



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title		Code
Narratives of place and migration in NBS region Vietos ir migracijos naratyvai Šiaurės ir Baltijos jūros regione		
Academic staff		Core academic unit(s)
Coordinator: assoc. prof. dr. Ieva Steponavičiūtė-Aleksiejūnienė Other(s): assoc. prof. dr. Aleksej Burov ir dokt. lekt. Tomas Kotovičius, dr. Rasa Baranauskienė, assoc. prof. dr. Satu Grünthal, guest lecturers, when possible		VU Faculty of Philology
Study cycle		Type of the course unit
Master		Optional
Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
Lectures, seminars, tutorials, individual work: hybrid (in the class and online)	Autumn	English
Requisites		
Prerequisites: none		Co-requisites (if relevant): none

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
10	250	64 (16 lectures, 32 seminars, 16 group and individual tutorials online and in class)	186

Goals of the course

The course is aimed at studying literary and other forms of narratives produced in the Baltic and Nordic Sea region that deal with the experience and representations of place, migration and displacement, and to train research skills by applying relevant theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

NB. A more specific version of the course content and assignments is available on the VU Teams / Moodle platform.

General skills:

Analytical, critical and creative thinking: to critically evaluate, systematize and process information from various sources; to improve existing and generate new ideas.

Problem-solving, social and communicative skills: to identify relevant problems to be solved, to discuss alternative choices; to offer and apply problem-solving solutions; to make informed decisions, based on facts and experience; to engage in constructive teamwork.

Academic and professional ethics: understand and respect ethical requirements; to comply with the principles of responsibility and integrity; to engage in dialogue and seek mutual understanding.

Subject-related skills:

Knowledge about and application of the theories and methods of the field; ability to formulate a research question and to communicate research findings to different audiences.

Learning outcomes	Study methods	Assessment methods
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Students will have: - familiarised themselves with a corpus of texts in various media from the region studied that deal with entanglements of place, migration and meaning, and with their cultural and socio-historical contexts.	Reading/watching and discussing assigned literary texts/ films and other multimodal media, attending lectures and workshops.					Assessment of home assignments and classroom participation. Quizzes.
-acquired theoretical and methodological framework of literary geography, imagology, and cultural migration studies.	Reading theoretical literature and relevant research output, participating in class discussions of such material, performing quizzes. Performing exploratory tasks (such a mapping a literary route)					Assessment of home assignments and classroom participation. Evaluation of the group or individual research project.
- trained the ability to perform, individually and in a group, analysis of chosen empirical material and to present its results in oral and written forms.	- participating in individual or group research and tutorials with supervisors and teachers of the language studied, writing a research log.					Assessment of the written project, its oral presentation and research log.
	Lectures	Tutorials	Workshops	Total	Self-study	Assignments
Theoretical frameworks						
1. Spatial turn in humanities, its subfields (literary geography; geocriticism; literary cartography) and key concepts. Workshop in literary mapping	2	2	2	6	10	Analysis of selected scholarly articles and reading/watching of selected narratives in preparation for discussions. Home assignments, presentations of on-going projects etc. All assignments and readings are specified on Moodle (VMA)
2. Imagology as a branch of comparative literature: inception and development; <i>image</i> as an object of research; methodological framework for analysing <i>auto</i> and <i>hetero</i> images; imagological approach in analysing fiction and non-fiction texts.	2	2	2	6	16	
3. Exploring the city for cultural signs and testing mapping methods).					16	
Empirical studies of narratives from the Nordic and Baltic Sea Region						
4 Old Norse migration narratives. Key places in saga literature: symbolism and historical realities. Islands in Icelandic imagination	4	2	2	8	16	Analysis of selected scholarly articles and reading/watching of selected narratives in preparation for discussions. Various selective assignments, presentations of on-going projects etc.
5. Lithuania in the eyes of a Dane: Åge Meyer Benedictsen's Lithuania. The Awakening of a Nation (1895) as an example of ethnological studies of place.	2			2	6	
6. Cityscapes. Literary representations of cities in German and Finnish literature.	4	2	2	8	10	
7. Selected example of migration literature.			2	2	10	
8. Project work. Studying a corpus of texts and selecting a narrative for analysis. Development of research question. Research ethics. Oral presentation of the project. Development of the final paper.	2	8	22	32	102	Development of the selected project. Peer to peer evaluation.

