



*Prince Ivan and the Firebird (Ivan Bilibin, 1899)*

## **RUT 3514: Russian Fairy Tales**

**Prof. M. Gorham • UF Russian Studies • Dept. of Languages, Literatures and Cultures**

**Section 7N52 (24616) • 3 credits • GenEd H & N**

**MWF 4**

**Spring 2020**

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### **Course Description and Goals**

Folk beliefs are a rich and enduring component of Russian culture. This course will introduce you to a wide selection of Russian folklore and fairy tales, and will examine the aesthetic, social, historical, and psychological values that they reflect. You will develop or enhance your understanding of the continuing influence of fairy tales and folk beliefs in Russian literature, music, film, popular culture, and everyday life. The course also provides a general introduction to the study of folklore and fairy tales from a variety of theoretical and comparative perspectives, including the Western fairy tale tradition (the Grimms, Perrault, Disney, etc.).

Upon successful completion of the course, you should be able to discuss several approaches to the study of fairy tales, especially as they apply to the body of texts contained in Afanasiev's *Russian Fairy Tales*. In particular, you will be able to:

- Interpret the symbolic meaning of Russian pagan and Christian customs and rituals;
- Classify Russian fairy tale narratives according to thematic cycles;
- Identify the main stylistic and structural components of Russian fairy tale narratives;
- Explain the function of fairy tales in a child's psychological development and the means by which this function is fulfilled;
- Explain the treatment of traditional gender roles in fairy tale narratives and judge the extent to which these narratives may reflect or influence the acculturation of men and women;
- Explain the role of fairy tale texts in economic, social, and political contexts;
- Explain the means by which fairy tale and folk motifs are transferred to other artistic media, such as the visual arts and music;
- Recognize similarities and differences between Russian and Western fairy tale texts.

### **Credit and Prerequisites**

This course carries three credits and, once approved (with a grade of "C" or higher), will satisfy General Education requirements for Humanities (H) and International (N) courses (see pp. 7-8 for details). There are no prerequisites and no knowledge of Russian language is required.

### **Course Requirements and Grading**

You will be required to:

- Complete the assignments scheduled for each class meeting (which may range from 10-50 pages per class) and be prepared to discuss them formally and informally in class;
- Participate actively and intelligently in class discussions, exercises, and quizzes;
- Take the three scheduled tests.

Your course grade will be determined initially by your performance on tests and in class attendance and discussions, as follows:

- 3 Tests: 65% (weighted evenly)
- Quizzes: 10%
- Independent analyses (written): 10%
- In-class presentations (oral): 10%
- Class participation: 5%

**Tests**

Each of the tests will consist of up to 4 parts: multiple-choice and true-false questions; short-answer identification questions; 1.5–3 page essay; 1–2 page critical analysis of an unfamiliar text. Each section will be weighted approximately the same (~25%). Tests are not cumulative by design, but will likely require cumulative knowledge, as you will constantly be building on your knowledge base and skill set over the course of the semester. **There will be no final exam in this course.** Grades will be posted in the gradebook portion of the Canvas e-Learning tool.

**Grading Scale:**

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
100-93	92-90	89-87	86-83	82-80	79-77	76-73	72-70	69-67	63-66	62-60	59-

**Note:** A grade of C– is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>;

<http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

**Tentative test schedule (dates subject to change with fair advanced warning):**

- Test 1 – Friday, February 3
- Test 2 – Wednesday, March 11
- Test 3 – Wednesday, April 22

**Make-up test policy:** Make-up tests will be offered only in the case of legitimate conflicts well-documented in advance. Please contact me as early as possible if you think you have a scheduling conflict. If needed, make-up tests will be administered at 7:30 AM on the Monday immediately following the regularly scheduled test. The make-up test structure will by necessity differ from the primary tests and consist primarily of a series of short essays. Make-up tests will be fair, but certainly no easier than the regular tests.

**Attendance.** Although not built into the course requirements, regular attendance is strongly recommended and the best guarantee of succeeding in the class. Regular attendance will better ensure that you engage in and properly absorb readings and lecture material. Much of the test material will come from lectures and discussions not fully represented by posted lecture slides. **If you do attend a class meeting, it will be assumed you are prepared to participate.** If you miss a class meeting, you will still be responsible for all course content and logistical information covered during the class. Class will begin and end promptly, so please be on time. For details on UF Attendance Policies, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

**Film screenings.** The course will likely feature two evening film screenings (tentatively scheduled for Sun., Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> and Thurs., Mar. 26<sup>th</sup>), both around 5 p.m. If you are unable to attend a screening, you must find an alternative means of watching the film prior to the class meeting during which it will be discussed. Both films will be available on reserve at Smathers Library West.

