

Receptions of Old Norse Mythology since the Middle Ages

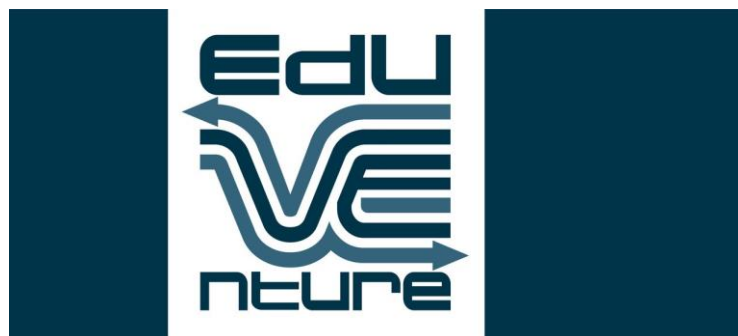
a course by j o l n e s –

Joint Learning in Northern European Studies

Winter term 2021/22



An interview with **Joanna Szyguła** (University of Cologne – Erasmus student at the Department of Scandinavian and Finnish Studies)



This project is part of **EduVenture Cologne (IVAC)** – University of Cologne Virtual Exchange Projects in 2021/22, endowed by

DAAD Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

Transcript

Joanna Szyguła

[Introduction in Polish. English follows.]

My name is Joanna Szyguła. I come from Poland and I study Swedish language at the university in Katowice, but I have spent my third semester doing my Erasmus at the university in Cologne.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THIS COURSE?

I chose this course, because I have always been interested in Nordic Mythology, Nordic Culture and Literature and I felt like I did not really have a class about it before, so I thought that it might be just what I had been looking for in my studies. The name of the course and the description were very appealing for me and I thought that I could just give it a try and see how it is like. And besides, I have never participated in an international course, where there are students from more than one country and more than one university.

DOES THIS COURSE COMPLEMENT YOUR STUDIES WELL OR IS IT AN EXTRA COURSE?

So, in Poland, at my home university, I study Swedish language, but here in Cologne I studied Scandinavian Studies. So, I think that the Nordic Mythology course complemented it really well, because thanks to it I learned more about mythology, but also the culture, the literature, history and also languages in Scandinavia. So, I think that it broadened my knowledge in fields of my studies.

WHAT WERE YOUR EXPECTATIONS AND HAVE THEY BEEN MET?

So, what I really wanted was this course to be just interesting. I wanted to learn many new things, read many interesting texts. And I think that this course was definitely that what I wanted and what I expected, that my expectations have been met. And somewhat I think that it went beyond my expectations, because the course was very well prepared and well thought out. The selection of texts was just amazing for me. We have read various texts from various Scandinavian lands and various centuries, we covered many topics and discussed many aspects. And before every class we had to read some texts and we also achieved some questions to them, so we actually had to

read them insightfully and think about them and see what is there in this text. So, it was really just mind-opening to see how we should read those texts, to what should we pay our attention. So, it just went beyond my expectations.

WHAT WERE YOUR IMPRESSIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF THE COURSE?

What I liked most during this course was, that there was much time for us to just talk and discuss the text and the topics. At the beginning of the classes there were of course some introductions or presentations made by the lecturer, but then we really talked with each other, we had a chance to exchange our ideas on different questions and the texts. And of course, it was an online course, so it is always harder to just sit in front of your computer and not in some lecture-hall or in your room in the university. But nevertheless, it was never boring to me to attend these classes and I really looked forward to it every week. So, my experiences and impressions are very positive.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF WORKING WITH STUDENTS FROM OTHER CITIES AND COUNTRIES?

For me the best advantage was to just exchange my thoughts with them. There were many people from many different countries, not only from Germany and France. So, this course was a mix of different people from different cultures, probably with different former experiences and different levels of knowledge, but nevertheless, we could talk with each other and share our thoughts and find a common interest. And I think that the more diverse a group of people that attend one course together, the more interesting the results of these classes and also discussions are.

ARE SUCH COURSES AN OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH COURSES ABROAD?

Of course I think so. Even though the course was purely online for me and I could not meet other participants every week, we had an opportunity to meet at the symposium in Strasbourg in December and spend some more time together talking about our classes, but also just enjoying the trip, sightseeing and getting to know each other more. So, it was definitely a great opportunity to meet some people, that I probably would not have met, if I had not participated in this course.

WOULD YOU PARTICIPATE IN SUCH AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING COURSE AGAIN?

Without doubt. It was such a wonderful experience for me to work with a group of such nice and dedicated people, to see how it is like, how they study in other countries and at the same time really broaden my horizons and my knowledge in fields of my studies. So, I just wish, that there were more courses like this in the future.

THE FINAL SYMPOSIUM TOOK PLACE IN PRESENCE. WHAT WERE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF IT?

It was something new for me, because I have never participated in a symposium before and it was also my first time in France. So, it was a very great experience. And it was nice to finally meet and see other people in real life and not only through computer cameras. And it was also great to talk with them in real life and discuss the topics one more time. And even though we had many courses that day in Strasbourg it was not boring or tiring for me. I really enjoyed it and I wish that this symposium was a little bit longer, because I would really like to talk more in real life about this topic.

Credits

The interview was conducted on January 18 2022 via Zoom.

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