



Course syllabus

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Department of Cultural Sciences

1KV400 Det nordiska arvet, 30 högskolepoäng

Nordic Heritage, 30 credits

Subject Group

Other Interdisciplinary Studies

Level of classification

First Level

Progression

G1N

Date of Ratification

Approved 2019-02-19

Revised 2021-10-28 by Faculty of Arts and Humanities. Revised literature.

The course syllabus is valid from spring semester 2022

Prerequisites

General entry requirements for university studies.

Objectives

After completing the course, the student should be able to:

- at a basic level read, interpret, analyse and critically review the language, literature and oral and visual remains of the Viking Age and the Middle Ages,
- at a basic level read and translate runes from the Viking Age and the early Middle Ages, and account for a few basic concepts and terms in runic research,
- in general terms account for mythology and religious practice in Old Norse religion as manifested in written and archaeological source material,
- in general terms account for how Old Norse culture has interacted with and been influenced by other cultures during the Iron Age, The Viking Age and the Middle Ages.

Module 1. The language of the Vikings, 7.5 credits

After completing the module, the students should be able to:

- account for and transliterate runes from the Viking Age until the early Middle Ages,
- use rune inscriptions, dictionaries and databases,
- read and translate runes from the Viking Age until the early Middle Ages,
- identify and demonstrate an understanding of the most common Runic Swedish words and inflections in their context,
- account for basic concepts and terminology in runic research,
- account for the earliest research on Nordic language history and runes from a

- historical and scientific perspective,
- give a presentation of a rune inscription.

Module 2. Old Norse Literature, 7.5 credits

After completing the module, the student should be able to:

- analyse and interpret Old Norse literature on the basis of basic literary terminology,
- reflect on the role of Old Norse literature in Western literary and cultural history and in relation to today's popular culture,
- account for the conditions of Old Norse literature in relation to society and the history of ideas, and exemplify how Old Norse literature interacted with the literature or other cultures during the Middle Ages,
- discuss Old Norse literature in relation to gender, class, and ethnic perspectives,
- discuss the texts from perspectives of source criticism and on the basis of how the interpretation is influenced by the fact that they are read in translation.

Module 3. Old Norse mythology and religion, an introduction, 7.5 credits

After completing the module, the student should be able to:

- in general terms account for mythology and religious practice in Old Norse religion as manifested in written and archaeological source material,
- exemplify how Old Norse religion interacted with other religions during the Iron Age (for example Roman, Celtic and Sami religion),
- apply basic source criticism on material used in studies of Old Norse religion,
- problematise interpretations of source material on Old Norse religion,
- discuss and problematise how Old Norse religion is portrayed in contemporary popular culture.

Module 4. Old Norse culture – Folklore, Artefacts and Visual Remains, 7.5 credits

After completing the module, the student should be able to:

- in general terms account for source material which can be used to study the culture of the late Iron Age, the Viking Age and the Middle Ages,
- apply basic source criticism relevant to this kind of material,
- exemplify some interpretations of Old Norse culture introduced with the help of artefacts, visual remains and similar material,
- in general terms account for source material from the Christian period used by historians to illustrate culture from the late Iron Age, the Viking Age and the Middle Ages,
- discuss and problematise the relation between elite culture and popular culture, using terms such as conversion, ideology and hegemony.

Content

This course discusses language, literature and religion from the late Iron Age, the Viking Age and the Middle Ages. The course also discusses how Old Norse myths, sagas, language and artefacts have been passed down and used in later history and contemporary society. The course also discusses how “Nordic heritage” has been influenced by other cultures, and contextualises contemporary use of Old Norse material culture and ideas.

Module 1. The language of the Vikings, 7.5 credits

This module discusses language in Swedish (and Scandinavia) during the Viking Age, on the basis of preserved source material. Runes and rune inscriptions from the entire period during which these were used are discussed, although the main focus is on texts from the Viking Age.