***Guidelines for Class Participation, Presentations and Quizzes***

- **Participation.** Under the assumption that long-term learning and personal development depend primarily on one's active engagement in the subject matter at hand, our class meetings will often take the form of group discussions of the assigned readings and broader issues relating to them. Background cultural, historical, social, political, and theoretical information will be provided in the form of short lectures. For this reason it is essential not only that you complete assignments promptly and thoughtfully but also that you **come to class prepared to share one or two coherent and articulate ideas, questions, or opinions.** Study questions for readings slated for discussion will be made available at the course website and should be consulted prior to class. If you need help speaking out, let me know and I'll make sure to include you in on the discussion. I reserve the right to call on students who haven't been participating and will occasionally use the "Socratic method" (randomly calling on students to answer/comment) to mix things up. You may also earn participation points by commenting on posted items in the "Discussion" section of the Canvas e-learning platform.
- **Presentations.** All students will have the opportunity to **prepare and deliver two 2-3 minute oral presentations** on assigned readings as a means of initiating class discussion over the course of the semester. In-class presentations should not exceed 3 minutes in length, should be delivered without reading (though notes may be used), and based on the assigned reading. **A good presentation will have the following features:**
  - It will be articulate -- well thought out in advance (but not read), well organized, well delivered, engaging, and cogent (brief and to the point);
  - It will begin with a brief summary of some of the more important parts of the reading, then turn to an aspect or aspects that you view as particularly noteworthy;
  - It will include specific examples from the course readings;
  - It will have a discernible beginning, middle, and end.

Presentation sign-up sheets will be made available in class and/or online.

- **Independent analyses.** Students will likewise have the chance to select, independently, 2 examples of folklore or fairytales from contemporary everyday life and analyze and comment on them using tools and issues relevant to the course. These can be books, stories, movies, television series, news stories, or other episodes or artifacts from everyday life. Commentaries should be posted to the Discussion section of the Canvas e-learning platform and should contain the following elements:

- The title and a brief description of the source, including a link, if available.
  - A paragraph commenting on how course issues and analytical tools help better understand and appreciate the source.
  - A paragraph of commentary on broader issues or questions the source raises—about the author, the genre, the culture from which the source comes, or anything else deemed interest and relevant to the student.
  - Deadlines for independent analyses: #1) Friday, Feb. 28 (midnight); #2) Friday, Apr. 17 (midnight). (Feel free to complete these assignments any time prior to the posted deadlines!)
  - All presentations will be graded using a 10-point scale. Grades will be based relatively equally on both style and content as outlined in the bullet points above. Grades will be posted in the “Gradebook” section of the Canvas e-Learning tool.
- Quizzes. These will be administered—both in-class, and online—over the course of the semester to assess your basic comprehension of the reading assignments. Some will be announced in advance, others will not. Quizzes will be short, mostly factual, but occasionally analytical, and based on the readings due the day on which the quiz is given (unless otherwise announced). If you miss class on the day of an in-class quiz, you will receive a failing grade for that quiz. Grades will be posted in the “Gradebook” section of the Canvas e-Learning tool. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped prior to the calculation of final grades.
  - The easiest way to qualify for the highest grade on this portion of the course is to do the assigned readings, come to class, complete the required prepared, in-class presentation(s), and contribute occasionally to informal discussions.

### **Class Demeanor**

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Please avoid the use of cell phones and restrict eating to outside of the classroom. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all.

Outside of class and office hours, feel free to reach me by email ([mgorham@ufl.edu](mailto:mgorham@ufl.edu)) with inquiries or issues that are not clarified in class meetings, the course syllabus, the online “Weekly Assignments” page, or posted handouts. If you do send email, practice your informal, but official, communication skills by including a proper form of address. “Dear Professor Gorham” or even “Hi Dr. Gorham” are fine, but “Hey” or omitting a greeting altogether are not. Also be sure to clearly identify yourself somewhere in the message with first-name + last-name – at least in the opening message of a communication string. If you abide by these simple rules of email etiquette, you can expect an answer within one working day.

