



# NRRN

NORDIC RESEARCH NETWORK

## **CONFERENCE PROGRAMME**

24-25th August 2017, University of Aberdeen

Edited by  
Heidi Synnøve Djuve





# 2017 Nordic Research Network Conference

## ‘The North as Home’

### A Multi-Disciplinary Conference



Gerhard Munthe, as found in *Snorres Kongasagaer II* (Oslo; Gyldendal Forsk Forlag, 1934), p. 213. All rights reserved.

The Centre for Scandinavian Studies and the Department of Archaeology at the University of Aberdeen are pleased to announce the 7th Nordic Research Network (NRN) conference, held in King's College, Aberdeen, 24-25 August 2017. Following the increased interest in regional aspects of Nordic life in recent years, the conference theme addresses ‘The North as Home’. The two-day event brings together postgraduate students and early career researchers currently working on research topics relating to the Nordic region.

#### NRN 2017 Organizing Committee

Stefan Drechsler  
Pam Corray  
Heidi Synnøve Djuve  
Beñat Elortza Larrea  
Michael Frost  
Ann Sølvia Lydersen Jacobsen  
Keith Ruitter  
Deniz Cem Gülen



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# Welcome to the Seventh Nordic Research Network Conference

On behalf of the Centre for Scandinavian Studies in the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy at the University of Aberdeen, I am delighted to welcome you to the seventh *Nordic Research Network Conference*. I have been thrilled to follow the work of the PhD students in the organizing committee at our vibrant research community, how they have planned and organized for this important conference.

As most of you already know our Centre for Scandinavian Studies is a research institution focusing on Post Docs, PhD students and externally funded research projects, and we also run an MLitt (Master) programme. With our profile, we have become the largest research unit in the UK for Early Scandinavian Studies, with a focus on Viking and Medieval Scandinavia. At the moment, we have around 15 PhD students, one Post Doc, and we have four ongoing research projects (most of them funded by the AHRC). We also deliver undergraduate teaching in various courses and have an undergraduate programme in modern Swedish.

The Nordic Research Network was initiated at the department of Scandinavian Studies at University College London in 2010, and I am delighted that we at Scandinavian Studies in Aberdeen now have been given the possibility to host the conference. I hope that the conference delegates will take the opportunity to make friends, indulge in fruitful discussions and find possibilities for future academic collaborations, and be inspired by the friendly atmosphere and intense (mostly) scholarly discussions we have on a daily basis in our Scandinavian Studies research community here in Aberdeen, which has become the hallmark for our Research Centre.

So, do feel welcome to Aberdeen and to the Centre for Scandinavian Studies. I wish you all an exciting and rewarding conference!

*Stefan Brink FRSE*

Sixth Century Professor of Scandinavian Studies, Adjunct Professor of Archaeology, and Director of the Centre for Scandinavian Studies

## Organising Committee Introduction and Acknowledgements

We are delighted to welcome you to the 7<sup>th</sup> Nordic Research Network (NRN) Conference hosted by the Centre for Scandinavian Studies and the Department of Archaeology, University of Aberdeen. Having a broad strategic research focus on *The North and* hosting a broad community of researchers interested in Nordic topics, the University of Aberdeen is an ideal venue to welcome members of the Nordic research community. Following the increased interest in regional aspects of Nordic life in recent decades, the conference theme will address *The North as Home*; a topic which covers wide and interdisciplinary strands such as *Network and Contacts*, *Spiritual and Physical Aspects of Home*, and the interesting questions on *Heritage, Identity and Reappropriation* of the wider Nordic history, life and culture.

The NRN conference series has a long tradition of enabling early-career researchers and postgraduates to present their research from a diverse range of methodologies and disciplines in a supportive environment. For 2017, we are very proud to showcase topics covering the widest possible range of Nordic research covering topics from Old Norse place names to Sound Art, from Norman writers to modern literature and from Corpus linguistics to landscape paintings. We are blown away both by the outstanding quality and also by the large variety of topics we received, and we are sure this conference will provide not only interesting topics for everyone, it will also enable fruitful and inspiring discussions in between disciplines, a core element of what the NRN stands for since its very beginning. In this regard, we are particularly proud to host for the first-time poster presentations as part of the conference. We are very excited to present a panel discussion on the very topic of this year's NRN conference, *The North as Home* featuring all four of our established international keynote speakers.

This conference would not have been possible without a number of sponsors and supporters, and we would like to thank the University of Aberdeen Development Trust Experience Fund for its generous support for this event. We are also very grateful for the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy and the School of Geosciences, which both offered to host this event and provided generous support and advice throughout the planning period. Furthermore, we would kindly like to thank Ms Rosie Bronte, Publishing Manager at Brepols Publishers (Turnhout) and Dr Claire Thomson, Senior Lecturer from the School of European Languages, Culture & Society at UCL, and Director of Norvik Press (London) for offering us to run a workshop and Q&A on 'Academic Publishing'.

Thank you for coming – all of us look very much forward to meet like-minded researchers from all over the world, and hear about your work.

On behalf of the NRN2017 Committee,

*Stefan Drechsler*

# Practical Information

## University of Aberdeen

The University of Aberdeen was founded in 1495 by William Elphinstone, Bishop of Aberdeen and Chancellor of Scotland, making it the third-oldest university in Scotland and the fifth-oldest in the English-speaking world. The institution founded by Elphinstone was officially named King's College and was located in Old Aberdeen. Following the Reformation, a rival university, Marischal College, was established in New Aberdeen, and the two colleges were merged in 1860 to form the University of Aberdeen.

## About the Nordic Research Network

The Nordic Research Network is a network of postgraduate students and early-career researchers based in the British Isles who are conducting Nordic research. Participation in the network is not limited to those working within departments or centres of Scandinavian and Nordic Studies, and the network seeks to encourage Nordic research in all areas across the humanities and social sciences. The Nordic Research Network was originally established in 2010 with funding from the AHRC's Student-led Initiatives Scheme, which was used to organise the first symposium at UCL. Since then the network has held a further six conferences at intervals of roughly eighteen months, hosted by a number of different university bodies in London and Scotland, and it has expanded and evolved with each successive iteration.

## Centre for Scandinavian Studies

The Centre for Scandinavian Studies at the University of Aberdeen aims to initiate research on aspects on Scandinavian language, history and culture, as well as creating a 'Research School' in Scandinavian Studies for postgraduates, where MLitt and PhD students on a daily basis participate in the activities at the Centre. The MLitt programme 'Viking and Medieval Scandinavia' is run every year, as well as a Scandinavian Studies Seminar Series. Members at the Centre are expected to participate, promote and enhance different projects, networks, conferences and interests, related to Scandinavia, both in Nordic music, film, legal history, Old Norse poetry, Old Norse mythology and Nordic landscape history. We have a large concentration of experts in the field, including Stefan Brink, Michael H. Gelting, Ralph O'Connor, Frederik Pedersen, Hannah Burrows, Lisa A. Collinson, David N. Dumville, Charlotta Hillerdal, among others. The main purpose of the Centre is to bring together these experts to coordinate research projects, provide research facilities and supervision, teaching for Undergraduate and Postgraduate programmes to promote Scandinavian Studies generally.

## Department of Archaeology

Established in 2007, we are one of the UK's youngest archaeology departments, located in one of Europe's oldest universities. As befits the 'Global University of the North', archaeology at Aberdeen has a special high-latitude focus that is found nowhere else. Reflecting this, our staff are prominent researchers and fieldworkers in Northern Europe, Scandinavia, the North Atlantic, Mongolia and the circumpolar region from Siberia to the Canadian arctic. Closer to home, the archaeology of Scotland is a natural priority. Spanning the humanities and physical sciences, our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offer a complete archaeological education with a distinctive northern flavour.



### **NRN Publication Series**

Following NRN 2013 at UCL, proceedings of the conference were published in a volume entitled *Illuminating the North: Proceedings from the Nordic Research Network 2013* by Norvik Press. This marked the first time that the NRN conference proceedings had been published. This opportunity provided many young scholars with their chance to write, review and edit papers for publication. The second publication came after the NRN 2015 held at the University of Edinburgh, titled *Beyond Borealism: New Perspectives on the North: Proceedings from the Nordic Research Network 2015*.

### **NRN Logo**

The Nordic Research Network's logo was designed by Giorgia Ghergo. She took her inspiration for the logo from the atmospheric landscapes of the Nordic region idealised in large expanses of snow, pristine northern forests, and the marvellous light of the *aurora borealis*. All of these concepts are presented in geometric and pure forms that accompany the viewer as they explore the depths of the Nordic universe.

### **Conference Dinner**

The conference dinner will be held at *Rustico*, a cosy Italian restaurant located on Summer Street, just off Union Street, at 8pm. It is possible to walk from the university campus to Rustico, but it takes around half an hour and we recommend instead taking a taxi or the bus (Number 20) from the bus-stop in front of King's College. The address of *Rustico* is 62 Union Row, Aberdeen (Postcode AB10 1SA).

### **Travel Information**

The University is located within a city at the heart of a diverse and thriving regional economy. Aberdeen's pivotal role in the international oil and gas industry means that it enjoys excellent communications and travel links.

#### By Air

Aberdeen's international airport is served by a number of major carriers, providing an extensive network of routes throughout the UK, direct to Europe and worldwide through major hubs. British and Irish destinations include four London airports (Heathrow, Gatwick, London City and Luton - just over an hour's flight time), Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Dublin, Durham Tees Valley, Exeter, Humberside, Leeds Bradford, Manchester, Newcastle, Norwich, East Midlands, Southampton, as well as the Scottish Highlands and Islands. European mainland destinations include Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Oslo and Paris. There is a frequent bus link or taxis available to take you to the city centre.

#### By Coach

First-class roads south to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and onwards, carry fast coach services linking Aberdeen with the UK's major cities. Competitive return fares, using Travelcard schemes, make coach travel popular with students.

### By Train

Rail services connect Aberdeen both north and south. There are regular direct trains to London, and services from Edinburgh and Glasgow link with other mainline routes. Inverness, the scenic West Coast and Highlands are reached northwards.

### By Car

Entering the city from the south or west, follow signs for the A90 (Fraserburgh and Peterhead). This leads round the ring road (Anderson Drive). Exiting from a roundabout (signed Old Aberdeen) onto Cairncry Road, continue to follow the A90 signs through two further roundabouts onto St. Machar Drive. After a third roundabout, the road bisects Old Aberdeen and local signs will direct you to University sites. From the north, Old Aberdeen is signposted on the A96 (from Dyce and Inverness) and on the A90 (from Peterhead). Postcode: AB24 3FX.

