FEMINISM & RUSSIAN WOMEN'S CULTURE

Russ. 2471 (18990)                                Helena Goscilo
W 4:30 - 7:25                                    CL1417
CL1221                                           Tel. 624-5908
Fall 2005 (2061)                                 Office hours: M 1:30-2:30

I. Course description and requirements:

This seminar (1) introduces students to feminist theory and gender studies via representative
visual and verbal texts in a historical perspective; (2) examines the principles governing the
construction of Russian womanhood during the last thirty-five years; (3) analyzes Russian women's
own cultural production (film, literature, art, etc.) during approximately the same period; (4) glances
briefly at notions of masculinity and their relevance to recent Russian culture.

Course requirements: regular attendance; reading and viewing of all assigned materials by
the specified dates; regular, intelligent participation in discussions (35% of grade); three 15-minute
class presentations (15% of grade); weekly one-page commentaries (15% of grade); one 15-20-page
paper, to be submitted by date specified (35% of grade). NOTE: no late work accepted. Students will
be evaluated on the quality of their work in each of these categories.

Though students in the Slavic Dept. should read as many texts as possible in the original
Russian, owing to the enrollment in the seminar of students outside Slavic, in class we shall be
discussing texts translated into English.

II. Course Goals and Logistics:

This course is designed (1) to initiate graduate students into the mysteries of gender studies
and feminism from both conceptual and historical perspectives; (2) to acquaint them with official
and anomalous or subversive concepts of womanhood in Russia during the last thirty-five or so years
as inscribed in political programs and pronouncements, diverse verbal and visual forms; and (3) to
train them to respond, in scholarly mode, to Russian women's works in various cultural genres
during approximately the same period.

Accordingly, the seminar entails (1) introductory readings in feminist and gender theory, as
well as theories of masculinity, plus criticism; (2) verbal and visual texts (prose, film, art, ads,
pornography) by contemporary Russian authors; and (3) Russian and Western reception of these
texts.

III. Reading List:

Readings for the course comprise (1) English-language theoretical and critical studies; (2)
xeroxes deposited in the Slavic Dept. (with Christine Metel as the Cerberus of texts) that will be
treated as library material: i.e., they may be signed out for several hours (and xeroxed by whoever
wishes to have her/his own copy).

Since our group is small, I have not placed any texts on reserve in Hillman Library, assuming
that we can negotiate the sharing of volumes and the practical aspects of several people on one
book, if necessary, through dialogue and decency.

The required readings are so wide-ranging that purchasing them through the Pitt bookstore would cost several hundred dollars, since many appear either in out-of-print publications or in "Selected/Collected Works." I therefore advise everyone to buy books that we shall be reading in their entirety on half.com or amazon.com. I am sure that all of us shall be willing to lend, pass on, etc. volumes to class members if the need arises. Anyone wishing to order Russian texts will find it most economical and efficient to do so through such Internet sites as www.petropol.com, www.russianbeat.com, www.russianthings.com, etc. We shall iron out questions of texts and their accessibility at the first class meeting.

Theory & criticism:

Moi, Toril. Sexual/Textual Politics (1985)
Sundry critical articles (see below, under Syllabus)

BUY THE THREE VOLUMES LISTED ABOVE

Primary texts:

FILM:

Men=shov, V. Moskva slezam ne verit [Moscow Doesn=t Believe in Tears] (1979)
Muratova, K. Korotkie vstrechi [Brief Encounters] (1967/87)
Sadilova, L. S dnem rozhdenia! [Happy Birthday!] (1998)
Shepit=ko, L. Kryl=ia [Wings] (1966)

PROSE:

Baranskaia, N. ANedelia kak nedelia" [AA Week Like Any Other®] (xerox)
Greko, I. "Vdovii parokhod," [Ship of Widows] (Northwestern UP: BUY)
"Otdelenie propashchikh" [AThe Losers= Division®] (Lives in Transit)
Kabirii a Obvodnogo kanala [Cabiria from the Obvodny Canal] (xerox)
Petrushevskaya, L. "Svoi krug" [Our Crowd®] (xerox)
Vremia noch= [The Time: Night] (xerox available, but worth buying)
Sadur, N. Pronikshie [Touched] (xerox)
Shcherbakova, G. ATri >liubvi= Mashi Peredreevoi@ [AThe Three >Loves= of Masha Peredreeva®] (xerox)
Tokareva, V. APervaia popytka@ [AA First Try@ aka AA First Attempt®] (Lives in Transit)
Tolstaia, T. Selected stories (xerox)
Ulitskaia, L. "Izbrannyi narod" [AChosen People®] (Lives in Transit)