Module 2. Old Norse Literature, 7.5 credits

This module introduces Old Norse literature and literary forms of expression. A selection of texts are studied in translation and analysed. This also includes an introduction to the general cultural historical background of the texts, including conditions related to society and the history of ideas. The module also discusses how similar literary forms arose simultaneously in different cultural areas during the Middle Ages. The texts are also analysed using modern gender theory, problematising aspects of power. The fact that the texts are not read in their original versions is discussed, as well as the fact that there might be several versions of one and the same text. This is also problematised in the non-fictional course literature. The module further introduces literary concepts and perspectives, providing the students with the opportunity to develop basic skills in analysing, interpreting and contextualising Old Norse literature. The students also develop the ability to communicate knowledge and experience of literature through written and oral practical applications. A modern popular work related to Old Norse literature is discussed in terms of how it has been influenced by Old Norse literature, providing the students with the opportunity to reflect on the role of Old Norse literature in literary history.

Module 3. Old Norse mythology and religion, an introduction, 7.5 credits

This module discusses Old Norse religion as practised during the late Iron Age and the Viking Age. Old Norse religion is studied using archaeological, iconographic and written sources. The students develop knowledge of Old Norse deities, central mythological themes, rituals, and religious manifestations such as iconography. Source material is discussed in lectures and in assignments specified on the online learning platform. The course emphasises a critical use of primary material and a problematisation of different interpretations and how this is reflected in popular culture.

Module 4. Old Norse culture – Folklore, Artefacts and Visual Remains, 7.5 credits

In this module the students develop knowledge of the culture of the late Iron Age, the Viking Age and the Middle Ages. The source material relevant when investigating ordinary people’s culture, mentality and world views cannot primarily be the elite’s written culture, but must include objects, images and other non-written remains. Therefore, this module emphasises discussions of issues concerning source criticism and the value of different constructive approaches. The module also discusses the documentation from later Christian peasant culture often used by folklorists to illustrate pre-Christian culture retroactively.

Type of Instruction

Teaching is delivered in the form of lectures, lessons, seminars and group exercises.

Examination

The course is assessed with the grades Fail (U), Pass (G) or Pass with Distinction (VG).

Module 1 is examined through continuous assignments and a final presentation.

Module 2 is examined through continuous assignments and a final take-home examination.

Module 3 is examined through continuous assignments and a final presentation in the form of a take-home examination.

Module 4 is examined through continuous assignments and a final presentation in the form of a take-home examination.

In order to receive the grade of Pass, the student must achieve the objectives. Grading criteria for the grade of Pass with Distinction will be specified when the course starts. In order to receive the grade of Pass with Distinction, the student must have received the grade of Pass with Distinction for at least 22.5 credits. Repeat examination is offered in accordance with Local regulations for courses and examination at the first and second-cycle level at Linnaeus University.

If the university has decided that a student is entitled to special pedagogical support due to a disability, the examiner has the right to give a customised exam or to have the student conduct the exam in an alternative way.

Course Evaluation

During the implementation of the course or in close conjunction with the course, a course evaluation is to be carried out. Results and analysis of the course evaluation are to be promptly presented as feedback to the students who have completed the course. Students who participate during the next course instance receive feedback at the start of the course. The course evaluation is to be carried out anonymously.

Credit Overlap

The course cannot be included in a degree along with the following courses of which the content fully, or partly, corresponds to the content of this course: 1SV109 The language of the Vikings, 7.5 credits

1LI149 Old Norse Literature, 7.5 credits

1RK040 Old Norse mythology and religion, an introduction, 7.5 credits

1RK045 Old Norse culture – Folklore, Artefacts and Visual Remains, 7.5 credits

Required Reading and Additional Study Material

Module 1. The language of the Vikings, 7.5 credits

Bianchi, Marco. 2008. "Runstenar och vikingatida skriftkultur i Kronobergs län." *Runor i Kronobergs län*. Kronobergsboken 2008, pp. 20–31. ISBN: 978-91-86870-16-4 (11 p.)

Eldblad, Anita. 2002. "Personnamnen i Jönköpings läns runinskrifter." *Om runstenar i Jönköpings län*. Småländska kulturbilder 2002, pp. 79–92. ISBN saknas i LIBRIS. (13 p.)