### City Centre to Old Aberdeen Campus

The number 20, from Littlejohn Street, next to Marischal College, links the city centre with the main Old Aberdeen campus, and the Hillhead Halls of Residence. The number 19, from Broad Street, opposite Marischal College, passes to the west of the University along Bedford Road. From Union Street, the city's main thoroughfare, the numbers 1 and 2 travel east along King Street and pass the University. Alight just after the King's playing fields on your left. First Aberdeen buses require exact fare, so have 10p and 5p coins ready.

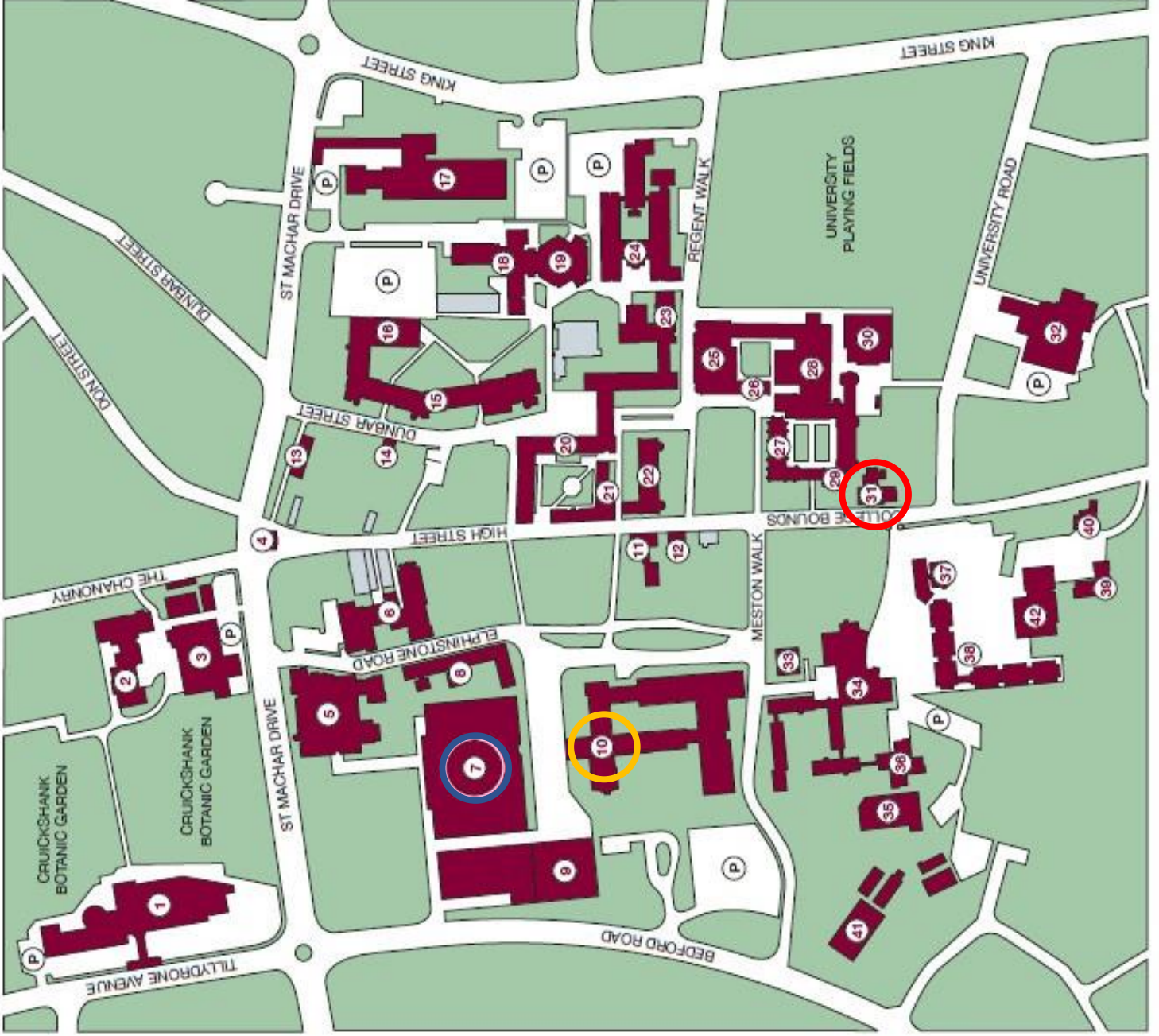
Nearest Stops to Old Aberdeen Campus are:

- Old Aberdeen (bus no. 20)
- Bedford Road (bus no. 19)
- King Street (bus no. 1 and 2)



# UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN CAMPUS MAP

- 1 Zoology Building
- 2 Cruickshank Building
- 3 23 St Machar Drive
- 4 King's Museum (Old Town House)
- 5 The Hub
- 6 St Mary's
- 7 Fraser Noble Building
- 8 Elphinstone Road Halls
- 9 The Sir Duncan Rice Library
- 10 Meston Building
- 11 Chaplaincy Centre
- 12 Confucius Institute
- 13 Security Officer/Mailroom
- 14 Counselling Service
- 15 Edward Wright Building
- 16 Edward Wright Annexe
- 17 MacRobert Building
- 18 William Guild Building
- 19 Arts Lecture Theatre
- 20 Taylor Building
- 21 Old Brewery
- 22 New King's
- 23 Regent Building
- 24 University Office
- 25 Elphinstone Hall
- 26 Linklater Rooms
- 27 King's College Chapel
- 28 King's College Centre
- 29 King's College
- 30 King's Pavilion
- 31 50-52 College Bounds
- 32 Butchart Centre
- 33 Crombie Annexe
- 34 Crombie Halls
- 35 Rocking Horse Nursery
- 36 King's Hall
- 37 Powis Gate/Muslim Prayer Room
- 38 Johnston Hall
- 39 Humanity Annexe
- 40 Humanity Manse
- 41 Bedford Road Workshops/CHP
- 42 Students' Association



Ⓟ Regulated Parking

## Day 1: Thursday 24th

Time	NRN 2017 Aberdeen	
<b>08:00 - 09:00</b>	<b>Registration</b> Location: Foyer of Fraser Noble Building	
<b>09:00 - 10:00</b>	<b>Keynote 1: Stefan Brink (University of Aberdeen): ‘Scandinavia, Nationalism and State Building – The Role of Academia’</b> Location: Meston Building 1 Chair and Welcome Address: Stefan Drechsler	
<b>10:00 - 10:30</b>	<b>Coffee</b> Location: Foyer of Fraser Noble Building	
<b>10:30 - 11:00</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 1: <i>Transnational Nordic Literature</i></b> Location: Fraser Noble Building 2 Chair: Lisa Collinson</p> <p>Ian Giles (University of Edinburgh): ‘From Gela Alta to Fortitude: The British Love Affair with the Frozen North’</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 2: <i>Home in the Old Norse World</i></b> Location: Fraser Noble Building 3 Chair: Hannah Burrows</p> <p>Luke John Murphy (Aarhus University): ‘The Home as Cult Place in Pre-Christian Scandinavia: Domestic and Household Religion in the Pre-Archaic North’</p>
<b>11:00 - 11:30</b>	<p>Anja Tröger (University of Edinburgh): ‘Home as a Liminal Place: Seeking Asylum in Mešković’s <i>Enmandstelt</i> and Khider’s <i>Ohrfeige</i>’</p>	<p>Blake Middleton (University of Aberdeen): ‘Which Way to <i>Jǫtunheimar</i>? A Study of the (Possible) Multiple Realms of the <i>Jǫtnar</i>’</p>
<b>11:30 - 12:00</b>	<p>Ellen Kythor (University College London): ‘In It for Love or Money? Translators Fostering the Market for Danish Literature in the UK’</p>	<p>Helen Leslie-Jacobsen (University of Bergen): ‘Final Places of Belonging: Home in the Old Norse Death Songs’</p>
<b>12:00 - 13:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b> Location: The Hub / Students’ Union Building	
<b>13:00 - 13:30</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 3: <i>Viking Archaeology</i></b> Location: Fraser Noble Building 2 Chair: Ann Sølvia Jacobsen</p> <p>Christian Cooijmans (University of Edinburgh): ‘Trade, Raid, and Aggregate: Establishing a Paradigm of Viking Activity Across the Frankish Realm’</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 4: <i>Nordic Sound and Film</i></b> Location: Fraser Noble Building 3 Chair: Ian Giles</p> <p>Kate Moffat (University of Stirling): ‘Displacement, Memory and the Road Movie: Documenting Identity in Ellen-Astri Lundby’s <i>Min Mors Hemmelighet/Suddenly Sami</i> (2009)’</p>



