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INTRODUCTION

The Russian twentieth century was an age of transformations - of revolution, of the Soviet Union, and of its collapse. In cultural terms, it was extraordinarily rich and varied. This paper covers the period from the first ‘revolution’ in 1905, through 1917, to the death of Stalin in 1953. It travels from the poetry, film and theatre of the ‘Silver Age’, through the revolutionary experiments of avant-garde writers and film-makers, to the feel-good ideological texts of Stalinist Socialist Realism. In the fraught political arena of Soviet Russia, literature and culture were formed in relation to state imperatives, which could be accepted or rejected, but which were difficult to ignore. The texts that we study in this paper provide a wide variety of responses to the particular contexts of early twentieth-century Russia, and reveal the remarkable creativity that flourished, perhaps paradoxically, in that world.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE

This paper offers the chance to tackle texts of different kinds (novels, poetry, drama, short stories), work with different media (written texts, film, visual and performing arts), and different modes of cultural enquiry (literary criticism and theory, intellectual and cultural history).

The paper is divided into two sections. Section A examines two set texts: Isaac Babel’s cycle of Civil War stories Konarmiia (1926) and Mikhail Bulgakov’s novel Master i Margarita (1928-1940). Section B offers four thematic topics. Each of these topics will require you to think across disciplinary boundaries, to make connections among texts produced in a range of media, and to explore both verbal and visual modes of cultural expression.

ASSESSMENT

The examination paper will be divided into two sections. Section A will include either a commentary or an essay question for each set text (Master and Margarita; Konarmiia), as well as comparative questions. Candidates can write on ONE of the set texts, or may write a comparative essay treating both texts. Section B will consist of a number of questions which relate to, but are not necessarily limited by, the frameworks of the topics taught in that academic year. There will be at least one question on the exam paper relating to each of the topics, but they will not be listed explicitly as such.

Answers in Section B must be answered with substantive reference to two or more works by one or more authors/artists. Students are free to draw on whatever appropriate material they have at their disposal in response to particular questions set— subject to the general principle, which appears as a rubric on the exam paper, that "candidates should not draw substantially on the same material more than once" in the exam, or about which they have written substantively in previous examinations of dissertations.

The rubric on the examination paper is as follows: 
All candidates must answer three questions.
Candidates for Part IB must answer at least one question from Section A, and must ensure that at least one of their questions refers substantively to more than one author/film-maker/visual artist.

Candidates for Part II may answer any three questions, of which no more than one can be drawn from Section A, and must ensure that at least two of their questions refer substantively to more than one author/film-maker/visual artist.

ALL Candidates must ensure that at least two of their answers on the paper as a whole refer substantively to at least one literary text.

(i.e. you cannot study only film and visual material to prepare for Section B). As always, you may not discuss the same material in more than one question.

TEACHING

There will be 16 Lectures; 4 revision seminars in Michaelmas term; and 10 supervisions over the year. Lectures will provide a ‘general’ background for the course, and are not limited in scope to individual topics, so you are expected to attend all of them.

SET TEXTS AND TOPICS, 2011-12

Please note that prior to every supervision you will have a discussion with your supervisor in which particular sources are recommended/selected. You are not expected to read/watch all the sources listed here.

SET TEXTS

Isaak Babel’, Konarmiia (1928)
Mikhail Bulgakov, Master i Margarita (1989 or later, as these later editions should mirror the edition prepared by Lidiia Ianovskaia for publication in Kiev, 1989, and Moscow, 1990)

TOPICS

Topic 1: Crises: of Representation, Communication (and Society)

Recommended primary sources:
Anton Chekhov, Diadia Vania; Vishnevyi sad.
Selected poetry by Aleksandr Blok, Anna Akhmatova, Osip Mandel'shtam (see below)
Aleksandr Blok, Balagan (play); Vsevolod Meierkho’d, ‘O balagane’ (about the staging of that play)
Extracts from Blok, “Krushenie gumanizma”; “O naznachenii poeta”

Topic 2: Opportunities: Revolutions in Art and Society

Recommended primary sources:
Selected poetry by Velemir Khlebnikov (see below); Futurist manifestos: ‘Poshcheshchina obschchestvennomu vkusu’; ‘Slovo kak takovoe’. Optional: Futurist opera ‘Pobeda nad solnstsem.’
Sergei Eisenstein, Stachka (1924); Visual art by Kazimir Malevich, Vladimir Tatlin.
Maiakovskii, Misteriia-Buf (1B read only prologue).
Evgenii Zamiatin, “O literature, revoliutsii i entrop’.

