

The Althing A&S Issue



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Submissions: Any gentle wishing to submit articles, artwork, poetry, etc., to the Althing is invited to do so. Please send your work to the chronicler. All material in the Althing is copyrighted to the individual contributors. The chronicler reserves the right to edit, refuse, or reprint any submissions. The Althing's submissions deadline is the 10th of every month – send your contributions to Costance or Alister at chronicler@debatablelands.org for inclusion in the next issue.

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O'no Kuma



From Their Royal Majesties

His Majesty & I wish you all the very best for the forthcoming year. We have been so pleased with being able to spend so much of 2016 as Royalty of Aethelmearc. We are looking forward to the next four months and all of the things that we can do together as a Kingdom to lift each other up and continue to show the known world how brightly Aethelmearc shines.

So take these moments to reflect and plan those goals for the new year whether they be artistic, science, service, or prowess. We look forward to seeing you at Carnivale (12th Night) and throughout the duration of Our reign.

Marcus & Margerite
Sylvan Crown of Aethelmearc

From the Baron and Baroness

Hello Debatable Lands!

We know you'll enjoy this special edition Althing, highlighting the Arts and Sciences. Thank you to our Chronicler, Baroness Constance, and her Deputy (and this issue's editor), Lord Alister.

We are all lucky to be living here in the Debatable Lands, where we are only limited in our medieval endeavors by our imaginations. There are guilds and individuals near you that do almost any art or science you can think of. Singing, dancing, calligraphy, illumination, brewing, vintnig, armoring, pewtering, leatherworking, ALL things fiber, costuming, basketweaving, metal working, carving, printing, cooking, book binding, and researching obscure topics, just to name a few.

We encourage everyone to poke around in whatever sparks your interest. Come to guild meetings, ask a friend, arrange project nights, invite people over to just geek out on projects and research and art. Heck, start a guild! Come to A&S Nights on Thursdays! And please share! Send articles to this fine publication, or the Aestel, or the Aethelmearc Gazette. Or just post on your blog or social media. You can even be published on the Baronial Blog, if you're interested. Learning and doing is even more fun with like-minded re-enactors!

If you're not sure where to start, contact our A&S Minister, THL Elss (ansminister@debatablelands.org), and she'll point you in an interesting direction. Please do make use of the copious resources here in the Best Barony in the Knowne World, and please be a resource for others!

Whether you're brand new, brand new to a particular art, have decades of experience, or anywhere in between, we hope you'll continue to enjoy your journey of learning, interest, and passion in the arts and science.

In Levitate et Caritate, and Cheers,
Baron Brandubh and Baroness Hilda

From the Seneschal

Greetings to the Most Excellent Barony-Marche of the Debatable Lands!

Its winter in our Barony a time that we normally use for preparing for the fighting/archery/thrown weapons season, Ice Dragon, Pennsic, and warmer weather in general. While winter is usually a time of quiet and waiting – we have had so many opportunities to get together and share our time with each other.

BMDL Twelfthnight was again successful and I thank THL Elß of Augsburg and THL Muirgheal inghean Dubghaill, along with their staff, for putting together such a good event. Even the weather cooperated!

A&S has also re-started in the New Year and the new A&S Night will be Thursdays at Victory Pointe on the South Side. Look for the weekly announcement so you don't miss anything. I know that Elß has some interesting classes planned for us.

For those interested in the Scribal Arts, we still have our monthly Scriptorium at Kameshima and Isabel's house – this month is a Project and Workshop night on Wednesday, 15 February, 2017. Please see the website for details. But that's not all!

For those of you that haven't heard, our new Kingdom Signet is not only offering her "Scribal Roadtrip" classes (where she holds a different class in each Region) but for the BMDL she will be holding a series of Scribal 101 classes on Saturdays at TechShop in Pittsburgh. Keep an eye out for times and specific dates, which will be available soon.

