

# INTERNATIONAL ASATRU SUMMER CAMP 2015

## IASC HERALD # 6

Saturday July 25 – Saturday August 1  
Unnaryd Sweden



## Colophon

IASC Herald #6  
Post-IASC 2015 Herald

### **Publisher**

Asatru-Eu Network

### **Editor-at-large**

Nathalie Cue Comes

### **Coordinating Editor**

Frigga Asraaf

### **Photo's**

Ines Lüders, Christian Derksen, Hans Kromme,  
Frigga Asraaf

### **Contact**

Frigga Asraaf - [frigga@hetrad.nl](mailto:frigga@hetrad.nl)

Nathalie Cue Comes – [n.cue@josoc.cat](mailto:n.cue@josoc.cat)

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# Editorial

By Frigga Asraaf

The thing is...

IASC 2009 will always be remembered for the potatoes, 2012 had its auction and IASC 2015 was all about thingies.

How to describe all this years IASC thingies? Eh... well... I do can say it was once more all about frith, fun and friendship, about our Asatru-Eu heathen community, and much, much more. The editors of the post-Herald of IASC 2015 leave it, beside some catchwords, to the writers of various articles and stories. IASC 2015 in a nutshell: takk for hug, hugthingiefest 2015, Amanda's Frey thingies making workshop, needle felted thingies, The Quest for a thingy. This Herald will be filled with thingies!

Let's start with a song thingie which expresses a lot in a few words:

## **Give me that old time religion**

**Chorus:**

**Give me that old time religion  
give me that old time religion.  
Give me that old time religion  
It's good enough for me!**

**Fredik Liljegen:**

**Let us all go to IASC!  
Drinking mead and hailing Steve!  
A lot of thingies we will see!  
It's good enough for me!**

## **IASC logs**

About some other important thingies: in 2009 the first IASC-pole was raised in Bogensholmlejren in Denmark during the openingscermony and was cut into nine pieces by the end of the week. These pieces of the pole became known as the IASC-logs. All

groups part of the Asatru-EU network present got such a log and a custom was born! In 2012 the second IASC-pole was raised in Sandhatten, Germany. Several of the IASC-logs returned, some of them lovely decorated, and were tied together to the pole for the whole week. From this tree even more logs were cut and handed out to new groups who also had become part of the Asatru-EU network. The IASC pole of 2015 was an ash tree and it was seen as a temporary wordtree. Again, the IASC-logs present were knotted to the tree the whole week. This time to, some new logs were cut: one for Clan Ostara from France, and one for all autonom people. By now, there are 15 IASC-logs taken care of by the log-keepers, mainly from groups, but not only! The 15 logs belong to:

Eldaring - Germany  
VfGH - Germany  
Åsatrufellesskapet Bifrost - Norway  
Forn Sed Sweden - Sweden  
Nordisk Tingsfaellig - Denmark  
Kith of the Tree and the Well (KTW) - England  
Het Rad - The Netherlands  
De Negen Werelden - The Netherlands  
Asatru Ibérica - Spain  
Gotland Forn Sed - Spain  
Asatru Polska - Poland  
Les Enfants d'Yggdrasil - France  
Clan Ostara - France

Ottar Ottosson - Iceland  
Brendan Duffy - autonome people

## **Asatru-EU Herald**

One of the things the Asatru-EU network council decided on is to publish the Asatru-EU Herald each year inbetween IASC. This is still work in progress. We will keep you informed on this project on the FB community of IASC and other places.

**Hail Asatru-EU network and hail IASC!**

**Hail all those who made it possible once more!**

**Hail all present, from Midgard and the Other Worlds!**

**Hail absent friends, old and new!**

# The legend of the origin of Thingies, a historical research

By Nathalie Cue Gomey, with some help from Frigga Asraaf

In an other time and an other dimension, or just a neighbour universe or nearby galaxy, there was the home of Things. Big and powerful grey Things, which spent their days making great and important things in an almost grey shaded world. Everything has its quadrangular and well-ordered form and things are done by the way planned to do. Things avoid the small and rare coloured forests and meadows in their world. They prefer the shades of grey. So normally things go well.

Sometimes it happened that a Thingie appeared. Small and colourful Thingies not really interested in doing great and important things, but preferentially singing and dancing in the forest and meadows and having a lot of fun. As you can imagine these Thingies were socially not well seen, neither accepted in the grey shaded and quadrangular world of Things.

In former times Thingies were just burned as witches, but since Things world became civilised Thingies were ordered to live in small ugly flats and from welfare.

You could think that Thingies had a fine time. With no occupation they could spend their days in the meadows, singing and dancing and having fun, but the welfare did not cover the bus fee to get to the

forest. Basically they had to stay in the grey city, spending boring times looking at their grey walls in their small and greyish flats.

Once in a while, some more adapted Thingies got a job from the Things, some sort of errand services, in which they had to wear grey all covering duxex-suits which make them sweat a lot. To get rid of greyish smelly odour they had to spend a big part of their wages to buy exotic fruity and flower soaps and deodorant.

Some of the Thingies could not stand the grey boredom anymore. They went abroad, seeking for a more colourful live. The big Things always were willing to pay them a ticket to anywhere, as long as the Thingie promised to stay far far away.

In 2009 an important and powerful person with a lot of social environment spelt the word "thingie" for the first in Midgard. At the time, this not only produced a small risk of infection in the immediate surroundings, but also some huge esoteric and electromagnetic waves spread out to the universe. Unfortunately none of the waves ever reached Things world. Most got lost on their way and ended up in a bawdy house at Alpha Centaury.



Other waves got kidnapped by Klingones in search of new sounds for the second part of their opera 'u', and so on. One of the esoteric and electromagnetic waves made a stop at the Cantina in Mos Eisley where she met a Thingie, that just quit its job as rags in Mc Donalds for tediousness and now trying to spend its last coins on getting really drunk. After hearing the story of the wave, the Thingie immediately decided to spend the rest of his money to buy a ticket to our world. Unfortunately the ticket was very expensive. But the space shuttle company offered him to pay with work on the journey. A hard job for a Thingie as breaks-clown for accountants and file clerks on board.

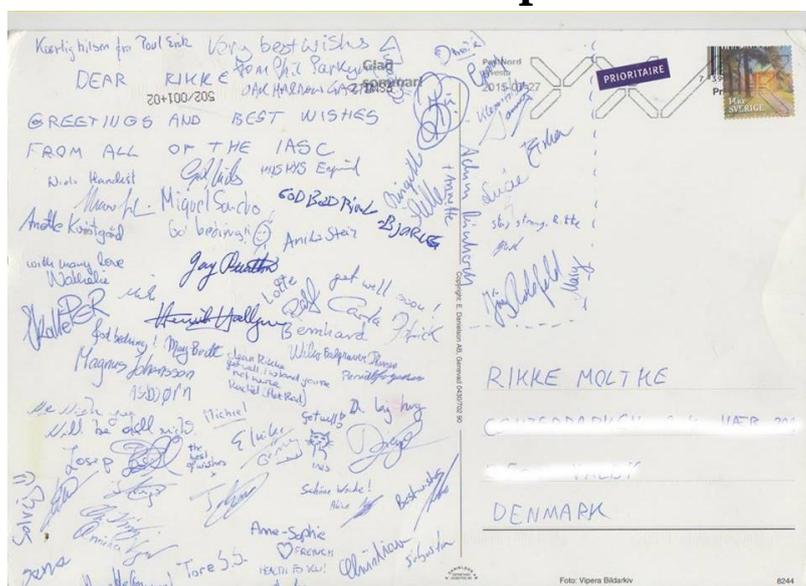
After a long and rough flight the Thingie reached our world. To his surprise it was easy to find the powerful and important person who spelt the word "thingie" for the first time in Midgard who was on its way to a heathen gathering named IASC in a small village in Germany. There the Thingie met a lot of people who like to spend time in nature, who enjoy singing and dancing and have fun. The Thingie was thrilled and after this experience it, knowing this gathering will be repeated in 2015, decided to travel back to Things world to tell its fellow Thingies about this amazing gathering in the hope they would join it on a colourful journey. On its way home Thingie did not remember well the way and instead of turning right after the third star he turned right after the second. Anyhow, it spend a nice week with Captain Hook and the crocodiles.

After nearly three years and many adventure it finally reached Thingsworld safe and sound. All Thingies were elated by the idea to go to a place where they would be welcome. The big Things were pleased to get rid of all these coloured and maladjusted Thingies, and so the great Thingie exodus begun on their way to Sandhatten in Germany. When they arrived after a swifte journey no heathen was there.... What to do? They were devastated and turned to look greyish with despair. Some of the smallest ones begin even in a heart breaking manner to cry.

In the meantime the infection risk has reached an alarming stage in Midgard and electromagnetic and esoteric waves were sent in ever decreasing intervals. Electromagnetic and esoteric waves jumped around everywhere hitting everything which was in their way and even one hit the Thingie which in this moment remembered vaguely something about people talking about another place for 2015 and it all came back to him!

It urgently needed Thingies to restore the balance. Just in time the Thingies arrived for the third IASC in Unnaryd Sweden. It was beyond their expectation, a festival of fun and joy, singing and dancing in the forests and on the meadows. All heathens cheer Thingies, because they know that Thingies marks the real difference make life worth living, and to bring joy and laughter. The delighted Thingies decided to stay to make our world more colourful and whimsical.

## A postcard for Rikke



Rikke recieved the postcard wednesday when IASC was still going on. She was and is very pleased by it and wish to say a warm 'Thank You' for all the warm feelings that she feels flowing towards her.



# Dwarf clans

## during ISAC 2015 in Unnaryd, Sweden

By Per Lundberg

As the dinners during IASC-2015 needed participants to work in the kitchen, Fredrik and me, Per Lundberg, followed the idea by Henrik Hallgren to divide all participants into groups.

But how and what names should we give the clans? For the fun of it and to connect to the Sagas someone came up with the idea that we could use names of the different dwarfs from Völuspa. There are many more dwarves than what we needed and we asked some of the early arrivals to help us choose which names to use. It was a process with lots of laughter. Well, then how to choose which participant of the camp to be in a clan?

We did not want to be the ones that decided for others in this matter so names of the Dwarf Clans were written on a piece of paper. Eight of each clan, then put in a leather bag and as the participants of the camp registered one pulled for oneself which clan one would be part of. Thus let the Norns decide!

Here are the names.