**Topic 3: New Minds, New Bodies, New Lives.**

**Recommended primary sources:**
Mikhail Zoshchenko, Rasskazy (short stories from the 1920s: see especially: Grimacy NEPa, Bania, Krizis, Aristokratka).
Boris Barnet (film), Dom na Trubnoi (1928)
Evgenii Zamiatin, My (1919) (Or: Iurii Olesha, Zavist’ (1929))
Optional: Iurii Olesha, Strogii iunosha (film, 1936)
Vasilev Brothers, Chapaev (film, 1935)

**Topic 4: Stalin’s Subjects**

**Recommended primary sources:**
Gregory Aleksandrov, Svetlyi put’ (film, 1938)
Vasiliev Brothers, Chapaev (film, 1935)
Raizman, Letchiki (film, 1937)
Chiaureli, Padenie Berlina (film, 1949)
Kalatozov, Letiat zhuravli (film, 1957)
Shalamov, Kolymskie rasskazy (1954-) [selected stories]
Akhmatova, Severnye elegii (1940-1955) [selected poems]
Kharms, Sluchai (1939)

Please note: The reading list below treats each topic as a separate entity, with distinct primary and secondary sources, but as the course proceeds you will realize that readings you have studied in relationship to one topic may also be discussed in relationship to several others.

**SCHEDULE OF LECTURES**

Michaelmas Term.

Week 1: Crises of representation 1 (EKW)
Week 2: Crises of representation 2 (EKW)
Week 3: Opportunities: Revolution 1 (EKW)
Week 4: Revolution 2 (EKW)
Week 5: Babel 1 (EKW)
Week 6: Babel 2 (EKW)
Week 7. Babel 3 (EKW)
Week 8. New Minds, New Bodies 1 (EKW) (lecture will a seminar format, 10-11.30am, and will link the materials covered so far.)

Lent Term.

Week 1: New Minds, New Bodies 2 (SG)
Week 2: New Minds, New Bodies 3 (SG)
Week 3: Bulgakov 1. (SKL)
Week 4: Bulgakov 2. (SKL)
Week 5: Bulgakov 3 (SKL).
Week 6: Stalin’s subjects 1 (SG)
Week 7: Stalin’s subjects 2 (SG)
Week 8: Stalin’s subjects 3 (SG) (lecture will be seminar format, 10-11.30)

Easter Term (four 1.5 hour revision seminars)

**READING LIST**

Primary and secondary texts are set out below, organised by Section and Topic. Although extensive, the list is not exhaustive, and you may wish to extend your reading in different directions on the advice of your supervisor. The lists of secondary reading are intended to offer a variety of critical and theoretical approaches, but they are limited—primarily, but not exclusively—to scholarly studies in English. Several important critical texts are only available in Russian, and we encourage you to try to read at least a few of them. You will see that a number of journal articles are suggested: do not be put off by the need to obtain these journals in the University Library! The use of articles is one of the most efficient ways to focus your reading and research. Many of the listed articles are available online, either on the CamTools website for this course or from electronic databases such as JSTOR (accessible from the Library home page). Your supervisor will help you to orientate yourself within the bibliography, and to use your time efficiently, by suggesting those texts which most closely relate to the themes and approaches that interest you. Some recommended texts, as well as links to useful web-based resources (for texts, images, and video), are (or soon will be) posted on the CamTools site for this course.

**I. BACKGROUND READING AND REFERENCE WORKS:**

The list below contains essential reference works for the course as a whole. You will want to consult them to get a sense of the general background both for the period as a whole, but also for specific texts and cultural questions. You are not expected to read all of these books, but you are encouraged to use this list as a guide in your preparation for essays and supervisions.