### **Extra-Credit Option**

You may take advantage of an optional extra-credit assignment, which will be worth up to four percentage points added onto your final course average:

- Submit a 4-6 page (double-spaced) paper in the form of an original fairy tale written in imitation of the genre as we will study it.

Extra-credit assignments will be due by 11:59 PM on Monday, April 27. See "Extra-credit Assignments" handout for details.

### **Course Materials**

#### ***Required Texts (available for purchase through local textbook vendors)***

- Afanasiev, Aleksandr. *Russian Fairy Tales*. New York: Pantheon. 1973.
- Ivanits, Linda J. *Russian Folk Belief*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe. 1992. (*Also available as e-book through Library West*)

Please note: The two textbooks and assigned films will be available for 2-hour, in-library reserve at Smathers Library West.

### **Accommodations**

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. For more information see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>.

### **University Honesty Policy**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conducthonor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

### **Course Evaluation**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

## **Resources Available for Students**

### HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- U Matter, We Care: [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu); 392-1575
- Counseling and Wellness Center:  
<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> ; 392-1575
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center; 392-1161
- University Police Department: <http://www.police.ufl.edu/> ; 392-1111 (911 for emergencies)

### ACADEMIC RESOURCES

- E-learning technical support: [Learningsupport@ufl.edu](mailto:Learningsupport@ufl.edu);  
<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml> ; 352-392-4357 (opt. 2)
- Career Resource Center: Reitz Union; <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/> ; 392-1601
- Library Support: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>
- Teaching Center: Broward Hall; 392-2010 or 392-6420
- Writing Studio: 302 Tigert Hall; <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> ; 846-1138

## **General Education Information**

RUT 3514 counts for three (3) hours of the University of Florida's General Education Requirement in the **Humanities (H)** area by providing instruction in the key themes, principles and terminology of a humanities discipline. **Course with the Humanities (H) designation** reflect the following objectives: Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

These general education objectives will be accomplished through:

1. Identification, evaluation, critique, discussion of the basic tools, terms, and methods used for analyzing literary genre, and folklore and fairy tales in particular.
2. Identification, evaluation, critique, and discussion of cultural and historical contexts key to understanding Russian folklore from its earliest manifestation through to the present day.
3. Identification, evaluation, critique, and discussion of the ways in which works of fiction speak to broader issues of relevance to Humanities students and readers today, in or outside of Russia.

RUT 3514 also counts for three (3) hours of the University of Florida's General Education Requirement in the **International (N)** area by addressing values, attitudes and norms of a non-US culture. **Course with the International (N) designation reflect the following objectives:** International courses provide instruction in the values, attitudes and norms that constitute the contemporary cultures of countries outside the United States. These courses lead students to understand how geographic location and socioeconomic factors affect these cultures and the lives of citizens in other countries. Through analysis and evaluation of the students' own cultural norms and values in relation to those held by the citizens of other countries, they will develop a cross-cultural understanding of the rest of the contemporary world.

These general education objectives will be accomplished through:

1. Identification, evaluation, critique, and discussion of the underlying values, attitudes and norms reflected in the works studied.
2. Comparison of those underlying values, attitudes and norms with those commonly associated with cultures of greater familiarity to students.
3. Identification, evaluation, critique, and discussion of the historical, cultural, social, geographical, and socioeconomic factors that may contribute to and help understand cross-cultural differences (and similarities) ascertained in preceding discussions.

See: <http://gened.aa.ufl.edu/subject-area-objectives.aspx>

**A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.**

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (Humanities and International):** Students will acquire a basic understanding of literary and cultural analysis and learn to apply this knowledge and develop their own reading skills. Students will pursue these goals across the following three categories:

- **CONTENT:** Students will demonstrate competence in the history, terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used in the literary and cultural humanities. They will identify, describe, and explain the values, attitudes, and norms that shape the cultural differences of the Russian people, particularly as reflected through folklore. Assessment by tests, written assignments, presentations, and discussions.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Students will communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the literary and cultural humanities. They will also clearly communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning stemming from their analysis of Russian cultural traditions. Assessment by tests, written assignments, presentations, and discussions.
- **CRITICAL THINKING:** Students will analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using methods specific to the literary and cultural humanities and developing reasoned solutions to interpretive problems. They will analyze and evaluate their own cultural norms and values by placing them in dialogue with those of the Russian people. Assessment by tests, written assignments, presentations, and discussions.