

Syllabus (Course description)

Course title: Modern mythologies / Theory-based project development A				
Course instructor(s), contact details: Dr. Povedák István / povedak@mome.hu				
Code: M-AE-E-102-A	Curriculum (program/level): ESMA	Recommended semester: 1-3	Credit: 5	Number of class hours: 36 Student task hours: 114
Related codes: M-AE-102, ER-THEO-BA-ELM- 20242501-01	Type: seminar	Can it be an elective course? Yes	In case of an elective course what are the specific prerequisites:	
Course connections (prerequisites, parallels):				
Aim and principles of the course: The course aims at a multidisciplinary analysis of modern mythologies of the 20th-21st centuries. By modern mythologies we do not only analyse the perpetuation of classical myths, but also a series of phenomena mythicised in contemporary society and their manifestations, primarily in visual culture, performative rituals, public spaces, and media.				
Learning outcomes (professional and general competences to be developed): Knowledge: a modern mitológiák keletkezése, működése, megnyilvánulásai Skill: önálló gyűjtés, feldolgozás, értelmezés, elemzés Attitude: elfogadás, nyitottság, érzékenység, kritikai érzék Autonomy and responsibility: önálló gyűjtésen alapuló munka				
Topics and themes to be covered in the course: 1. Myth, mythology, legend, lore, belief, gossip 2. When, why and how do modern mythologies arise? Digital folklore 3. Conspiracy theories. Evolution, variations, drivers 4. Identity-forming myths. Myths of tradition, history, nation, homeland 5. Heroes, saints, stars, influencers, celebrities 6. The dual worldview of contemporary myths: the myth of goodness and the myth of evil 7. The mythology of the stranger 8 The mythology of beauty 9 The mythology of the end of the world 10. The mythology of science				

Specificities of process organisation / organisation of learning:

The first half of the course is an interactive lecture. In the second half of the semester, students will present and discuss their independent research.

Students' tasks and responsibilities:

Regular preparation of literature for the lectures, independent research and constructive comments during the presentations.

Learning environment: classroom

Assessment:

Requirements to be met: regular preparation for class based on the given literature, active attendance, presentation based on independent work and submission as a seminar paper.

Method of assessment: presentation + written paper

Assessment criteria: class attendance 20% + presentation 30% + essay to be submitted 50%.

Compulsory literature:

Aitamurto, Kaarina, and Scott Simpson. 2013. *Modern Pagan and Native Faith Movements in Central and Eastern Europe – Anthology*. Durham: Acumen.

Barkun, Michael. 2003. *A Culture of Conspiracy: Apocalyptic Visions in Contemporary America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bellah, Robert Neely. 1967. "Civil Religion in America." *Daedalus* 96: 1–21.

Dyrendal, Asbjørn, Leif Edward Ottesen Kennair, and James R. Lewis. 2018. "The Role of Conspiracy Mentality and Paranormal Beliefs in Predicting Conspiracy Beliefs Among Neopagans." *International Journal for the Study of New Religions* 8 (1): 73–97.

Hammer, Olav, and James R. Lewis. 2007. *The Invention of Sacred Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hubbes, László Attila, and István Povedák. 2014. "Competitive Pasts. Ethno-Paganism as a Placebo-Effect for Identity Reconstruction Processes in Hungary and Romania?" *Religisk, Filozofiski Raksti* 17: 133–152.

Hubbes, László Attila, and István Povedák. 2019. "New National Mythologies: Re-Paganization of Christian Symbolism in Hungarian and Romanian Ethno-Pagan Culture." In *Expressions of Religion. Ethnography, Performance and the Senses*, edited by Eugenia Roussou, Clara Saraiva, and István Povedák, 245–290. Zurich: LIT Verlag.