Alltjof	Nain	Gandalf
Bömbur	Mjödvitne	Vindalf
Train	Nide	Hlevang
Dolgtrase	Heptefile	Draupne

Also the clans had social function of meeting together and creating a smaller group of fellowship. As organisers we let go of all control factors and just let each clan do as they wanted, much or as little as they wanted. The suggestion was to hold a Morning Dwarf moot after breakfast each day. They could have a small circle and check in with each other and discuss some topics.

- 🕒 How are you today? a short circle with how everyone is right now.
- 🕒 Practical slavery. ? What assignments do we have today as a group?
- 🕒 Discussion topic today, Choose one topic for each day from below or create you own. These topics are meant to be short thought provoking discussions..



The purpose was not to give right or wrong answers, but to talk with each other. We saw the topics more as seeds that we gave the community or the camp and they themselves did whatever they wanted to do. There were no presentation from the clans to the whole camp as these topics are dynamic and change over time.

The topics were written by Silje Herup Juvet and Haraldson Stenseth from Bifrost Norway.

### Nature religion

Is Asatru a nature religion? If so, why, and how do we relate that to both the ancient practice and our practices today? Has anything changed?

### Ancestor worship

How can we worship our ancestors in today's religious practice?

Who do we actually worship and why? How do we perform the actual worship?

### Viking fetishism

How does the viking culture and art forms, outlook, warrior ideals relate to our religion today? Is there an automatic connection? Was there ever? Does modern Asatru equal a calling to wear costumes and live like the old vikings did?

### Golden Age heathenry

Do we see the times around the migration period and viking age (roughly 400-1100) as a sort of Golden Age for ur religion? To what extent do we try to live up to ancient practices and religious viewpoints? Are we lesser heathens nowadays?

### Ethnicity and Asatru

Is modern asatru/forn sidr an ethnic religion or not and what do you mean with the word ethnic? Can anyone become a asatruar? How to deal with heathen groups/individual that connect Asatru with folk and genetic makeup, e.g "folkish"?

I want to share these topics here also, so that they can be spread and perhaps talked about in a larger community than the heathens that was together during IASC 2015.

## Reflections of how this worked out

As we did not have any feedback or presentation of the discussions from the Dwarf clans, I cannot say anything and the purpose was not really to reach a conclusion, but as said talk together about these issues. One practical observation from the camp was the kitchen service that the clans had as partial purpose.

As all control of who was in each clan and what they did, when a new arrival to the camp came and wanted to get in touch with the others in her or his clan, we could not help. The purpose was to coerce participants to communicate with each other.

Naturally some did, some perhaps did not and this was then up to the individual. An impractical aspect of this was that part of the purpose of the Dwarf clans was to perform service in the kitchen, to cook and to clean. So sometimes there was too few

dwarves performing this service. Pernille, our great cook from Denmark, was understandably a bit frustrated at times. As organizers, Fredrik and me, would call for volunteers. It was beautiful that everyone wanted to work and create a great camp together.

This way of both working and socializing together was often joked about, some perhaps was not happy with their group others really clicked and had interesting talks. And such is the weaving between us all, it has all kinds of colours, textures and forms. And we all have preferences that does not mix so well with what is going on at the time. I am for one happy that this part of the International Asatru Summer Camp worked as it did, both on the practical for dinner and clean up service and on the social aspect.



## Things to do



# To Sweden and back again

By Brendan Duffy - Sugar

As most of you know I came to Sweden by bicycle to join IASC 2015 and I made it back home, only there is one problem,...

I FORGOT MY THINGY!!!!

Did anyone see it?



I want to give out a BIG thanks for all the support and cheering from everyone who was there for a shoutout! #tourdeSVERIGE

I had a life changing experience the weeks while cycling and it has given me my personal jewels to be able to surpass any obstacle that will come in my way. Not only physically but also mentally (as you can imagine it's very lonely and also challenging on the road), because before this I've never been away from my friends or family longer than a week.

Drifting deeper into a knowing of nothingness what will come up each day. What direction should I go to? What should I do? Where am I going to sleep? And what shall I eat?

All of these things I've never really asked myself before, but I learned myself how to interact with it. How I would like to resemble it; kinda like Oden and

his wisdom, In some sort of way, (for me) I forced myself in between a rock and a hard place, and got back not only with more discipline and wisdom about certain things, but also with mental toughness.

On the way a lot of great things happened. Like meeting new people, accidentally coming across a viking market where I bought some amazing stuff, free beer and a sleeping place, free meals and all this from people whom are good from the heart!



And then a week full of new people whom I did not know (except Michiel). I came in on Thursday after a week or two of hardcore cycling. Saw a few people sitting around a table (Per, Fredrik and Bernhard) and I asked if this was the International Asatru Summer Camp. Introduced myself, and immediately I was being interviewed by the local newspaper. The journalist asked me why I was at IASC. I replied: "I am in search of wisdom and I want to learn a lot of new things."

I didn't get in the paper tho, but it was a quite funny experience. After talking a little bit with the lads, I felt a very strong connection and lots of knowledge what they could give on to me. But first we carried many beds to all the rooms for everyone to sleep on.

Afterwards me and Per went to get a pizza, a Swedish pizza,... I must say they are pretty good!

A few days later, more people arrived and we were divided into dwarf-groups, mine was Gandalf! With some amazing group members, but I must say I only been to morning dwarf moot twice because I was still in my bed. I'll try to drink a bit less and try to go to bed BEVORE 5-6o'clock at IASC 2018.

At one stage everyone started calling me Sugar because I made a stupid joke. While cooking, May-britt asked where the sugar was, and I popped up in here face and said "Here I am!!!" Maybe I should have thought about the consequences, but it was totally worth it!

At one of Frigga's workshops about the runes I was just mind blown. The impact it had on me still makes my neck hairs stand up the moment I think about it! I've never worked with runes before and I most certainly didn't know anything about their meaning or how they work. After singing a chant with the group I went into trance, and I saw a lot of eye opening things.

At the big blot I attended as one of the representatives for Sif, which I felt very honoured to do. My words were as followed:

**Oh beautiful Sif, Lady with the golden hair, ripening of the fruits, growing of fields of gold, the coming and going of seasons,  
Oh beautiful Sif, may we be granted with a great harvest and plenty.**

As said: I met a lot of new and beautiful kind people. We celebrated every night around the campfire with music, poetry and dancing! I'm already looking out for IASC 2018!!!



## IASC 2018

Most likely, many readers will wonder where IASC 2018 will take place, but this is something still shrouded in the mists of time. During the last Asatru-EU network meeting at IASC 2015 it was decided both England and Spain to be an option. People from Gotland Forn Sed and Ásatrú Ibérica are looking around in Spain and members of KTW and Asatru-UK do their search in England. So, don't worry the fourth IASC will happen!

# Do you want more mead?...then be QUIET!!

Experiencing a meadtasting surrounded by a flock of thirsty heathens.

By Miquel Sancho

It was about 16:00 hours on Sunday in Unnaryd. Some of us were at Vildmarksgymnasiet and it was known that some Dwarf groups started drinking mead (as the actress said to the bishop\*) in the morning meeting. Thus, around 30 happy dwarf moody-like heathens attended the mead tasting.

At 16:15, these mead-eager people were sitting inside a barn at Hembygdsparken. As a surprise to many, there were only two shot glasses per person and some water jugs on the tables. Curiously, many did not understand that from the beginning. Later on, it was seen that water was to clean the glass and, of course, reduce the arousing effect of mead.

Then, Per Lundberg and Fredrik Liljegren from Sveriges Asatrosamfund introduced Johan Pihl from Mjödhamnen ([www.mjodhamnen.se](http://www.mjodhamnen.se)) who proceeded to introduce each of the meads: Vår, Sommar, Höst, Vinter, Tatt av Vinden, Söt mot Bin, Dubbelt, Svarta Tranan, Dalafröd, Grunwaldzki and two Mölska ( a mix of beer and mead). And then it was when Ragnarok was sparked in the barn...

In Per's words: As the tasting started and the 30 heathens, being just that, heathens set in to enjoy

Johan showed himself a bit shy but Per mentioned: Johan, a rather timid and softspoken person was to introduce the new mead. I noticed his small smiles as we where happier and happier.

The crowd was more and more enthusiastic after each mead, so as many did not just pour a single shot for a mere sip and tasting it but rather many bottles were emptied at the end of tables, whilst praising the brewmaster's skills. There was plenty of toasts for almost everything on Midgard.

There was a point in which the meadmaker was not able to make himself be heard by the loud honey beverage-inspired heathens, hence Fredrik had to say out and loud: Do you want more mead?...then be QUIET!! And only just then, silence was made.

At the end, as Per says: Towards the end Miquel Sancho of Forn Sed Gotland, Catalunya probably was touched by the poetic mead and performed a poem in Spanish with very vivid mimes and body movements to the enjoyment of all. What that poem was about, well, that remains with all those that where at this happy and ecstatic event during IASC 2015.



the mead, toasting before each new mead came natural and spontaneously. The enthusiasm increased somehow as more and more mead was consumed. Wonder why?

So this is how the dynamics of the evening went, with its ups and downs. However, most people I have asked have a good but not clear memory, like Josep of Gotland Forn Sed: It is not that clear, I have a rather blurred memory...but tons of happiness indeed, that's what I can recall.

Or Sebastian of Eldaring: From the tasting I remember a lot of laughter, many hails to the meadmaker and some very drunken guys and some crying kids, because we were too loud. Ah, and: good mead!

It was a great experience to be able to taste such a huge variety of meads which probably managed to fit in everyone's taste. I must praise both the organization and the brewer. It is not easy to organize such an event in such premises, with such a high quality mead and at such reasonable price. Of all the Swedish meads I tried, I can perfectly assure



that Mjödhamnen is the milestone of mead in Sweden. Not only for its quality but for daring to be inquisitive and experimenting on the use of unusual products in mead like mustard.

And last but not least, my praise does not only go for the organization and the brewmaster, but for all the great people that was there and know how to party. My honest Hail to all of you.

PS: \*ask John 'Aswulf' for that reference, that sentence is his.