Gustavson, Helmer. 2006. *Svenskt runordsregister. Tredje reviderade upplagan*. Institutionen för nordiska språk, Uppsala universitet: Uppsala. www.nordiska.uu.se/forskning/projekt/runlink (79 p.)

Norris, Matthew. *A Pilgrimage to the Past: Johannes Bureus and the Rise of Swedish Antiquarian Scholarship, 1600–1650*. pp. 493–534. Ak. avh. 2016. Lund University. ISBN 978-91-87833-59-5 (41 p.)

Palm, Rune »Runor och latinskrift« I: Larsson et al. *Den medeltida skriftkulturen i Sverige. Genrer och texter*. pp. 22–51. Sällskapet Runica et Medievalia och Stockholms universitet. Stockholm 2010. ISBN 978-91-88568-42-7 (29 p.)

Palm, Rune: *Vikingarnas språk*. 2nd ed. 2010. Nordstedts förlag. pp. 429–457. ISBN 9789113030807 (28 p.)

Peterson, Lena. 2002. *Nordiskt runnamnslexikon. Fjärde, reviderade versionen med tillägg av frekvenstabeller och finalalfabetisk namnlista februari 2002.* www.sofi.se/SOFIU/runlex/ (344 p.)

Pettersson, Gertrud. 2005. *Svenska språket under sjuhundra år. En historia om svenskan och dess utforskande.* Lund: Studentlitteratur. 2nd ed. pp. 67–98, 113124. ISBN 9144039115 (31 p.)

Stille, Per. »Johan Bure och hans Runaräfst.« 347–354. In: *Runes and their Secrets. Studies in runology.* Museum Tusculanum Press, Copenhagen, 2006. ISBN 87-635-0428-6 (7 p.)

Stille, Per. 2008. "Runstenar och runresare i Småland." *Runor i Kronobergs län.* Kronobergsboken 2008, pp. 72-83. ISBN: 978-91-86870-16-4. (11 p.)

Walette, Anna. 2008. "Rötter och identitetskapande i antikvarisk och historisk forskning." *Runor i Kronobergs län.* Kronobergsboken 2008, pp. 99-109. ISBN: 978-91-86870-16-4 (10 p.)

Williams, Henrik. 1996. "Vikingasvenska." *Svenskan i tusen år. Glimtar ur svenska språkets utveckling.* eds. Lena Moberg & Margareta Westman. Stockholm: Norstedts Ordbok, pp. 1–10. ISBN 9119622724 (10 p.)

Williams, Henrik. 1996. "The Origin of the Runes." *Frisian runes and neighbouring traditions: proceedings of the First International Symposium on Frisian Runes at the Fries Museum, Leeuwarden 2629 January 1994 / edited by Tineke Looijenga and Arend Quak.* Amsterdam: Rodopi, pp. 211–218. ISBN 90-5183-951-0 (9 p.)

Williams, Henrik. 2004. "Vittnar runstenen från Söderby (Gs 13) om Sveriges första ledungståg. Runfilologi och konsten att läsa som det står?" *Kungl. Humanistiska Museum, Leeuwarden 26–29 January 1994 / edited by Tineke Looijenga and Arend Quak.* Amsterdam: Rodopi, pp. 211–218. (9 p.)

Williams, Henrik. 2004. "Vittnar runstenen från Söderby (Gs 13) om Sveriges första ledungståg. Runfilologi och konsten att läsa som det står?" *Kungl. Humanistiska Vetenskapssamfundet i Uppsala. Årsbok 2004,* pp. 40–53. (13 p.)

Runes provided by the department, ca 25 texts. 100 p.
Material provided by the department. (100 p.)

Module 2. Old Norse Literature, 7.5 credits

Anthology

Hansson, Gunnar D. & Fyhr, Lars. 2007. *Texter. Från Sapfo till Strindberg* (TT). Lund: Studentlitteratur. ISBN 914403248X

Non-fictional literature

Clunies Ross, Margaret. 1996. *Hedniska ekon. Myt och samhälle i fornnordisk litteratur.* Bokförlaget Anthropos. ISBN 9185722170. Chapters 3 and 4, (71 p.)

