



University of Toronto  
Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

Questions for Ph. D. Comprehensive Examination  
in the Candidate's Special Field

This examination consists of three questions (with choices for questions B and C). The examination is to be written in one three-hour session (10:00 AM – 1:00 PM).

**Question A (one hour)**

Identify the major polemics that have emerged in discussions of contemporary Ukrainian literature and trace the general trends in the organization and production of Ukrainian literature of the 1990s.

**Question B (one hour)**

Select ONE of the following questions and write an insightful essay on the topic.

B1. Examine the literature of the 1990s from the perspective of genre. What genres are apparent? Dominant? In ascendance? In decline? Have new genres or new permutations of genres appeared? How does the map of genres in contemporary Ukrainian literature compare to what came immediately before it? How does it compare to the modernist period?

B2. Who reads Ukrainian literature and why? How do contemporary Ukrainian writers adapt to their perceived audience? Do they take active measures to appeal to a particular audience? What measures do they take to reach their audience? Which audience? What impact do the specifics of the contemporary audience and literary market have on the position and role of the contemporary Ukrainian writer?

**Question C (one hour)**

Select ONE of the following questions and write an intelligent essay on the topic.

C1. Ukrainian literature is no longer divided into two separate streams, one internal (in Ukraine) and the other external (diaspora). Has the disappearance of this division had any noticeable impact? Has the division really disappeared?

C2. Examine Ukrainian literature of the last quarter of the twentieth century from the perspective of the national question. How does the national question appear in contemporary literature? What are the key issues? Who are the heroes and villains?

C3. Examine treatments of the remote and the not so distant past. Examine such issues as martyrology and farce, apocalypse and golden age, heroes and rascals. How does contemporary Ukrainian literature explore Ukrainian history and with what motives? What aspects, periods, characters are particularly stressed, discovered, reshaped? How does previous Ukrainian historic fiction fit into the contemporary canon and market? What functions does historic fiction play in Ukrainian culture today?

C4. Choose two or three texts that highlight the configuration of gender and gender relationships in contemporary Ukrainian literature. How do these texts differ from earlier treatments of gender in Ukrainian literature of the Soviet, modernist or even earlier periods (or how are they similar)? How would you characterize the relationship between authorship (as a cultural agency) and gender on the contemporary Ukrainian literary scene?

C5. How do contemporary Ukrainian writers realize the position and role of Ukrainian culture in the “brave new world” between the East and the West? How do these realizations relate to or react against such conceptual frameworks as post- and neo-colonialism, globalism, and post-modernism? What do these realizations inherit from the Ukrainian literary and intellectual traditions of the past? Illustrate by a closer discussion of two or three texts.