**Kids having fun**



# Asatru-EU network statement

At IASC 2015 the Asatru-Eu network council agreed upon a joint statement concerning the hate against Iceland's Atrúarfélagið and to publish a firm position of the groups and organizations in it. Due to the informal structure of the Asatru-EU network, this statement had to be taken back to the individual groups and was minimally altered in an discussion on our bulletin board. We may now present the final text:

**"We, the groups and individuals behind the Asatru-EU network support and share Ásatrúarfélagið's non-discriminatory stance.**

**We believe in a reality populated by uncountable beings, such as gods, ancestors, land-wights, etins, humans, etc., all co-existing with equal value and unbreakable interdependence.**

**We are firmly committed to Asatru as a non-exclusive religious approach, heathenry is open for everyone who chooses so.**

**We strongly believe in respect, in respecting others and in frith, in open-mindedness and the courage to grant others their space."**

This statement is still in the process of finally being accepted by each groups' responsible entities and is supposed to be published on their websites. So far it has been accepted by the following groups:

- Eldaring e.V. (ER), Germany
- Verein für Germanisches Heidentum e.V. (VfGH), Germany
- De 9 Werelden (D9W), Netherlands
- Het Rad, Netherlands
- Les Enfants d'Yggdrasil (LEY), France
- Clan Ostara, France
- Forn Sed Sverige (FSS), Sweden
- The Kith of the Tree and the Well (KTW), UK
- Asatru UK (AUK), UK
- Ásatrú Ibérica, Spain
- Gotland Forn Sed (GFS), Spain

Besides the member groups of the Asatru-EU network we have received messages from other groups that support and share the joint statement:

- NornirsAett, Germany
- Asatru Schweiz, Switzerland
- Heidenvlam, Netherlands



# Discussing Asatru and History

by Caroline Synke and Michiel de Nijs

In the months before the summer camp, while discussing the lecture on historical research Caroline was going to give, the thought arose that it would be nice to have an exchange on the topic. We were curious which ideas concerning the roles history plays in present day Asatru-thought and -practice are prevalent in our little community. Thus the idea arose to put up the discussion as an activity on its own on the week's program.

We started with writing down a couple of questions that could be starting points for further discussion. We decided upon starting with just one question: "Does your practice need any links with history?" Then we would see where the exchange would lead us from there.

Right from the beginning it culminated in a lively and respectful exchange of views, that led us past all the different questions we'd thought up beforehand. We as discussion leaders didn't have to steer very much. And though there were some different approaches and ways of putting the different views forward, there was quite a lot everybody more or less agreed upon. The different views that were ventilated can be ascribed to the next general outlines:

- As Asatruar I honour my ancestors. Doing well-funded research into their beliefs and how they lived their lives is necessary to acknowledge them for who they really were and thus honouring them.
- Do we need to make historical claims to legitimize ourselves and our religion?
- Asatru as a new religion is different from the other new religions, like wicca, etcetera, because it uses both reconstruction, by delving into the past, and eclecticism, by forming something new from different elements out of the past.
- When we look at (the historical roots of) Asatru, we need to have at least some amount of understanding of history.

- There isn't that much material on what people in pre-Christian times actually believed in, how they conducted their rituals, etc. On top of that there have been a lot of reinterpretations of those source materials in the ages between then and now. Historical research can help us find the scraps that are still there and enable us to make the distinction between fact and interpretation. An interpretation is a product of its own time. By trying to trace back the actual material we can get clear what we really know and reshape it for our own time.

- Even if we would see Asatru as a complete modern invention, we still use history by using the names and symbols that have been in use for hundreds of years, if not millennia. That in itself binds Asatru to historical heathenry.

- History is seen as essential to Asatru. The roots are in the past and by looking at them we can take basic ingredients to take Asatru into the future.

- Historical heathenry can be a common ground to build upon. The fact of sharing this common ground does unite us in a way.

After the discussion, a lot of questions were still left open. Questions like "what is a religion?" are interesting to delve into as well.

Outside the more general philosophical matters, there's also the personal experience to take into account when considering the role of history in Asatru. People who think they had a great experience because they did this or that 'historical ritual' feel robbed if it turns out that the ritual was made up not so long ago. In that sense 'history' serves as authentication. We don't feel that Asatru needs false history to be meaningful for people.

We would like to thank all the participants. If we misunderstood what you said, or didn't remember it correctly, we are the only ones to blame. If people want to respond, contact us on:

[heidensegeschiedenis@gmail.com](mailto:heidensegeschiedenis@gmail.com)

# The Post IASC Blues - reflections from one of the organisers

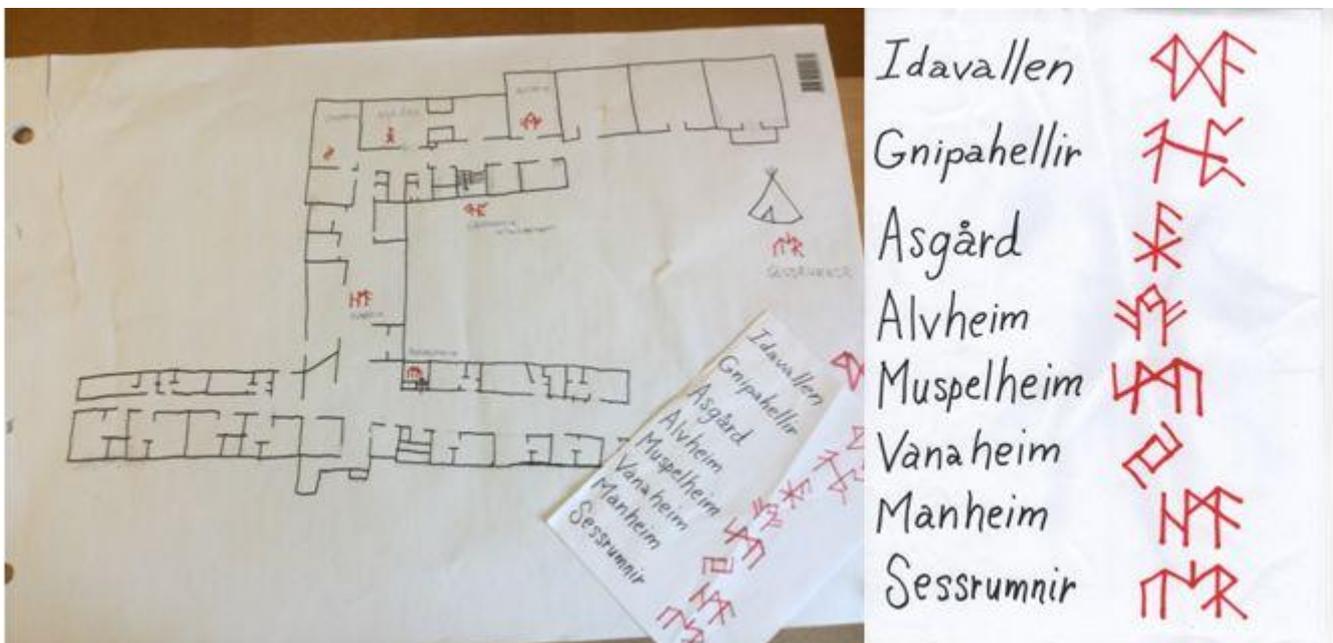
By Per Lundbeg - Forn Sed, Sweden

Arriving home after the intensive time together with so many new friends and heathens from so many countries and networks the post-IASC-blues vibrated in my being. Memories in my *hugr* and body kept coming wave after wave. Pleasurably with contrast to the aloneness in my home. All had been a so close and intensively interaction with many heathens for more than a week. Looking back on some of the images: all the human circles comes strongly to mind and touches me.

Before IASC I had not met with heathens from other countries or organisations. Now I have memories of standing in great circles, blot after blot, as each night different groups and representatives from their countries shared to the collective a sample of how they perform a blot. A great way to share and be part of the diversity of Asatru internationally. I was

struck by the observation of how similar the various blots were, the difference are just minor details really. The circle, the quadrants of the dwarfs, Nordri, Sudri, Vestri och Austri, the horn and the mead and the giving and sharing to the Powers, Goddess as Gods and Nature spirits! Naturally the intentions and focus upon different deities was there as I think it ought to be.

Again and again, I felt how flashes of memories from different situations came inside me during the week after the camp. We all created a great fellowship with both new and old friends that somehow had a self occurring platform, it just was there. Naturally conversations of various interests and preferences took place, but in a common attitude both of accepting differences and that we have so many things in common.



## Active weaving during the camp

What a great weaving we all did during the summer camp! When I bring back memories of the first day's of arrival and the Saturday Welcome gathering the feeling of how all came together in joy came over and over again. Along with the memory of many people recognition old friends, many only meet at IASC, and for new interest and joy of just being together in the same space. The welcoming meeting was in a room too small to actually fit everyone, but we squeezed in. The principal of the Wilderness High

school, Juha Rankinen, bid us all very welcome to the school and to the village of Unnaryd.

I will not bore you with the practical information, but rather say that the welcoming atmosphere I felt from the start was amazing. At first, I was wondering if the system for sleeping, eating and event rooms with the assigned names and bindrunes would work? I guess it did! Another thing I want to mention was the great joy to see how the pre-planned program grew and more and more event were added during the week.



## The post-ISAC-blues

Afterwards, many participants from the camp wrote on FaceBook about the 'Post-IASC blues' and how difficult it was to leave the camp and come home. The time at the camp we spent together was intense and to change back to coming home to my everyday setting and social environment was a huge difference. Remembering faces, places and activities almost gives me echo's of the fellowship of living together on a large farm, in a longhouse or in a tribe, echo's of how humans have lived together for millennia. Echo's of having a strong sense of 'we' and fellowship and actively working together for common goals. I think that often this kind of fellowship is lost in our western society and perhaps we can build small islands of togetherness in the local communities where each one of us live and are active. Then, perhaps, the post-IASC-blues will be less.

If you read this and was not part of IASC 2015, I can truly say you missed something and I recommend that you give yourself and the community the gift of coming to the International Asatru SummerCamp in 2018.

Last but not least, a great thanks for all the effort in making the camp manifested to Bernard Bös for the local contact and contracts and much more. To Fredrik Liljegren for all the hours in front of the computer making a new website and registering system, for the accommodation planning and the economic planning, the food planning and all the mead! There are many more things to be thanked than words can describe!

The camp was and is created by many, all in actions making an incredible time together!

Thanks and see you in three years.



Things to do



# The Big Blót

By Michiel de Nijs

'Tradition' dictates that IASC has a big blót on Wednesday and this time it wasn't any different. During a talk about sharing our ritual practices on Sunday, five people volunteered to co-ordinate the preparations for this blót: Miquel, Maia, Räv, Henrik and Michiel. They would be supported by a large number of people that put their name on a list, because they wanted to have an active role in the ritual.

After a few days of brainstorming on the ingredients, the blót began to get shape. It would be a ritual in which the community stood central, people and gods together. A second theme would be the ripening of the fruits and the harvest. After all, it was the end of July. While the summer camp was the harvest of three years of debating and planning, the season of harvesting the crops that had been growing in the one-year cycle of sowing, growing and harvesting had just begun. It was the third time that we arranged IASC and we really could experience the camp was leaving the state of beginning. Instead we were entering a state of ripening.

