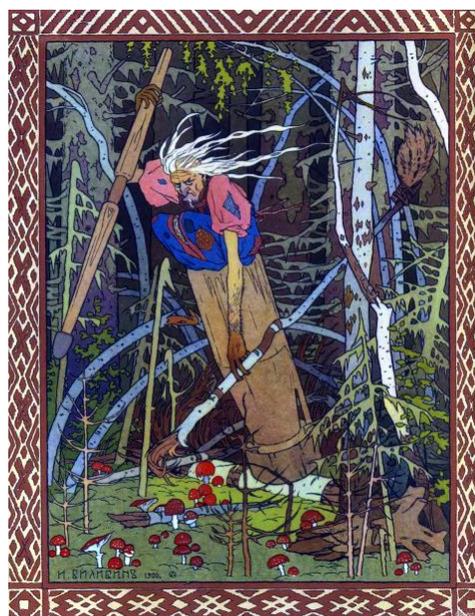




RUSS 229:
Introduction to Russian Folklore
(3 credits)
Winter 2020
MW: 11:35-12:55

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Office Hours: Monday, 2:30-4:30



Course Description: Folklore remains an integral part of Russian culture. It figures into the literary works of Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstaya, Pelevin, in the music of Mussorgsky, Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, and in various filmic adaptations. Introduction to Russian Folklore will provide students with a background not only in Russian folk beliefs and the major tales, but also in the history of folklore analysis. Students will be introduced to various folktales collected in the 19th century, as well as the literary, musical, and filmic versions of folktales of the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. The course provides an introduction to different theoretical approaches to folklore, providing the students with an arsenal of interpretive methodologies. Key questions that will be asked will include: What is folklore? How have folktales changed? Why do folktales and folkloric figures remain so popular today (see American TV shows like *Grimm*, *Once Upon a Time*, and *Game of Thrones*, or the recent *Beauty and the Beast* or even *The Shape of Water*)? No Russian is required as all texts and films will be in English (or with English subtitles), however the originals will be provided upon request.

Required Materials: All texts will be available at The Word Bookstore (469 Milton St, Montreal, QC, H2X 1W3). I have chosen to have the books for purchase at The Word because it supports an independent, local bookstore. The text is available for secure pick-up or delivery for a flat fee across North America. It is also available in e-copy at the Kindle store or your preferred e-book retailer.

1. *Russian Fairy Tales*, Alexandr Afanasyev, New York: Random House, 2006. ISBN: 9780394730905

All other texts will be made available through My Courses or through library course reserves

Course Objectives: This course introduces Russian folklore, as well as the study of folklore more broadly. Additionally, the course gives students a beginner's guide to the history of literary interpretation by examining the chronology of folklore interpretation.

Structure of the Course and Course Policies

Instead of the traditional two lectures a week, this class will contain video lectures, active reading assignments, quizzes, discussions, and various writing assignments. Students will be responsible for the readings, taking quizzes online to help direct the readings, and listening to/watching lectures. Once a week, there will be discussions to be held over Zoom, over chat, and on the discussion board. Class time will be divided into 2-3 Zoom sessions of 45 minutes with a more manageable 20-30 people, and the online discussion board is open to everyone. We will schedule two Zoom sessions during our normal class time, and if there are enough students who have time-zone issues, we can open a third at a more convenient time. You can participate in any version or over all three should you so desire. The point is to offer everyone the chance to participate in class regardless of their technical situation. Students will be evaluated on their quiz results, participation in discussions, and on their writing assignments.

Technical Requirements for Zoom Meetings:

Some discussion classes will meet remotely during the regularly scheduled class times. We will use **Zoom** for these discussions and the link to the meetings will be posted on myCourses. In order to use Zoom, you will need a computer, a microphone, and a webcam (these can be internal to your computer).

Please do the following before you join the course:

- Create a basic account by clicking on the following link: <https://mcgill.zoom.us/> You must sign in with your McGill username/password. Having a Zoom account will help you facilitate virtual meetings for collaborative assignments.
- Read this article on [getting started](#). If the link does not work, go to: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362033-Getting-Started-on-Windows-and-Mac>
- If you have any other issues, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will do my best to help you troubleshoot.

Zoom Etiquette:

- Only use your official McGill Zoom with your full name.
- Upon entering, please write a chat saying “here” or “present” or even just “hi” so I have a record of everyone who is there (I do not record the meetings, but I do keep the chats).
- You do not need to use your camera over Zoom.
- Please turn your microphone off when you are not speaking.
- Please use the wave hand signal or the chat to alert me that you have a question or want to make a comment. I will call on you.
- If you do not have a microphone, feel free to use the chat function to engage with the Zoom conversation. I will happily include chats into the broader discussion.
- I will not record class time to ensure the privacy of all students, and I do not consent to having the class recorded. Discussions are live events and are meant to be ephemeral.

Other discussion formats:

Since Zoom may not be an option for everyone, students are free to use the discussion board in MyCourses instead. There will be no difference in grading patterns between students who use Zoom and those that use the online discussion format. You are completely free to choose either way of participation.

