesday 9 - 11 am, Laws 1.02
Overlap: RUS5015 RUS6015 COM5015 COM6015

LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE MODULE
1. Students will have acquired an understanding of the key formal and political tendencies in Russian literature of the period and of its relation to Western European developments.
2. Students will have acquired an understanding of the impact of Russian literature on the political and social debates of the day.

3. Students will have understood the meaning of key theoretical and critical concepts and learned how to use such concepts.

4. Students will have enhanced their ability to subject texts to the practice of “close readings.”

5. Students will have acquired the study habits and the interpretive skills necessary to processing substantial works of fiction.

6. Students will have developed their essay writing skills and their command of academic English.

7. Russian honours students will have expanded their passive vocabulary in the Russian language and developed sensitivity to stylistic nuances of the language.

update
8. Level 6 (RUS308) students will have developed a solid awareness of the place of a particular novel in Russian literary history and of its relations with prior specimens of the genre or with other contemporary genres.

9. Level 6 (RUS308) students will have acquired an understanding of the critical reception of a given novel.

MODULE SCHEDULE, CORE TEXTS AND FURTHER READING

1. **Introduction.**
   The role and place of literature in late twentieth century cultural life
   The international dimension of the Soviet Union and Russia
   **The Monolith:**
   Literature under Stalin;
   i) prescriptions: Socialist Realism; the Stalin cult; the heroic;
   ii) proscriptions: silences and taboos of the Stalin years
   **Beginning of the end of the Monolith:** Literature after the Death of Stalin
   References to Ilya Ehrenburg, *The Thaw*
   Evgenii Evtushenko – *The Heirs to Stalin*
   Vasilii Grossman, *Life and Fate*

2-3. **Depicting the Camps**
   **Core Reading:**
   Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, [1962]
Further Reading

4 Socialist Surrealism?
Core Reading:


(Download Russian text: [http://www.belousenko.com/wr_Tertz.htm](http://www.belousenko.com/wr_Tertz.htm))

Further Reading:

5-6 Literature and Nationalism: Village Prose
Core Reading:
Valentin Rasputin, *Farewell to Matyora* (1972)
(Online Russian text: [http://lib.ru/PROZA/RASPUTIN/matera.txt](http://lib.ru/PROZA/RASPUTIN/matera.txt))

Further Reading:
Geoffrey Hosking, Beyond Socialist Realism (excerpts)

7

Reading Week

Early option essay deadline: Thursday 17 November 4pm

8

The Underground and Satire
Core Reading:
Online Russian text: http://lib.rus.ec/b/142473/read

Further Reading:
Robert Porter, Russia’s Alternative Prose, Oxford: Berg, 1994, 72-87,

9-10

Women Writers without Feminism
Core Reading:
Liudmila Petrushevskaia, Night Time (1992)
(Online Russian text: http://lib.rus.ec/b/42569/read)

Further Reading:
Liudmila Parts, ‘Down the Intertextual Lane: Petrushevskaia, Chekhov, Tolstoy,’ The Russian Review 64 (January 2005): 77–89
Russian Post-Modern Literature

Core Reading:
(Online Russian text: [http://knigo.com/p/PELEWIN/omon_engl.html](http://knigo.com/p/PELEWIN/omon_engl.html))

Further Reading:


Final option essay deadline: Thursday 14 December 4pm

Modern Russian Literature II: Beyond the Monolith? Background Reading


Press, 1994

ACQUIRING TEXTS
The course focuses on close reading of the texts, and you are required to bring a copy to each lesson.
The library has a few copies of each of the core texts: you are strongly advised to acquire your own copy in good time eg from www.ozon.ru or, for translations, www.abebooks.co.uk

ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES
Early option:
Final Deadline:
Associate students attending one semester write two 3000 word essays, one for each of the deadlines.

MARKING CRITERIA
See the Undergraduate student handbook
It is important that students use quotations from the original text, where possible in Russian, to support their arguments.

SUBMISSION OF COURSEWORK
Unless otherwise specified, two copies of your essay must be submitted by 4:00 pm on the deadline day:
Early option:
Final Deadline:
An electronic version on QMPlus, with attached coversheet