<p><b>13:30 - 14:00</b></p> <p><b>14:00 - 14:30</b></p>	<p>Andrea Blendl (University of the Highlands and Islands): ‘Runes in Orkney: Making a Diaspora Home?’</p> <p>Timothy Carlisle (University of Aberdeen): ‘Paddle your own <i>knorr</i>: Agency and Place in the Viking Age’</p>	<p>Aya Shimano Bardai (Paris-Sorbonne University): ‘Nordic Sound Art: Aspects of an Artistic Collectivity’</p> <p>Andy Lawrence (Northumbria University): ‘Once Upon a Time in the North: Hrafn Gunnlaugsson’s Viking Trilogy – National Mythology in a Transnational Marketplace’</p>
<p><b>14:30 - 15:15</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Poster Presentations (during which coffee will be served)</b> Location: Foyer of Fraser Noble Building</p> <p>Alfonso Pacheco Contreras (University of Costa Rica): ‘The Birth of a Warrior: The Construction of the Viking Female Identity Through the Influence of Literature, Religion and the Figure of the Other’</p> <p>Sara Davies (Manchester Metropolitan University): ‘<i>Dalastugor</i>: An Artistic Re-Appropriation of Home Through Diasporic Touch’</p> <p>Pardaad Chamsaz (British Library): ‘The Germanic Collections at the British Library’</p> <p>Jessie Yusek (Brock University): ‘Monstrous Women: Exploring Gender in Medieval Icelandic Literature and Society’</p> <p>Bárbara Barreiro León (University of Aberdeen): ‘The Idea of Space as a Symbol in Ingmar Bergman’s Oeuvre: Identity, Experience and Shelter in Postwar Sweden’</p>	
<p><b>15:15 - 15:45</b></p> <p><b>15:45 - 16:15</b></p> <p><b>16:15 - 16:45</b></p>	<p><b>Session 5: Ancestral Homes &amp; Identity</b></p> <p>Location: Fraser Noble Building 2 Chair: Beñat Elortza Larrea</p> <p>Taylor Mankin (University of Houston): ‘From Anglo-Danes to Anglo-Normans: How the Normans Recognized and Used Surviving Danish Elements in Creating Anglo-Normal England after 1066’</p> <p>Barbara Auger (Grenoble Alps University): ‘The Norman Medieval Writers and the Re-Appropriation of the North’</p> <p>Karl Christian Alvestad (University of Winchester): ‘Norwegianness and St Olaf: A Question of Identity, Nativeness and Appropriation in the North’</p>	<p><b>Session 6: Contemporaneous Nordic Homes &amp; Heritage</b></p> <p>Location: Fraser Noble Building 3 Chair: Pam Corray</p> <p>Katharina-Lorraine Malchow-Roth (University of Iceland): ‘From Old to New? Viking Age Culture and Religion Maintained or New Cultures Rising’</p> <p>Naja Carina Steenholdt (University of Greenland): ‘The Importance of Hunting and Fishing in Greenland – as an Occupation for the Individual and as an Industry in Society’</p>

<p><b>16:45 - 17:00</b></p>	<p><b>Room change</b></p>
<p><b>17:00 - 18:00</b></p>	<p><b>Keynote 2: Patrick Gleeson (Newcastle University): ‘Cult and Kingship: Religion and Authority in First-Millennium AD Northern Europe’</b>  Location: Meston Building 1  Chair: Keith Ruitter</p>
<p><b>18:00 - 18:15</b></p>	<p><b>Room change</b></p>
<p><b>18:15 - 18:45</b></p>	<p><b>Roundtable Discussion: ‘The North as Home’</b>  Location: Regent Building 1  Chairs: Stefan Drechsler and Beñat Elortza Larrea</p> <p>Stefan Brink (University of Aberdeen)  Patrick Gleeson (Newcastle University)  Lorna Philip (University of Aberdeen)  Frode Boasson (NTNU Trondheim)</p>
<p><b>20:00</b></p>	<p><b>Conference Dinner</b>  Location: <i>Rustico</i> Restaurant Aberdeen</p>

## Day 2: Friday 25th

Time	NRN 2017 Aberdeen	
08:00 - 08:30	<p><b>Registration</b> Location: Foyer of Fraser Noble Building</p>	
08:30 - 09:30	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Keynote 3: Frode Boasson (NTNU Trondheim): ‘The Medial Breakthrough: Journalism and the Rise of Norwegian Realism’</b> Location: Meston Building 1 Chair: Heidi Synnøve Djuve</p>	
09:30 - 10:00	<p><b>Coffee and Ongoing Poster Presentation</b> Location: Foyer of Fraser Noble Building</p>	
10:00 - 11:30	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 7: <i>Home in the Old Norse World 2</i></b> Location: Fraser Noble Building 2 Chair: Michael Frost</p> <p>Harriet Jean Evans (University of York): ‘Animal-Human Relations in the Home-Place of Iceland’</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 8: <i>Linguistic Relations</i></b> Location: Fraser Noble Building 3 Chair: Deniz Cem Gülen</p> <p>Grzegorz Bartusik (University of Silesia in Katowice): ‘Europeanisation of the Mediaeval North Through the Means of Translation. The Case of <i>Rómverja saga</i> (AM 595 a–b 4<sup>o</sup>, AM 226 fol) and Related Literature’</p>
10:30 - 11:00	<p>Justin Tyree (University of Houston): ‘Anglo-Saxons, Icelanders and Gotlanders: Connecting Medieval Germanic Culture Through Legal Discourse’</p>	<p>Hannah Booth (University of Manchester): ‘Just How ‘Oral’ are the Sagas? New Insights from Corpus Linguistics’</p>
11:00 - 11:30	<p>William Pidzamecky (University of Nottingham): ‘Drunken Proposals – A Study of the Political Role of Alcohol in Medieval Scandinavian Feasting’</p>	<p>Yair Sapir (Kristianstad University): ‘Álvdalen and the Reappropriation of its Vernacular’</p>
11:30 - 12:30	<p><b>Lunch</b> Location: The Hub / Students’ Union Building</p>	

<p><b>12:30 - 13:00</b></p> <p><b>13:00 - 13:30</b></p> <p><b>13:30 - 14:00</b></p>	<p><b>Session 9: Norwegian Identities</b> Location: Fraser Noble Building 2 Chair: Heidi Synnøve Djuve</p> <p>Steinar Aas (Nord University): 'Regional Strategists and Identity Makers in the Capital'</p> <p>Miriam Jensen Tveit (Nord University): 'European Networks in the Medieval High North: The Integration of <i>Hálogaland</i>'</p>	<p><b>Session 10: Art Historical Homes</b> Location: Fraser Noble Building 3 Chair: Stefan Drechsler</p> <p>Jan D. Cox (University of Oslo): 'The Painters of Skagen – A Cocoon in the North?'</p> <p>Isabelle Gapp (University of York): 'Of Lakes and Mountains – The Landscape Painting of Helmer Osslund and Gustaf Fjæstad'</p> <p>Jesús Rodríguez Viejo (University of Edinburgh): 'The Frescos of Adam and Eve on the Central Pillar of Nylars Kirke: Architecture, Narrative and Collective Ritual in Bornholm'</p>
<p><b>14:00 - 14:30</b></p>	<p><b>Coffee and Ongoing Poster Presentation</b> Location: Foyer of Fraser Noble Building</p>	
<p><b>14:30 - 15:00</b></p> <p><b>15:00 - 15:30</b></p>	<p><b>Session 11: Swedish Homes</b> Location: Fraser Noble Building 1 Chair: Claire Thomson</p> <p>Victoria Lesley Ralph (University College London): 'A Haunted Home on a Northern Moor in 'Stenkumlet' in <i>Osynliga länkar</i> ('The King's Grave' in Invisible Links) by Selma Lagerlöf'</p> <p>Jakob Starlander (Uppsala University): 'The Peasant Imagined: Social Imaginary and Identity in Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century Sweden'</p>	<p><b>Session 12: Nordic Identities</b> Location: Fraser Noble Building 2 Chair: Beñat Elortza Larrea</p> <p>Romain Chuffart (University of Akureyri): 'Arctic Language Rights: The Evolution of Indigenous Linguistic Rights in the European Arctic'</p> <p>Ruairidh Tarvet (University of Edinburgh): 'Language and Identity in Sleswig: Mapping Out the Present Status of the National Minorities'</p>
<p><b>16:00 – 16:15</b></p>	<p><b>Room change</b></p>	
<p><b>16:15 - 17:00</b></p>	<p><b>Workshop and Q&amp;A on 'Academic Publishing'</b> Location: Meston Building 1 Chair: Keith Ruitter</p> <p>Rosie Bonté (Brepols Publishers, Turnhout); Claire Thomson (Norvik Publishers, London)</p>	
<p><b>17:00 - 17:15</b></p>	<p><b>Room change</b></p>	



<b>17:15 - 18:15</b>	<b>Keynote 4: Lorna Philip (University of Aberdeen): ‘Mixed Methods Research: Tales from a Rural Social Scientist’</b> Location: Meston Building 1 Chair: Ann Sølvia Jacobsen
<b>19:00</b>	<b>Reception</b> Location: Centre for Scandinavian Studies, 50-52 College Bounds, AB24 3DS Aberdeen

## Keynotes

### Stefan Brink

Sixth Century Professor of Scandinavian Studies, Adjunct Professor of Archaeology, and  
Director of the Centre for Scandinavian Studies, University of Aberdeen, UK

Thursday 24th

Time: 09:00-10:00

Location: Meston Building 1

Chair and Welcome Address: Stefan Drechsler

#### **‘Scandinavia, Nationalism and State Building – The Role of Academia’**

The 19th century was the era of innocence when it comes to the nationalism movement, and to the pan-Nordic adaptation, the Scandinavism. In this movement academia became a decisive tool and a prime mover, it was the academic world, which could deliver sophisticated arguments and to legitimize claims. New States were created and old States were territorially reshaped, and the tool to legitimize these States was the idea of the Nation. It has been said several times by many scholars that the History discipline emerged as a response to the need of national histories, legitimizing histories of the Nation. The Danish historian Uffe Østergaard (1993: 32) has somewhat polemically written that the discipline History should – in the decisive period 1850–1920 – 1) build up and manage the state archives 2) produce nationalistic propaganda and 3) indoctrinate the part of the people affected by compulsory school attendance of the project called the Nation. In this paper, I will discuss the role of academics in this process and I will especially look what happened in Norway.

*Professor Stefan Brink is the Sixth Century Professor of Scandinavian Studies, and the director of the Centre for Scandinavian Studies at the University of Aberdeen. In addition, he is a Fellow of the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities, and a Fellow of The Royal Society of Edinburgh. Among his many publications are *The Viking World* (Routledge, 2008), *Vikingarnas slavar* (Atlantis, 2012) and *Jämtlands kristnande* (Uppsala Universitet, 1996). In addition, Stefan is editor of journals such as *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia* (Brepols) and general editor of a number of series such as the University of Aberdeen’s own *Acta Scandinavica* (Brepols). Among his many research interests are the societies and cultures of early Scandinavia, Viking slavery, Germanic place names, and the early laws of Scandinavia.*



# Patrick Gleeson

Dr and Lecturer in Archaeology at the Department of History, Classics and Archaeology,  
Newcastle University, UK

Thursday 24th  
Time: 17:00-18:00  
Location: Meston Building 1  
Chair: Keith Ruiters

## **‘Cult and Kingship: Religion and Authority in First-Millennium AD Northern Europe’**

This paper explores the relationship between the development of new religious beliefs, cult landscapes and kingship in first millennium AD Northern Europe. In particular, re-assessing the so-called 'royal sites' of Ireland and a corpus of Iron Age to early medieval landscapes with comparable evidence in Ireland, it suggests similarities in the ways in which cult and authority was manufactured and developed in the 4th to 7th centuries AD in Ireland, Britain and Scandinavia. Comparing and contrasting the genesis and evolution of central places, it explores how these landscapes were manipulated in Northern Europe, and actively constructed as 'homes' for the gods and seats for sacral kingship, which remained fundamental to the character of North European society thereafter.