Remote Learning Resources

Since learning remotely is a new skill that we all have to acquire, I would encourage you to look at the resources that McGill's Teaching and Learning Services compiled:

<https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/students/remote-learning-resources>

Consider looking at all the tips, particularly the following points:

- [5 Strategies for Success](#)
- [Study Tactics](#)
- [Learning Strategies Inventory](#)
- [Learning with Zoom](#)

Important Note: I recognize that learning online is still a new experience for everyone, so I expect a certain number of difficulties/technical issues/glitches/errors. Not everything will go right every time, and as far as possible, I will make every effort to ensure that the learning experience works for everyone. If you are having consistent issues, or if you have particular concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. We are all in this situation together, and if we will all work together, I am confident we can make the experience intellectually stimulating and rewarding.

Additional Course Policies:

- I am available and always happy to see you in my scheduled office hours, or by appointment if you have a conflict that does not allow you to come at those times. I can be reached by email as well. However, I have a 48-hour email rule, meaning that I may not respond to any given email before 48 hours. If I do not respond before that point, you may email me with the title 48-Hour Rule, and I will respond as quickly as possible.
- No late assignments will be accepted without prior written consent. If you feel you may need an extension, please contact me well in advance of the deadline.
- In this class we will be discussing complex and controversial political, cultural, sexual, and national issues. While robust debate is good, you are expected to respect your classmates' rights to their opinions and beliefs. This includes not interrupting people, dominating the floor, raising your voice, insulting, threatening, etc.
- Under no circumstances should you be texting, playing games, checking social media, checking your email, surfing the web, talking on the phone, or otherwise engaging in activities that are unrelated to what is happening in class.

Assignments

- **Discussions:** Discussions will be held over Zoom, over the chat function in Zoom, and on the Discussion page in my courses. Students may participate in any of the three discussions. Discussion questions will be posted once a week online, and these will be used as the basis for all three forms of discussion. Students who do not have access to the bandwidth necessary to participate in a Zoom session, or simply choose not to, should either use the chat function for

Zoom or the discussion page on MyCourses. Students may use any form regardless of the technological abilities, and they may switch back and forth throughout the semester. In order to receive full marks in discussions you must actively participate in the discussions throughout the semester. Active participation includes the following: asking questions, responding to questions, talking with other students about the material in class or on the discussion board, working with groups, and adding to the general conversation in a timely manner. Your grade will be based not on one or two good or bad days but on consistent participation in the discussions. The best way to ensure that you receive full credit for discussion is to participate actively every week and to engage your fellow students. I value interaction with your colleagues not just with me most of all, and this will be reflected in your grade if you do so.

- **Quizzes:** Throughout the course, there will be *very* short quizzes on MyCourses about the readings, lectures, and other materials to be completed online outside of class. These will be easy if you've done the reading and listened to the lectures. They are aimed at keeping you up to date on your work throughout the semester. There will be roughly one quiz per week, with days off when there is no reading or lecture assigned or when you have other work due. Quizzes should take no more than 5 minutes, but you'll be given half an hour to complete them.
- **Fairy Tale:** For the assignment, you will be asked to write a piece of folklore in the Russian style. You will be graded on accuracy with the principle structures of the folktale discussed in class, as well as on creativity. You will also be asked to justify the style and content in a short analytical addendum.
- **Armchair Analysis and Folklore Defense:** These are two assignments in which you will be expected to apply some of the lessons from the lectures and readings. For the Folklore defense, you will be expected to submit a piece of folklore and defend that it *is* folklore. For the armchair analysis, you will need to perform a psychological analysis *a la* Bruno Bettelheim. Both will be graded on a pass/fail rubric.
- **Midterms:** The two midterms are a chance to synthesize the material we have covered in the first part of the class. It will be a take-home assignment based on short identifications of significant passages, characters, and concepts, giving you a chance to link the specifics to the broader themes we have been tracing. The midterms should take no more than 90 minutes, but you will be given a substantial grace period of another 90 minutes to complete them.
- **Final Paper** (Take-home Final): The final paper will be 4-5 pages double-spaced (1500 word limit). This is your chance to formulate an argument about one or more of the texts we read or watched after the first half of the class and to back-up your ideas with evidence from the text and your choice of theoretical analysis.

Final Grade Breakdown

- Discussions: 15%
- Fairy Tale: 20%
- Psychological Analysis and Folklore Justification: 10% (5% each)
- Midterms: 25%
- Quizzes: 10%
- Final paper: 20%

Grade	Percentages
A	100%-85%
A-	84%-80%
B+	79%-75%
B	74%-70%
B-	69%-65%
C+	64%/-60%
C	59%-55%
D	54%-50%
F	49%-0%

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I remind everyone of their responsibility in ensuring that videos and associated material are not reproduced or placed in the public domain. This means that each of you can use it for your educational (and research) purposes, but you cannot allow others to use it, by putting it up on the Internet or by giving it or selling it to others who may also copy it and make it available. Please refer to McGill's [Guidelines for Instructors and Students on Remote Teaching and Learning](#) for further information. Thank you very much for your help with this.

McGill policy statements:

Academic Integrity:

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information). (approved by Senate on 29 January 2003)

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/).

If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, or other academic offences, do not hesitate to contact me!

Inclusive Learning Environment:

As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the Office for Students with Disabilities, 514-398-6009.

Evaluations:

End-of-course evaluations are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available on Mercury, the online course evaluation system. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.

Student Rights: "In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This

does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.”
(Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 - see also the section in this document on Assignments and Evaluation.)

« Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue). »

Know Your Rights! (you have more than 3 of them!): Additional policies governing academic issues which affect students can be found in the McGill Charter of Students' Rights" (The Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities is available here <https://www.mcgill.ca/deanofstudents/rights>)