

Princeton University
 Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures & Mathley College
FRS 133: Figures of Madness in Russian Culture

Fall 2007-2008 Mon, Wed 1:30 – 2:50PM Madison Hall G21	Instructor: Petre Petrov Office: 231 East Pyne Hall Tel: 609-258-1605 (with voicemail) Email: ppetrov@princeton.edu Office hours: Mon 11:00 - 12:00AM, Wed 3:00 - 4:00PM
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Credits, Prerequisites, and Format

The course fulfills the University LA ("Literature and the Arts") distribution requirement. This is a Freshman Seminar, and as such has no prerequisites for enrollment other than your (hopefully enduring) interest in the topic. Familiarity with Russian culture is a plus, but in no way a must. The course meets twice a week in a format that combines lecture and discussion. The latter component is particularly important, as one of the main goals of the seminar program is to provide you with an optimal setting for exchanging ideas and opinions with your fellow students and instructors. I believe that knowledge is a matter of dialogue, and am hence committed to giving each of you ample opportunity for participating in the ongoing dialogue which will be our seminar.

Course Rationale and Goals

This course explores interpretations and representations of madness in Russian culture from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the twentieth century. Our primary texts will be verbal and visual: fairy tales, folk narratives, literature, film. Since madness is not an exclusively Russian phenomenon, we will seek to place its Russian history within the broader context of European ideas and treatments from Hippocrates to the present day. This is not a medical course, and it will not treat madness as synonymous with "mental illness" or "mental disorder." We will study different medical approaches to madness, understanding that "mental illness" is only one, limited and problematic, answer to the question "What is madness?" As we will witness, many other interpretations are possible. Our goal is not to decide which one of them is "correct," but rather to see how representations of madness—including the medical/scientific—express cultural politics, values, and tensions.

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to

- Discuss the general historical development in concepts of madness from the Antiquity to the present day.
- Identify major historical stages in the treatment of mental disorders.
- Identify and describe main categories and types of mental disorder.
- Characterize major cultural personages in the Russian tradition of madness: Ivan the Fool, the *iurodivnye* ("fools in Christ"), the *klikushi* ("shriekers"), the "little man," etc.
- Identify and discuss major literary texts in the Russian tradition of madness.

- Critique modern concepts and treatments of mental illness from a feminist perspective (analyze the ways in which these have been used to marginalize and oppress women in a male-dominated society).
- Problematize medical definitions of madness and the corresponding clinical, psychiatric, and psychoanalytic practices.

Required Readings

- Dostoevsky, Fyodor. Notes from the Underground and the Double. Trans. Jessie Coulson. NY: Penguin, 2003.
- Erofeev, Venedikt. Moscow to the End of the Line. Trans. H. William Tjalsma. Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 1992.
- Freud, Sigmund. An Outline of Psychoanalysis. Trans. James Strachey. NY: Norton, 1989.
- Proffer, Carl R. (ed.) From Karamzin to Bunin: An Anthology of Russian Short Stories. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1969. (**Anthology**)
- Primary and secondary texts in electronic format (available through Blackboard [BB])

Recommended Readings

- Billington, James. The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture. (any edition)
- Foucault, Michel. Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason. (any edition).
- MacKenzie, David and Michael W. Curran. A History of Russia, the Soviet Union and Beyond. (any edition)
- Porter, Roy. Madness: A Brief History. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002.
- Porter, Roy. Ed. The Faber Book of Madness. Boston: Faber and Faber, 1991.
- Radden, Jennifer (ed.) The Nature of Melancholy: From Aristotle to Kristeva. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000.
- Thompson, Robert. Russia and the Soviet Union: A Historical Introduction. Boulder, CO: Westview, 2003.

Course Requirements and Grading

You will be required to

- Complete the assignments scheduled for each class meeting (normally that means read 50-80 pages and be ready to discuss them in class on the pertinent day)
- Participate actively and intelligently in class discussions
- Prepare and deliver one in-class oral presentation
- Write, revise, and submit one shorter (3-page) and one longer (5-page) papers

Your grade will be determined from the following components:

• longer paper	40 points
• shorter paper	20 points
• class participation	20 points
• oral presentation	10 points
• 2 peer reviews	10 points
TOTAL:	<hr/> 100 points max.

