

Slavic Folklore, SLAV 120
Spring 2008
Section A
Tu & Th 2:00–3:20
165 Noyes Laboratory

Instructor: David L. Cooper
Office: 3131 FLB
Email: dlcoop@uiuc.edu
Office Hours: TBA
Phone: 244-4666

Slavic Folklore is an introduction to the folklore of the Slavic peoples in its narrative forms. We will read and study a wide variety of collected folkloric texts translated from several Slavic languages. This material will help us to understand important aspects of the traditional culture of these groups. We will learn to recognize the different forms the stories told in traditional cultures take and their functions and roles in the culture. As a part of this, we will learn about some important approaches scholars of folklore have developed for the analysis of folkloric texts, and we will analyze our texts using these approaches, which will allow us to explain some of the stranger aspects of these texts, to understand their structure and function as stories, and to grapple with their cultural significance. Finally, because folklore is not just something that the Slavic peoples had way back when, we will collect and analyze stories told in our culture today for our class project.

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance and participation: Because lectures and discussions do not replace readings but complement them, students must come to class with the material they have read, prepared to participate in discussions. Absences for *documented* illnesses, family emergencies, and university obligations are excused, as are religious holidays. But you are responsible for material covered in every class, including those you miss. Excessive lateness will begin to count as unexcused absence. Students with more than 3 unexcused absences will have their grades lowered a full letter grade; 6 unexcused absences will result in failure.
2. Written assignments: There will be two written assignments involving group work: a collection project involving the creation of a web page and a structural analysis of a tale. Work on the collection project will be collected and reviewed in several stages of the process. Class discussions and analysis, which may include short in-class writing assignments, will prepare you for the written work.
3. Exams: There will be two short exams during the semester and a comprehensive final exam covering material from the readings and class lectures and discussions.

Grading:

Final grades will be based on class attendance and participation, exams, and the writing assignments. Most weight is assigned to the collection project and the comprehensive final exam:

Class attendance and participation:	15 %
2 papers/projects:	30 %
2 midterm exams:	30 %
Final exam:	25 %

Required Texts:

Afanas'ev, Aleksandr. *Russian Fairy Tales*.
Cooper, David. *Traditional Slovak Folktales, Collected by Pavol Dobšinský*.
Holton, Milne, and Vasa D. Mihailovich. *Songs of the Serbian People: From the Collections of Vuk Karadžić*.

Ivanits, Linda. *Russian Folk Belief*.

Lüthi, Max. *The European Folktale: Form and Nature*.

Course Packet—available at Notes-n-Quotes, 502 E John St., Champaign.

Course Packet includes:

Aarne, Antti and Stith Thompson. *The Types of the Folk-tale: A Classification and Bibliography*. Sample pages.

Bacchilega, Cristina. “‘Be Bold, Be Bold, But Not Too Bold’: Double Agents and Bluebeard’s Plot.”

Bailey, James and Tatyana Ivanova. *An Anthology of Russian Folk Epics*. Excerpts.

Bascom, William. “The Forms of Folklore: Prose Narratives.”

Bettelheim, Bruno. “Little Red Cap and the Pubertal Girl.” In *Little Red Riding Hood: A Casebook*.

Bogatyrev, Petr. *Vampires in the Carpathians: Magical Acts, Rites, and Beliefs in Subcarpathian Rus’*. Excerpts.

Dragomanov, Mixailo Petrovic. *Notes on the Slavic Religio-Ethical Legends: The Dualistic Creation of the World*. Short excerpt.

Dundes, Alan. “Earth-Diver: Creation of the Mythopoeic Male.”

“The Earthdiver.” In *The Storytelling Stone: Traditional Native American Myths and Tales*.

Erotic Tales of Old Russia. Excerpts.

Gogol, Nikolai. “St. John’s Eve” and “Vij.” In *The Collected Tales of Nikolai Gogol*.

Lord, Albert Bates. “Avdo Međović, Guslar.”

Propp, Vladimir. *Morphology of the Folktale*. Excerpts.

Schedule of readings and discussions:

Week 1 — Introduction to the course. What is folklore? The gods and creation.

Jan 15 Introduction.

Jan 17 Slavic gods. Cosmogony.

Readings: Ivanits, 3-18. Course Pack (CP): Bascom, Dundes.

Texts: Ivanits, 127-35. CP: Dragomanov, “The Earthdiver.”

Week 2 — Folk beliefs: devils, saints, spirits.

Jan 22 Saints and devils

Readings: Ivanits, 19-50.

Texts: Ivanits, 135-68. Optional: Dobšinský #43, 44 and Afanas'ev, pp. 145-6, 404-6, 576-7.

Jan 24 Other spirits

Readings: Ivanits, 51-82.

Texts: Ivanits, 169-89.

Film clips in class: from Brabec’s *Kytice*

Week 3 — Folk calendar and folk belief: yearly cycle, healing and witchcraft, vampires.

Jan 29 Calendar rituals.

Readings: CP: Bogatyrev ch. 1. (Review Ivanits, 5-12).**Film clips in class:** Ivan Kupalo celebration from Tarkovskii's *Andrei Rublev*; contemporary video of Ukrainian Kupalo celebrations from web.

Jan 31 Sorcery. Healing. Vampires.

