

**University of Pittsburgh**  
**Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures**

Russian 2640: From Thaw to Stagnation: Soviet Cinema, 1953-1986      Vladimir Padunov  
Fall Semester 2011      427 CL  
Tuesdays 5:30 — 9:30      624-5713  
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Office Hours: Mondays and Tuesdays 12:00—1:00, Wednesdays and Thursdays 1:00—2:00,  
and by appointment

**I. REQUIRED and RECOMMENDED TEXTS:**

- Beumers, Birgit. *A History of Russian Cinema*. NY: Berg, 2009.  
Leyda, Jay. *Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film*. 3d ed. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1983.  
Liehm, Mira and Antonin. *The Most Important Art: Soviet and East European Film After 1945*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1977.  
Prokhorov, Alexander, ed. *Springtime for Soviet Cinema: Re/Viewing the 1960s*. Pittsburgh: Russian Film Symposium, 2001.  
Stites, Richard. *Russian popular culture: Entertainment and society since 1900*. NY: Cambridge UP, 1992.  
Woll, Josephine. *Real Images: Soviet Cinema and the Thaw*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2000.

Зоркая, Нея. *История советского кино*. Санкт-Петербург: Алетейя, 2005.  
Михайлов, В.П. *Запрещенные фильмы*. Москва: НИИ Киноискусства, 1993.  
Трояновский, Виталий, ред. *Кинематограф оттепели*. Москва: Материк, 1996.  
Фомин, Валерий. *Полка*. Москва: НИИ Киноискусства, 1992.

**III. TEXTS ON RUSSO-SOVIET CINEMA IN HILLMAN LIBRARY:**

Many of the texts relevant to post-Stalin Russian cinema are located in Hillman Library. For their individual research projects, students should consult the online bibliography for Russo-Soviet cinema at [http://www.pitt.edu/~slavic/video/cinema\\_biblio.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~slavic/video/cinema_biblio.html) and then check PittcatPlus for the holdings of specific titles in Hillman Library. If material is not in Hillman Library, ask the instructor and he'll bring in his own copy. Alas, the bibliography has not been updated for several years, so be creative.

**IV. READING, SCREENING, and WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:**

The Schedule of Assignments provides an itemization of reading, screening, and writing assignments for the entire semester. With the exception of the first meeting of the seminar, there will be no films screened in class. Instead, students will be assigned three films to view in the following week and the first part of each meeting of the seminar (two hours) will be a detailed examination and discussion of each film.

Reading assignments: All reading assignments must be completed before entering the classroom on the day scheduled. Since students will receive a number of grades for each meeting of the course (preparation, participation, and quality of written work), students are encouraged not to attend any session for which they have not thoroughly prepared. Any suspicion that students are not keeping up with the reading will result in a bombardment of quizzes that will lower grades. There are no reading assignments for the final two meetings of the course to allow students to focus on their research papers.

Screening assignments: students are required to view all assigned films prior to the next meeting of the class. Students should arrange a convenient time and location for the assigned screenings. The instructor will provide viewing copies of the assigned films at each meeting of the class. Several of the films scheduled do not have English subtitles.

Writing assignments: there will be weekly writing assignments and students must submit all writing assignments on the date due. All assignments must be submitted in a sufficient number of copies for each member of the course. With the exception of the final research paper (see below), all writing assignments should be limited to one or two printed pages maximum. There are three types of writing assignments for the course:

(i) “viewing questions and rationalization”: students must compile a list of viewing questions for the assigned films. Viewing questions should both assist and guide students in making sense of the film. The rationalization for the viewing questions must state explicitly (and elaborate) the formal and content considerations that are central to the film and that are embedded in the viewing questions.

(ii) “trope assignments”: students must choose a specific trope (positive hero, Party-mindedness, class-mindedness, people-mindedness, idea-mindedness, monumentality, historical inevitability, socialist competition, bureaucracy, the family, labor, identity formation, etc.) and identify—on the basis of specific sequences in specific films—the changes that the trope undergoes as it moves from one socio-political period to another.

(iii) “research paper assignments”: students must submit an abstract (maximum two printed paragraphs) of their proposed research paper on Tuesday 18 October to every member of the class. All students (as well as the instructor) must comment on and make suggestions concerning the abstract. Students must submit a revised version of the abstract together with a preliminary list of relevant works on Tuesday 1 November; an annotated bio-filmography (and expanded list of relevant works) on Tuesday 15 November; and an outline of the research paper with a finalized list of relevant works on Tuesday 29 November; and a final research paper on Tuesday 13 December.

