



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI BERGAMO

Università degli Studi di Bergamo

Corso di Studio	13-270 - MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
Insegnamento	139046 - MEDIEVAL GERMANIC CULTURES (Advanced Course)
Anno Offerta	2025/2026
Responsabile	CAMMAROTA MARIA GRAZIA
Periodo	First semester
Modalità didattica	Convenzionale
Lingua	ita

ATTIVITÀ FORMATIVA DI RIFERIMENTO

Corso di Studio	13-270 - MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
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Titolare	CAMMAROTA MARIA GRAZIA

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PREREQUISITI

N.B. This syllabus contains information on the 9 cfu 139046 and the 6 cfu course (code: 13R041, which can be chosen as an optional course).

The course takes place in the first semester and is taught in English.

The course can also be chosen by LM students: together with the lecturer, LM students will choose a topic to study in greater depth – which they may present orally during classes or submit as a written paper one week before the exam.

The course (9 and 6 cfu) is advanced and presupposes one of these courses: Germanic Philology A; Material Culture in the Germanic Middle Ages; Intercultural Phenomena in the Germanic World; Intercultural Heritage, Media and Archives.

Prerequisites: One of the following courses:

Filologia germanica A;

Cultura materiale nel Medioevo germanico;

Fenomeni interculturali nel Mondo germanico;

Intercultural Heritage, Media and Archives.

OBIETTIVI FORMATIVI

The course aims to illustrate the peculiarities of Medieval Germanic texts and to discuss the theoretical and practical problems inherent in various forms of presentation of Medieval figures and texts to the modern reader (translations, literary adaptations, opera, cinema, etc.), investigating reasons and aims of different forms of rewriting. Students will be able to interpret Medieval texts from the Germanic Middle Ages from a comparatistic perspective and through scrupulous examination of textual data; they will understand the problems inherent in a correct process of historicization of texts; they will develop the ability to analyze the various forms of modernization of Medieval texts.

CONTENUTO DEL CORSO

“The Dragon in Medieval Germanic Cultures”

The module investigates the figure of the Dragon and its fights with a hero in a variety of Germanic texts, in Scandinavian pictorial representations, as well as in some contemporary rewritings.

a) Old Norse Tradition. Sigurðr fights Fáfnir in the Eddaic lay “Fáfnismál”, in the “Völsunga saga” (chapter 18); rune-stones and manuscript illuminations.

b) Old English Tradition. Dragon-fights in “Beowulf”: the Sigemund’s episode (ll. 875-897; in the original language), Beowulf kills the creature (ll. 2538-2751).

c) Middle High German. “Das Nibelungenlied”: Hagen mentions Sîfrit’s killing of the dragon (III, 100, in the original language), Kriemhilt reveals Sîfrit’s invulnerability due to the dragon’s blood (XV, 899). “Tristan”: Dragon-fight (ll. 8967-9096; in English translation).

d) Rewritings. Similarities between Fáfnir and Smaug in Tolkien’s “The Hobbit”. A new dragon-paradigm in Tolkien’s “Farmer Giles of Ham”. Siegfried and the dragon in film adaptations (“Die Nibelungen” by Fritz Lang, 1924; “Sigfrido” by Gentilomo, 1958).

e) Only for the 9 cfu course: workshop (with a final paper) on contrastive analysis of rewrites with their medieval Germanic sources. Topics will be chosen together with the lecturer.

The passages in their original language to be analyzed will be provided on the e.learning page of the course (Moodle).

Reference texts that will be discussed during the course (cf Leganto):

- Paul Acker (2013), "Dragons in the Eddas and in Early Nordic Art", in "Revisiting the Poetic Edda: Essays on Old Norse Heroic Legend", ed. by P. Acker and Carolyne Larrington, pp. 53-75.
 - Jesse Byock (2012), The Saga of the Volsungs: The Norse Epic of Sigurd the Dragon Slayer, pp. 1-29; 63-65.
 - Christine Rauer (2007), "The Dragon Episode", in Beowulf and the dragon: Parallels and analogues, Woodbridge, pp. 24-51.
 - Francis Gentry (2002), "Fáfnismal" (p. 14), "Nibelungenlied" (pp. 22-32), "Siegfried" (pp. 115-116), "Dragon's Blood" (p. 147), in "The Nibelungen tradition: an encyclopedia".
 - Romuald Lawoski (2015), "A Wilderness of Dragons: Tolkien's Treatment of Dragons in "Roverandom" and "Farmer Giles of Ham".
 - Fanfan Chen / Thomas Honegger (2012), "Good Dragons are Rare: An Inquiry into Literary Dragons East and West", pp. 27-59.
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METODI DIDATTICI

Lectures and team work. Students' direct participation in the discussion or presentations are highly welcome.

MODALITA' VERIFICA PROFITTO E VALUTAZIONE

The exam consists of an oral exam that aims to verify knowledge and critical skills reached by the students. To obtain a positive grade, students need to be able to talk about all the Medieval texts read in modern English translation and to read and translate into English (word by word) the texts analyzed in the original language during the course; they also need to be able to place the texts in their historical and cultural context, and they need to know the main aspects of the various forms of adaptations analyzed during the course. To obtain a highly positive grade, students have to show an in-depth knowledge of the texts, commenting them from a linguistic and philological point of view, and of the theoretical and practical issues inherent in translations and other forms of rewriting. To obtain an excellent grade, students have to show an organic view of the topics discussed in class, to be able to use sources and bibliographical material, to link topics, and to master expressive skills.

ALTRE INFORMAZIONI

There is no specific syllabus for students who cannot attend the course.

The course is held in the first semester.

OBIETTIVI AGENDA 2030 PER LO SVILUPPO SOSTENIBILE

16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions

4 - Quality education

Peace, justice and strong institutions.

Quality education.

URL LEGANTO - INFORMAZIONI NON PUBBLICHE

Leganto url for Reading list: [Leganto](#)

For further info visit [Library Services](#) web page