Balina, Marina and Evgenii Dobrenko, eds.. Cambridge Companion to 20th Century Russian Literature. CUP, 2011. This book contains many chapters that will be relevant to specific topics in this paper, and would be a useful text to refer to consistently throughout the year. Available online from computers in the .cam.ac.uk domain at: http://cco.cambridge.org/uid=17532/book?id=ccol9780521875356_CCOL9780521875356
Kahn, A., Lipovetsky, M., Reyfman, I. and Stephanie Sander, eds., A History of Russian Literature. Oxford University Press, 2018. This is a substantial volume; your supervisors will be able to specify relevant chapters in the course of the year.
Bulgakov, Mikhail. Master i Margarita. Please purchase your own copy of this text, using an edition prepared AFTER 1989. This novel has a complicated textual history and earlier versions do not conform to the text that scholars consider the closest to a 'final' version.
Those of you who may wish to read a translation before or as you work your way through this difficult text should be aware that ONLY the translations prepared by the teams of Diana Burgin & Katherine O’Connor or Richard Pevear & Larissa Volokhovsky are considered both accurate and complete by the scholarly community.

A2. Secondary readings for Mikhail Bulgakov’s Master i Margarita


Bethea, David. The Shape of Apocalypse in Modern Russian Fiction, Princeton University Press, 1989

Bulgakov, Mikhail. “Moi bednyi bedny Master…: Polnoe sobranie redaktsii i variantov romana 'Master i Margarita’. Ed. Viktor Losev. Moscow: Vagrius, 2006. [This text allows you to trace the complex textual history of the novel, by comparing its multiple, very different drafts.]


Curtis, Julie. Manuscripts don't burn: a life in letters and diaries, 1991


Renan, Ernst. La Vie de Jesus, 1863 (trans. The Life of Jesus, 1864]. An important intertext for The Master and Margarita.


Testa, Carlo. "Bulgakov's Master i Margarita: Post-Romantic Devil Pacts," Canadian-American Slavic Studies, 24 no. 3 (Fall 1990), 257-78

A2. Primary text: Isaak Babel’, Konarmiia

Selected Secondary Literature on Isaak Babel


Буденный, С. “Бабизм Бабеля из Красной нови.” Октябрь 3 (1924): 196-197.

**Theoretical reading on violence and mourning**

NB: The readings listed in this section are densely written and, ‘though recommended ,they are NOT required. You should focus on working through the primary texts before you start wrestling with any of this material. Lectures may refer to this material; if you want to follow up, here’s where to start (representative extracts are posted on CamTools).

Agamben, Georgio. *Homo sacer* (extracts)


On violence: a reader, ed. Bruce B. Lawrence (Duke UP, 2007) [contains excerpts of work by Agamben, Arendt, Benjamin, Freud and Marx, which may be useful in thinking about this topic].

III. SECTION B: TOPICS

This list sets out the topics to be taught in 2018-19, together with titles of texts/films, etc. that are particularly recommended for study on each topic. Please remember that the topics are designed to organize your thinking and work, but that the examination will not limit you to individual topics.

There are two lists of primary source reading for each topic: one contains a list of 'core' readings & visual materials that are particularly suitable for students in part IB and the other contains a list of 'additional' readings that all students are welcome to explore, but which are more challenging linguistically and, thus, more suitable for students in Part II. Lectures will tend to focus on, but will not be limited to, the 'core' texts.

Please remember that you are NOT expected to read all the primary sources listed for each topic, but you should aim to have studied a broadly representative selection of texts related to the topics that you plan to discuss in the exam. The extensive lists of recommended primary and secondary readings below are intended as a map of possible directions for you to explore―and narrow!-- in your own reading and research.

TOPIC 1: CRISSES: OF REPRESENTATION, COMMUNICATION (AND SOCIETY)

**Primary Sources**

**Core reading**

Plays:
Chekhov, Chaika (1895-6), Diadia Vania
Blok, Balaganchik (1906)

Poetry:
Akhmatova, ‘Poema bez geroia’
Many poems available online at: http://blok.niv.ru/. See also D. Obolensky, The Heritage of Russian Verse. Online here.
http://www.poetryloverspage.com/poets/blok/blok_ind.html

Theory:
[Meier’khold, Balaganchik (1913)]
**Additional reading**

Dmitrii Merezhkovskii. “O prichinakh upadka i o novykh techeniiakh sovremennoi russkoi literatury” (1893); http://www.ad-marginem.ru/article12.html

Maiakovskii, Vladimir Maiakovskii. Tragedia. (1913)

Chekhov, Vishneviy sad (1904): only for students who are NOT preparing this text for SL4.


Kruchenykh at al., ‘Pobeda nad solntsem’ (first Futurist opera, 1913)

**Secondary Literature**

**General background reading on Russian theatre**

Braun, Edward, The Director and the Stage: From Naturalism to Grotowskii (Methuen: London, 1982) [Read chapters on Stanislavskii and Meyerhold]

Carlson, Marvin, Theories of the Theatre: A Historical and Cultural Survey from the Greeks to the Present (Cornell, 1984), Chapters 14 and 18.