Readings: Ivanits 83-124. CP: Bogatyrev ch. 5.**Texts:** Ivanits 190-205. Optional: Dobšinský #3, 32 and Afanas'ev pp. 333-4, 593-8.**Film clips in class:** from Sergei Paradzhanov's *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors***Week 4** — Introduction to folktales: animal heroes.Feb 5 **Exam 1:** Paganism and folk beliefs.**Readings:** Cooper, introduction.**Texts:** Dobšinský #11, 18, 24, and Afanas'ev pp. 15-19, 25-29, 54-55, 61-62, 66, 72-76, 86-88, 171-72, 188-94, 196-99.Feb 7 **Texts:** Dobšinský #33, 39, and Afanas'ev pp. 249-51, 273-76, 283-84, 288-89, 309-10, 312-13, 371-75, 437-38, 447-56, 498-500, 590, 612.**Discussion:** Folklore collection workshop.**Collection assignment, due April 17.****Week 5** — Magical tales: magical objects. Stylistics of the folktale.Feb 12 **Texts:** Dobšinský #8, 15, 17, 25, and Afanas'ev pp. 13-15, 31-37, 46-48, **97-109**, (110-14), **119-23**, (124-30), 164-68, (202-08), **494-97**, (528-32), **533-41**, **612-24**.Feb 14 **Readings:** Lüthi 4-36.**Texts:** Dobšinský #27, 38, 47, 49, and Afanas'ev pp. (211-13), 224-26, **234-49**, 321-24, (349-51), (387-89), 399-404, **425-27**, (541-44), 545-49, (553-62), (567-8).**Week 6** — Magical tales: stepmothers, witches, obstacles. Formal analysis of the folktale.Feb 19 **Readings:** Lüthi 37-80.**Texts:** Dobšinský #7, 12, (16), 21, and Afanas'ev pp. **44-46**, 76-79, **146-50**, 200-02, (229-34), 294-99, (340-41), **342-45**, (351-56), **406-10**, **427-37**.Feb 21 **Readings:** Lüthi 81-106.**Texts:** Dobšinský #35, 40, 45, and Afanas'ev pp. **194-95**, **278-9**, (**363-65**), **366-69**, (393-98), **439-47**, (475-82), 485-94, 504-20, 580-88.**Week 7** — Magical tales: dragons, helpers, heroes. Structure of the folktale.Feb 26 **Readings:** CP: Propp.**Texts:** Dobšinský #1, 5, 10, (19), and Afanas'ev pp. **49-53**, 79-86, 168-70, **173-77**, (184-88), (269-73), (292-94), **299-302**, (304-07), (310-11), **375-87**, **457-63**, **463-75**.Feb 28 **Texts:** Dobšinský #22, 30, 50, and Afanas'ev pp. 213-20, 255-61, **262-68**, 314-20, (356-60), (360-62), **389-93**, 410-14, (482-84), 521-28, 600-11.**Group Assignment:** Structural analysis of a tale à la Propp (handout). **Due Mar 11.**

Week 8 — Tales of everyday life: wise maidens. Feminist and psychological approaches.

Mar 4 **Readings:** CP: Bettelheim.

Texts: Dobšinský # 9 and Afanas'ev pp. 20-24, 40-44, 161-62, 182-83, 325-27, 327-31, 415-18, 501-504.

Mar 6 **Readings:** CP: Bacchilega.

Texts: Dobšinský #37, and Afanas'ev pp. 29-30, 115-17, 117-18, 131-33, 134-40, 141, 226-27, **252-55**, 280, 308, 578-79, 579-80, 625-27.

Week 9 — Tales of everyday life: thieves.

Mar 11 **Texts:** Dobšinský #26, 36, and Afanas'ev pp. 37-38, 39-40, 208-10, 276-77, 289-91, 419-23, 563-67, **590-93**.

Proppian analysis due.

Mar 13 **Exam 2:** Approaches to the folktale.

Texts: Dobšinský #42, 48, and Afanas'ev pp. 58-59, 59-61, 142-45, **151-55, 156-58**, 332, 369-70.

Spring Break

Week 10 — Humorous and legendary tales.

Mar 25 Humorous tales

Readings: Afanas'ev, 631-51.

Texts: Dobšinský #2, 6, 13, 28, 29, and Afanas'ev pp. 62-65, 118-19, 161, 163-64, 221-23, 228-29, 334-36, 336-37, 338-40, 345-48, 455-56, 599, 600.

Mar 27 Legendary tales

Texts: Dobšinský #4, 14, 20, 23, 31, 34, 41, 46 and Afanas'ev pp. 159-60, 172, 177-79, 180-82, 268, 423-25, 550-52, 588-89.

Week 11 — Tales not for children. Disney.

April 1 **Texts:** CP: *Erotic Tales of Old Russia*.

April 3 **Film in class:** Cinderella.

Week 12 — Russian oral epic: demigods and heroes; two cities.

April 8 **Readings:** CP: Bailey and Ivanova, introduction excerpts.

Texts: CP: Bailey and Ivanova, #1, 3, 8, 11.

April 10 **Texts:** CP: Bailey and Ivanova, # 12, 19, 21, 28.

Week 13 —Serbian oral epic: a memorable battle.

April 15 **Readings:** Holton and Mihailovich, 1-12.

Texts: Holton and Mihailovich, pp. 13-101. Required: 13-15, 18-19, 21-32, 37-41, 42-78, 86-96.

April 17 **Texts:** Holton and Mihailovich, pp. 102-176. Required: 106-130, 131-46, 150-53, 159-69, 173-76.

Collection assignment due.

Week 14 — Serbian oral epic: the singer of tales.

April 22 **Readings:** CP: Lord.

Texts: Holton and Mihailovich, pp. 176-244. Required: 182-93, 195-214, 215-26, 232-40.

April 24 **Texts:** Holton and Mihailovich, pp. 244-306. Required: 245-54, 258-63, 267-73, 274-78, 298-306.

Week 15 — Literature and folk narrative.

April 29 **Texts:** CP: Gogol.

Final Exam