Now that we had given the ritual its structure and form, it was time to give the different people their role in it. We had to deal with some practical things as well, like the mead we were going to hail with, the offerings, the torches that would play a role, etcetera.

On Wednesday afternoon the time for the big blót was finally there. After a last quick rehearsal, the people who would attend the ritual began to assemble around the 'world-tree' that was standing in the middle of the blót-place. This tree had been put up in the opening-ritual we had been performing on Sunday.

Once a circle of people had been formed, two torches were lit, which Maia and Michiel took to the opposite sites of the circle. After a horn was sounded once, Pol started singing. He had suggested to sing a verse of the Völuspá. After the first notes it became obvious that he had chosen a melody of Wardruna, which he sang beautiful and quite intense. During this song the torches were carried around the circle, one round each. When the torchbearers had completed their round they walked to a firebowl that

stood next to the worldtree in the centre.

The moment Pol finished his song the bonfire was lit with the torches. Without any hesitation the flames rose up.

After that, the torchbearers in the middle of circle were joined by seven other people. Here around the fire, at the roots of our own version of the world-tree, nine people formed a circle inside the larger circle of the community. One by one they recited the same verse of the Völuspá. The one in which the gods gather beneath Yggdrasil and give sun and moon their places, and thus created time. The verse was repeated nine times in all languages of the people standing in the inner circle: Dutch, Swedish, German, Norwegian, Danish, Catalan, French, and English. As the last one of the nine, Óttar said his verse in Old-Norse.

**Then went reigns all  
to their ruling seats,  
the high-holy Gods  
held council;  
night and descendant  
they gave names,  
morning they named,  
and midday,  
afternoon and eve;  
years to count.**

When the last words had echoed away, the people of the inner circle returned to their places in the larger circle and Henrik stepped forward to say a word of welcome to all people present. Räv was the first to invoke the Aesir, the Vanir, the ancestors and other beings and welcomed them into Midgard. Geoff and Andre impersonating Huginn and Muninn invoked allfather Odin. After all, the blót was held at his day. This was followed by the invocations of Týr, for the community, and Thor and Sif, for a good harvest.

Now it was time for the offerings. First the people who did the invocations brought a communal offering by tearing a bread into pieces. These pieces were either placed in or with the tree, or thrown into the fire. The offering-bread was specially baked for the occasion by Räv.

After this three children stepped forward with a basket filled with homemade cookies. The day before, under the stern supervision of Amanda, the children baked them. Michiel consecrated the cookies and the children went round the circle to let everyone have one. Henrik already had started playing the flute and some people had taken their drums. The music formed a nice background to which the personal offerings could be made.

Once we had made all the personal offerings, the music ended. After a short talk to inform everybody, we chanted the following line from Sigdrivumál several times:

## Heil sjá in fjolnýta fold

The words of which mean: "Hail to you, abundant earth." When we sung, every attendant's horn or cup

was filled with mead. After this we continued with the final part of the formal sequence of the ritual.

In this last part we did three toasts, one to the community and everything attached to it, one to the protection of all things vulnerable and a final one to fertility and a good harvest. They were called out loud first, after which all people hailed together.

After the formal part of the big blót we danced. Henrik played the bagpipes and Per invited everyone into a spiral dance. He got all the participants in the blót dancing and it didn't take long for it all ended up into a great party with lots of merry celebrations. Even the weather joined in. The ritual started with a light rain and overcast skies, but the sun appeared while the blót proceeded. She stayed up into the sky until after we had finished the communal meal, which we shared at the ceremonial place.

## IASC in the media

**HYLTE** Resaktionsen, tel: 010-471 50 70 • E-post: hylte@hallandsposten.se • Telefaks: 010-471 50 73

**Va-kollen gav polisänmälin**

...vi har gjort ring av avlöpt och skrivit till besvärgare. Vi vill dem som vi från eller som ordnas med. V ut i kommunen knäckar på...

**Asatron samlar 120 till sommarläger**

**ENKBYRD**  
Anhängare av asatron samlas på ett internationellt läger på Vidmarergymnasiet i Umeå. Ett stort blót blir höjdpunkten.

120 deltagare från en 7ad olika länder väntas till arrangemang. Asatru summer camp, som inleddes i dag.

Det är tredje gången det ordnas, det började 2009 i Danmark och hölls sen i Tyskland, berättar Per Lundblad, vice ordförande i det svenska trossamfundet Forn Sed.

LÄGRET I EN vecka är ett samarbete mellan samfund i Sverige, Norge, Danmark, Tyskland (som har två), Frankrike, England och Nederländerna.

Vi kommer att ha åskådliga föreläsningar och workshops och göra exkursioner till arkeologiska platser och rättsinstans i området. Det blir en marknad med försäljning av handverk, dockor, ringar, spinnings- och avstärningspennor.

PÅ ÖNSKAD DELTA utövama ett stort blót på gränsmötet. Vad som händer är inte helt klart. Det är en naturreligion och vi står i en ring och hälsar på platsen som en individ i en ritual. Säger Per Lundblad.

Det blir någon form av offer där deltagarna lägger ut blommor och frön till olika godter i sin gudavård, som befolkas av bland andra Tor, Odin, Freja, Frigg och Fre.

Vi skillar med mjöd i ett dryckeshorn som går runt. Det ska hållas vi ut på jorden. Sång och skådespel kan följa.

Utvärna av asatron har låta höjdet under året men det här arrangemanget ingår inte i sågen av dem.

Det är för att vi är så många bedrog som träffas. Blöet är vår gudsälskade och en del av det magiska skamanska utövandet med trummar och såg.

Intresset förklarar Per Lundblad med att det är den nordiska kulturen före kristendomen.

Den gamla asatron har funnits i flera tusen år. Se bildvärlden i Tanum, soldyrkan på bronsåldern och schamanismen. Det är också bört spännande. Ölvörre av asatru finns i Hylte.

FOR MIC är det en personifikation av naturen. Mäniskan vill ha sågen att kommunicera med, säger Bernhard Bös i Lilla Boabo. Av en jockillare utövare bruket har han gjort en bär, en mossvarighet till. Allt där han placerat tre trälgårer av gudar som han sågat till med en mossvarighet.

Jag pratar med mina gudar och frågar Tor vad det är för väder. Allt i naturen är förgäpligt, världen och gudar är förgäsl, enligt Bös. Retikarnation, återförelse, tror många utövare på.

Jag tror, men har inga bevis.

**JAN BERGMAN**  
010-471 51 16 berghallandsposten.se

**BIDRAG**  
Från stiftelsen Henoch S. Johanssonss Donath Boende inom Långaryds, Fångaryds och Femspit kan söka medel ur stiftelsen. Testamentets huvudsakligt syfte är att personer med funktionsnedsättning, rörelsehjälpmedel eller vård, så att de därigenom får hjälp. Ansökningshandlingar kan rekryteras från och stiftelsen Henoch S. Johanssonss Donation Bo Lindbladh Box 4 31421 Hyltebruk eller hämtas på www.henoch.se Ansökan ska vara stiftelsen tillhanda senast 11 augusti 2015. Endast ansökan på blankett behandlas.

**Man misstänkt för knark och 1**  
HYLTE. När en polispatrull kontrollerade en Camilla Nissäntigen i Hyltebruk i onsdags morse g bedömden att mannen var påverkad av blött narcoika.

Mannen togs med för kroppsbesiktning och vil resultat man förenat som tillhör någon annan, vi tanke om grov stöld. Mannen är i 30-årsåldern o från ett annat land.

**Rådjur dödade i bilkollisioner**  
SÖTARBY/TORUP. Ett rådjur dog i en kollision med bil på väg på riksväg 26 klockan 08.30 förra morgonen som från en kvinna från Fredaryd 19. Ännu ett rådjur skötes på och dog i en krock med motorbil i höjd med bilbegränsning norr om i Torup. Krocken sked i onsdags morse den 22 juli, en man i 50-årsåldern från Torup.

**MUSIK I**  
Söndag de Marie och orgel, Sång Bo Lindb Lytt

**FORUM**  
PAPER TOWNS  
Sbn 26/7 kl 20.00  
Ons 29/7 kl 20.00  
Från 7 år • tid 1,09  
www.forumhylte.se

**NATURLIG** För Bernhard Bös är asatron en personifikation av naturen.

**SYMBOL** Torshammare och kadorur är delar av Per Lundblads utövning.

<http://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/article21191035.ab>

<http://www.vn.se/article/asatroende-samlades-pa-internationellt-lager/>

<http://m.hallandsposten.se/nyheter/hylte/1.4180810-granslost-samarbete-pa-lager-for-asatro>

<http://www.svt.se/nyheter/regionalt/halland/hedningar-i-hylte>

<http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=1637&artikel=6220700>

[http://m.hallandsposten.se/nyheter/hylte/1.4168170-asatron-samlar-120-till-sommarlager?utm\\_source=google.se&utm\\_medium=organic&utm\\_campaign=redirect](http://m.hallandsposten.se/nyheter/hylte/1.4168170-asatron-samlar-120-till-sommarlager?utm_source=google.se&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=redirect)