Grading scale

100-98 =A+	90-88=B+	80-78=C+	70-68=D+	
97-94=A	87-84=B	77-74=C	67-64=D	60 and below =F
93-91=A-	83-81=B-	73-71=C-	63-61=D-	

Assignments

INDIVIDUAL ORAL PRESENTATIONS: Each of you will be asked to give a presentation in class on a freely chosen topic related to the general theme of madness. This is a chance for you to follow your interests beyond the limits set by the course curriculum. You can present to the class a film, literary text (or a single literary character), work of art, historical figure, or cultural phenomenon that has intrigued you or simply made you stop and think. The choice of topic is not limited to Russian history and culture. The presentation should take approx. 15 minutes and be delivered at the beginning of class on the day assigned. Specific guidelines for how to prepare and deliver your presentation, as well as evaluation criteria, will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class. All presentations will be scheduled for the later part of the semester, thus giving you sufficient time to choose your topic. I ask that you inform me of your choice at least two weeks before your assigned date.

SHORTER PAPER: 4-5 pages in length (approx. 1000 words), this paper should address a topic covered in the first part of our course. The goal is for you to demonstrate a firm grasp of a particular problem or controversy we've encountered during our seminar sessions by mapping it analytically and taking an informed position on it. You will be able to choose from a list of topics circulated in advance. The use of critical sources outside those assigned for the seminar is not mandatory for this assignment, but is, of course, encouraged and welcome. If you need pointers to secondary material on the topic you've chosen, I would be happy to help.

LONGER PAPER: 8-10 pages in length (approx. 2000 words), the longer paper differs from the shorter one not just in length, but also in substance. Here you take the lead role in formulating the topic, researching it, and devising the argument. The topic should be more specific than the themes of our meetings. It should center on a primary text (or texts), preferably Russian, and bring it to bear on some of the issues we have discussed in the course of the semester. For this paper you will be asked to incorporate at least three critical sources not included in the reading list for the course (general information sites like Wikipedia do not qualify as "critical sources"). An abstract outlining your topic and argument should be submitted in advance. Guidelines for writing the longer paper, as well as the criteria I will use for grading it, will be posted sufficiently in advance and discussed in class.

PEER REVIEWS are an opportunity to give helpful feedback that can improve the quality of a classmate's writing; you yourself will be receiving such feedback from someone else. Two reviews will be due: one for the shorter and one for the longer paper. Each should be around 250 words in length.

Attendance

You are expected to attend all classes. Missing classes jeopardizes your participation record and puts you in danger of missing quizzes and important information. **More than three** unexcused absences will adversely affect your final grade. **More than five** will result in automatic failure of the course, regardless of prior standing. Excused absences, such as illness or death in the immediate family, must be documented no later than a week after your return to class.

In case of absence, it is your responsibility to obtain **from your classmates** any information passed out during the class you missed. You are, therefore, encouraged to exchange telephone numbers and e-mail addresses with your classmates.

If you are experiencing special problems in the course, do not hesitate to make an appointment with me.

Blackboard

The Blackboard Academic Suite will be both an essential tool in our common work and a major channel of communication throughout the course of the semester. By enrolling at Princeton and establishing a University account, you are automatically given access to Blackboard. From this point on, it will be necessary for you to acquire at least a basic command of the program's interface and functions. The place to start is the Blackboard Resource Site, which contains detailed training materials and tutorials. For additional assistance with the program, call the Blackboard help line at 609-258-0737 or email blackboard@princeton.edu.

Academic Integrity

By remaining enrolled in the course, you agree to abide by all the fundamental regulations concerning academic integrity. These are spelled out in the Princeton Booklet on Integrity (<http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity/index.html>). I strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with it.

Disability Policy

If you have a disability that requires special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications, please notify both me and the Office of Disability Services located in 327 First Campus Center. You can reach the Office by phone at 609-258-8840 or by e-mail at ods@princeton.edu.

