

NOFI106 Old Norse Mythology: Syllabus

Spring Semester 2018, 5 ECTS

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Wednesdays 12:15-14:00 and Fridays 14:15-16:00 (weeks 3, 4 and 5), HF room 400

Compulsory Assignments and Attendance

- 1) Obligatory attendance at least 75% of the scheduled lectures.
- 2) If the student, in consultation with the lecturer, sets up an alternative syllabus to the standard one, the student must hand in and have the syllabus list approved within the advertised deadline.

Form of Assessment

Oral examination (week 7, exact date to be determined)

No examination support material is permitted.

It is permitted to speak Norwegian, Danish, Swedish or English during the oral examination. It will be taken into consideration that international students might need extra time in order to formulate their answers fully.

Programme

- 17.1. Introduction
- 19.1. Cosmology – Vǫluspá, Vafþrúðnismál, Grímnismál
- 24.1. Myth, Cult, Society – Rígsþula, Skírnismál
- 26.1. Óðinn and Knowledge – Hávamál, Baldr's Draumar, Hyndluljóð
- 31.1. *Snorra-Edda*
- 2.2. Þórr and Loki – Þrymskviða, Lokasenna

Reading list

A. Primary Literature

1. Ten Eddic poems (*The Poetic Edda*, translated by Carolayne Larrington, Oxford University Press, 2014):

- Völuspá (The Seeress's Prophecy)
- Hávamál (Sayings of the High One)
- Vafþrúðnismál (Vafþrúðnir's Sayings)
- Grímnismál (Grímnir's Sayings)
- Skírnismál (Skirnir's Journey)
- Lokasenna (Loki's Quarrel)
- Þrymskviða (Thrym's Poem)
- Baldrs draumar (Baldr's Dreams)
- Rígsþula (The List of Rig)
- Hyndluljóð (The Song of Hyndla)

2. *Snorra-Edda* (The Prose Edda, translated by Jesse L. Byock, Penguin, 2005)

- Prologue
- Gylfaginning
- Skáldskaparmál

B. Secondary Literature

1. A broad introduction to Old Norse religion:

Turville-Petre, E.O.G.: *Myth and Religion of the North. The Religion of Ancient Scandinavia*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964.

2. A selection of articles and chapters that comment on the primary texts of the syllabus. Approx. 100 pages.

Clunies Ross, Margaret. "How to do things with Old Norse myths: On method and sources." *Prolonged Echoes. Old Norse myths in medieval Northern society, Vol. 1: The myths*, University Press of Southern Denmark, 1994, pp. 11-20.

Gunnell, Terry. "Pantheon? What Pantheon? Concepts of a Family of Gods in Pre-Christian Scandinavian Religions." *Scripta Islandica* 66 (2015), pp. 55-76.

Jón Karl Helgason. "'Þegi þú, Þórr!': Gender, Class, and Discourse in *Þrymskviða*." *Cold Counsel. Women in Old Norse Literature and Mythology*, Sarah M. Anderson with Karen Swenson (eds.), Routledge, pp. 159-166.

Larrington, Carolyne. "Vafþrúðnismál and Grímnismál: Cosmic History, Cosmic Geography." *The Poetic Edda. Essays on Old Norse Mythology*, Paul Acker and Carolyne Larrington (eds.), Taylor and Francis, 2002, pp. 59-77.

McKinnell, John. "Myth as Therapy. The Usefulness of Þrymskviða." *Medium Aevum* 69 (2000), pp. 1- 20.

Nordberg, Andreas. "Continuity, Change and Regional Variation in Old Norse Religion." *More than Mythology. Narratives, Ritual practices and Regional Distribution in Pre-Christian Scandinavian Religions*, Catharina Raudvere and Jens Peter Schjødt (eds.), Nordic Academic Press, 2012, pp. 119-151.

Segal, Robert A. "Introduction." *Myth. Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies*, Vol 1, Routledge, 2007, pp. 1-20.