We also have an amazing opportunity to show off just how awesome we are – we have been invited to participate in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Pittsburgh on Saturday, 11 March 2017. The parade starts at 10:00 a.m. Yingerz (Mark Yingling) is coordinating this effort and is looking for fencers, fighters, dancers, and everyone else to march with the Barony that day. If you would like more information, please contact him directly at ying762(at)yahoo(dot)com. The Baroness and I will definitely be there and hope to see you there, too.

The March Barony Meeting will be held at the Pittsburgh Chinese Church (8711 Old Perry Highway, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15237 -- map here: <https://goo.gl/maps/PLr6qcNL8dk>) on Sunday, 19 March 2017. It will start at 2:00 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to attend. Immediately after the meeting, there will be open A&S where there will be an opportunity to create items to donate to Their Excellency's gift basket for April's Coronation.

Keep an eye on the BMDL Email List and our various social media for information about upcoming practices, events, and learning opportunities. We are a talented and diverse Barony who loves to share our time and knowledge – so there's no shortage of opportunities to learn, practice, or just socialize.

As always, if you have any ideas about how to improve anything in the Barony or have concerns, I am available via email (seneschal@debatablelands.org) or in person at events and meetings.

In Service to the Barony,

Odriana, Seneschal

From the Exchequer

Please see the BMDL year-end financial report. It lists balance sheet and income sheet for calendar year 2016.

Also, the April Officers' meeting is the annual budget meeting. If you have a legitimate barony expense that you think should be funded, please send it to exchequer email address ahead of time if possible. This makes for a more efficient budget meeting. Although only financial committee can vote on expenses, many who are not officers may have valid requests. I will be posting the summary of last year's approved budget and what was spent, as well as a summary of our income to help guide our budget planning for next year.

In Service,

Hara Kikumatsu

From the Knight Marshall

This officer did not submit a report

From the A&S Minister

Tomorrow starts a new month, and a new series of A&S classes and meetings starts also!

A&S meetings are now on Thursday evenings at a new location: Victory Pointe on the South Side at 1113 E Carson St, Pittsburgh, PA 15203! <http://www.victorypointe.com/>

Join us upstairs in the gaming room on Thursday, February 2nd at 7 pm for a discussion of upcoming topics and a short talk and workshop on Viking Bling! Feel free to come early and eat downstairs -- I heartily recommend the fabulous milkshakes; they are -almost- too much for one person!

Be careful when parking, probably the best place is the bank parking lot across the street after business hours.

Are you new to the SCA? Just tired of being cooped up? Need to see some other friendly faces? Come on out, we are just waiting to meet you!

Elss Augsburg

From the Chronicler

Greetings from your Chronicler!

This amazing A&S issue is brought to you by Tighearna Macleod my awesome deputy. We hope you enjoy the A&S yearly issue. The next Althing's theme will be all about heavy fighting, and combat archery. If you have an article you'd like to write, please send it on in. The deadline for the April issue is March 31st. As always if you have any suggestions for the Althing, please feel free to email either myself, or Tighearna both of our emails are in the DarkPages.

Baroness Constance

From the Chatelaine

This officer did not submit a report

From the Web Minister

Konnichiwa Debatable Landers;

My term as your Webminister is up in April, and while I am perfectly willing to continue doing this job, I will not be offended if somebody else would like a chance.

The Webminister is responsible for the official Baronial web site and its related functions. The Webminister updates the information on the web site as necessary, such as when office holders change or a new calendar event is announced. Knowledge of HTML and basic web design is required. Some functions of the web site are written in PHP, and an understanding of PHP would be helpful. You must have a reliable computer, Internet connection, and email address. Most changes to the current site can be made in a text editor and uploaded via FTP, so no special software is required. The web site is hosted by a commercial service provider, so the ability to pay hosting and domain registration fees via credit card is required, though you will be reimbursed by the Barony after you make payment.