*Dr Patrick Gleeson is Lecturer in Archaeology at Newcastle University. He is a member of the Gefrin Trust, and a Council Member of the Society for Medieval Archaeology. Among his many publications are articles on ‘Making provincial kingship in early Ireland’ and ‘Towards an Archaeology of Assembly in Early Medieval Ireland’. Patrick has a number of ongoing fieldwork projects in Ireland, western and northern Britain, including work at the Rock of Cashel, Knockainy, Dunseverick and Dunamase. Alongside these activities, he established The Óenach Project: examining early Irish assembly places and practices in 2012, and is engaged in his own Making Kingdoms and Creating Communities Project, which examines early medieval practices of rulership and governance through case studies of kingdoms in the Irish Sea region.*



## Frode Boasson

Associate Professor at the Department of Language and Literature,  
Norwegian University of Science & Technology, Trondheim

Friday 25th

Time: 08:30-09:30

Location: Meston Building 1

Chair: Heidi Synnøve Djuve

### **‘The Medial Breakthrough: Journalism and the Rise of Norwegian Realism’**

In Norway, the publication of our first modern novel, *Amtmannens Døtre* (1854/55), coincided with the introduction of the postage stamp, the railroad and the electrical telegraph. The following fifty years saw the concurring advent of 19 century media culture with the most influential and important period in Norway’s national literary history. This historical coincidence confronts us with a research question that has never been systematically studied before: How did Norwegian literature respond to the media developments from 1855 to 1905? In this paper, I will present a developing research project, *The Medial Breakthrough*, that aims to answer this question. My presentation will focus on the establishment of the commercial press and how it coincides with the rise of realism in Norway. This coincidence is never studied in a Norwegian context. As in many other countries this is largely due to the traditional view of literature and journalism as distinct entities. Recent studies in for example Victorian, French and American literature have however moved beyond this division and proved it wrong. Although this seems to be the case also in a Norwegian context, it needs further study. In this paper, I will show a few examples that will illustrate why such an investigation is needed.

*Dr Frode Boasson is a scholar of literature with special expertise in Norwegian modernism, especially through his extensive study of Knut Hamsun’s writings. His research is characterised by a particular interest in historical and hermeneutic methods, as well as approaches focused on literary reception. Frode’s publications include but are not limited to thorough readings and analyses of literature in the period after 1850, but also comprise studies of literature and cultural exchange across linguistic borders.*



# Lorna Philip

Dr., Senior Lecturer in Human Geography and Head of School of Social Sciences,  
University of Aberdeen, UK

Friday 25th

Time: 17:15-18:15

Location: Meston Building 1

Chair: Ann Sølvia Jakobsen

## ‘Mixed Methods Research: Tales from a Rural Social Scientist’

Researchers from many disciplines draw upon multiple sources of ‘data’ to construct their narratives and to interrogate research questions. They sometimes implicitly and sometimes explicitly conduct *mixed methods* research. This presentation will offer reflections on ‘doing mixed methods research’, considering the advantages mixed methods offer to researchers interested in both contemporary and historical social worlds. Following an overview of attributes of, and debates surrounding mixed methods research in the social sciences examples from my research which focuses on socio-economic change and inequalities in contemporary rural areas in the UK, around the themes of demographic ageing and digital divides, will be used to illustrate how mixed methods can be deployed in contemporary research and to highlight the importance of methodological triangulation. The usefulness, and in some cases the necessity of triangulation, drawing upon multiple sources of information to verify and ‘plug gaps’, will then be considered from the perspective of my research that focuses on 18th and 19th century rural Scotland. Facilitated by explicitly adopting a mixed methods approach I have pieced together narratives of socio-economic change in enlightenment era south-west Scotland. Examples of demographic change and the development of numerous planned villages will be presented. Finally, I will reflect on the usefulness of mixed methods as a means of providing a methodological framework to support interdisciplinary historical research using the example a project I am developing in collaboration with a colleague from the physical sciences. Drawing upon multiple, and different types of information, or ‘data’, and being aware of the strengths and weaknesses of these multiple sources of information can strengthen many research projects.

*Lorna is a Human Geographer with particular expertise in social exclusion and demographic change in rural areas. She employs both quantitative and qualitative methods in her research, frequently with an explicitly mixed methods design. She has led interdisciplinary collaborations with scholars from other social science disciplines, public health, computing science and internet engineering. Lorna’s publications have made significant contributions to debates on rural social exclusion, rural demographic ageing and rural healthcare in the context of demographic ageing and her recent work on rural digital divides has offered an innovative territorial perspective on digital inequalities. Contributions to methodological debates have been widely cited and her research on the development of towns and villages in Enlightenment Era South-west Scotland has been well received by academic and lay audience.*



# Papers

**Steinar Aas, ‘Regional strategists and identity makers in the capital’** (Nord University, steinar.aas@nord.no)

‘Nordlændingernes forening’ (The association for the native of the north of Norway) was established in the Norwegian capital, Kristiania (now Oslo) in 1862. This ‘diaspora’-society of young students from the north of Norway became a central interest group for northern regional issues towards the central power of Norway during the 19th and 20th century.

In 1862 the Northern part of Norway was far from integrated in the rest of the nation, so the association mentioned became central in the creation of the region as a common identity region, as well as marking a course for the further modernisation and development of the region. In the shaping of one common identity region, the association tried to articulate and define the content of the common identity of the ‘Nordlending’ – which was the name used as a concept of the native group of the three northernmost counties of Norway.

This paper will sort out in what ways the development of the content of the northern identity has been through different times by the association. It will deal with the challenges the association met in the creation of collective identities of the North, too.’

**Karl Alvestad, ‘Norwegianness and St Olaf: a question of identity, nativeness and appropriation in the North’** (University of Winchester, 0906548@unimail.winchester.ac.uk)

In 1928 Marta Steinsvik, a Lutheran Norwegian author, openly attacked the Catholic Community in Norway and especially Sigrud Unset for ‘stealing’ St Olaf from the Lutheran Norwegian community. Steinsvik’s attack on the catholic community came more than 80 years after the catholic community first had called upon St Olaf as their patron saint in Norway. Steinsvik’s attack resulted in a court case and a considerable debate: was St Olaf a symbol of Norwegianness or of religious faith? And could both Lutherans and Catholics safely celebrate the saint’s impact on Norway? These questions were especially important as two years after Steinsvik’s attack Norway celebrated the 900-year anniversary of the Battle of Stiklestad, the death of St Olaf and the conversion of Norway. Olaf, who died in 1030, had ruled Norway as king from 1015/6-1028, and was by nineteenth and early twentieth century historians, politicians, and textbook authors as the saviour of Norway: the king who re-established an independent Norwegian kingdom. As such Olaf II, who happened to be a saint, was a natural national symbol for the awakening national consciousness of Norway in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and some members of the Lutheran majority felt the Catholic celebration of Olaf threatened the Norwegianness of Olaf. This paper aims to explore the catholic re-appropriation of St Olaf and the relationship between the Catholic St Olaf as an identity marker for the Norwegianness and nativeness of the Catholic community, and the national identity and heritage he represented for the majority Lutheran population.



**Barbara Auger, ‘The Norman medieval writers and the reappropriation of the North’**  
(Grenoble Alps University, drbarbarauger@gmail.com)

Born from the ashes of the Viking raids, Normandy was shaped during the 10th and 11th centuries with the Dukes building a Norman myth. It started with Dudo writing his *De moribus et actis primorum Normannorum ducum* (between 996 and 1015) for Duke Richard 1st. His genealogical history was later continued and commented by William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, Robert of Torigni, and Wace. Normandy, these writers tell us, means ‘land of the men from the North’.

Studies have shown that, while Dudo referred to ancient texts to write his foundation history (Jordanes, the Bible, and Virgil), Orderic Vitalis seemed to rely on first-hand testimonies. After a quick review of what is known of the Nordic regions as a starting point of the Norman history, this paper aims to present the various ways the Norman writers described the North to give Normandy its specific identity inside the Frankish kingdom.

**Grzegorz Bartusik, ‘Europeanisation of the mediaeval North through the means of translation. The case of *Rómverja* saga (AM 595 a-b 4o, AM 226 fol.) and related literature’** (University of Silesia, gr.bartusik@gmail.com)

*Rómverja saga* is an interesting manifestation of textual movement between the North and the South. Literary contacts between continental Europe and Scandinavia started as early as the Christianisation in the North. Powerful currents of Latin learning and continental European culture were felt in Iceland from this time. The North underwent Christianization, the first profound colonial *civilizing process*, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It opened up to the Latin culture, and later to the courtly culture and the main intellectual stream of the Middle Ages in Europe - *translatio studii et imperii*, cross-cultural exchange of knowledge, transfer of written knowledge through translation, between societies in Europe. With the inflowing of Latin learning to Iceland, the Old Norse-Icelandic conceptual world did not remain intact. The classics imported from the South and the Latin language had an important influence on the medieval Northern World. I intend to point at the cultural connections between the two apparently unrelated times and places: Antiquity and Middle Ages, the Roman Empire and the Icelandic Commonwealth. I will reflect on the mediaeval Icelanders' pursuit of knowledge about the South and Greco-Roman Antiquity as a deliberate activity undertaken at all levels: import of manuscripts, translating, cultural transfer, cognition, mentality. I intend to answer the question: how through translation they incorporated European culture into their own, which made them not only familiarise with Europe but also feel there more at home.

**Andrea Blendl, ‘Runes in Orkney: Making a diaspora home?’** (University of Highlands and Islands, Kirkwall, Andrea.Blendl@uhi.ac.uk)

The proposed paper examines runic writing in Orkney with regards to Norse diaspora identities and suggests a new approach for investigating the corpus. There is a rich and diverse corpus of

at least 58 runic inscriptions on different kinds of objects in Orkney, mostly from the Medieval period when it was a Norse earldom. However, there are also inscriptions from the earliest Viking settlement period. Were runes then deliberately used to make Orkney a Norse home, particularly in exposed locations or on ancient monuments? Can runic writing in Orkney be regarded as part of a claim for Norse overlordship of the land or did it form part of everyday activities the Norse took to Orkney from their homelands?

