

Save Ancient Studies Alliance

Summer 2022 Texts-in-Translation Reading Group

Understanding the Vikings Through Their Texts

Blurb about the topic

General Template:

- Question to the person viewing the ad: Do you want to understand more about the Viking way of life and who they were beyond the myth?

- Statement of importance of this topic in general - Medievalism is an ever growing field and the Vikings a key subject within it. The stereotypes and mythification that surrounds them means that this is a culture vulnerable to misrepresentation. This has already been happening for over 100 years. By taking active part in the process of understanding the Vikings and the Viking Age we all contribute to a better understanding of the past, and a clearer representation of the present and the future.

- Examples of this theme in your field: Videogames (Assassin's Creed, Valheim), TV Series (Vikings, The Last Kingdom), Films (The Northman). The ever growing number of Viking reenactors that don't actually represent history. The constant borrowing in wargaming promoting the Vikings as brute berserks (Parabellum Conquest, Warhammer).

- Connection of the theme between ancient times and today: For the Scandinavian countries, there is not a clear cut division between ancient studies and the middle ages. The Viking period

is a continuation from what most other European countries would count as the iron age and the early middle ages. This is something poorly understood by most scholars, let alone the public nowadays, which was similar to what their contemporaries thought of them. The Viking myths created to distort their image during the middle ages, are currently being used by alt-right movements, feeding already from the exploitation this culture suffered during WW2. Even to date we still say that the first europeans to discover america were Spanish conquistadors instead of Leif Eirikson and his crew, which were using older maps that suggest even older communities may have done this trip. This constant misunderstanding of the past is stopping us from being able to truly understand our present.

- What we'll study in this reading group: 3 key texts to understand general themes and ideas of the Viking Age. The havamal: saying of the old one, are understood to be lines directly given from Odin to live and behave appropriately. The Saga of the Volsungs is a staple of literature that has contributed to the many tropes we still see nowadays in fantasy, including several aspects of the Hero's journey. The Saga of the Greenlanders talks of the exploits of the icelanders that left for Greenland and the New World and the sheer and active role the vikings had in shaping the modern world, centuries before it.

- What participants will get out of joining the group: a deeper understanding of Viking culture. The enjoyment of reading texts that are similar to our modern day fantasy novels. A deeper self awareness of their own political and sociological thoughts and biases. A stronger appreciation of the ancient world through a modern lense.

Your SASA Educational Ambassadors:

Full Name: Dr [Lillian Cespedes Gonzalez](#)

What you study & where you are getting your degree: PhD from the University of Winchester
Viking Age and Medievalism

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Dates (3 weeks):

Wednesdays at 11 AM EST

-Session 1: July 20th

-Session 2: July 27th

-Session 3: August 3rd

Location:(Provided by SASA)

Zoom Meeting Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89601922304?pwd=SEJMUE5RcmZpS212QIBQUzdVZlUT09>

Zoom Meeting ID

896 0192 2304

Zoom Meeting Password

505661

Reading Group Google Folder: (PDF Readings and Recordings of Sessions)

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xrl0_Ohr9kZFF-B_mZQshrqdSgvvCH1K?usp=sharing

Week 1 (theme of week)

1-5 readings not exceeding 100 pages total

HAVAMAL

Week 2 (theme of week)

1-5 readings not exceeding 100 pages total

SAGA OF THE VOLSUNGS

Week 3 (theme of week)

1-5 readings not exceeding 100 pages total

SAGA OF THE GREENLANDERS

*Main readings must be in the language your group will be conducted in, additional readings and resources are highly encouraged, and can be in any language available.

Guest Scholars

In the past, our Educational Ambassadors have invited other scholars to join them for a session, an expert in an area you will be discussing, and people really enjoying getting the perspective and discussion with multiple scholars in order to help them get a well rounded view of the topic.