The Webminister is also responsible for maintaining the list of email aliases. The hosting service also provides email forwarding so that senders can always send email to a Baronial officer without having to remember who currently holds that office and what that person's address is. Updating the list of aliases involves logging into the hosting provider's domain management web interface, so some ability to deal with that kind of thing is required.

The Webminister is also responsible for maintaining and administrating the Baronial Blog. The Debatable Blog uses the Wordpress system and all interactions with the site are through a web interface. Some knowledge of Wordpress usage and administration would be helpful.

The job of Webminister is not constant. It mostly consists of small amounts of work on an irregular basis, but occasionally requires a large amount of work in a short time period. The editorial policy of the website is available on the site. Some familiarity with the current policy, and an interest in upholding or improving on these traditions would be to your advantage.

The Webminister is not responsible for the Barony's social media presence, as this is a function of the

Seneschal's office by society policy. Some coordination with the Seneschal or Social Media Deputy will doubtless be required, however.

If you are interested in standing for this position, please submit a letter of intent to the Webminister and Seneschal before the next officers' meeting, which will be on April 5th, 2017.

Arigato gozaimashita

From the Comet

Pursuivant

Greetings to all Debatable Landers from your new Comet Pursuivant! I am excited to follow the good work of THL Jorundr and am looking forward to continuing our fine heraldic tradition in the Barony.

In my position, I wish to promote the heraldic arts to all in the barony. I will be teaching the ways of good heraldry, both formally and informally. I will promote the display of personal and baronial heraldry at events. I will encourage all who wish to register a name and device, and consult myself or many other warranted heralds with any necessary assistance in doing so. I will also do what all great holders of office do when faced with many responsibilities: ask for help.

Are you interested in the heraldic arts too? Are you interested in the origins of coats of arms and sources of names?

Would you like an opportunity to stand behind the baronial thrones and help proclaim the good deeds of our citizens?

Do you want to help trumpet Thier Most Excellent of Excellencies into court?

If you answered 'yes' to any of these questions, or if you have other questions about heraldry, I encourage you to contact me at [rstrobel @ gmail](mailto:rstrobel@gmail.com). Thank you!

Kieran MacRae

Aethelmearc guild halls forming

I have been thinking for a while about how best to promote the growth of medieval and renaissance material culture (The tangible items that are part of the daily experience of the people and cultures that we as members of the SCA try to emulate). My personal view is that we can greatly enhance our shared experience as members of the society, as well as make it more authentic if we promote the idea and practice of producing period items using period (or as close as we can approximate) tools and materials and using them as they would have been used. Aethelmearc has guilds both at a Kingdom and local level, as well as artisans, and hobbyists (and just people who are interested in learning how to do something, or saw something cool that they want to try in a book) so after briefly bouncing the concept off of Their Majesties and Their Highnesses, and basing the concept on the Guild Hall in the Medieval City of York (Jorvik) where all of the guilds would meet. I have created the Aethelmearc Guild Hall as an informal organization.

This organization will be dedicated to communication between artisans of all genres, whether it be cooking, ceramics, metals, tailoring whatever. The Guild Hall will be run by and for the artisans, outside of the structure of the formal A&S community, answering as the medieval guilds did directly to the Crown. As we grow more members we can decide as a body how formally or informally we as a group want to do things, but the first step is to set up a forum where we can all communicate. Facebook is the easiest way to do this so I have created a public group.

All who are Aethelmearc subjects and are interested in the material trades are welcome to join. The usual prohibitions on mundane politics and being a jerk apply. Until this is up and running I will retain the right to ban anyone who is acting like a jerk so be nice

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/975346225904744/>

Master John Michael Thorpe
Guildmaster, Royal Guild of Aethelmearc Metalsmiths

Morien's Poetry Corner

An Acrostic in Ottava Rima on the Name of Saint Dorothea, for her Feast Day

Draw nearer and a wonder we'll relate,

Of martyr's death, and dear redemption's powers.