István Povedák, 2023: An investigation into para-scientific imageries and esoteric nationalism around the cult of the Holy Crown of Hungary, *Religion*, DOI: 10.1080/0048721X.2023.2277021

Recommended literature:

Brubaker, Rogers. 2012. "Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches." *Nations and Nationalism*. 18 (1): 2–20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2011.00486.x>.

Brubaker, Rogers. 2017. "Between Nationalism and Civilizationism: The European Populist. Moment in Comparative Perspective." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40 (8): 1191–1226. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1294700>.

Campbell, Colin. 1972. "The Cult, the Cultic Milieu, and Secularization." In *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain*, edited by Michael Hill, 119–136. London: SCM Press.

Carroll, Robert Todd. 2003. *The Skeptic's Dictionary. A Collection of Strange Beliefs, Amusing Deceptions, and Dangerous Delusions*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

- Casanova, José. 2020. "Transnationalism and Religion: The European Union, from Christian-Democratic Project, to Secular Cosmopolitanism, to Populist 'Christian' Neo-Nationalism." In *Religion, Populism, Neo-Nationalism*, edited by Florian Höhne, and Torsten Meireis, 29–48. Berlin: Nomos.
- Foster, Michael Dylan, and Jeffrey A. Tolbert. 2016. *The Folkloresque: Reframing Folklore in a Popular Culture World*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado.
- Fritze, Ronald. 2009. *Invented Knowledge: False History, Fake Science and Pseudo-Religions*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Gingrich, Andre, and Marcus Banks. 2006. *Neo-nationalism in Europe and Beyond. Perspectives from Social Anthropology*. New York & Oxford: Berghahn.
- Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. 1985. *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and Their Influence on Nazi Ideology: The Ariosophists of Austria and Germany, 1890–1935*. Wellingborough: The Aquarian Press.
- Povedák, István. 2014. "Invisible Borders: Christian–Neopagan Syncretism in Hungary." In *Religion, Religiosity and Contemporary Culture. from Mystical to (I)Rational and Vice Versa*, edited by Aleksandra Pavićević, 143–156. Belgrade: Institute of Ethnography SASA.
- Povedák, István. 2019. "The Future That Changed the Past. A Narrative-Level Analysis of UFO Culture with Special Regard to Paleoastronautics Behind the Iron Curtain." In *Present and Past in the Study of Religion and Magic*, edited by Ágnes Hesz, and Éva Pócs, 363–390. Budapest: Balassi Kiadó.
- Povedák, István. 2020. "Religious Neo-Nationalism in Hungary." In *Religion, Populism, Neo-Nationalism*, edited by Florian Höhne, and Torsten Meireis, 289–308. Berlin: Nomos.
- Povedák, István. 2021a. "Come, Look and Hear how the Past has Been and the Future Will be! Festival Culture and Neo-Nationalism in Hungary." In *Festival Cultures: Mapping new Fields in the Arts and Social Sciences*, edited by Jeremy Kidwell, and Maria Nita, 65–86. London: Palgrave.
- Povedák, István. 2021b. "From the Hungarian Jesus to Flying Saucers." In *Politics of Religion. Authority, Creativity, Conflicts*, edited by Tobias Köllner, and Alessandro Testa, 123–149. Zürich: LIT Verlag.
- Robertson, David G. 2015. "Conspiracy Theories and the Study of Alternative and Emergent Religions." *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 19 (2): 5–16.
<https://doi.org/10.1525/nr.2015.19.2.5>.
- Rountree, Kathryn. 2015. *Contemporary Pagan and Native Faith Movements in Europe. Colonialist and Nationalist Impulses*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn.
- Smith, Anthony D. 2009. *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach*. New York: Routledge.
- Povedák – Wojcik eds. (2021) Vernacular religion and contemporary spiritualities. *Traditiones* 50 (3)

Other informations:

Recognition of knowledge acquired elsewhere/previously/validation principle:

- Some tasks may be replaced by other activities.

Out-of-class consultation times and location:

Tuesday 14.00, prior arrangement is required