#### **V. ABSENCE AND ATTENDANCE:**

Students are expected to attend all classes. Absence due to personal illness, as well as illness or death in the family, must be documented. Absent students are required to obtain all in-class handouts and class notes for the session they missed from another student in the class; all missing assignments must be made up. All unexcused absences will receive a grade of “UA” for that session. Three such unexcused absences will result in an “F” for the course.

#### **VI. QUIZZES:**

There will be a number of unannounced quizzes during the semester on assigned readings, screenings, and material covered in the course. This is especially true if the instructor suspects students are not doing the reading and/or screening assignments. No quizzes will be re-scheduled and no make-up quizzes will be given.

#### **VII. RESEARCH PAPER:**

All students must submit a final research paper (20-30 pages) on Tuesday 13 December. Topics for the research paper must be discussed with the instructor before beginning work on the project.

Since the first “research paper assignment” is due on Tuesday 18 October, students are encouraged to begin work immediately in choosing and researching a topic. All research papers must conform in layout, documentation, and works cited to the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (6<sup>th</sup> edition).

#### **VIII. EVALUATION AND GRADES:**

Grades will be calculated using the following percentages: final research paper (30%), preparation and participation (10%), quizzes (10%), viewing questions and rationalizations (15%), trope assignments (20%), and research paper assignments (15%). Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor periodically to review their grades and progress in the course.

#### **IX. DISABILITY:**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 or 412-383-7355 (TTY) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

#### **X. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY:**

Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students suspected of violating the University of Pittsburgh policy on Academic Integrity will be required to participate in the procedural process initiated by the instructor. A minimum sanction of a zero score for the quiz, exam, or paper will be imposed.

#### **XI. E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY:**

Each student is issued a University e-mail address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their e-mail via other service providers (e.g., Gmail, Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from the pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address. To forward e-mail sent to your University account, go to <http://accounts.pitt.edu>, log into your account, click on Edit Forwarding Address, and follow the instructions on the page. Be sure to log out of your account when you have finished. For full E-mail Communication Policy, go to [www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/09/09-10-1.html](http://www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/09/09-10-1.html)

## **XII. SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS:**

### **week 1: 30 August: Late Stalinism, 1945-53: Varnishing the Monumental**

screen: Mikhail Chiaureli: *The Fall of Berlin* (1949)

assignments for week 2: **The Interregnum: 1953-1956**

a. reading: Liehm 47-75; Woll 1-56; recommended: Stites 98-122

b. screening: Vsevolod Pudovkin: *The Return of Vasilii Bortnikov* (1953)  
Iosif Kheifits: *The Big Family* (1954)  
Mikhail Shveitser: *Alien Kin* (1955)

c. writing: viewing questions and rationalization for *The Return of Vasilii Bortnikov*, *The Big Family*, and *Alien Kin*

### **week 2: 6 September: The Interregnum: 1953-1956**

assignments for week 3: **Was “Life Getting Better”?: The Stalin and Thaw Musical**

a. reading: Liehm 199-215; Woll 57-99; recommended: Stites 123-147

b. screening: Grigorii Aleksandrov: *Volga-Volga* (1938)  
Ivan Pyr'ev: *Cossacks of the Kuban* (1949)  
El'dar Riazanov: *Carnival Night* (1956)

c. writing: viewing questions and rationalization for *Volga-Volga*, *Cossacks of the Kuban*, *Carnival Night*

### **week 3: 13 September: Was “Life Getting Better”?: The Stalin and Thaw Musical**

assignments for week 4: **Recasting the Positive Hero**

a. reading: Beumers 112-145; Трояновский 5-76

b. screening: Feliks Mironer and Marlen Khutsiev: *Spring on Zarechnaia Street* (1956)  
Grigorii Chukhrai: *The Forty First* (1956)  
Mikhail Kalatozov: *The Cranes Are Flying* (1957)

c. writing: viewing questions and rationalization for *Spring on Zarechnaia Street*, *The Forty First*, and *The Cranes Are Flying*

### **week 4: 20 September: Recasting the Positive Hero**

assignments for week 5: **Home from the Factory**

a. reading: Prokhorov; Трояновский 118-131

b. screening: Lev Kulidzhanov and Iakov Segel: *The House I Live In* (1957)  
Grigorii Chukhrai: *Ballad of a Soldier* (1959)

Georgii Daneliia and Igor' Talankin: *Serezha [A Summer to Remember]* (1960)

c. writing: Stalinist/Thaw trope

**week 5: 27 September: Home from the Factory**

assignments for week 6: Suturing Ruptures

a. reading: Зоркая 289-334

b. screening:

Sergei Bondarchuk: *The Fate of a Man* (1959)

Grigorii Chukhrai: *Clear Sky* (1961)

Andrei Tarkovskii: *Ivan's Childhood* (1962)

c. writing: viewing questions and rationalization for *The Fate of a Man*, *Clear Sky*, and *Ivan's Childhood*

**week 6: 4 October: Suturing Ruptures**

**week 7: NO CLASS**

assignments for week 8: The Word on Screen

a. reading: Woll 101-160

b. screening: Iosif Kheifits: *Lady with a Dog* (1960)

Aleksei Sakharov: *Colleagues* (1962)

Grigorii Kozintsev: *Hamlet* (1964)

c. writing: two-paragraph abstract of proposed research paper

**week 8: 18 October: The Word on Screen**

assignment for week 9: Laughter in the Dark

a. reading: Woll 161-197; Liehm 306-336

b. screening: Leonid Gaidai: *"Operation Y" and Shurik's Other Adventures* (1965)

Elem Klimov: *The Adventures of a Dentist* (1965)

El'dar Riazanov: *Beware the Car!* (1966)

c. writing: viewing questions and rationalization for *"Operation Y" and Shurik's Other Adventures*, *The Adventures of a Dentist*, and *Beware the Car!*

**week 9: 25 October: Laughter in the Dark**

assignment for week 10: Political Culture Intervenes in Cultural Politics: Stage One

a. reading: Woll 199-225; Михайлов 7-62.

b. screening: Marlen Khutsiev/Sergei Gerasimov: *Lenin's Guard/I'm Twenty* (1964)  
Sergei Paradjanov: *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* (1964)  
Andrei Tarkovskii: *Andrei Rublev* (1966/1971)

c. writing: revised abstract and preliminary list of works cited

**week 10: 1 November: Political Culture Intervenes in Cultural Politics: Stage One**

assignment for week 11: **Political Culture Intervenes in Cultural Politics: Stage Two**

a. reading: Фомин 77-91

b. screening: *Beginning of an Unknown Era* (1967/1987):  
Andrei Smirnov: *Angel* and Larisa Shepitko: *Homeland of Electricity*  
Andrei Konchalovskii: *The Story of Asia Kliachina Who Loved But Did Not Marry*  
(1967/1987)  
Kira Muratova: *Brief Encounters* (1967/1987)

c. writing: viewing questions and rationalization for *Beginning of an Unknown Era*, *The Story of Asia Kliachina*, and *Brief Encounters*

**week 11: 8 November: Political Culture Intervenes in Cultural Politics: Stage Two  
TO BE RESCHEDULED**

assignments for week 12: **Political Culture Intervenes in Cultural Politics: Stage Three**

a. reading: Фомин 46-76, 110-132.

b. screening: Aleksandr Askol'dov: *Commissar* (1967/1987)  
Aleksei German: *Trial on the Road* (1971/1985)  
Andrei Tarkovskii: *Mirror* (1975)

c. writing: annotated biblio-filmography and expanded list of relevant works

**week 12: 15 November: Political Culture Intervenes in Cultural Politics: Stage Three**

assignments for week 13: **Pesky Girls, Wives, and Mothers**

a. reading: Михайлов 92-109; Зоркая 393-446.

b. screening: Aleksandr Motyl': *White Sun of the Desert* (1969)  
Kira Muratova: *Long Farewells* (1971/1986)  
Nikita Mikhalkov: *At Home Among Strangers, A Stranger at Home* (1974)

c. writing: Thaw/Stagnation trope

**week 13: 22 November: Pesky Girls, Wives, and Mothers**

assignments for week 14: **Melodrama and Melocomedy**

a. reading: Зоркая 447-511.

b. screening: Vasilii Shukshin: *Snowball Berry Red* (1973)  
Georgii Danelliia: *Autumn Marathon* (1980)  
Vladimir Men'shov: *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears* (1980)

c. writing: outline of research paper and final list of works

**week 14: 29 November: Melodrama and Melocomedy**

assignments for week 15: **Broken Bonds**

a. screening: Andrei Smirnov: *Belorussian Train Station* (1970)  
Nikita Mikhalkov: *Slave of Love* (1975)  
Larisa Shepit'ko: *The Ascent* (1976)

**week 15: 6 December: Broken Bonds**

assignments for week 16: **The Broken System**

a. screening: Vadim Abdrashitov: *The Train Stopped* (1982)  
Aleksii German: *My Friend Ivan Lapshin* (1984)  
Rolan Bykov: *Scarecrow* (1984)

writing assignment: research paper due

**week 16: 13 December: The Broken System**