This research shows how an interdisciplinary methodology combining traditional runology with findings from other disciplines, such as archaeology, sociology and psychology, can help in explaining how the use of runes aided people in negotiating their identities in Viking Age and Medieval Orkney, making the isles their homes. By using network analysis on the spread of runic literacy and certain deviant spellings and carvings, this ongoing project attempts to shed light on how the Orcadian inscriptions reflect contacts both to the Norse homelands and other diaspora settlements

**Hannah Booth, ‘Just how ‘oral’ are the sagas? New insights from corpus linguistics’**  
(University of Manchester, hannah.booth@manchester.ac.uk)

The origins of the Icelandic sagas have long been debated. A central question is: to what extent are the preserved texts reflective of an oral tradition? This paper approaches the issue from a novel angle, applying methodologies from the field of corpus linguistics. I present results from a quantitative study of various Old Norse text-types (sagas, learned prose, sermons, law) in IcePaHC. The distribution of linguistic phenomena typically associated with spoken vs. written language is examined across the texts. The profiles of the various text-types are then compared to examine whether sagas exhibit a particularly ‘oral’ style. More generally, I hope to highlight the potential of corpus linguistics in bringing a fresh perspective to longstanding debates in Old Norse scholarship.

**Timothy John Carlisle, ‘Paddle your own knørr: Agency and Place in the Viking Age’**  
(University of Aberdeen, r01tjc13@abdn.ac.uk)

The people of the Viking Age that spread throughout Northern Europe and the North Atlantic region appear to have had an almost egocentric intrepid spirit. This is often characterised using the term agency. Their strong sense of agency manifested in various ways as they moved throughout the landscape of Early Medieval Northern Europe. This presentation will examine archaeological and literary evidence of Viking-age Norse agency. Potential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, rune stones, runic inscriptions, and the evidence of domestic ritual, as well as the tone and content of contemporary literature. These sources of evidence will be compared in order to establish how personal agency was exercised. Furthermore, this presentation will integrate sociological and philosophical ideas concerning human agency in order to interpret the potential factors that caused this apparent desire of Viking-age Scandinavians to be saga-like and inscribe their presence into the world. Theoretical frameworks suggest that an impending sense of mortality is an influence on human agency. It appears that this intensive sense of agency was heightened by the dangerous world in which



they lived and a belief in Ragnarøk, the mythical end of existence. This would have created a climate of uncertainty that, in turn, motivated Viking-age people to be their own agents, do memorable things, and to be remembered.

**Romain Chuffart, ‘Arctic Language Rights: The Evolution of Indigenous Linguistic Rights in the European Arctic’** (University of Akureyri, ha150375@unak.is)

This paper compares the evolution of indigenous languages rights and the evolution of language policies, laws, and rights for indigenous peoples living in the European Arctic. This paper aims at discussing the extent to which indigenous communities and indigenous peoples are protected under international, national, and regional laws when it comes to using their own languages in the public sphere. Although any attempt to amalgamate these different communities would be culturally damaging, this paper also aims at showing to what extent central and local governments can learn from each other in terms of creating a robust legal framework promoting sound language management and revitalisation that is beneficial for indigenous communities in both countries.

**Christian Cooijmans, ‘Trade, Raid, and Aggregate: Establishing a Paradigm of Viking Activity across the Frankish Realm’** (University of Edinburgh, C.Cooijmans@ed.ac.uk)

The early politico-economic exploits of the Vikings in Francia (c. 750-950 CE) have long been obscured by the persistent constraints of fragmentary and biased bodies of evidence, both textual and archaeological. Cumulative comparative analyses of these interdisciplinary sources are nevertheless able to reveal overall trends in these interregional contacts, alluding to a relatively uniform sequence of trade, aggression, settlement, and subsequent political interaction along the Carolingian coastal territories and inland rivers. To define these potential patterns and their associated stimuli, this paper will present the establishment and application of a dedicated conceptual development model of Scandinavian encroachment. Through the use of geospatial analysis, this model will support ongoing efforts to fill lacunae in our understanding of the Viking phenomenon and its advancement across mainland Europe.

**Jan D. Cox, ‘The Painters of Skagen – A Cocoon in the North?’** (University of Oslo, Copenhagen, Aarhus, Edinburgh and Rome, jady\_sea@hotmail.com)

From the earliest known visit by an artist – Martinus Rørbye in 1833 – to the arrival of the railway in 1890, the town of Skagen was an isolated community, situated at the northernmost tip of Denmark. With today’s easy access by road, rail and motor yacht, it is difficult to imagine the remoteness of the fishing community who existed there, and the artists’ feeling that they were an exclusive and isolated group, co-habiting in a rugged and septentrional Shangri-La.

Today, Skagen is idealised in the mind of the Danish public by Krøyer’s images of women in long white dresses gliding along the pale beach next to an azure sea. Less discussed are the lives of the original inhabitants of Skagen, and the status of their relationship, or lack of it, with the urban painters who colonised their fishing town. The painters were all, with the exception of Anna Ancher, incomers to Skagen, and a sharp divergence existed between them and the

models for their pictures. This social difference was reflected in the art. The local community were shown in their roles as fishermen or in genre scenes of predominantly elderly people. The depictions of the artists themselves were very different: eating, drinking, celebrating and – as Anna Schram Vejlbjby says – rarely showing encounters with the Skagen locals.

**Harriet Jean Evans, ‘Animal-human relations in the home-place of Iceland’** (University of York, harriet.jean.evans@gmail.com)

The migration to Iceland was a move to a land without the dangerous wild animals known from mainland Scandinavia and the British Isles. The place of Iceland then, in many ways, was a place of domestic animals. Yet in studies of animal-human relations in the *Íslendingasögur*, the place of the home has so far scarcely been considered (Rohrbach, 2009; Teuscher, 1990).

Place is the third aspect of any relationship, and the places of these animal-human interactions, both the physical contexts of Viking-age and medieval Iceland, and the literary contexts of the sagas themselves, provide a way to focus on these narrative encounters that embraces the real animals behind the text. As the survival of Icelanders depended upon work with these animals, it cannot be denied that the experience of men and women in medieval Iceland would have shaped their perception of the world, and the stories they told (Ingold, 2011).

Taking an interdisciplinary approach combining archaeology, climate data, and legal and literary studies, this paper will argue that the northern home-place is vital in understanding the animal-human relationships that we find depicted in the *Íslendingasögur*.

**Isabelle Gapp, ‘Of Lakes and Mountains – The Landscape Painting of Helmer Osslund and Gustaf Fjæstad’** (University of York, icbg500@york.ac.uk)

This paper will address the way in which the Swedish artist, in particular, used their native landscape as a way of reinventing a national identity. Having been drawn towards Paris during the 1880s, by the end of the decade artists, including Richard Bergh and Gustaf Fjæstad, were overcome by a sense of natural and national nostalgia; they were drawn back home. In Swedish painting of the 1890s and early 1900s, the diversity of the Swedish landscape became the motif for many an artist. Moreover, the inspiration of French Impressionism and Symbolism became submerged in a longing to reveal a new formed sense of national pride.

This paper will primarily focus on the art of Fjæstad, and his contemporary Helmer Osslund – two artists who worked at polar opposite ends of the country, and yet who reveal through a distinct use of colour and technique, an understanding and appreciation of their home country. I will also touch upon, how artists throughout the Nordic nations were similarly looking for a new way to depict their nation. For many, such as the Norwegian painter Nikolai Astrup and the Danish artist J.F. Willumsen, this similarly came in the form of their native landscape, and the myths and legends which were set within it. This paper will highlight how what was familiar and personal to the Swedish, and indeed Nordic, artist, became a way of creating a new image of a nation.

**Ian Giles, ‘From Gela Alta to Fortitude: the British Love Affair with the Frozen North’**  
(University of Edinburgh, Ian.Giles@ed.ac.uk)

Scandinavian culture is currently in the midst of an unparalleled golden age of imports to the Anglophone world courtesy of phenomena such as ‘Nordic Noir’ and ‘hygge’. This paper confronts the love affair with the frozen north, seeking to determine the origins of icy vistas cast in semi-darkness, as portrayed in print and on-screen when depicting the Nordic region. British readers and viewers, in particular, are especially receptive to certain fictional settings and tropes when consuming, or indeed imitating, Nordic cultural products. This paper will draw upon the examples of Peter Høeg’s novel *Miss Smilla’s Feeling For Snow* (1993) and Sky Atlantic’s *Fortitude* (2015-) to illustrate the development of hybrid genres that satisfy the requirements of the British audience.

**Jakob Starlander, ‘The Peasant Imagined: Social Imaginary and Identity in Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century Sweden’** (Uppsala University, jakob.hakansson@live.se)

The purpose of my work is to show how the Swedish peasantry was thought of, experienced and perceived by the other three estates during the 18th and early 19th century. The period and the group in question is particularly interesting as the peasants’ role in society drastically changed and underwent a fundamental social and political radicalization. The process of the social and political events which allowed this radicalization to take place is well documented and studied. However, how this transformation was perceived by everyone else is not.

**Miriam Jensen Tveit, ‘European networks in the medieval high north: the integration of Hálogaland’** (Nord University, miriam.tveit@nord.no)

The northern coastal region of medieval Scandinavia, Hálogaland, was successively integrated into the administration of the Norwegian Crown from the 12th to the 16th century. In a protracted process, the region transformed from being an autonomous province with ties to Nordic and European networks, to become a northern periphery subject to the emerging state with center further south. By religious, fiscal, military and legal measures, the people of Hálogaland was subjected to the Norwegian Crown and Church. The province was first subordinate to the judicial authority of the more southern regional court before an active process of integration of all the Norwegian provinces began with the promulgation of a national code in 1274. However, while the coastal area gradually fell under Norwegian dominion, the boundaries of the northern parts of the Scandinavian Peninsula were not fixed, and the different groups of the region continued open interaction. The paper explores how the contact between the peoples of Hálogaland and the rest of Europe was affected in this period of national integration.