Kress, Helga. "Vad en kvinna kväder. Kultur och kön på Island i fornnordisk medeltid" in Möller/Jensen *Nordisk kvinnolitteraturhistoria I.* available at Litteraturbanken.se (67 p.)

Lönnroth, Lars. 2017. *Det germanska spåret.* ISBN 9789127151635 (available as an e-book), chaps 3–22, (145 p.)

Lönnroth, Lars. 1976. *Njáls saga: A Critical Introduction*. University of California Press. ISBN 0-520-02708-6, (247 p.)

Lönnroth, Lars. 2008. *Den dubbla scenen. Muntlig diktning från Eddan till ABBA*. Carlssons Bokförlag. ISBN 9789173311557. Chaps 1–4, (104 p.)

Petersson, Margareta & Schönström, Richard. 2017. *Nordens litteratur*. Studentlitteratur. ISBN 9789144083322 (selection, provided on Mymoodle) (15 p.)

Schrevelius, Ally. "Balladspår i modern svensk litteratur". Master's thesis in Nordic languages, Växjö University, pp. 8–15. Available at <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:205862/FULLTEXT01.pdf> (7 p.)

Tenngart, Paul. 2011. *Litteraturteori*. Gleerups Utbildning AB. ISBN: 9789140673107. chapter 2: "Strukturalism" (provided on Mymoodle) (15 p.)

Additional study material

Olsson, Bernt & Algulin, Ingemar. 2009 or later edition. *Litteraturens historia i Sverige* (LHS). Stockholm: Norstedts. Sections on prehistory and the Middle Ages, (22 p.)

Petersson, Margareta (ed.) 2011. *Världens litteraturer. En gränsöverskridande historia* (VL. Lund: Studentlitteratur. ISBN: 9789144055879. "Sagor och legender", p. 58–59, "Medeltidens ljus och mörker", Den fornnordiska litteraturen och dess grannar, pp. 86–92, (8 p.)

Fiction

(TT) = Anthology: Texter från Sapfo till Strindberg, 65 p. in total:

Balladen om Ebbe Skammelsson (TT)

From *Beowulf* (TT)

From *Eddan*: Voluspá (TT), Havamal (TT), Trymskvädet (TT), Det första Gudrunskvädet (TT)

From *Egil Skallagrimsons saga* (TT)

Gunnlaug Ormstungas saga (TT)

From *Heimskringla*: From *Olav Tryggvasons saga* (TT)

Herr Olof och älvorna (TT)

Rundiktning (TT)

From *Snorres Edda*: From *Skáldskaparmál* (TT)

Svenska landskapslagar (TT)

Njáls saga, 345 p.

Tristan och Isolde, återberättad av Joseph Bédier, 147 p.

Völsungasagan (available in Swedish through Studentlitteratur), 173 p.

An additional contemporary work related to Old Norse literature.

Module 3. Old Norse mythology and religion, an introduction, 7.5 credits

Brink, Stefan, & Price, Neil. *The Viking World*, (eds: Stefan Brink, & Neil Price), Taylor & Francis, (available as an e-book), (in selection, ca 100 p.)

Chunies Ross, Margaret. *Hedniska ekon: myt och samhälle i fornnordisk litteratur*. Anthropos. The latest edition, (330 p.)

Steinsland, Gro. *Fornnordisk religion*. Natur & kultur. The latest edition, (in selection, ca 400 p.)

Den poetiska Eddan (Translation by Lars Lönnroth, 2016), The latest edition, (myths in selection, ca 100 p.)

Compendium with source material and articles (provided on Mymoodle), ca 50 p.

Module 4. Old Norse culture – Folklore, Artefacts and Visual Remains, 7.5 credits

af Klintberg, Bengt, *Svenska folksägnar*, Norstedts, i urval c:a 100 sidor.

Du Bois, Thomas A., *Nordic Religions in the Viking Age*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1999. ISBN 0-8122-3511-8, 0-8122-1714-4, 258s.

Articles, ca 500 p, available at the online learning platform.