Senelick, Laurence (ed), Russian Dramatic Theory from Pushkin to the Symbolists: An Anthology (University of Texas Press, 1981); see relevant essays on Naturalism, Symbolism.


**Chekhov and Naturalism**

James Noehlin, The Cambridge Introduction to Chekhov (Cambridge, 2010). Read this basic introduction first.


A.P. Chekhov v russkoi teatralnoi kritike : kommentirovannaia, antologiia / A.P. Kuzicheva. (Moscow, 1999).


Borney, Geoffrey, Interpreting Chekhov (ANU Press, 2008)


Gilman, Richard, Chekhov’s Plays: An Opening into Eternity (Yale, 1995)

Pitcher, Harvey, The Chekhov Play: A New Interpretation (Berkeley, 1973)

Rayfield, Donald, Understanding Chekhov: A Critical Study of his Prose and Drama (University of Wisconsin Press, 1999)


Modernist Theatre before 1917: Selected reading on Blok, Meierkhol'd and Maiakovskii


Braun, Edward, Meierkhol'd on Theatre (translations of Meierkhol'd's main writings)


Leach, Robert, Vsevolod Meyerhold (Cambridge University Press, 1989)

MacManus, Donald ‘Meyerhold’s Transformation from Pierrot to Kappelmeister: The Fairground Booth and Columbine’s Scarf’, in No Kidding: Clown as Protagonist in 20th Century Theatre (Rosemount, 2003)


Rudnitskii, Konstantin, Russian and Soviet Theatre (Thames and Hudson, 1988), especially useful for its illustrations)


Symons, James, Meyerhold's theatre of the Grotesque (Rivers Press, 1973)

Westphalen, Timothy, Alexander Blok’s Trilogy of Lyric Dramas (Routledge, 2003)

[Introduction]

POETRY: USEFUL ANTHOLOGIES OF POETRY AND CRITICISM:

READING POETRY: METHODS & THEORIES:
Note: If you are new (or relatively new) to the study of Russian poetry, begin with Wachtel’s Cambridge Introduction to Russian Poetry, which offers an excellent introduction to techniques of verse analysis and exemplary close readings of a wide range of poems across genres and centuries. More detailed discussion of Russian verse forms may be found in the texts by Mikhail Gasparov and Barry Scherr. All three critics base their work in the theoretical and methodological approaches of the Russian Formalists (represented here by short readings from Brik, Eighenbaum, Jakobson, Tynianov, and Zhirmuskii) and the Tartu semioticians (represented here by Iurii Lotman and Mikhail Gasparov).

Ginzburg, L. Ia.. O lirike: Izdanie vtoroe, dopolnennoe. Leningrad: 1974. [See especially “Problema lichnosti,” “Nasledie I otkrytiia,” “Veshchii mir,” and “Poetika assotsiatsii.” This text will be particularly helpful for students focusing on Blok and/or Mandelstam].

BOOKS & ARTICLES ON INDIVIDUAL AUTHORS, TOPICS, MOVEMENTS:
Note: The literature on Russian poetry is vast; this list aims to offer a range of approaches, primarily Anglophone, and focuses on texts that offer important entry points to the study of a given author or topic.
Sandler. Stephanie, ed.. Rereading Russian Poetry. Yale University Press. 1999. [Recommended: the editor's introduction; Beaudoin on Silver Age homoeroticism; Cavanagh on Mayakovsky]]
TOPIC 2. OPPORTUNITIES: REVOLUTIONS IN ART AND SOCIETY

Primary Sources
Core reading & viewing

Film:
Sergei Eisenstein, Stachka (1924)

Theatre:
Vladimir Maiakovskii, Misteriia-buff (1918, 1921). Part IB expected to read ONLY the prologue and and last act of the 1921 version. Part II reads the entire play.

Poetry:
Khlebnikov, Zakliatie smekhom; Bobeobi
Maiakovskii, Pro eto

Visual art:
works by Rodchenko, Popova, Stepanova, Malevich, Tatlin and others

Theory/Manifestos
Zamiatin, “O literature, revoliutsii, entropii i o prochem” (1923).
Futurists, ‘Poshcheshchina obshchestvennomu vkusu’;

Additional reading & viewing

Films:
Sergei Eisenstein, dir. Bronenosets Potemkin (1926), Oktiabr (1928)

Theatre:
Futurist opera ‘Pobeda nad solnstsem.’

