

CP7014 Postmodernist Literature in East and Central Europe

Module type Option (Identities and Cultures of Europe, Comparative Literature, Literary Translation, Applied Intercultural Communications)

Term / hours Michaelmas / 22

ECTS 10

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Module description

This module sets out to explore the notion of postmodernity across a range of literatures and language cultures from among the former communist states of East and Central Europe. The principal zones of exploration will be the former USSR (Russia and Ukraine); Poland; the Czech and Slovak Republics/former Czechoslovakia; Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia/former Yugoslavia; Bulgaria and other Balkan literatures. Most texts studied on the module are works published after the pivotal date of 1989 (1991 in the case of the former USSR), and thus the end of Communism. All texts are read and studied in English translation.

Assessment

The module is assessed through a 3,500-5,000-word essay.

Indicative bibliography

Kundera, Milan, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (*Nesnesitelná lehkost bytí*, 1984), trans. Michael Henry Heim (Faber, 1984).

Kurkov, Andrei, *Death and the Penguin* (*Пикник на льду*, 2001), trans. George Bird (Vintage Books, 2002).

Pelevin, Viktor, *The Clay Machine-Gun* (*Чапаев и пустота*, 1996), trans. Andrew Bromfield (Faber, 2000).

Pavić, Milorad, *Dictionary of the Khazars* (*Хазарски речник/Hazarski rečnik*, 1984), trans. Christina Pribičević-Zorić (Knopf, 1988)

Ugrešić, Dubravka, *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender* (*Muzej bezuvjetne predaje*, 1998), trans. Celia Hawksworth (Phoenix House, 1998)

Todorov, Vladislav, *Zift* (*Дзифт*, 2006), trans. Joseph Venatov (Paul Dry, 2010)

Gospodinov, Georgi, *The Physics of Sorrow* (*Физика на тъгата*, 2011), trans. Angela Rodel (Open Letter, 2015)

Tokarczuk, Olga, *Flights* (Bieguni, 2007), trans. Jennifer Croft (Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2018)

Jedrowski, Tomasz, *Swimming in the Dark* (Bloomsbury, 2020)

Andrukhovych, Yuri, *The Moscoviad* (Московіада, 1993), transl. Vitaly Chernetsky (Spuyten Duyvil, 2008)

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- LO1 Analyse and critically evaluate postmodern literary texts from the former communist states of Eastern and Central Europe.
- LO2 Demonstrate an understanding of postmodernism as expressed in literary texts from the former communist states of Eastern and Central Europe.
- LO3 Show knowledge of the cultural-historical background of former communist states of Eastern and Central Europe.
- LO4 Apply critically relevant theoretical approaches, and post-colonial theory in particular.
- LO5 Analyse and reflect critically on the module content through class presentations and essays.