Rare her beauty was, and cruel her fate,

Our blessed virgin, votaress of flowers;

True to the last through trials and torments great,

Her gracious gifts flow fair from Heaven's bowers.

Eternal now in gardens green she goes,

Apple-sweet grows God's Celestial Rose!

~Morien MacBain

Ottava Rima is a period verse form of Italian origin, famously employed by the Florentine Giovanni Boccaccio and the Venetian poetess/courtesan Veronica Franco. Each stanza consists of eight lines of iambic pentameter having the rhyme scheme ABABABCC. In an acrostic, the first letter of each line spells out the name of the subject, or some other message.

Saint Dorothea of Caesarea (feast day Feb. 6th) was a Fourth-Century virgin martyr who was executed at Caesarea Mazaca (now Kayseri, Turkey). The scant records we have of her life are largely derived from the Martyrologium Hieronymianum.

Born during the height of the Roman persecutions, Dorothea refused to worship the idols of the Olympian gods. Her family was forced to forsake their possessions and relocate to Cappadocia. Upon her baptism by Saint Appollinarius, Dorothea was filled with the Holy Ghost, and with a beauty said to be above that of all the maidens of the land.

During the Middle Ages, Dorothea's cult became widespread, beginning in the Seventh Century, and was especially prominent in Sweden, where she was considered (along with Saint Barbara, Catherine of Alexandria, and Margaret of Antioch) as one of the Huvudjungfrur, or "Main Virgins."

She is considered the patroness of horticulture, brewers, brides, florists, gardeners, and midwives. The nuns of her order teach and are famed for their produce and flowers. The saint is usually portrayed in a flowered crown, or carrying flowers or apples, or with the Christ-child in an orchard. Her feast day, February the sixth, commemorates the date of her martyrdom in 311 C.E.

~Morien

A Moment of Your Time

Let me tell a story. Last year was my second Pennsic. During our trip, we wanted to find more time to volunteer as well as getting to experience more of the event. There is so much to do, even with a well planned schedule, it is hard to fit in everything. Sometimes things overlap, and you have to make tough choices about what you want to do most. I feel like this is probably harder the first few years, because there is so much to see and do that you have never done before.

I definitely wanted to spend some time making the event run for everyone else. I specifically wanted to spend some time at Troll since I was BMDL's deputy exchequer. I ended up making it to two shifts at troll. One of them was very busy during middle Friday, the other was late in the week, when the hours would be counted for war points. At this time, there were three or four people running the computers, and I think maybe two families stopped by while we were there.

I was being a bad SCAdian, and I did not remember to bring anything with me to do while I waited. The woman next to me was sewing a veil. We started chatting about my misadventures in sewing, and the fact that she had been sewing since she was a child. She showed me what she was doing with the veil. It seemed pretty easy, and I put it on my list of things to do over the winter. At one point, she set down her sewing, paused and looked at me, and asked me if I'd like to learn how to make a button. It completely took me by surprise. I told her I'd love to learn.

I was not aware that making a button was so easy. She showed me how to fold the cloth and keep it gathered. She told me how some people cut pieces in circles to use, or how some will tear up smaller pieces of cloth inside. She gave me a scrap and an extra needle, and I focused on creating a little ball of fabric. The secret that I didn't tell her is that both lining up buttons and hand sewing scares the crap out of me, but that button was my favorite thing to take home from Pennsic. It rode home in the cup holder of the truck. I was so proud of it. I hadn't gone to a class to make it, as I had with a few other items I took home. While at the event, I had many conversations with people I hadn't met before. But this one conversation and this one thing stood out enough that I will remember it for many years and it made my event better.

We have a plethora of artisans and craftsmen in the SCA. The things they do are amazing. I really believe that we have a wonderful collection of people who really love creating. This experience made me realize that even the things that I think are simple may be new to someone else, and sharing that is what makes us a community. I hope that in telling this story to others, they can see how much impact a few moments can inspire another.