Poems:
Vladimir Maiakovskii, “Noch”, “Utro”, “Oblako v shtanakh”, others??
Velimir Khlebnikov, Zakliatie smekhom”, “Bobeobi”, others??

Manifestos:
Gan, Aleksei. Konstruktivism (1922) [extracts]
Maiakovskii, v. ‘Kak delat’ stikhi,’ in How are verses made?; with, A cloud in trousers; and, To Sergey Esenin, translated from the Russian and with an introduction and notes by G.M. Hyde (1990) [and elsewhere].

Secondary Literature

General background reading on revolutionary culture:
Burger, Peter, Theory of the Avant-garde (University of Minnesota Press). Especially documents from LEF.

Selected reading on prose, poetry and theatre:
Stapanian, J.R. Mayakovský’s Cubo-Futurist Vision, 1986
Selected reading on film and visual art:

Joyce, Mark. ‘The Soviet Montage Cinema of the 1920s,’ in An Introduction to Film Studies, Routledge, 1996
Lawton, Anna, Cinema and the Russian Avant-garde: Aesthetics and Politics Occasional paper (Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies); no. 213, 1986.
Lodder, Christine. Russian Constructivism, Yale University Press, 1983
Schnitzer, Luda and Jean and Marcel Martin, Cinema in Revolution; The Heroic Era of the Soviet Film. New York, Hill, 1943
Taylor, Richard and Ian Christie, The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents, Routledge, 1994 [contains many useful articles and manifestos]
Taylor, Richard, ed.. The Eisenstein reader. London: British Film Institute, 1998

TOPIC 3: NEW MINDS, NEW BODIES.

Primary Sources

Core reading & viewing

Fiction:
Evgenii Zamiatin, My (1920)

Film:
Boris Barnet, Dom na Trubnoi (1927)
Iurii Olesha, Strogii iunosha (1936)
Vasiliev brothers, Chapaev (1935)

Additional reading & viewing

Fiction & drama
Iurii Olesha, Zavist’ (1927)
Nikolai Erdman, Samoubiitsa (1928)
Mikhail Bulgakov, Sobach’e serdtse (1929)
Platonov, ‘Usomnivshiiisia Makar’ (1929)
Film
Ermler, Oblomok imperii (1929)
Room, Tret’ia meshchanskaia
Zheliabuzhskii, Papirosnitsa iz Mosselpрома (1927)
Aleksandrov, Tsirk (1936)

Secondary Literature

General

Selected Secondary Literature on Specific Works and Authors or Filmmakers:

Iurii Olesha:
Beaujour, E.K. The Invisible Land - a Study of the Artistic Imagination of Jurij Olesha, 1970

Boris Barnet:
Eisenschitz, Bernard. "A Fickle Man, or Portrait of Boris Barnet as a Soviet Director."Inside the Film Factory, 151-164.

Mikhail Zoshchenko:
Evgenii Zamiatin
Gimpelevich, Zina. "'We' and 'I' in Zamyatin's We and Rand's Anthem". Germano-Slavica 10:1 (1997), 13-23
Shane, Alex M. Life and Works of Evgenij Zamjatin (University of California Press, 1968)
Other

TOPIC 4: STALIN'S SUBJECTS

Primary Sources

Core reading & viewing
Film:
Ivan Pyr'ev, Partiinyi bilet (film, 1936)
Alexander Medvedkin, Novaia Moskva (film, 1938)
Gregory Aleksandrov, Svetlyi put' (film, 1938)
(* = available with English subtitles in some format)
*Sergei Vasil’ev and Georgii Vasil’ev, Chapaev (1934)
Raizman, Letchiki (film, 1937)
*Mikhail Chiaureli, Padenie Berlina (The Fall of Berlin, 1949), excerpts posted on CamTools

Texts:
Akhmatova, Severnye elegii (1940-1955) [selected poems]
Daniil Kharms, Sluchai (1933-1939) and ‘Kassirsha’, (1936). Kharms’ Sluchai are very short: you should read all of them, but for purposes of the lecture, focus on ‘Kassirsha’ and the ‘Sluchai’ # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 15, 18, 23, 29, 30.
Additional reading and viewing
*Grigorii Aleksandrov, Tsirk (Circus, 1936) and/or Volga-Volga (1938)
Sergei Gerasimov, Semero smelykh (1936)
*Ivan Pyr’ev, Kubanskie kazaki (1949)