**Ellen Kythor, ‘In It For Love or Money? Translators Fostering the Market for Danish Literature in the UK’** (University College London, e.kythor@ucl.ac.uk)

Since 2010 the number of books being translated and published in English in the UK from Denmark has increased to a modest dozen per year from only one or two at the turn of the millennium. This has presented an opportunity for more translators to find work translating Danish literature into English - or perhaps translators have been pivotal in fostering this market themselves? This paper will investigate the factors enabling someone to forge a career as a literary translator of Danish into English including relationships, networks, and state support. Interviews have uncovered a dichotomy between the stories translators tell and what they actually do: many literary translators profess that they embarked on their career to pay the bills, yet they describe many hours of unpaid labour time which speaks of a passion for the field that they work in. This unpaid labour functions to build and strengthen the market for Danish literature in translation. Specifically in relation to the conference theme ‘the North as Home’, this case study investigates personal and professional identities and the significance of networks and contacts at home and abroad that enable a literary translator to establish their career.

**Andy Lawrence, ‘Once Upon a Time in the North: Hrafn Gunnlaugsson’s Viking trilogy – National Mythology in a Transnational Marketplace’** (Freelance journalist, andy.lawrence@hotmail.com)

This paper will explore representations of Iceland's history and mythology in Hrafn Gunnlaugsson's feature-films *The Raven Flies*, *Shadow of the Raven*, and *The White Viking*. The paper will contextualise the films in terms of industrial developments and textual analysis. Among the earliest examples of Icelandic heritage films, the trilogy represents an attempt to present a representation of the nation's history, real and literary, to multiple international partners. The paper will discuss the creation of a national cinema during the ‘spring of Icelandic filmmaking’ that occurred during the early 1980s and reference debates about self-sustainable modes of production vs. international co-production. Addressing Iceland's shared cultural history with other Nordic nations, the paper will identify how Hrafn Gunnlaugsson attempted to create a trilogy with region-specific signification. Additionally, the paper will consider how Nordic heritage films have contributed to a sense of national identity.

**Helen F. Leslie-Jacobsen, ‘Final Places of Belonging: Home in the Old Norse Death Songs’** (University of Bergen, helen.leslie@gmail.com)

My paper focuses on how the concept of the North as home or as a place one belongs to serves as an important plot device in Old Norse literature, focusing on the Old Norse Death songs. These poems, uttered by characters at the point of death in several Old Norse legendary sagas, detail the lives of the heroes and often describe their travels to far-flung lands. Nevertheless, the North as Home plays an important role in these sagas as a reference to the point of origin of characters and as a foil to their adventures. For instance, the hero Qrvar-Oddr returns to his

home island after a long life abroad, having been subject to a prophecy as a youngster that he will be killed there by his horse. The horse long dead, he returns to be bitten by a snake that has crawled out of his horse's skull, and dies 'at home' after having recited a long death song in which his deeds abroad are recounted, these adventures now finding a foil in his inglorious death on a far-flung island in Norway. My paper will thus argue that the idea of the North as Home in the sagas serves three functions: 1) one of origin, 2) as an accent to exciting foreign lands, and 3) as an anchor point at the time of death. The idea of North as Home is subsequently very important to the construction of worldview in the sagas, as a means not only for anchoring the identity of the character but also as a means for orienting the narrative geography.

**Katharina-Lorraine Malchow-Roth, 'From Old to New? - Viking Age Culture and Religion Maintained or New Cultures Rising'** (Háskóli Íslands, kam19@hi.is)

This paper discusses the funerary rituals in the contemporary pagan group of 'Forn Siðr – Asa og Vanetrosamfundet í Denmark.' I question how they express identity and culture, particularly whether these rituals are performances of original rituals or the result of reshaped rites under the influence of a different cultural environment. A rise and expansion of pagan religious groups in Scandinavia led my interest for an understanding of heritage and identity of the Viking Age in the present.

I also investigate whether or not it is possible to inherit culture without direct exposure to the original culture that is being 'revived'. Previous researchers in this field, Stefanie von Schnurbein in 1990 and recently Leszek Gardela, have addressed similar problems, but this paper employs direct interviews and questionnaires involving the members of 'Forn Siðr' to understand the perception of rituals in contemporary pagan religion. The empirical results are then contextualized in a close examination of Catherine Bell's aspects of rituality, which offers a theoretical frame for the paper's investigation of funerary rituals in the group of 'Forn Sidr'.

This paper aims to show the significance of the Viking Age in modern perceptions to understand questions of heritage and identity today.

**Taylor Mankin, 'From Anglo-Danes to Anglo-Normans: How the Normans Recognized and Used Surviving Danish Elements in Creating Anglo-Norman England after 1066'** (University of Houston, taylormankin@yahoo.com)

Scholars have tended to view the process of assimilation, whereby the Normans and English became Anglo-Norman, as largely passive. However, an analysis of two twelfth-century Anglo-Norman sources, the *Gesta Herewardi* and Geoffrey Gaimar's *Estoire des Engleis*, written in eastern England and concerning such legendary Anglo-Scandinavian figures as Hereward the Wake and Havelock the Dane, problematizes this interpretation. These works are filled with evidence of Scandinavian influence and, in the case of the latter, of pro-Danish sentiments. Moreover, they share common themes of reconciliation, admiration for courtly behaviour, and a focus on local places, legend and folklore within the regions of the old Danelaw. This paper will examine these themes and questions about the creation of Anglo-Norman identity after the Conquest and postulates that the Normans recognized and

purposefully incorporated these surviving Anglo-Danish elements in an effort to assimilate with an area which was previously the center of the Danelaw, as well as anti-Norman resistance in the decades following the Conquest of 1066. This paper, therefore, sheds new light on the active means through which the Normans integrated with a multi-cultural England and created the Anglo-Norman realm.

**Blake Middleton, ‘Which way to Jǫtunheimar? A Study of the (possible) multiple realms of the Jǫtnar’** (University of Aberdeen, blake.middleton@abdn.ac.uk)

Pórr goes east, Óðinn goes north, Surtr comes from the south; each of these cardinal directions are utilized within either the *Poetic Edda* or *Snorra Edda* (or both) as the direction one must travel in order to enter and interact with those beings who, according to Finnur Jónsson, are the common enemy of both the gods and mankind.

This paper will examine, via a narratological approach, the multiple descriptions of the *Jǫtnar*’s realm within the two primary texts above, along with the relevant scholarship concerning the same, develop an understanding as to why each of the three directions represent valid homes of the enemy of the gods.

**Kate Moffat, ‘Displacement, Memory and the Road Movie: Documenting Identity in Ellen-Astri Lundby’s *Min Mors Hemmelighet/Suddenly Sami* (2009)’** (University of Stirling, katiemoffat2011@hotmail.co.uk)

This paper discusses Ellen-Astri Lundby’s 2009 documentary *Min Mors Hemmelighet/Suddenly Sami*, an autobiographical road movie that follows the director as she returns to her mother’s homeland in Sápmi, the geographical and cultural region of the indigenous Sami people. As an ‘assimilated filmmaker’ growing up in Oslo, Lundby discovers her mother’s repressed Sami ancestry later in life, and her road movie approach balances historical facts surrounding Norway’s enforced assimilation activities with elements of Sami folklore. Lundby explores these mythological ideas through dramatic re-enactments, photo collages, and playful animated sequences. This combination of techniques is relatively rare in Sami cinema and provokes questions about real and imagined spaces. Visual autonomy is an ongoing debate in Sami film culture, and some scholars have convincingly argued that the use of mythology can compromise counter-hegemonic political arguments made by Sami filmmakers precisely because these myths align themselves with dominant representations of the Sami in Nordic popular culture (Kääpä and Mecsei, 2015). How can we interpret Lundby’s mixed media approach to displaced Sami identity and do these techniques help or hinder our understanding of Norway’s oppressive colonial history?



**Kerstina Mortensen, ‘Reflection or Representation: A Theory of Titles in the Work of Vilhelm Hammershøi (1864-1916)’** (Trinity College Dublin, mortenk@tcd.ie)

This paper examines the ‘translation’ of ideas between visual and written representation in the context of Scandinavian Symbolist art 1890-1915, focusing on the function of the artwork title as a confrontation between art and language. This relationship reveals the subtleties of interpretation to be navigated by the viewer, with titles occupying the liminal space between viewer and artwork.

Titles can lend impenetrability to an artwork, reinforcing a sense of mystery; none more so than the reticent canvases of Danish artist Vilhelm Hammershøi (1864-1916). Works such as *Five Portraits* (1901-02) and *White Doors (Open Doors)*, *Strandgade 30* (1905), whose titles correspond to the painted image with literal exactitude, seem impervious to natural curiosity. The process of vision and visualisation, of subject and object, is combined in the duality of the mirror’s gaze: are (linguistic) titles reflective of visual representation? Or is visual interpretation moulded by language?

The title of an artwork is of greater significance than mere identification. Adapting Genette’s theory of paratexts and Peirce’s Division of Signs as a methodological framework, this paper will analyse the function of artwork titles in the oeuvre of Hammershøi, encompassing issues of intentionality, atmosphere and the dual logics of visual and verbal reading.

**Luke John Murphy, ‘The Home as Cult Place in Pre-Christian Scandinavia: Domestic and Household Religion in the Pre-Archaic North’** (Aarhus University, luke@luke-murphy.com)

Scholarship on pre-Christian cult places in the Late Iron Age Nordic cultural region has understandably tended to focus on spectacular accounts of enormous religious festivals featuring gold-decked temples, sacral kings, and human sacrifice, thus overlooking small-scale, localised cult praxis. This paper seeks to redress this imbalance by examining evidence for religion practiced by family members in or near their own domestic space. It employs a range of comparative evidence for familial, household, and domestic religions from the Mediterranean and Near East to propose a general paradigm of pre-Archaic private religion, and attempts to establish the extent to which pre-Christian religion in Scandinavia agrees with – or deviates from – this model. Based on descriptions of religious praxis in a number of medieval Icelandic narratives and skaldic verse, an articulation of pre-Christian household religion is proposed to feature characteristics including a predominance of localised deities (such as ancestor spirits), significant roles for women, and a temporal link to specific times of the year, particularly late autumn and winter. This model not only contributes to an emerging comparative model of comparative private religiosity, but also offers insight into what might be uniquely Nordic about pre-Christian religion in Scandinavia and the homes its practitioners inhabited.