Sonechka (BUY)
AGulia® (Lives in Transit)

"Shamara"(Shamara and Other Stories)
Durochka [Little Fool] (Shamara and Other Stories)

Translations:

English translations of many relevant Russian texts have appeared in several collections or as individual publications:

Gessen, M. Half a Revolution (Cleis Press, 1995)
______. Lives in Transit (Ardis, 1995)*
Goscilo & B. Lindsey, eds. Glasnost (Ardis, 1990)
Women=s View, No. 3 of GLAS; A Will and a Way, No. 13 of GLAS
Baranskaya, N. A Week Like Any Other (Seal Press, 1989)
Greko, I. The Ship of Widows (Northwestern UP, 1994)*
Petrushevskaya, L. Immortal Love (Virago, 1995)
______. The Time: Night (Pantheon, 1994; Northwestern UP 2001)
Tokareva, V. The Talisman and Other Tales (Picador, 1993)
Tolstaya, T. On the Golden Porch (Knopf, 1989); Sleepwalker in a Fog (Knopf, 1992)
Ulitskaya, L. Sonechka (Northwestern UP)*
Vasilenko, S. Shamara and Other Stories (Northwestern UP, 2000)*

Among critical works, the following brief list provides a useful start, but merely touches the tip of the iceberg: * Indicates works not focused specifically on things Russian.

______. Red Women on the Silver Screen (Pandora, 1993)
Baigell, Renee & Matthew Baigell. Soviet Dissident Artists (Rutgers UP, 1995)
______. Peeling Potatoes, Painting Pictures: Women Artists in Post-Soviet Russia, Estonia, and Latvia (Rutgers UP, 2001)
Butler, Judith. Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (Routledge, 1990)*
______. Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of ASex® (Routledge, 1993)*


de Plessix Gray, F. *Soviet Women Walking the Tightrope* (Doubleday, 1990)


Draine, Betsy. *ARefusing the Wisdom of Solomon: Some Recent Feminist Literary Theory,* @ *Signs* 15.1 (Autumn 1989): 144-70*


Goscilo, Helena, ed. *Fruits of Her Plume* (M.E. Sharpe, 1993)

______. *Skirted Issues: The Discreteness and Indiscretions of Russian Women=s Prose* (Spring 1992)


Heldt, B. *Terrible Perfection* (Indiana UP, 1987)

______. *"Feminism and the Slavic Field"* (*Harriman Review* 7.10-12, Nov. 1994)

Hoisington, Sona. *A Plot of Her Own: The Female Protagonist in Russian Literature* (Northwestern UP, 1995)

Holland, Barbara, ed. *Soviet Sisterhood* (Indiana UP, 1985)


Hubbs, Joanna. *Mother Russia* (Indiana UP, 1988)

Irigaray, Luce. *This Sex Which Is Not One* (Cornell UP, 1985)*

Isaak, Jo Anna. *AReflections of Resistance: Women Artists on the Other Side of the Mir.* @ *In* Jo Anna Isaak, *Feminism and Contemporary Art* (Routledge, 1996)

*Iskusstvo kino* 5 (1997) @ issue devoted to gender


Penley, Constance, ed. *Feminism and Film Theory* (Routledge/BFI Pub., 1988)*

Perry, Gill. *Gender and Art* (Yale UP, 1999)*


Rich, Adrienne. *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (W.W. Norton & Co., 19861995)*


______. *AThe Antifeminist Woman,* @ *AMotherhood in Bondage,* @ *AMotherhood: The Contemporary Emergency and the Quantum Leap.* @ *In* On Lies, Secrets, and Silence: *Selected Prose 1966-
Syllabus:

HISTORY AND THEORY
T. Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics*
Judith Butler (xerox)

Sept. 7  Critical tendencies: Archeological documentation vs feminist theory
Moi (cont.)
Betsy Draine, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (xerox)
H. Cixous, *Sorties, The Newly Born Woman* 63-134