Socialist realist fiction:
Dmitrii Furmanov, Chapaev (1923)
Fedor Gladkov, Tsement (1925, 1941. See Busch for details of the novel’s textual history)
Nikolai Ostrovskii, Kak zakalialas’ stal’ (1932-4)

Secondary literature

General background reading on the Stalin era and Socialist Realism
Clark, Katerina., “‘Boy Gets Tractor’ and All That: The Parable Structure of the Soviet Novel”,
Russian and Slavic Literature ed. Richard Freeborn, R.R. Milner-Culland and C.A. Ward,
Slavica, 1976, 358-75
Dobrenko, Evgenii and Eric Naiman (eds.). The Landscape of Stalinism : The Art and
Fitzpatrick, Sheila. Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in
the 1930s. Oxford UP, 1999, especially chapters three and four.
Fitzpatrick, Sheila. The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia. Cornell
UP, 1992, chapters 1, 9, 10, in particular.
Freeborn, Richard. The Russian Revolutionary Novel, Cambridge University Press, 1982,
Chapter 3, 65-123
Groys, Boris. The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, And Beyond,
translated by Charles Rougle Princeton University Press, 1992
Holmgren, Beth. Women’s Works in Stalin’s Time: On Lidia Chukovskaia and Nadezhda
Mandelstam, Indiana University Press, 1993
Ilic, Melanie (ed.). Women in the Stalin Era. Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave,
James, C. Vaughan: Soviet Socialist Realism: Origins and Theory. NY: St. Martin’s Press,
Kaganovsky, Lilya. How the Soviet Man Was Unmade: Cultural Fantasy and Male Subjectivity
Maguire, Robert. Red Virgin Soil: Soviet Literature in the 1920s, Cornell University Press,
1987.
Morson, Gary Saul, Morson, “Socialist Realism and Literary Theory,” Journal of Aesthetics
and Art Criticism 37 (1979): 121-33.

Soviet Writers’ Congress 1934: The Debate on Socialist Realism and Modernism (Maxim Gorky, Karl Radek, Nikolai Bukharin, Andrei Zhdanov and others) Wishart, 1977 [A transcript of the debate at which ‘Socialist Realism’ was adopted]


Tertz, Abram (pseud. for Andrei Syniavskii). Chto takoe sotsialisticheskii realizm [1959, On Socialist Realism].

Selected Secondary Literature on Anna Akhmatova


Reeder, Roberta, Anna Akhmatova: Poet and Prophet Alison and Busby, 1995.


Selected Secondary Literature on Varlam Shalamov


Sarah Young, 'Recalling the Dead: Repetition, Identity, and the Witness in Varlam Shalamov's Kolymskie rasskazy', Slavic Review, vol. 70.2 (summer 2011)


Selected Secondary Literature on Daniil Kharms and the OBERIU

Kharms in the Context of Russian and European Literature of the Absurd’ and Nikolskaia on ’The Oberiuty and the Theatricalization of Life.’


Wanner, A., Russian Minimalism: From the Prose Poem to the Anti-Story, chapter on Daniil Kharms (Northwestern UP, 2003).

Secondary literature on cinema:


Kaganovsky, Lilya, How the Soviet Man was Unmade: Cultural Fantasy and Male Subjectivity under Stalin, Pittsburgh UP, 2008. (chapter on Partiinyi bilet)


Widdis, Emma. Visions of a New Land: Soviet Film from the Revolution to the Second World War, Yale University Press, 2003, Chapter 6


All candidates must answer three questions.

Candidates for Part IB must answer at least one question from Section A, and must ensure that at least one of their questions refers substantively to more than one author/film-maker/visual artist.

Candidates for Part II may answer any three questions, of which no more than one can be drawn from Section A, and must ensure that at least two of their questions refer substantively to more than one author/film-maker/visual artist.

All Candidates must ensure that at least two of their answers on the paper as a whole refer substantively to at least one literary text.

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS
20 Page Answer Book x 1
Rough work pad

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS
None
You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent pages of this question paper until instructed that you may do so by the Invigilator.
SECTION A

1 'Storytelling [...] is far from an innocent act: narratives have designs on their narratees that must be unravelled' [PETER BROOKS]. Discuss this statement with reference to Master i Margaria, OR/AND Konarmiia.

