**Reimagining Russia: Place, Identity, and Environment in Contemporary Russian/Russophone Literature**

This course is intended as an upper-division undergraduate seminar in Russian/Russophone Literature. Its primary aim is to help students understand the role Russian literature has played in the construction of empire and to examine the ways in which contemporary Russophone literature can help provide alternative ways of seeing and understanding Russian/Post-Soviet space and place. In the process, it seeks to decolonize the typical contemporary Russian literature syllabus by demonstrating the variety of geographic, gendered, ethnic, and national perspectives that Russophone literature since the 1970s encompasses and providing a solid theoretical background through which students can interrogate dominant discourse on Russian literature.

I. **Peopling the Periphery – Siberian Regionalism and the Soviet Anthropocene (Weeks 1-3)**

**Week 1:**

Introduction – What is Russia? What is space/place?

Chekhov, “In Exile” (1892); Boris Pilnyak, “The Cheshire Cheese” [In *The Tale of the Unextinguished Moon and Other Stories* (Washington Square Press, 1967).]


**Week 2:**

Evtushenko, Evgenii - *Bratsk Station* (excerpts)


**Week 3:**

Rasputin, Valentin – *Farewell to Maryora* (continued); “Siberia without the Romance” (short excerpt) [In *Siberia, Siberia* (Northwestern University Press, 1996).]

II. The Empire Writes Back – The Decolonial Gaze in Indigenous “National” Literatures of the 1970s-80s

Week 4:


Week 5:
Aitmatov, *The Day Lasts More than a Hundred Years* (continued)

Week 6:
Aitmatov, *The Day Lasts More than a Hundred Years* (conclusion)

Bogoraz, Vladimir, *Chukchee Mythology* (excerpts) [published as Waldemar Bogoras, E. J. Brill Limited, 1913].

Week 7:

III. The Border(land)s of War – Ukraine and the Caucasus in the Putin Era

Week 8:

Week 9:
Ganieva, Alisa, *The Mountain and the Wall* (continued)


Week 10:
Ganieva, *The Mountain and the Wall* (continued)


Gogol, Nikolai, “Preface” and “The Fair at Sorochintsy.” In *Evenings on a Farm in Dikanka*, Book I.


Week 11:


Week 12:
Kurkov, *Grey Bees* (continued)

Secondary Reading: Zaharchenko, Tanya, “Frontiers of Identity.” In *Where Currents Meet: Frontiers of Memory in Post-Soviet Fiction of Kharkiv, Ukraine*

IV. The New Russian City

Week 13:


Secondary Reading: DeCerteau, Michel, “Walking in the City.” [In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, vol. 1, University of California Press, 1988.]
Week 14:


Student Research Presentations