**William Pidzamecky, ‘Drunken Proposals – A Study of the Political Role of Alcohol in Medieval Scandinavian Feasting’** (University of Nottingham, william\_pidzamecky@live.ca)

*King Svein made a magnificent feast, to which he invited all the chiefs in his dominions; for he would give the succession-feast, or the heirship-ale, after his father Harald... The first day of the feast, before King Svein went up into his father's high-seat, he drank the bowl to his father's memory, and made the solemn vow... This heirship bowl all who were at the feast drank.*

The above quotation from the Saga of Olaf Tryggvason effectively displays the permeating presence of drink and drinking in Viking society, not least of which within the political ritual of feasting. Medieval Scandinavian ‘big men’ would gain and maintain their prestige and power through such open displays of conspicuous consumption. Feasting cemented alliances and relationships creating both earthly and other worldly bonds between the chieftains and their followers. Feasting also had a darker side with political intrigue, feuds, declarations of war and severe over consumption. The overall goal of this study will be examine the intricacies behind the political side of feasting and the role of alcohol within it. It will utilize a variety of Icelandic saga material in combination with archaeology and historical interpretation to analyze the role of masculinity and warrior mentality of Medieval Scandinavians as well as the special location where the feasting would take place, the hall. Additionally, the study will examine what was being consumed at these feasts and how this factored into displays of wealth and power. From this investigation a further understanding should be achieved about the social-norms of medieval Scandinavians.

**Victoria Lesley Ralph, ‘A Haunted Home on a Northern Moor in ‘Stenkumlet’ in Osynliga länkar (‘The King’s Grave’ in Invisible Links) by Selma Lagerlöf’** (University College London, Scandinavian Studies, victoriasaga52@gmail.com)

In ‘Stenkumlet’ Lagerlöf combines two geographical features of the region of Bohuslän in Sweden – the heather moor and the ancient stone monuments. Tönne builds a home for Jofrid opposite Old King Atle’s grave mound on the heather moor. The log cabin with a heather roof and stone threshold is haunted by their dead foster-son. Tönne wants to confess their neglect of the child but Jofrid prefers to lay the ghost by putting all repentance and blame from her.

Lagerlöf re-maps the narrative setting of the ghost story in the Icelandic sagas to place the grave mound of King Atli from *Volsunga saga* within sight of the cabin’s threshold. The co-existence of two parallel belief systems in the saga revenant stories are reinterpreted in this 19th century ghost story that explores a penance theme with a conflict of heathen/Christian moral values and presents both supernatural/religious or psychological explanations of events.

This paper examines how Jofrid’s heather characteristics, reflected in her appearance and home extend to the moor outside and interact with the stone element in Atle. It asks how the conflict of heathen/Christian moral values are used to question polarised essentialist gender constructions of masculinity with war and femininity with peace.



**Jesús Rodríguez Viejo, ‘The frescos of Adam and Eve on the central pillar of Nylars Kirke: architecture, narrative and collective ritual in Bornholm’** (University of Edinburgh, [jesusrodriguez@libero.it](mailto:jesusrodriguez@libero.it))

The Danish island of Bornholm is home to four round churches that still today define its rural landscape. At the centre of Nylars Kirke, built in the twelfth century, a round pillar structures the internal space and supports the ceiling. Its fresco decoration, dated as belonging to the first half of the thirteenth century, reproduces six scenes from the story of Adam and Eve. The narrative runs anti-clockwise through the upper and widest part of the pillar and that seems to recall a tree.

This paper aims to explore the reception of the frescos amongst the local population that worked and lived in nearby areas, restoring the rituals that the individual performed in the interior of the church and the visual and emotional interaction that they could have developed with the narrative episode. The allusion to sin and the shape of the pillar clearly refer to the well-known Biblical story itself. Moreover, the space invited the worried visitor to perform rituals of public penance, understood as a rotatio or semiotic interplay between movement, word and ambiance, that shaped the communal identity and everyday life of the pious islanders that entered this peculiar typology of building.

**Yair Sapir, ‘Älvdalen and the Reappropriation of its Vernacular’** (Kristianstad University, [yair.sapir@hkr.se](mailto:yair.sapir@hkr.se))

Traditionally considered a Swedish dialect, Elfdalian is today often regarded as a separate language from Swedish. Last year it was recognized as such by the renowned SIL International. In 1984, Ulum Dalska, the Association for the Preservation of Elfdalian, started a process of reappropriation and revitalization of the Elfdalian and since 2005, it has had its standard orthography. As the population of Älvdalen is Swedish-speaking or bilingual, Elfdalian appears to be a local identity marker only when distancing from non-speakers. However, it is a clear identity marker for people from outside Älvdalen. Since 2005, Ulum Dalska has been pleading for a recognition as a minority or regional language in Sweden.

What is the background to this unusual wave of reappropriation and revitalization that we are witnessing in Älvdalen, as opposed to other parts of Sweden? How does the interaction between Älvdalen and Swedish authorities reflect the contrast between rural and urban dimensions? And finally, what does the Elfdalian example say about the contrast between future and past orientation in today’s Sweden?

**Aya Shimano-Bardai, ‘Nordic sound art: aspects of an artistic collectivity’** (Paris-Sorbonne University, [ayasbar@gmail.com](mailto:ayasbar@gmail.com))

‘Sound art’ is a polysemous term referring to a multifaceted and composite genre. As a result of its historical connection to music and visual arts as well as the multiplicity and hybridity of its forms, it opens the field for various definitions and thus raises many debates and discussions.

Since its emergence in the 1950s and throughout its development, Nordic artists have engaged in opening a considerable number of alternative spaces, galleries, collectives, festivals and exhibitions which are associated as much with the music field as with the artistic field. With the aim of exploring new ways of experimenting and questioning former methods, they have been actively participating in broadening the field of definition, interpretation and creation. Furthermore, many of these initiatives and projects point out the ambition to develop sound art in a collective spirit specifically within the North region.

What are the different aspects that underpin the criteria of this collective approach? Through an overview of these Nordic sound art projects, this paper will take a closer look at the artistic, conceptual and curatorial thoughts in order to question the influence of the geographical choice on artistic outcomes and its contribution in the study of stylistic relations.

**Kim Simonsen, ‘Fields of Knowledge: Natural History, Antiquarianism and the Discovery of the Romantic North - Landscape, Environment, and Travelling European ‘Men of Science and Letters’** (University of Amsterdam, K.Simonsen@uva.nl)

The focus of this paper is on how the Romantic North was rediscovered through Romantic historicism, Antiquarianism and travelling European ‘men of science and letters’ 1800- 1900. Furthermore, how polymath travellers and expeditions pursued antiquarian interests alongside scientific interests, furthermore, how travellers became the ‘in-betweens’, who performed and initiated the imagological contact zone between countries (e.g. Rasmus Rask, Xavier Marmier, Konrad Maurer, Mallet), but also between fields of knowledge. Through recognising this aspect of travellers, we need to see the transnational cultural translators as creators of, for example utopian ideas and metaphors, and structures of imagining landscapes in Europe, which had a long-lasting effect on the self-image and on nation building in the North and Europe.

In this paper, I will investigate the ways in which philosophy, history, and science interact in the field of humanities. For instance, how eco-critical philosophy is shaped by the contemplation of its history in the interaction with history and historical and literary theory. In this paper, I will investigate imagined landscapes and the Europe-wide sense of a disappearing nature, mourning and melancholia as the shock of the modernising and rapidly industrialising Europe, and how nodal points of travels were reverted by the scientific elite as a part of constructing and/or romanticising what was considered to be peripheral and rural Romantic sites.

**Naja Carina Steenholdt, ‘The Importance of Hunting and Fishing in Greenland - as an Occupation for the Individual and as an Industry in Society’** (University of Greenland, naks@uni.gl)

In the beginning of the 19th century, the Inuit society in Greenland was characterized as a traditional community, where hunting and fishing were among the most important means to make a living. Today, Greenland has transitioned into a modern monetary-based society, where paid work and consumption of imported goods to a large extent have replaced the traditional

activities. The number of hunters and fishermen has decreased over the last century and today make up less than 10 % of the total work force. However, the Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic (SLiCA) from 2007 showed that as much as a third of the Greenlandic population would prefer hunting and fishing to be their main source of income. This project explores the importance of hunting and fishing in a fiscal and labor perspective.

In this project, I conclude that Greenland's fisheries are economically the most important industry seen from a foreign trade perspective. Almost 90% of the total export includes halibut, cod and/or shellfish. However, the fact that the economy is dependent on a few species makes Greenland as a whole highly vulnerable to changes in the global market. This feeds the need for exploring alternative solutions. Furthermore, the interest in labor within the fishing and hunting industry has changed considerably over the last century. More and more people establish themselves as fishermen, whereas fewer and fewer seek out hunting as a profession. During my presentation, I will present the findings of my research, more specifically the factors that are of importance in the work preferences within the hunting and fishing industry among the Greenlandic people.

**Ruairidh Tarvet, 'Language and Identity in Sleswig: Mapping Out the Present Status of the National Minorities'** (University of Edinburgh, R.Tarvet@ed.ac.uk)

The relationship between language and identity is an important determiner when attempting to define membership of a certain cultural or national group. In the globalised era of fluid cultural, sexual and gender identity, can ethnic identity or affiliation with a national minority be seen as fluid, taking place on a spectrum or even possible to categorise? As anyone in Sleswig can legally associate themselves subjectively with either national minority without contest, what are then the exact dimensions and dynamics of minority identity? Are Danes south of the border as Danish as those North of the border or are they simply Germans who have learned Danish as a second language at school, still speaking German at home, with friends and in public life? Perhaps one can even talk of a brand of Sleswigian Danes and Germans, distinct from their national counterparts but able to find belonging in both cultures as well as in their own regional culture and each other's.

This paper will seek to map out different relationships with the national minorities of Sleswig, taking into account objective criteria such as individual and group use of language online, at school and at home and the practice of cultural norms. The paper will also present a macro-linguistic overview of the role of language in defining one's sense of regional, national and transnational identity.