M, Sept 17	INTRODUCTION; SYLLABUS; BLACKBOARD.	
W, Sept 19	GENERAL INTRO TO RUSSIAN HISTORY & CULTURE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video: <i>The Face of Russia. Part I: The Face on the Firewood</i> (BB) • http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Russia
M, Sept 24	MENTAL DISORDERS: DEFINITIONS. PSYCHIATRY AND ANTI-PSYCHIATRY.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article on mental disorders from Britannica Online (BB) • Szasz, "The Myth of Mental Illness" (BB)
W, Sept 26	ECSTASY. SHAMANISM.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliade, from <i>Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy</i> (BB)
M, Oct 1	WOMEN POSSESSED.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ussher, "Witchcraft" (BB) • Weyer, "Melancholia, Witches, and ... Demons" (BB) • 'Malleus Maleficarum' excerpt (BB)
W, Oct 3	RUSSIAN DEMONIACS: THE CASE OF THE <i>KLIKUSHI</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worobec, from <i>Possessed: Women, Witches, and Demons</i> (BB)
M, Oct 8	TRICKSTERS AND FOOLS. THE IMAGE OF THE SIMPLETON IN RUSSIAN FOLKLORE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siniavskii, from <i>Ivan the Fool: Russian Folk Culture</i> (BB) • Fairy tales from the Afanas'iev collection (BB)
W, Oct 10	HOLY MADNESS: THE RUSSIAN "FOOLS IN CHRIST" (<i>IURODIVYE</i>).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kobets, "Foolishness in Christ: East vs. West" (BB) • <i>Life of St. Mikhail of Klopsk</i> (BB)
M, Oct 15	ECSTATIC CHRISTIAN SECTS: <i>KHLISTY</i> AND <i>SKOPTSY</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engelstein, from <i>Castration and the Heavenly Kingdom</i> (BB) • ["The Castrati (<i>Skoptsy</i>) Sect in Russia"] (BB)
W, Oct 17	THE LIBERATING FOLLY OF CARNIVAL.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bakhtin, from <i>Rabelais and His World</i> (BB)
M, Oct 22	RATIONALIZATION OF MADNESS: FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE ENLIGHTENMENT. Full-length draft of short papers due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Porter, from <i>Madness: A Brief History</i> (BB) • Hippocrates, "On the Sacred Disease" (BB)
W, Oct 24	THE AGE OF REASON. THE "GREAT CONFINEMENT".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descartes, from <i>Discourse on the Method</i> (BB) • Foucault, "The Great Confinement" (BB)

	Presentation topics due	
	FALL RECESS (OCT 27 – NOV 4)	
M, Nov 5	SENTIMENTALISM AND ROMANTICISM. MELANCHOLY AND MELANCHOLIA. MENTAL ILLNESS AND CREATIVE GENIUS. Peer reviews due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aristotle: "Brilliance and Melancholy" (BB) • Ficino: "Learned People and Melancholy" (BB) • Burton, from <i>The Anatomy of Melancholy</i> (BB) • John Keats: "Ode on Melancholy," "What the Thrush Said" (BB) • Nikolai Karamzin, "Poor Liza" (Anthology 53-67)
W, Nov 7	PUSHKIN'S TRAGIC LOSERS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pushkin, "The Queen of Spades" (Anthology 79-103) • Pushkin, "The Bronze Horseman" (BB)
M, Nov 12	GOGOL'S LITTLE MAN. . Revised short papers due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gogol: "Diary of a Madman" (BB) • Gogol: "The Overcoat" (Anthology) • [E. Altschuler, "One of the Oldest Cases..."]
W, Nov 14	DOSTOEVSKY'S LITTLE MAN.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dostoevsky: <i>The Double</i>
M, Nov 19	THE UNDERGROUND MAN.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dostoevsky: <i>Notes from the Underground</i>
W, Nov 21	MAD SAVIORS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turgenev, "Strange Story" (BB) • Garshin, "The Red Flower" (BB)
M, Nov 26	THE THIN BORDER: MADNESS/REASON, DOCTOR/PATIENT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chekhov: "Ward #6" (BB) • Brown "Psychiatrics and the State..." (BB)
W, Nov 28	PASSION.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leskov: "Lady Macbeth..." (Anthology) • Brown, "Female Sexuality..." (BB)
M, Dec 3	PSYCHOANALYSIS. INTRODUCTION. Abstract of longer paper due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freud, <i>An Outline of Psychoanalysis</i>

W, Dec 5	CHALLENGES TO PSYCHOANALYSIS. WOMEN AND HYSTERIA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webster, "Freud, Charcot, and Hysteria..." (BB) • Micalé, "A Short 'History' of Hysteria" (BB) • Ussher, "The Female Malady" (BB)
M, Dec 10	SHELL-SHOCK TRAUMA AND MALE HYSTERIA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freud, "Memorandum..." (BB) • Andreev, "Red Laugh" (BB)
W, Dec 12	ALCOHOLIC DELIRIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erofeev, <i>Moscow to the End of the Line</i>
Mon, Jan 7	Full-length draft of longer papers due	
Thu, Jan 10	Peer reviews due	
Tue, Jan 15	Revised longer papers due	