Total:		16	16	32	64	186	
Assessment strategy	Weight %	Deadline				Assessment criteria	
Cumulative evaluation of participation in seminars and home assignments (40%)		During the term.				Preparation for seminars, completed assignments, participation in discussions and other course activities.	
Group or individual analysis of a selected narrative(s) or study related topic: oral presentation (40%) and individual study log (20%). The project can be in written or multimodal, combining sound, video, image etc. The scope of the group project is 10-15 pages for groups of two-three students. The list of references should consist of at least 8-10 entries. Individual papers: not less than 6 pages (2000-3000 words), including literature (at least 5 entries). The number of total pages for the project can be agreed upon with the teachers, taking into consideration the potential multimedia content.		Project is a course work. Oral presentations, with possibilities of feedback, take place as the end of the term approaches. The final version of the project is handed during the exam session. Please note. The grade is reduced by 1 for late hand-in.				Grasp of theory (use of concepts, in-depth reading), clear articulation of the project idea, formulation of the research question, the quality of the analysis (in depth and well-grounded), the quality of the interpretation (independency in thinking, critical awareness), structuring of the content of the project, well-ordered bibliography, linguistic fluency, aesthetics. The project must be based on relevant theoretical concepts. In case of group project, oral presentation is assessed collectively. Individual logs help to differentiate the results within a group.	

Compulsory readings NB. Students read selectively; at the beginning of each semester the relevant literature is listed on the course moodle page

Cresswell, Tim (2014). *Place: An Introduction*. Wiley Blackwell.
Cresswell, Tim (2024). *Geographic Thought: A Critical Introduction* (Second Edition). Wiley-Blackwell.
Dukić, Davor (2012). Foreword. In *Imagology Today: Achievements, Challenges, Perspectives*, edited by Dukić, 11–16. Bouvier.
Giugliano, M. & Alsina Keith, V. (2019). Seeing the image of one's culture through the image of another: translating images of national identity. *Meta*, 64(3), 748–775. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1070538ar>.
Leerssen, Joep (2016). *Imagology: On Using Ethnicity to Make Sense of the World*. Iberic@l / Revue d'études ibériques et ibéro-américaines 10, 13–31. <http://iberical.paris-sorbonne.fr/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Pages-from-Iberic@l-no10-automne-2016-Final-2.pdf>.
Tally, Robert (2018). *Topophrenia: Place, Narrative, and the Spatial Imagination*. Indiana UP.
Tuan, Yi-Fu (2001). *Space and Place. The Perspective of Experience*. University of Minnesota Press.
Westphal, Bertrand (2011). *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces*. Palgrave Macmillan.
Additional texts according to the topic of the project.

Optional readings (selective reading)

Cresswell, Tim and Deborah Dixon (eds) (2002). *Engaging Film: Geographies of Mobility and Identity*. Rowman and Littlefield.
González, B. M. (2005). Topophilia and Topophobia: The Home as an Evocative Place of Contradictory Emotions. *Space and Culture*, 8(2), 193-213. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1206331204273984>.
Frank, Søren (2012). Hvad er migrationslitteratur? *Kritik*, 203, 2-10. https://www.academia.edu/9468488/Hvad_er_migrationslitteratur.
Malmio, Kristina & Kaisa Kurikka (eds.) (2020). *Contemporary Nordic Literature and Spatiality*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-23353-2>.
Prieto, Eric, 2016, Geocriticism Meets Ecocriticism: Bertrand Westphal and Environmental Thinking. In *Ecocriticism and Geocriticism* 19-35. DOI:10.1057/9781137542625_2.
Sondrup, Steven P., Thomas A. DuBois, and Dan Ringgaard. (eds.) (2017). General project introduction. In *Nordic Literature: A Comparative History*, 1: *Spatial nodes*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
Tally Robert T. Jr. (2009). Review of Bertrand Westphal, *La Géocritique: Réel, fiction, espace*. *L'Esprit Créateur: The International Quarterly of French and Francophone Studies*, 49(3), 134. <https://digital.library.txstate.edu/handle/10877/3926>.