**Anja Tröger, 'Home as a Liminal Place: Seeking Asylum in Mešković's Enmandstelt and Khider's Ohrfeige'** (University of Edinburgh in Scandinavian Studies, s1130547@sms.ed.ac.uk)

In a comparative close reading of the Danish novel *Enmandstelt* (2016) by Alen Mešković and the German novel *Ohrfeige* (2016) by Abbas Khider I would like to explore how processes of seeking asylum are described and reflected upon in narrative text. From an intimate first person

narrative perspective, the narrators of both texts depict flight, arrival, seeking asylum and life in various centres for asylum seekers in Denmark and Germany respectively. By tracing similarities and dissimilarities between both texts, this comparison investigates if there are commonalities in the procedures of seeking asylum across countries and time, while simultaneously examining how these processes affect the narrators' lives differently and individually. As the two narrators spend long periods of time in places of transit while they wait for the outcome of their applications for asylum, I will pay particular attention to these places, addressing questions regarding their location, how and by whom they are regulated and policed, and, especially, what impact life in any of these liminal places has on the protagonists' sense of home and belonging. The narratives describe in fictional form experiences that are similar to the reality of those who are currently seeking refuge in Europe. In this sense, they contribute to the on-going debate about asylum and migration by adding, although fictionalised, the voices of those who are normally not heard, the asylum seekers themselves.

**Justin Tyree, 'Anglo-Saxons, Icelanders and Gotlanders: Connecting Medieval Germanic Culture Through Legal Discourse'** (University of Houston, [jv.tyree@gmail.com](mailto:jv.tyree@gmail.com))

The earliest written laws of the Anglo-Saxons appeared in the dawn of the seventh century in southeast England (Kent), whereas those codified and promulgated in Iceland and Gotland did not surface until five to six centuries later. Iceland's *Grágás*, written early in the eleventh century, and Gotland's *Guta lag*, written in the second half of the twelfth century, both likely drew their inspiration from the laws of the *Gulaping* of western Norway. Half a millennium before, the people of Kent were roused by the success of Merovingian jurisprudence. Comparing *Grágás* to *Guta lag* is no great leap, especially if the two indeed share the same parentage; but reaching back to the seventh century and finding similarities in the Anglo-Saxon dooms leads to some interesting connections, all of which are indicative of a shared cultural element among the Germanic-speaking peoples, in spite of their spatial (and temporal) divide. In this paper, I intend to argue the cultural relationships between the law codes of medieval Gotland, England, and Iceland rooted in a shared oral tradition by addressing the *personality* of the laws through discourse analysis.

## Posters

**Bárbara Barreiro Leon, 'The idea of space as a symbol in Ingmar Bergman's oeuvre: identity, experience and shelter in Postwar Sweden'** (University of Oviedo, University of Aberdeen, barbara.b.leon@gmail.com)

The intriguing figure of the Swedish filmmaker, Ingmar Bergman, carries with him an intellectual treatment and the cultural experience he had been experiencing since his earliest childhood. However, Bergman's work was not only based on personal experiences, but also followed a Nordic philosophical line— authors like Kierkegaard or Heidegger— for the creation of his films; Existentialism.

The curiosity to investigate and inquire into different aspects of human life and beliefs has made him an existentialist filmmaker which will lead to an intensely emotional and religious character of his work. Far from the traditional ontological system, in which logic and argumentative reasoning prevails, it presents a propitious time for the unfolding of the intense and distressing human subjectivity.

A priori, the work of Bergman represent Swedish traditions and heritage: the architecture, traditional characters, conversations and totally casual events. However, one of the characteristics of Bergmanian existentialism is represented by anguish, which modifies the traditional concept of space transporting us instantaneously to a deeper and questionable world of which we were presented in the first place. This space is now turned into either figurative emptiness or an existentialist model of a traditional experience now serving a new archetypal model of Swedish culture.

**Sara Davies, 'Dalastugor: An artistic re-appropriation of home through diasporic touch'** (Manchester Metropolitan University, sara.k.davies@stu.mmu.ac.uk)

My research project examines issues of belonging in the Swedish diaspora in the north of England bringing a minority discourse into the public realm. Through art practice I visualise the embodied experience of having two cultural narratives. I am developing a notion called diasporic touch, it is a conceptual idea, exploring how a combination of seeing, touching and creative writing opens up an imaginary space where 'there and then' is 'here and now', where past experience is enacted in the present (Kuhn, 2010), and the process of making art generates a sense of belonging. Estelle Barrett (2013, p.64) explains how artistic practice is a performative and material process which follows an impulse to handle objects and to think and feel through their handling. She argues that the process of making art gathers knowledge between established discourses. My visual images of belonging express the hyphen in my Anglo-Swedish experience, a life story emerging between two written histories.

In a new body of visual work I use the Swedish schoolbook, *Läsebok för Folkskolan*, published in 1931, as a source of inspiration. On the front cover is a traditional red-painted croft, a Dalastuga and a large pine tree. In Sweden, this type of place is often a subject matter in historical paintings, used as front covers in magazines and frequently visible in the IKEA catalogue. The red-painted croft by the lake in the forest has, over many years, been the subject

matter and the source of inspiration in my art practice. It is a cultural symbol (Nora, 1996) deeply embedded in Swedish culture linked to the notion of home, an idyll depicted by national romantic painters such as Carl Larsson and Anders Zorn; and a symbol still prevalent today. For me, it is a romantic, diasporic access point to my former culture (Cohen, 2008), an imaginary home (Rushdie, 1991), a place I desire but also approach with caution.

In my images of belonging I transform the Dalastuga, the symbol of the ideal home, through diasporic touch. I re-appropriate the national narratives in the schoolbook from my position in diaspora, questioning ideas of rootedness and homogeneity. I use the idea of photographic 'double exposures' (Boym, 2001), as a method of synthesising cultural material from my multiple and partial homes (Papastergiadis, 2007[2000]). The little red-croft silently haunts my art practice; it returns endlessly, in different forms, tones and opacity. By visualising the hyphen between Anglo and Swedish I am developing the means to materialise Homi Bhabha's (1994) notion of 'third space' between cultures in my particular situation. I am expressing the wavering diasporic experience between established historical discourses. The conflicting lines, multiple frames, shadowy and blurred areas begin to fragment dominant cultural narratives. In my layered visual compositions, clarity becomes porous, histories leak, material cultures merge. Is diasporic touch, the touch of an artist transforming souvenirs from their former homes into new cultural forms, treasured things veiled by melancholia?

**Poliana De Oliveira Gomes, 'The Gosforth Cross: Intericonicity, visual identity and the use of Norse mythology on the conversion of Viking settlers in Northumbria'** (Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, poliana.gomes@ufrgs.br)

The Gosforth Cross is a high-cross sculpture from the mid-10th century located in the northwest of England, a region that received Hiberno-Norse settlements in the ninth century. Its iconographic repertoire mixes the Anglo-Saxon sculptural tradition with motifs from Scandinavian, Celtic and Christian art. Such a fusion evidences the presence of intericonicity, syncretic visual language and an intricate juxtaposition between elements of Norse, Celtic, and Christian mythology. The 'pagan iconography of Christian ideas' is a powerful visual register of the rhetoric used on the conversion of Norse peoples – a long intellectual process of assimilation and re-signification – made possible by the integration of elements from pagan epic and mythological narratives to the Christian ones: a process of religious accommodation. The sculpture is also a record of the emergence of a new figurative tradition, a regional variation of the Scandinavian Borre style, adapted to the new social reality, yet, still reflecting the taste and deep rooted in the cultural traditions of the colonizing elite. Therefore, the Gosforth Cross reveals itself as a monument of great relevance, especially as a visual narrative of the axial myth from the Norse canon and an archaeological evidence of Norse cultural and spiritual heritage survival outside Scandinavia.



**Alfonso Pacheco Contreras, *The Birth of a Warrior: The Construction of the Viking Female Identity through the influence of Literature, Religion and The Figure of the Other***  
(University of Costa Rica, alfonstok@gmail.com)

By analyzing fictional and non-fictional female figures in Norse literature and how they contribute to the social construction of female identity in Viking culture, this study demonstrates the relevance of the female identity in the construction of the Viking culture. To the collective imaginary, the term Viking is restricted to male warriors that lived during Viking Age. Thus, little has been mentioned about female Vikings, their own sense of identity and their role within the Viking culture. Literary accounts such as *Gesta Danorum* by Saxo Grammaticus provide an insight on the identity of the Viking female warrior Lagertha. Additionally, *Erik the Red Saga* highlights the importance of Aud the Deep-minded as a skilled and smart woman. Hence, Literature serves not only to identify and analyze a broader context in which female identity is created, but it also contributes to demystify the collective perception of the Viking women, who were supposed to delimit their roles to housekeeping. In addition, by raiding other countries, Vikings were able to familiarize themselves with other cultures, such as the Anglo-Saxon Christians from Medieval England. Therefore, the construction process of female identity in Viking culture evolves from an individual process to a collective one when they identify their own selves within their own culture and separate themselves from that of the Anglo-Saxon Christians.

**Jessie Yusek, ‘Monstrous Women: Exploring Gender in Medieval Icelandic Literature and Society’** (Brock University, jessica.yusek@gmail.com)

The supernatural, mythology, and folklore can reflect and represent social and cultural anxieties about gender roles and gender relations. They become a social technology for conceptualizing and testing norms by pushing the boundaries of gender roles since these creatures are already abnormal and supernatural. These genres can also be vehicles for making sense of transgressive individuals and behaviors or as a way for women to claim some degree of agency.

My project focuses on monstrous women in the sagas taking the shape of giants, dwarves, and trolls. It is argued that women who were acting in ways that were directly opposing what medieval Icelandic society believed they could had to become supernatural creatures in order to allow them to be violent, vicious, sexual, or inhumanely dominated. Furthermore, in dehumanizing and ‘dewomanizing’ these characters their ferocity and grotesque nature became more credible. Throughout my research I highlight several recurring themes, the first of which is how the gender roles of both male and female supernatural creatures can be regarded as a reflection of their human counterparts’ traditional gender roles. Yet, the theme of ‘Otherness’ with regards to supernatural and mythological women demonstrates how women thus must pursue ‘Other’ means of seeking and securing power.

Another theme was the relationship between women, reproduction, and fertility. This not only included mothers having children, but also the perceived relationship between women and nature; for instance women, their ability to have children, their association with nature, and resulting connections to life and death due to their reproductive capabilities are all important and reflected in the various supernatural and mythological creatures previously mentioned.

Third, the recurring themes of female subordination and domination were present, though it is clear that many of the supernatural and mythological women described above were constantly challenging this. Although their attempts were not necessarily always successful, the fact that attempts at resistance were made shows how these women used their elevated supernatural status for their benefit. Furthermore, being supernatural or mythological was one way in which women could reclaim their sexuality.



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