

SCAND 345/ JSIS A 345, Baltic Cultures, Fall Quarter 2018

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Class meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30-2:20 pm, Smith Hall 107

This course gives a broad introduction to the cultures of the Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians. Baltic literature, music and film will be studied in its historical context, exploring the relation between people and culture in the Baltic countries.

Course Objectives

- Read three books by Baltic authors (Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian)
- Read and discuss selected songs, poems and stories, listen to music, see pictures and videos created by people in the Baltic
- Investigate connections between these works and people in the Baltic: How are they related to history and identity?
- Develop skills to interpret, critique and perform literature and art

Required Readings

- Nora Ikstena, *Soviet Milk* (2015, translated 2018)
- Andrus Kivirähk, *The Man Who Spoke Snakish* (2007, translated 2015)
- Žemaitė, Tofylis, or *The Marriage of Zosé* (1897, translated 2018)
- Selected readings and films posted on Canvas website

Grades

- 40% Four take-home exam essays about assigned readings
- 10% Final Exam/Literary Slam: Read/Perform a work of Baltic Culture!
- 30% Point person/discussion starter for assigned readings
- 20% Independent reading/film Interpretive Essay

Midterm exams (take-home essays): You will be given question prompts for four essays (3-4 pages). You will be graded on your knowledge of people and works we've encountered in class assignments. Write notes as you prepare for each class discussion, add to the notes during class discussion, and review for exams! Midterms are graded for knowledge, but also ask for creative thinking: practice writing as if you were writing the "Interpretive Essay" (see below).

Point person/discussion starter (class participation): Come to class prepared to discuss the works assigned for that day:

- In the assigned work(s) mark a short passage that sparks a question for you;
- Propose a possible answer to your question; interpretations may include any or all of the following:
 - **Form** (What rhythm, rhyme, or structure holds this work together and sets it apart from non-art? For music and films, you may also discuss sounds, colors and techniques).
 - **Content** (How do images and characters interact in the work? What story is the author telling?)
 - **Context** (Who was or is the author and audience? Why did this author publish this work? What did the author want audiences to feel, think, or know? Has the work's meaning changed over time? How does the work connect to other works?)
 - **Reader's response** (How does the work affect you? Why?)
- Present your question to the class, and/or respond to other people's questions!
 - Class discussion includes student presentations, as assigned before class.
 - Read a section of the work out loud. What question does this work raise, and what is a possible answer?
 - Presenters will post a short summary of class discussion, including ideas that emerged in class. A paragraph is probably enough, but there is no length limit. Imagine that you're starting a draft of the Interpretive Essay (see below)
 - Post a peer response to another student's online presentation (at least four peer responses are required to get full credit for class discussion). Do you agree with their interpretation? Can you expand on their ideas? Can you add ideas about other interesting details in the work? Or compare to other works discussed in this class?

Interpretive Essay (6-10 pages): **Either** revise and expand one of your class presentations (you may combine several presentations if you wish), **OR** revise and expand one of your exam essays **OR** arrange with the instructor to write an essay about a work not included in class assignments.

1. Introduce the author;
2. Discuss the form, and summarize the content of the work;
3. Summarize what at least one other scholar has written about this author and/or work. (Wikipedia is okay to jump start your research, but you must find other published sources. Find these scholars by using resources such as the books on library reserve; MLA Index; Google Scholar, etc. List these sources in a "References quoted" section at the end of your essay).
4. Present your own, unique interpretation. For ideas, see "class participation" above. You may agree or disagree with the persons you have mentioned in #3, or you may look at the work from an entirely different perspective.
5. Quote portions of the work to support your analysis. (for published works, note page numbers)
6. Create a title that captures the essence of your essay.

On Final Exam day, introduce a work assigned in this class, and "perform" it. (Works not in the syllabus are also okay- discuss with the instructor). Memorization is encouraged, but grades are not reduced if you read out loud from a written page.

Baltic Cultures: Meeting Schedule and Assignments. (see copies of reading texts on Canvas website)

