



## **RUSS 851**

### **PROSEMINAR IN SLAVIC LITERATURE**

**THURSDAYS 9:25 – 11:15  
102 CO493**

**MOLLY BRUNSON**  
**2699 HGS**  
[molly.brunson@yale.edu](mailto:molly.brunson@yale.edu)

**MARIJETA BOZOVIC**  
**2708 HGS**  
[marijeta.bozovic@yale.edu](mailto:marijeta.bozovic@yale.edu)

#### **DESCRIPTION:**

This graduate seminar offers an introduction to the profession of Slavic literary studies. The main objective is to offer an overview of approaches and instruments used in contemporary literary scholarship and pedagogy: epistemological premises of the humanities, concepts of criticism, analytical and interpretive moves, research strategies, and more. Topics include Russian and East European contributions to literary theory, concepts and methods from international literary and cultural theory, research and publishing, conference presentations, and other facets of professional life.

#### **REQUIREMENTS:**

Graduate seminar requirements include challenging reading assignments and excellent preparation for each discussion. Students will be asked to write reading responses several times during the course of the semester: these will be staggered, so as to have two students providing the class with reading responses each week. Reading responses should consist of 1-2 pages of single-spaced text. Other assignments will include exercises in citation, transliteration, translation, and other useful skills; archival research; book reviews; peer reviews; public scholarship genres; and concluding conference presentations. We encourage students to draw on material in progress rather than produce entirely new work for the final assignment: we ask students instead to practice revising and foregrounding theoretical and methodological frames. We will deliver these papers in an informal setting at the end of the semester.

#### **SYLLABUS:**

**Jan. 18**                      **Introduction: State of the Field I**  
• Questionnaire exercise and discussion

**Jan. 25**                      **Forms I**  
• Shklovskii, “Iskusstvo kak priem”  
• Eikhenbaum, “Teoriia formal’nogo metoda”  
• Eikhenbaum, “Kak sdelana ‘Shinel’ Gogolia”  
• Tihanov, “Why did Modern Literary Theory Originate in Central and Eastern Europe? (And Why Is It Now Dead?)”

Feb. 1

### Forms II

- Tynianov, “O literaturnoi evoliutsii”
- Tynianov and Jakobson, “Problemy izucheniia literatury i iazyka”
- Striedter, *Literary Structure, Evolution, and Value: Russian Formalism and Czech Structuralism Reconsidered* [1-82]
- **Assignment:** Transliteration, Translation

Feb. 8

### Communication and Structure

- de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* [65-96]
- Jakobson, “The Speech Event and the Functions of Language”
- Jakobson, “Dva aspekta iazyka i dva tipa afaticheskikh narushenii”
- Jakobson, “Linguistics and Poetics,” “Poeziia grammatiki i grammatika poezii”
- Lévi-Strauss, “The Structural Study of Myth”
- Baran, “Structuralism and Semiotics,” in Terras, *Handbook of Russian Literature*
- **Assignment:** Citation
- + **scholarly work-in-progress presentation [MB2]**

Feb. 15

### Text and Author

- Lotman, *Struktura khudozhestvennogo teksta* [Ch. 2, 3, 9]
- Gasparov, “Eshche raz o funktsii podteksta v poeticheskom tekste (‘Kontsert na vokzale’)”
- Barthes, “From Work to Text”
- Barthes, “Death of the Author”
- Derrida, “Structure, Sign, and Play”
- Foucault, “What is an Author?”

Feb. 22

### Discourse

- Bakhtin/Medvedev/Voloshinov, *Formal’nyi metod v literaturovedenii* [Ch. 3.2, 3.3, 4.2]
- Bakhtin, “Formy vremeni i khronotopa v romane”
- Bakhtin, “Slovo v romane”
- Hirschkop, *Mikhail Bakhtin: An Aesthetic for Democracy* [3-108]
- Naiman and Nesbet, “Formy vremeni v ‘Formakh vremeni...’ Khronosomy khronotopa”
- **Assignment:** Book review

Mar. 1

### Carnival

- Emerson, *The First Hundred Years of Mikhail Bakhtin* [3-72]
- Clark and Holquist, *Mikhail Bakhtin* [skim all]
- Morson, Titunik, and Clark and Holquist, “Baxtin Forum,” *Slavic and East European Journal*
- Wall and Thomson, “Cleaning Up Bakhtin’s Carnival Act”
- Morson and Emerson, “Imputations and Amputations: A Reply to Wall and Thomson”
- Wall and Thomson, “Chronic Chronotopicity: A Reply to Morson and Emerson”

Mar. 8

### Marxist Debates

- Lukacs, *The Historical Novel* [skim all]
- Lukacs, “Realism in the Balance”
- Clark and Tihanov, “Soviet Literary Theory in the 1930s,” in Dobrenko and Tihanov, *A History of Russian Literary Theory and Criticism: The Soviet Age and Beyond*

- Anderson, “From Progress to Catastrophe: Perry Anderson on the Historical Novel”
- Eagleton, Introduction to *Ideology*
- **Assignment:** Archival research

**Mar. 29**

**Semiotics**

- Ivanov, Lotman, Piatogorskii, Toporov, and Uspenskii, “Tezisy k semioticheskomu izucheniiu kul’tur”
- Lotman, “O semiosfere”
- Lotman, “Dekabrist v povsednevnoi zhizni (bytovoe povedenie kak istoriko-psikhologicheskaia kategoriia)”
- Gasparov, Introduction to *The Semiotics of Russian Cultural History*
- Gasparov, “Tartuskaia shkola 1960-kh godov kak semioticheskii fenomen”
- Gallagher and Greenblatt, Introduction to *Practicing New Historicism*
- **Assignment:** Peer review
- + **scholarly work-in-progress presentation [MB1]**

**Apr. 5**

**Feminisms I**

- Cixous, “Poetry, Passion, and History: Marina Tsvetaeva”
- Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic* [3-107]
- Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century”
- Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* [skim all]

**Apr. 12**

**Feminisms II and Post-structuralism**

- Kristeva, “Word, Language, and the Novel”
- Kristeva, “Approaching Abjection”
- Johnson, *The Feminist Difference: Literature, Psychoanalysis, Race, Gender* [skim all]
- Johnson, *Mother Tongues: Sexuality, Trials, Motherhood, Translation*, “Correctional Facilities,” “Task of the Translator” [1-25, 40-64]
- **Assignment:** Nauka

**Apr. 19**

**Psychoanalysis and Politics**

- Lacan, “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience”
- Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* [skim all]
- Timofeeva, *Istoriia zhivotnykh* [skim all]

**Apr. 26**

**Postcolonialism**

- Said, *Orientalism* [Introduction, skim rest]
- Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?”
- Spivak, Condee, Ram, and Chernetsky, “Are We Postcolonial? Post-Soviet Space”
- Etkind, *Internal Colonization: Russia’s Imperial Experience* [1-45]
- Condee, *Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema* [3-48]

**May 3**

**State(s) of the Field II**

- 2015 ASEEEES Report on the State of Russian Studies in the United States
- Todd, “On the Care and Development of ‘Home-Grown Disciplines’”
- Morson, “Literature and Responsibility”

- Buckler, “What Comes after Post-Soviet Studies?”
- Batuman, “The Murder of Leo Tolstoy: A Forensic Investigation”
- **Assignment:** Op-ed

**TBA**

**Final meeting and conference presentations**

**NOTES:**