<http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=128&artikel=6219857>



Wednesday



BIG BLOT





Frith, fun and friendship



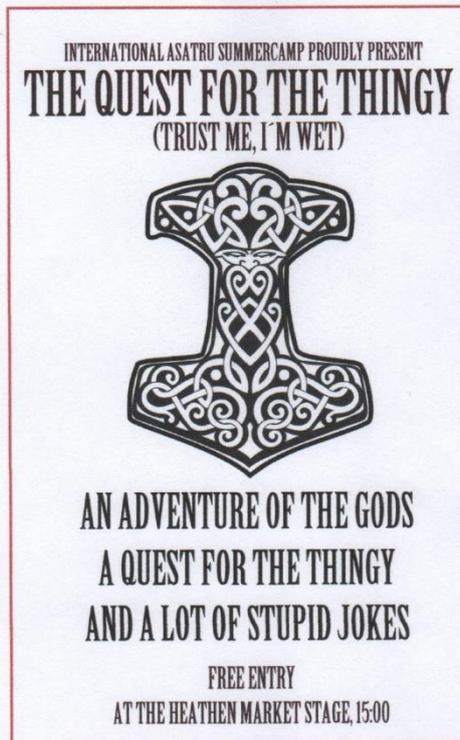
# The final Timetable



Saturday July 25th	Sunday July 26th	Monday July 27th	Tuesday July 28th
<b>Morning</b>			
	<p>7.30 <b>Morning Meditation</b></p> <p>11.30 <b>Asatru-Eu meeting</b> (closed)</p>	<p>7.30 <b>Morning Mead</b></p> <p>10.00 <b>Bronze-casting</b> Peter Warholm</p> <p>10.00 Lecture: <b>What's in a name?'</b> <b>- How the ancestors</b> <b>percieved the names of the</b> <b>gods.</b> Jannik Thalbitzer</p>	<p>7.30 <b>Morning Meditation</b></p> <p>10.00 <b>Bronze-casting</b> Peter Warholm</p> <p>10.00 Lecture: <b>Why heathenry</b> <b>cannot be secular</b> Haimo Grebenstein</p> <p>11.00 <b>Cookie baking</b> Amanda</p>
<b>Afternoon</b>			
<p>14.00 onward <b>Arrival</b></p> 	<p>13.30 <b>Opening Ceremony</b></p> <p>15.00 <b>Introduction Project Blot</b> <b>Experiences 1</b> Andre and Amanda Henriques and Nathalie Cue Gomez</p> <p>16.15 <b>Mjödhammen</b> <b>Mead Tasting</b></p>	<p>14.00 <b>Bronze-casting</b> Peter Warholm</p> <p>14.00 Lecture/Worskhop: <b>Ancestors</b> John Potts and Gunna Einarsdottir</p> <p>16.00 Workshop: <b>The World Tree:</b> <b>a cosmic and inner axis</b> Andre Henriques</p> <p>16.00 <b>Shamanic practise today</b></p>	<p>14.00 <b>Bronze-casting</b> Peter Warholm</p> <p>14.00 Lecture: <b>Sense and non-</b> <b>sense of historical research</b> Caroline Synke</p> <p>14.00 Workshop: <b>Runic</b> <b>Constellations</b> Frigga Asraaf ,Pauline Tuymelaar and Annette Schroeder</p>
<b>Evening</b>			
<p>19.00 <b>Dwarf Mood</b></p> <p>20.00 <b>Word of welcome</b></p>	<p>20.00 Workshop: <b>Hear the gods</b> <b>through theatre or</b> <b>experience the gods through</b> <b>theatre</b> Magnus Johansson</p> <p>22.00 <b>German blot</b></p>	<p>20.00 <b>Seidr: Flame of Frith</b> Frigga Asraaf and Pauline Tuymelaar</p> <p>22.00 <b>Danisch and French blot</b></p>	<p>19.30 Lecture: <b>Forn Sidr and the</b> <b>Rights of Nature</b> Henrik Halgren</p> <p>23.00 <b>Solberg blot at Yggdrasil</b></p>

Wednesday July 29th	Thursday July 30th	Friday July 31th	Saturday August 1st
<b>Morning</b>			
7.30 <b>Morning Meditation</b>	7.30 <b>Morning Prozac</b>	7.30 <b>Morning Mead</b>	Waking up, packing, Cleaning, departure
09.30 <b>Excursion to archeological sites</b> Henrik Halgran	10.00 Lecture/workshop: <b>The Soul of the Land</b> Michiel de Nijs	09.30 <b>Project Blot Experiences 2</b> Andre and Amanda Henriques and Nathalie Cue Gomez	
09.30 <b>Singing Circle</b>	10.00 <b>Stick Spinning</b> Ulrike	11.00 <b>Asatru-Eu meeting</b> (closed)	
10.00 <b>Bronze-casting</b> Peter Warholm			
11.00 <b>Needle Felting</b> Frigga and Gerry Children and adults			
<b>Afternoon</b>			
14.00 <b>Bronze-casting</b> Peter Warholm	14.00 Workshop: <b>Frey's Mysteries</b> Amanda and Andre Henriques	14.00 <b>Friday Fair</b>	
14.00 Lecture: <b>Cosmology of Seidr: a new academic study</b> Andre Henriques	Singing bowl meditation: <b>Nine Worlds</b> Annette Schroeder	15.00 <b>Play: Quest for the Thingy</b>	
16.00 <b>Big blot</b>	16.00 <b>Glass painting</b> Children and adults	16.30 <b>Auction</b>	
	16.30 Workshop: <b>Asatru and history</b> Michiel de Nijs and Caroline Synke		
	18.00 <b>Surströmmingshelgd</b>		
<b>Evening</b>			
18.00 <b>Gille - Festive Dinner</b>	20.00 <b>Spá-ritual / Hjalle sitting</b> Frigga, Michiel, Amanda, Andre, Annette and others.	20.00 <b>Closing Ceremony</b>	
20.30 <b>Frigga's Famous Powersinging</b> Frigga Asraaf	20.30 Asatru film show: <b>The Wicker Man</b>	21.00 <b>Party!!!</b>	
22.00 <b>Spanisch blot</b>	24.00 <b>Bifrost Blot anno 1996</b>		

# The quest for the thingy - trust me I'm wet



A play by: Magnus Johansson, Maja Gunnarsson, Mary Welz, Lucie Welz, Pol (Alberti Gringö Makarov), Brendan Duffy, André Henriques, Linnea Lönnberg and May-Britt Bjørlo Henriksen performed by the same group under the firm direction of Magnus Johansson

Odin:

So, I would like to tell you a story about what happened a long time ago when the world was still young.

I was looking around over the worlds as I always do, and then I saw Thor and Freya. They were drinking in fun and laughter in a tavern in the dark woods. There I saw, even Thor was close to his limits. That caught my interest, and I decided to watch more closely. So I took the form of a young man, walking in to the tavern.

*Thor and Freya are laughing and having fun.*

Thor: I need to take a piss. Freya could you watch my hammer?

*(When Thor is at the toilet, Freya flirts with Steve. Siv enters the room and, looks jealously at Freya and steals the Hammer. She leaves almost unseen.)*

Odin: They kept on drinking the whole night, flirting and laughing, oblivious of the betrayal that happened behind their backs. The night fell upon the land, Donar and Vanadis fell asleep over each other in the tavern. The wheel kept spinning and the night turned to dawn. Then they woke up with a bad hangover.

Thor: Coffee, thingy

*Freya and Thor argues... IMPROVISE*

*Then they see Steve in the corner*

*Before they leave the tavern they ask around, and ask Steve in particular about the thingy.*

Steve:

In a dark place, in the east you have to search for a green hearted deer.

*Steve leaves after this.*

Thor: Where can we find the dark place in the forest?

*Take away coffee, leaving of Thor and Freya*

Odin: And so they begun their journey, deeper, and deeper into the dark woods. The wind was calm, but the breeze was steady, they could smell the sap of the trees. Asking the spirits of the forest and every living being for the thingy.

*Thor and Freya enters the audience, asking for the thingy.*

Odin:

After a while they came up on a crossroad, stumbling upon a creature of unknown character. As they made their approach they recognized the blind god.

*They talk to Hoder... He shows the way and they take the other way.*

Odin:  
Their quest continued. They walked further and further on the bumpy road. Birches snapping and birds taking to the sky in fear of something rumbling in the dark. The wind whistling about dark mysteries. A stench arose from the dark spots of the forest and a wet tar giant approaches them from the shadows.

Tar:  
You shall not pass!  
This is my territory.

Thor: says something cocky

Tar:  
I see you miss something, Thor. You are coming to battle unarmed.

*The wet Tar beats down Thor. Thor asking Freya to seduce Tar.*

Tar: I'm sorry honey, I'm gay. Trust me I'm wet.

*Freya comes in and kicks the wet tars arse.*

Odin:  
The wood comes alive when the presence of the wet tar disappears. Birds start singing, flowers blooming up, and the air feels lighter. Thor and Freya walks

around, continuing their search for the thingy finding the green hearted deer in a clearing.

*Thor and Freya talks to the green hearted deer. Demanding a clue, bragging about their heroic fight with the wet tar monster. And that makes the green deer grateful and it agrees to show them the thief. She point at Siv.*



*Siv comes in, angry and yelling. Thor tries to sneak away. Siv stops him. Freya complements Siv about her hair. And they're at peace with each other.*

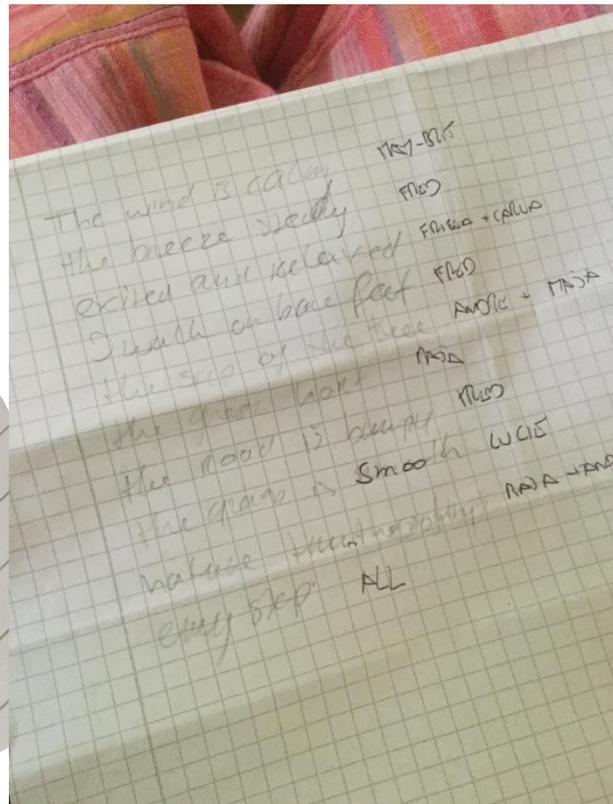
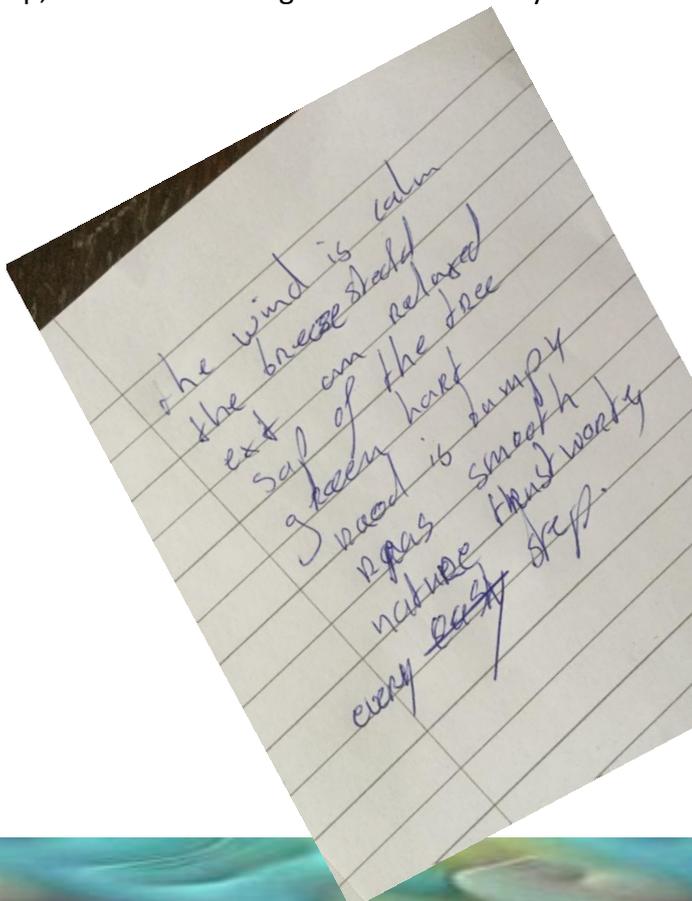
*Siv gives thor the hammer and a kiss on the cheek.*

Siv: but you have to clean all the floors in Asgard.

