

RUSS 260: UNDERWORLDS

Winter 2019

Prof. Barbara Henry

MTWTh 12:30—1:20

5 credits / VLPA

SLN:19792

Underworlds are both real and metaphoric: subways and coalmines, Hades and Hell, criminal subcultures, political undergrounds, horror-movie basements and windowless office cubicles. Stories of these underworlds address the most profound questions of our lives: what happens after we die? Where do we come from? Where are we going? What are our responsibilities to our world, each other, ourselves? This class looks at works of art and literature from Russia, the US, and Europe, set in many different underworlds, which intersect with and shape our perceptions of the world around us.

You will learn to recognize the mythic underworld and understand how it functions not only in art, but in your own life. All readings in English.