Sept. 14  Agency; Private vs public/Double burden
N. Baranskaia, AA Week Like Any Other (1969) (xerox)
Thomas Lahusen, *Leaving Paradise* and Perestroika, *Fruits of Her Plume* 205-224
Larisa Shepitko, *Wings* (1966)
Maya Turovskaya, *A Woman and the Woman Question* in the USSR, etc.,
in L. Attwood, *Red Women on the Silver Screen* 133-48 (xerox)


Sept. 28  Maternity (Nationhood, Nurture, and Madness):
Goscilo, *Dehexing Sex* 31-55

Oct. 5  Maternity (cont.):
D. Rubina, The Blackthorn, Lives in Transit
L. Ulitskaia, Bukhara’s Daughter, Sonechka

Oct. 12
Maternity (cont.):
V. Krishtofovich, Adam=s Rib (1991)
S. Vasilenko, Piggy (xerox)

Oct. 19
The Body: Sexuality, Pregnancy, Abortion, Sickness, Prostitution
Ted Koppel, Sex in the Soviet Union (1988; documentary video)
L. Ulitskaia, Gulia, Lives in Transit
S. Vasilenko, Shamara, Shamara and Other Stories
M. Palei, The Losers= Division, Lives in Transit
V. Tokareva, First Try, Lives in Transit
Goscilo, Introduction to Svetlana Vasilenko, Shamara and Other Stories: xi-xxii; Dehexing Sex: 87-116; Skirted Issues

Oct. 26
The Body (cont.)
Prostitutki (documentary video)
G. Shcherbakova, The Three Loves= of Masha Peredreeva (xerox)
M. Palei, Cabiria from the Obvodny canal (xerox)
L. Ulitskaia, The Chosen People, Lives in Transit
Goscilo, Dehexing Sex: 117-34

Nov. 2
RESCHEDULE: AAASS in Salt Lake City
Woman and Hysteria/Insight/Prophecy/Madness:
S. Vasilenko, Little Fool (1998)
L. Sadilova, Happy Birthday! (1998)

Nov. 9
Woman as Witch, Seductress, Muse, Visual Pleasure
N. Sadur, Selections from Touched (xerox)
T. Tolstaia, Fire and Dust, Sonia, The Okkerville River (xerox)
L. Ulitskaia, Sonechka
M. Palei, Rendezvous, Lives in Transit
John Berger, Chapter 3 of Ways of Seeing (xerox)
L. Mulvey, Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema (1975) (xerox)
______. Afterthoughts on Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema= inspired by Duel in the Sun (1981) (xerox)
Mary Ann Doane, A Film and the Masquerade: Theorising the Female Spectator, @ Screen 23, 3. & 4. (1982) 74-87 (xerox)

Nov. 16 Masculinities
Selections from A. Easthope, R.W. Connell (xerox)
A. Sokurov, Father and Son (2003)
T. Tolstaia, APeters® (xerox)

Nov. 23 RESCHEDULE? THANKSGIVING BREAK
The Cinderella model: romance, fairy tale
A. Men-shov, Moscow Doesn’t Believe in Tears (1979)
T. Tolstaya, AHunting the Wooly Mammoth, APoet and the Muse, AFakir, ARendezvous/Date with a Bird® (xerox)
Elena Stishova, APriklucheniiia Zolushki v strane bol’shevikov, @ Iskusstvo kino 5 (1997): 99-107

Nov. 30 Women=s art
IdiomA/Heresies
Alison Hilton, AFeminism and Gender Values in Soviet Art, @ Gender Restructuring in Russian Studies 99-116 (xerox)
Jo Anna Isaak, AReflections of Resistance®: 77-138 (xerox)
R. & M. Baigell, Peeling Potatoes, Painting Pictures (passim)
Helena Goscilo, ACanvassing Gender® (xerox)

Dec. 7 Women=s magazines: Krest’ianka, Rabotnitsa, post-Soviet glossies
Maggie McAndrew, ASoviet Women=s Magazines, @ in Barbara Holland, ed. Soviet Sisterhood: 78-115 (xerox)
Helena Goscilo, AStyle and S(t)imulation: Popular Magazines, or the Aestheticization of Postsoviet Russia, @ Studies in 20th Century Literature 24.1 (Winter 2000): 15-50 (xerox)

Women in advertising:
American and Russian ads

Pornography
Russian & Anglophone samples
Helena Goscilo, Dehexing Sex: 135-70
Dec. 14 Queerness (texts to be decided, probably from Butler, Fuss, Tuller, plus a film)
Dec. 16 LONG PAPER DUE