*Thor scream "no, not again!" and go down on his knees.*

Siv: I love you honey!

Odin: IMPROVISATION about the story of the play and the world spinning:-)  
And so the worlds moved on, with easy steps...



# Historical research, an introduction – part 1

Caroline Synke

The basis of this article was the lecture 'Sense and non-sense of historical research' at IASC 2015. Some people were unable to attend and because the PowerPoint doesn't make much sense without the talk and didn't contain the literature list anyway, writing this seemed the most logical thing to do. This article deals a bit with history in general and how our minds and education can fool us, followed by the basic concepts of historical research. Next how they fit together and how to do it yourself. The article closes with a list of websites and books mentioned in the lecture.

## Asatru, the religion with homework

Within Asatru people have different ideas regarding the position of the historical pre-Christian European religion: Asatru is a reconstruction of, a continuation of or inspired by that historical religion. But every religion is a product of a culture, it is made by people. In order to understand a historical religion, and to be able to build upon it or use it in the present, some sort of understanding of that historical culture is needed. Otherwise there's, amongst others, the risk of mistaking other people's historical fantasies for historical facts. Contrary to popular belief there is good information available, but mostly in academia. I hope this introduction will give people who are interested in historical heathenry some tools to access that information.

'Anyone who is going to make anything out of history will, sooner or later, have to do most of the work himself. He will have to read, and consider, and reconsider, and then read some more.' - Geoffrey Barraclough

## To start: History ...

'... is a Greek word which means, literally, just "investigation".' Arnold Toynbee

'... is not a science, it is a method.' - Charles Seignobos

Historical research is a research method, also used by for example investigative journalists. In order to use this method right, there are some basic concepts and guidelines. But first some general information on history.

## History is complex

History deals with the actions of people from the past and people are complex and irrational beings. Events usually have multiple causes and some things change while others stay the same. For certain times and places there is no information available, which leaves us with gaps in our knowledge. In studying history all these aspects have to be taken into account, which makes history complex.

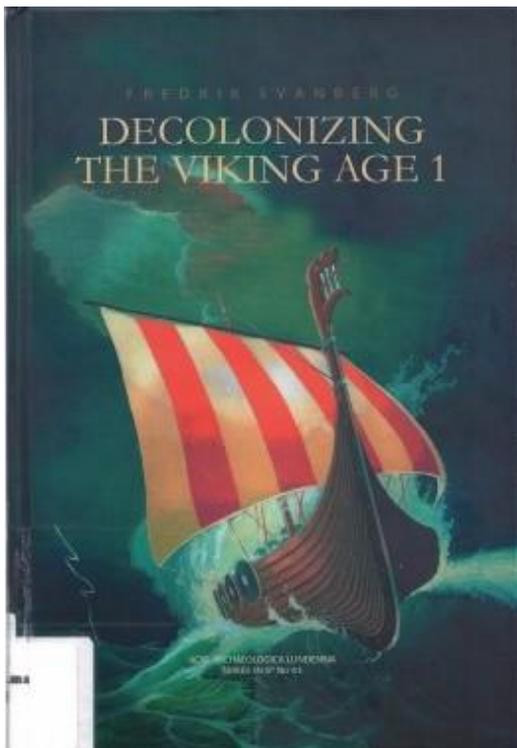
But most of us know history only from school, where history is taught as a story. With good reasons. Humans are story telling animals. We communicate in stories, as in this article. We use stories to make sense of our environment and of our lives, they help us to shape our world. Our brains have a tendency to fill in missing information and to think in black and white and stereotypes for quick information processing. We have to remind ourselves that these stories and stereotypes are not reality. Doing historical research can help us to remember this.

One of the goals of history as a school subject was nation building, to legitimize and give meaning to the nation state, a modern creation. By making this story the past was distorted by simplifying and by cherry-picking history for what would fit into the image a people had (or have) of themselves and of their nation. Of course, we all prefer the good bits over the bad bits. As a side-effect 'others' are portrayed as passive extras in this story, for example because 'they' were colonized by European nations, or 'they' are claimed as 'our great ancestors'. The latter is, in short and with a big name, historical colonialism.

Not only in the time of nationalism history has been used in this way. E.g. in the Dutch Revolt against Phillips II (formerly known as the 80-years War, 1568 – 1648) Gaius Julius Civilis and the Batavian Revolt was a very popular theme. The Dutch saw that revolt as a precursor of their own and claimed the Batavians as their ancestors.



The plot of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis, Rembrandt Photo made at Rijksmuseum, 2014. The painting is in the National Museum, Stockholm. Claudius is a translation mistake of Tacitus' account.



Decolonizing the Viking Age 1, part of the PhD study of Fredrik Svanberg, Swedish archaeologist.

The decolonization in the 1960's and 1970's resulted in a change in mentality, naturally also influencing historians and archaeologists. In short: decolonizing history is about trying to find out about the identity of people in the past instead of putting an identity on them. Instead of making up stories about our ancestors to suit us, historical research is about putting in the effort to find things out about them as they were, however complex and incomplete that picture will be. Compare it with finding things out about the lives of your grandparents and great-grandparents. Would you prefer made-up stories or would you like to find out about them as real

people? When you prefer the latter, historical research is something for you.

'The careful, sympathetic yet critical investigation of the traces of the past [...] can and should free us from the burdens that people want to impose on us in the name of history.' – Guy Halsall

### The basic concepts: time and place

Time and place are the basic units of history. It also means the time and place we live in now. It means culture and worldview, the lenses through which one perceives reality. This is true for people in the past, like earlier historians, as well as for us living in the present. Worldview cannot be altered, you can only try to be conscious of its existence.

One time is not another, one place is not another. For those reasons Dutch historians of religion do not use the 13th century Icelandic Eddas as a source for religion in the Lowlands in the 8th century and before. On the other hand, archaeologists might, which shows you one of the differences between these two academic disciplines. Each has its own expertise and being up to date with other disciplines is not always high on the priority list of an academic.



Europe around 450 CE.jpg

Change and continuity? In both maps the Friesen are living more or less in the same place, although there's almost no direct link between the people called Friesen in 1 CE and the people called Friesen in 450 CE. (maps: Neues Museum, Berlin)

A good researcher respects time and place. When researchers want to connect different times and/or places, they should give some evidence that there could have been, at the very least, a possibility of a connection.

### The basic concepts: fact and opinion

History always has two components: a historical source (fact) and its interpretation or explanation (opinion). It's the historians' job to make it clear in their story what is fact and what is opinion, e.g. by using notes.

Usually we use 'fact' as 'truth'. In history a fact is something you can verify, you can look it up. A fact can be a historical source (more below) or something another researcher has written. A fact can be wrong or a lie. Of the things Tacitus wrote about the Germanic tribes, some facts are supported by archaeological finds (right) and others are disproven (wrong). When researcher A uses the work of researcher B but twists it, that fact of researcher A is a lie. It's the job of researchers to get their facts straight, and it's your job to check if they did. Lucky for us, we amateur researchers can decide how far we want to go with this.

Facts have to be interpreted. Remember, history is complex. Usually multiple interpretations are possible, even likely. These interpretations form the notorious historical discussion without end. Good researchers will deal with alternative explanations than their own e.g. in notes like 'for a different interpretation see...'. But not all explanations are equally valid. Ideally, within an explanation you weigh each argument by itself, so every explanation can contain strong and weak parts. More on this in part 2. To keep it short, in general:

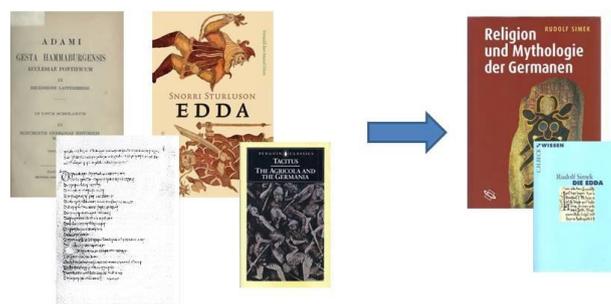
- an academic expert's interpretation carries more weight than a non-expert's, even when the latter is an academic in another field;
- an interpretation with logical arguments is stronger than an interpretation with logical fallacies and hasty conclusions;
- an explanation which also deals with a logical refutation of counter-arguments is stronger, and much more informative, than an explanation with only arguments in favour or against.

### A special kind of fact: historical sources and critiquing them

No historical source => no history. In that case words like hypothesis, assumption, idea or belief are more suitable than was or were.

Primary sources are made in the time and place they deal with, secondary sources are later works dealing with primary sources. Technically Tacitus' work and the Icelandic Family sagas are secondary sources. But as they are used as primary sources we still can use the guideline: primary source & interpretation => secondary source. An example:

Primary source & interpretation = secondary source



written sources

On the left: primary sources: Adam of Bremen - Gesta Hamburgensis, Snorra Edda, Indiculus superstitionum, Tacitus - the Germania.  
On the right: secondary sources: Rudolf Simek - Religion und Mythologie der Germanen, - Edda.

Because primary and secondary sources are made by human beings, you can never trust them on face value. Before you can use them, you have to analyse them critically. That boils down to asking a lot of questions. Most of the time an amateur researcher will rely on the answers of specialists like palaeographers and historical language experts, especially regarding primary sources. Again alternative explanations are possible, that's just part of the work.

The many source critiquing questions can be summarized as follows:

Is the source authentic?

If it's a fake, it's a fake, like the Oera-Linda book. But there are also more subtle ways to fake texts: by putting new bits of text in between authentic text or to publish only certain bits.

What kind of source is it?

There are different kinds of sources, who each require a certain way of handling: written ones like diaries, proclamations, law text, inventories, letters, and non-written sources like objects and landscapes.