2 'The role and duty of the writer is a key preoccupation of the novel.' Discuss with reference to Konarmiia OR/AND Master i Margarita.

3 Write a commentary on the style and content of the following passage:

– Ваш роман прочитали, – заговорил Воланд, поворачиваясь к мастеру, – и сказали только одно, что он, к сожалению, не окончен. Так вот, мне хотелось показать вам вашего героя. Около двух тысяч лет сидит он на этой площадке и спит, но когда приходит полная луна, как видите, его терзает бессонница. Она мучает не только его, но и его верного сторожа, собаку. Если верно, что трусость – самый тяжкий порок, то, пожалуй, собака в нем виновата. Единственно, чего боится храбрый пес, это грозы. Ну что ж, тот, кто любит, должен разделять участь того, кого он любит.

– Что он говорит? – спросила Маргарита, и совершенно спокойное ее лицо подернулось дымкой сострадания.

– Он говорит, – раздался голос Воланда, – одно и то же, он говорит, что и при луне ему нет покоя и что у него плохая должность. Так говорит он всегда, когда не спит, а когда спит, то видит одно и то же— лунную дорогу, и хочет пойти по ней и разговаривать с арестантом Га-Ноцири, потому, что, как он утверждает, он чего-то не договорил тогда, давно, четырнадцатого числа весеннего месяца нисана. Но, увы, на эту дорогу ему выйти почему-то не удается, и к нему никто не приходит. Тогда, что же поделается, приходится разговаривать ему с самим собою. Впрочем, нужно же какое-нибудь разнообразие, и к своей речи о луне он нередко прибавляет, что бо- лее всего в мире ненавидит свое бессмертие и неслыханную спаву. Он утверждает, что охотно бы поменялся своей участью с оборванным бродягой Левием Матвеем.


– Повторяется история с Фридой? – сказал Воланд, – но, Маргарита, здесь не тревожьте себя. Все будет правильно, на этом построен мир. – Отпустите его, – вдруг пронзительно крикнула Маргарита так, как когда-то кричала, когда была ведьмой, и от этого крика сорвался камень в горах и полетел по уступам в бездну, оглашая горы грохотом. Но Маргарита не могла сказать, был ли это грохот падения или грохот сатанинского смеха.

– Не надо кричать в горах, он все равно привык к обвалам, и это его не встревожит. Вам не надо просить за него, Маргарита, потому что за него уже попросил тот, с кем он так стремится разговаривать, – тут Воланд опять повернулся к мастеру и сказал: – Ну что же,
SECTION B

Answers in Section B must refer to works by two or more writers/directors/visual artists. At least one of your answers in Section B must refer to one or more literary texts.

1. ‘The principal challenge faced by practitioners of revolutionary culture was to balance the competing imperatives of iconoclasm and control.’ Discuss.

2. ‘Only new contents permit new forms. Indeed they demand them.’ [BERTOLT BRECHT]. Discuss with reference to Russian and Soviet culture.

3. ‘Чем больше картина, чем больше чувство жизни.’ Discuss with reference to pre- and/or post-revolutionary culture.

4. ‘The collision of political imperatives and formal preoccupations defined Russian and Soviet culture.’ Discuss.

5. ‘Post-Revolutionary Russian culture sought to eliminate the “sedative of ordinariness” [RICHARD DAWKIN].’ Discuss with reference to twentieth-century Russian and Soviet written and/or visual culture.
6. ‘The principle of the mechanization or biological automatization [of man] must go very far, all the way to his so-called mental activity’ [ALEKSEI GASTEY]. Discuss with reference to twentieth-century Russian and Soviet written and/or visual culture.

7. ‘To influence man in the new society, to give him new habits, a new way of thinking: such is the goal of any art.’ Discuss.

8. ‘Ambiguity and open-endedness are more transgressive than outright statements of resistance’. Discuss with reference to Russian or Soviet written and/or visual culture.

9. ‘Soviet culture should be able to portray our heroes; it should be able to glimpse our tomorrow. This will be no utopian dream, for our tomorrow is already being prepared for today by dint of conscious planned work.’ (Zhdanov) Discuss.

10. ‘Socialist Realism was formal bricolage, unified by content.’ Discuss.

11. ‘Violent action challenges both narrative and social order’. Discuss with reference to twentieth-century Russian and Soviet culture.