	Tuesday	Thursday	Weekend
Sept 27		Baltic journeys, Baltic landscapes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kernagis, "Song of the Road" Ziedonis, "Motorcycle" handout 	Film, Livonian Stories (1991)
Oct 2-4 Ancient Heritage	Languages & Ancient History <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Azarova, "Magic" Sauerwein, Sweet Language Ernštreit, 4 poems Koidula, "My Fatherland" 	Songs & Mythology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Film, Eglė, Queen of Snakes (9 min) Lithuanian folktale, Snake's Bride Lithuanian <i>Sutartinės</i> Milosz, <i>Issa Valley</i> excerpt 	Film: Featured Video: Balts at 1998 Folklife Festival
Oct 9-11 Folklore Heritage	Folklore Old and New <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estonian <i>Regilaul: Creation</i> Tormis, <i>Curse upon Iron</i> <i>Bearslayer</i> (excerpt) Vilkači songs 	Thursday: Guest Performance, Vilkači	Response Essay: Folksongs. Also, skim the 1930 Film: Bearslayer
Oct 16-18 National Heroes	National Heroes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maironis, Graves of Giants Marcinkevičius, <i>Mindaugas</i> 	Flawed National Heroes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Mindaugas</i>, continued <i>Kalevipoeg</i> (excerpt) 	Film, <i>Sprīdītis</i> (1985)
Oct 23-25 National Literatures	Heroic journeys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Latvian folktale, <i>Sprīdītis</i> Zālīte (<i>Sprīdītis</i> songs) Rainis, Mountain Climber 	Who are the people, really? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biliūnas, The End of Brisius Betti Alver, 4 poems Leyb Stocky, "Little Jewish Streets" 	Response Essay: <i>Mindaugas</i>
Oct 30-Nov 1 Memory and trauma	Guest lecture, Violeta Kelertas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Žemaitė, <i>Marriage of Zosė</i> 	War and Occupation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Granauskas, Red Forest Sabaliauskaitė, Franco's Black Pearls Ivask, 6th and 7th Elegy, 2nd series 	Film, <i>Ekskursantė</i> (2013)
Nov 6-8 Soviet Trauma	Soviet Milk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Due: pages 1-113 Degutytė, 4 poems 	Soviet Milk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading due: pages 113-155 Belševica, 2 poems Tranströmer, "To Friends" 	Film, <i>Four White Shirts</i> (1968)
Nov 13-15 Literature as Therapy	Soviet Milk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read pages 155-190 Čaklais poems/songs 	Thursday: Guest Lecture, Nora Ikstena	Response Essay: <i>Soviet Milk</i>
Nov 20-22	Man Who Spoke Snakish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Due: pages 1-102 	<div>Thanksgiving Holiday</div>	
Nov 27-29	Man Who Spoke Snakish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading due: 103-356 		
Nov 27-29	Man Who Spoke Snakish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading due: 357-442 	Man Who Spoke Snakish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading due: 357-442 	Response Essay: <i>Man Who Spoke Snakish</i>
Dec 4-6	Guest lecture, Liina-Ly Roos 100 Years of Baltic Cinema <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review <i>Sprīdītis</i>, <i>Ekskursantai</i>, <i>Sangarid</i> 	Baltic voices, old and new <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juhan Liiv poems Kristiina Ehin poems Arvo Pärt, Spiegel im Spiegel [Video] 	
December 13		Final Exam / Poetry Slam Thursday, 10:30-12:20	

Survey of languages / authors , SCAND 345 / JSIS 345

Estonian

- Men
 - 1 Kreutzwald (1 excerpt)
 - 2 Liiv (2 poems)
 - 3 Kaplinski/Tormis
 - 4 **Kivirähk - book**
- Women
 - 1 Liisu Orik (folk singer)
 - 2 Koidula (1 poem)
 - 3 Alver (4 poems)
 - 4 Ehin (2 poems)

Latvian

- Men
 - 1 Ziedonis (poem series)
 - 2 Pumpurs (1 excerpt)
 - 3 Rainis (2 poems)
 - 4 Čaklais (2 poems/songs)
 - 5 **Vilkači / Latvian folksongs + class visit**
- Women
 - 1 **Ikstena – book + class visit**
 - 2 Zālīte (poems/ songs)
 - 3 Brigadere (play, remade as movie “Sprīdītis”)
 - 4 Belševica (2 poems)

Lithuanian

- Men
 - 1 Biliūnas (1 short story)
 - 2 Maironis (1 poem)
 - 3 **Marcinkevičius - play**
 - 4 Granauskas (1 story)
- Women
 - 1 **Žemaitė – 1 story/book & translator’s guest lecture**
 - 2 Sabaliauskaitė (1 story)
 - 3 Degutytė (4 poems)
 - 4 Folk singers – sutartinė

Poems in other languages

- Hybrid: Ivask (Estonian/Latvian poet writing in English in the USA)
- German, Sauerwein (German linguist who wrote poetry in Lithuanian)
- Livonian: Ernštreit (Liv poet in Latvia)
- Polish: Miłosz (Polish poet born in Lithuania)
- Russian: Azarova (Russian poet who lived in Latvia)
- Swedish: Tranströmer (Swedish poet with friends in the Baltic)
- Yiddish: Stotsky (Jewish poet in Lithuania)