What is the communicative context of the source?

Who made the source and for which purpose(s) and/or audience(s)?

What is the position of the informant (writer)?

Could the informant know what s/he wrote, e.g. as an eyewitness? If not, who were the informants?

What is known about the informants, the writer and their relationship?

Considering secondary literature, also ask: is the writer an expert in the field s/he writes about?

What is the contemporary context of the source?

Where and when was the source made? What is the political, social context of the source? What is the cultural context of the source?

How reliable is the information in the source?

What is the viewpoint of the writer, like political affiliation, school of thought, recurring point of view, cultural context, (hidden) agenda's? Can you see it influencing the information given?

### Putting it all together, the actual work

Now you know the basics, the next step is to put this all together and to get to work.

Start with something you are really interested in.

Maybe you want to know everything there is to find about pole gods or Viking Age blacksmiths. Or you wonder about the historical reliable information in the Eddas or what you can find on 'blot'. Start small and take your time. You don't need to hand in your work before a certain date, so keep it enjoyable.

Join or start a study group. You can exchange

information and borrow books from each other. It can help to keep a certain momentum in your research project.

Read up on your chosen subject to build up

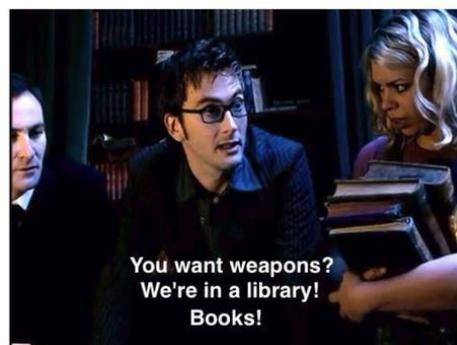
knowledge. Read, read and read some more. Ask others about good books on your subject, for example in an online historical discussion group.

Read reviews and discussions of suggested books.

### Time & Place - source critique



Instead of looking through the lenses of the past (blue), research the contemporary context of sources (red arrows below) and of our own time and place as well.



Borrow books at the university library directly or via the regular library through inter library loan. Different academic disciplines deal with aspects of pre-Christian culture and religion: archaeology, art history, history, historical literature and language studies, Indo-European studies, comparative mythology, and, formerly a bit controversial, folklore studies (if based on present day academic methodology).

Always start with the latest publication you can find. By following the notes dealing with the subject you're interested in, you'll travel back in time.

Use the internet: Academia.edu, university websites, historical blogs, Odroedirjournal.com, Asatrulore.org. Watch lectures by academics on YouTube or follow a MOOC. Municipal or governmental archaeological services and local history and archaeology groups can help you too.

While reading or watching ask questions: Who is the author? Where did the author get this information from? Is the author clear about source and interpretation? About time, place and connections? etc. etc. You check the logic and weigh arguments for alternative interpretations and the arguments that support or challenge your opinion.

In the information before you found already some points on what a good researcher does and what a good interpretation contains. Although most of the good researchers are academics, Stephen Pollington is a good example of someone who isn't. But don't compare yourself with them. As an amateur researcher you can only do research at your own level and that's fine. Just use the information from the experts. More on this in part 2.

All this takes time and effort, and the flexibility to change your mind when better ideas present themselves. With each new book or article you read on your chosen subject, you might get information that challenges your existing ideas. But you might also get confirmation or come up with counter-arguments. And this is where it's actually all about, now you are participating in the historical discussion.

I thank all the participants of the lecture and the proof readers for their critical questions and

remarks, I hope I've done them justice. In part 2 more on history, judging argumentation and sources, the research process and why would you bother and what can you do with it, plus the adventures of an amateur in academia-land. Questions & remarks: [synke@live.nl](mailto:synke@live.nl).

Websites mentioned

Academia.edu, you don't need an account to read the papers online.

Asatrulore.org, esp. book recommendations and discussions. Use the Search Function!

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L.H.M. Wessels en A. Bosch (ed), Veranderende grenzen. Nationalisme in Europa 1815 – 1919 (Heerlen/Nijmegen, 1992)

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Luit van der Tuuk, De Friezen. De vroegste geschiedenis van het Nederlandse kustgebied (Utrecht, 2013)

More on logical fallacies:  
<https://yourlogicalfallacyis.com/>



Who could forget the amazing and at first sight a bit scary painting at Gläntan?

# Our surströmming adventure

Rachél Belgraver-Thissen

A little over a week before IASC 2015 Miquel (Sancho) asked the Swedes in Asatru EU whether it was possible to get surströmming for IASC. He thought the legendary fermented fish would be great for a dare to find out who was the bravest heathen of them all that dared to eat the smelly herring. Martin (Domeij) objected to the exotification of Swedes and their fine Swedish cuisine by making a game out of it. After all: being the only country in the EU where selling herring from the heavily polluted Baltic sea is legal is not exotic at all! The tradition of surströmming trumps the laws to protect people from eating fish that's too toxic to consume. If you are reading this thinking "so that is what that smell was" you are wrong. The Baltic toxins are a side issue, don't eat surströmming more than two or three times a year and not at all while pregnant and you will be okay.

To protect Sweden's cultural heritage Martin suggested to have a Thor's Hallow on Thursday where he would introduce the spiritual aspects of surströmming. For this he would TRY to find some fish, no promises though: "Surströmming sales start on the third Thursday of August, and most cans fly off the shelves, so I don't know if I can find any, and, if so, how many."



I don't like fish, I recently 'learned' to eat canned tuna but other than that I try to avoid fish and especially pickled herring (zure haring). But I like fermentation. Wilco had heard stories about a can of surströmming being the reason to clear out a school and was curious about the stuff so we signed up for surströmming and left for Sweden. Martin had not been able to find any cans yet and we were not completely sure whether we wanted him to or not.

Before going to Unnaryd we stayed in Halmstad for a couple of days and went to a supermarket there (one (1) supermarket!). When I saw a refrigerator with at least 15 cans of the unfindable fish I expected this was not the right stuff but Martin and Miquel were enthusiastic and told us to buy some.

So there we were with five cans of fermented fish and no refrigerator to keep them cool. One of the cans was bulging a little but we send pictures of it to Martin and he said we were save for now. Early in the morning Wilco heard a ominous popping sound \*pop\* this later turned out to be the sound of one of the cans growing. The four small cans were bulging now, the larger one was trying to become a ball. Wilco send another picture to Martin who now told us to "fridge it!!" which was not what we were hoping for because we had to pack them and take the bus to Unnaryd. I joked on facebook that this must be what carrying nitroglycerin feels like while hoping no cans would explode in my bag. The one with all my clothes in it.

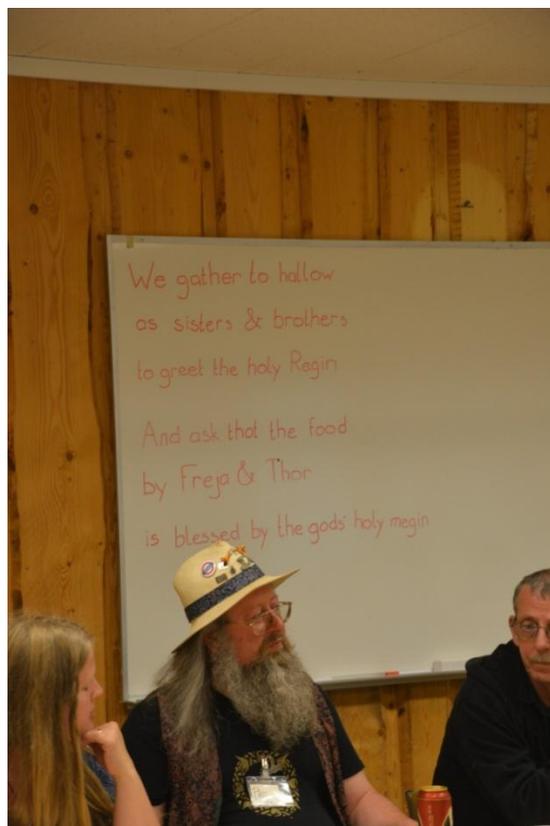


At the station we met André and Amanda and got on the bus. We did not tell Amanda she was sitting right under what she called "this weapon of mass fishyness!" but she wasn't very comfortable just knowing it was on the same unrefrigerated bus. The travel was eerie and inauspicious and ended in a bit of an anti-climax when we handed the cans of fish over to Fredrik who put them away in a cold place.

Thursday around dinnertime the cans left the refrigerator again and the brave, the curious and the Swedish (well, some of them) came together in Valhalla for Torshelgd and surströmming.

I could try to reproduce the interesting, spiritual and philosophical things Martin said about fermentation (it's magic!) or give a detailed description of Thor's Hallow but I'm not going to. If you were there you know, if you weren't you should have been. If you were not there you've missed some interesting insights, cultural history, a good ritual, Stina's beautiful singing, the excitement of opening the first can (in a bucket of water). You've missed the almond potatoes, the bread, onions, sour cream. The sauerkraut (the vegetarian alternative!) the schnapps, the Swedes singing before drinking schnapps, others singing before every drink they took, so long and thanks for all the fish and best of all: The Surströmming.

I don't know how it smells without the bucket of water but I was a bit disappointed about what I smelled. I expected it to be horrible but I did not think it was. On the internet I see people compare the smell to babies' diapers so maybe being the mother of a young child has affected my sense of smell but I actually kind of liked it. It was a complex and interesting smell but not bad. I did not dislike the taste either, I preferred the sauerkraut but I liked the fish better than Dutch 'zure haring'. It was rather salty and not really fishy.



Not everyone liked it, when I was going outside I encountered some one I saw in Valhalla earlier entering the building with a pile of pizzas. But at least they tried.

## The long way home - a reflection

By Nathalie Cue Gomez

This time I had the impression that my way home took a considerable long time. Well, my body arrived late night at home, but my mind and spirit were still somewhere on its way from Unnaryd and it took more than a week until both reconnected again. Still I'm not sure if all parts arrived and if there are not some lost in a Swedish meadow.

Perhaps nowadays we travel too fast, too fast to find the thread out of this intensive weaving we made in only one week, too fast to leave all the dear friends to get back to our normal day by day routine, too fast to change from involving spirituality to a relative lone emptiness. Perhaps the ones who added some vacation days, who took some more time to come home did not feel this strange separation from body and mind. I don't know, I didn't ask, but I remember that Eyvind told something similar: that the way home took more time than just the journey. I could not attend to IASC 2009, but I am pretty sure

that it felt all about friendship and building bases. For me IASC 2012 was all about building a strong community, how everyone felt responsible and stepped in charge when the organisation got in financial trouble, and I felt pretty proud to be part of this community.

So after building friendship and community IASC 2015 for me was all about spirituality: we had a lot of more Seidhr events and also daily blots. The gods were near and you could feel the presence of friendly wights in everywhere. From my first steps on the wet grass I felt my mind calm down and filling up with peace, joy and happiness. I had other plans and I came to IASC with the idea of having a week of hard work, but you know ... sometimes, someone has other plans for you and so I spend a week of breathing, feeling and just gracefully being a small part of something really big, forming part of our frith, fun and friendship. And now I am curious what IASC 2018 is to bring about.

# The blot project and how this will go on

by Nathalie Cue Gomez and Andre Henriques

Sometimes you have an idea, some vague glimpse, some sort of fleeting thought and while the idea grows, solidify and you can almost imagine its final form, you have to realise that this idea has its own dynamic.

Refreshing a little, the basic thought was that there are many heathen which do not worship their gods just because they do not know how and have no possibility to join a established group or haven't found one they like, from where they can learn. So the idea was to collect experiences from those who worship and perform blots, to arrange all this experiences and make them available. For this we made a questionnaire which we handled out the first reunion on IASC 2015.

So Nathalie went to Unnaryd with the firm propose to handle out the questionnaire and have a lot of interviews, and a lot to do after IASC. We told you the idea has its own dynamic? Soon after beginning the first meeting it was clear that there will be more than just a hand-out for beginners. This seems to grow as an international volume of wide experiences, helpful for beginners but also an inspiration for those who perform usually blots. From Eldaring we had the news that they are working since years in something similar and they offered immediately their help and writings. Everybody seemed to be very interested and enthusiastic about this, and at the end of the meeting we handled out a lot of questionnaires. We really don't know if the idea to perform different blots from different countries came with the blot project and it quite don't matters, perhaps it was just perfect timing, but it shows us the similarities but

also the differences between the different blots which we had along the week. The basic building and the choreography of the different steps are almost the same but there are quite small differences, real inspirations that make you think and bring your thoughts to ways you never went before and get a deeper understanding, you know: thingies mark the difference.

Finally Nathalie had no interview in Unnaryd. Basically because she do not like bother people and she realised that IASC is too short to hijack persons which have a lot of other things to do only for to close them up for a precious (IASC)hour and have an interview, which can be made at any other time. Almost the same happened with the questionnaires, obviously most people had no time to sit down and really fill in all the questions and we had only two of them back in IASC, most persons promised to send them by mail and that is good because so they have really the time to think and fill it up.

In the second and last meeting we could put in order the way how this project will go on and how it will be made. We agreed that we will have an closed and hidden Facebook group where we can discuss all the questions of the questionnaire, also having an e-mail list to inform all those who have no Facebook account. Unfortunately we haven't made a list of all the persons we handled out the questionnaires and memory is not the best, so we please you all who wanted to work with us on these project to contact Nathalie or Andre that we can get you in the Facebook group or set you on the e-mail list. Hopefully by next IASC we can present already the finished work.



# Questionnaire

Personal dates:

Name:

Country:

How do you want be treated in the written? By full name, only first name, nickname or anonymously?

1.1 - How do you prepare a blot?

1.2 - Which aspects are important for the preparation (season, theme etc.) ?

1.3 - Absolute necessary tools:

1.4 - Important things that may not be forgotten:

2.1 - Do you have a special blot place?

2.2 - How do you choose a blot place?

2.3 - Preparing the place for the blot:

3.1 - What do you offer to the gods and how (fire, burying, just leave it in the nature, and why this method)?

4.1 - How do you prepare yourself to hold a blot?

4.2 - How do you prepare the others for the blot?

5.1 - Normal blot procedure/course/development:

5.2 - Do you change the procedure/course/development sometimes and why?

5.3 - Do you make a difference in the procedure if you perform the blot for your own or in a group?

6.1 - How do you use the sumble?

6.2 - Inside the blot?

6.3 - Outside the blot?

6.4 – What is important or what things are really essential in a Sumbel:

7.1 - Worshipping the gods and spirits outside the blot:

8.1 - What worked?

8.2 - What didn't work?

8.3 - Important findings:

9.1 - A story:

Please fill in the questionnaire and send it to: [n.cue@josoc.cat](mailto:n.cue@josoc.cat)



## SEI 2016 is still work in progress.

Seidr, seiðr or seidh is a contemporary form of shamanism and mysticism practised within the Germanic Field. In the old days it was known in pre-Christian Scandinavia as an oracular and magical practice. Today's seidr incorporates staff-work, power-singing, trance, shape shifting, constellation work, healing, empowerment and much more.

Join SEI 2016 to explore ancient and modern seidr knowledge and practice!

### SEI 2016

- ☉ is to inspire! To have fun! To enjoy!
- ☉ is like IASC from the heathen community for the heathen community, all work done is voluntary.
- ☉ is for people with no experience with seidh/witchcraft/shamanism at all, as well for highly skilled and trained people with years of experience, and all levels in between.
- ☉ is for all who have an interest in seidh whether it is as an asatruar or from a cultural point of view, witchcraft, shamanism etc.
- ☉ is about sharing knowledge and experience.

Several well trained and highly skilled seidh-workers from various countries will share their experience and expertise with you, like Annette Schroeder (Germany) and Frigga Asraaf and Pauline Tuymelaar (the Netherlands).

The main language is English, if needed we will work simultaneously in English, Dutch and German.

SEI 2016 will be accommodated in Lindenhorst manor in a rustical environment near the city of Meppel, located in the north-east of the Netherlands ([www.lindenhorst.nl](http://www.lindenhorst.nl)). There is room for a maximum of 50 people. Arrival Thursday 22 from 16.00 onward and departure Sunday 25 after lunch. Minimum age for participants 18.

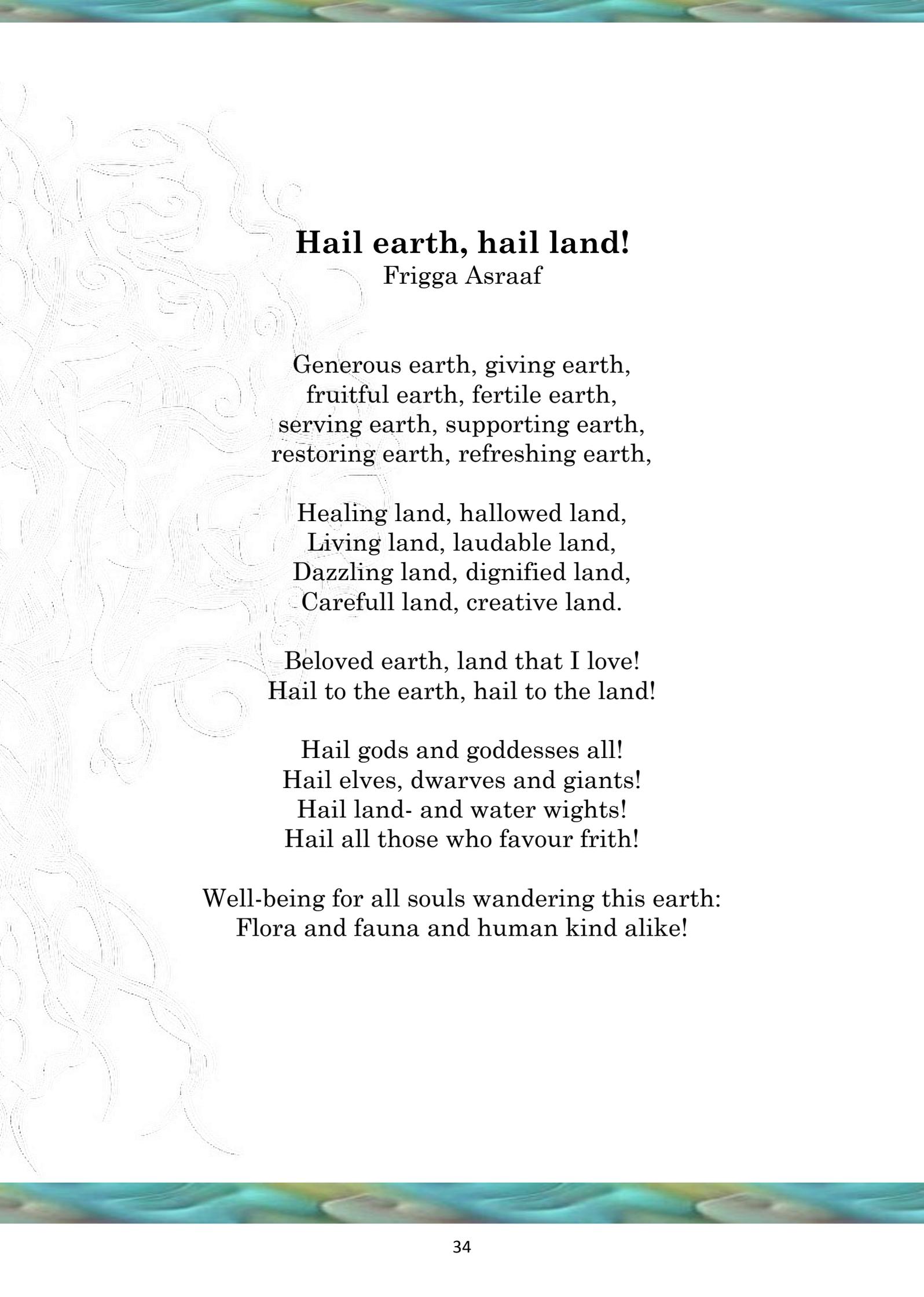
Early booking discount of € 10, for bookings until 31 December 2016! Upon registration we ask for a down payment of € 30, per person, but of course you can pay the whole amount of € 185 at once (or € 175,- before 31 December 2015).

### Enrolmentform:

<http://www.hetrad.nl/heidendom/bijeenkomsten/SEI-2016-enrolment-form.pdf>

### FaceBook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/134664270199382>



## **Hail earth, hail land!**

Frigga Asraaf

Generous earth, giving earth,  
fruitful earth, fertile earth,  
serving earth, supporting earth,  
restoring earth, refreshing earth,

Healing land, hallowed land,  
Living land, laudable land,  
Dazzling land, dignified land,  
Carefull land, creative land.

Beloved earth, land that I love!  
Hail to the earth, hail to the land!

Hail gods and goddesses all!  
Hail elves, dwarves and giants!  
Hail land- and water wights!  
Hail all those who favour frith!

Well-being for all souls wandering this earth:  
Flora and fauna and human kind alike!



# Closing Ceremony

July 31 2015