Lady Arthes MacLeod

Period Things I Learned About in Japan

by Ishiyama-roku-i Gen'tarou Yori'ie

Some of you may have heard that I spent some time in Japan in October of 2016 as the subject of a reality television show. It was a great experience, and they were more respectful of me than you might imagine. The show is called "Who Wants to Come to Japan" and it showcases traditional Japanese culture and crafts to modern Japanese people by finding foreigners from around the world who have an interest in something Japanese, and bringing to Japan to learn about it. Of all my interests, the thing they were most attracted to was my study of the type of hat called an "Eboshi". That's what I spent the most time on specifically while I was in Japan, but I saw a lot of things while I was there for the show of course, and had a few free days to pursue things on my own as well. I hope to develop most of these into fuller articles and classes over time, but here's a brief outline of six SCA-applicable things I learned.

Historical Dress Parades

"Jidai Parades" are a common part of many festivals in Japan, and are a big reason that sites like "Bokunan-do" exist. Crews of people (mostly local civic groups or clubs) dress up as historical personages (local or national heroes and nobles) or types (ashigaru footsoldiers, traveling merchants, armed horsemen, etcetera) and parade through a temple compound or city street. As a surprise to me, they had me dress up in one of my fancier Kamakura-era outfits and march with a local crew! I was able to mingle "backstage" with a number of other marchers.

Buying Traditional Items in Japan

If you find yourself in Japan, how do you find clothing and accessories that are historically appropriate to the SCA period? Many of the items that are sold in souvenir shops are too modern, and may not even be Japanese in origin. I only got a little bit of time to do this kind of shopping, but I learned some quick tips. For instance, some of the larger temple areas mandate that all products sold on their grounds be made in

Japan.

Cormorant Fishing on the Nagara River in Gifu

I spent a day in Gifu City, which is very central on the Japanese mainland, and served as the residence of Oda Nobunaga for 7 years during his attempts to unify Japan in the late 16th century. The Nagara River runs through Gifu City at the base of the mountain that is topped by the castle where Oda lived, and fishermen who live beside the river still practice cormorant fishing. Called "Ukai" in Japanese, these fishing boats use flocks of leashed birds to pull "A-yu" sweet fish river every night during the warm months. Nobody knows how long they have been doing this, but they can document it back 1700 years. There are now only 6 U-sho (Ukai masters), but this job is now a hereditary position in the Imperial government. I visited with Yamashita-usho in his home and learned about the traditional clothing (including the kaze-ori "wind-swept" eboshi) and methods of Ukai, then we went back after dark to witness the nightly ritual.

Making Tate Eboshi

We spent two days in the only workshop that still makes traditional "tate eboshi" entirely by hand. These standing eboshi are still worn today by Shinto priests and other formal types, so there is still a steady demand. Master Yotsutani and his apprentice Yokkaichi showed me every part of the 30-step process that involves 100-year-old paper, cedar splines, rice paste, pointy tools, hot irons, fermented persimmon juice, and lacquer. I don't know if I'll ever be able to acquire the materials and tools to practice what I learned, but I found out so much that I didn't know about eboshi and took dozens of pictures.

Tokyo National Museum Collection

On one of my free days, I was able to spend the afternoon touring the National Museum and viewing the items it has on display. Much of the collection is from after the SCA period, but some good examples of older works are there too. They have arms, armor, scrolls, screens, lacquer wares, woodworks, metal works, household items, and devotional items. That will all be appropriate to my persona! I even found an entire illustrated scroll on display that none of my research had even mentioned. Last year, the museum had one of the Choju Giga ("Frolicking animals") scrolls from the 12th century on display, and the gift shop still has a large number of items from that exhibit which made this period emaki scroll a pop-culture phenomenon. The book store there is also a tremendous resource, and I found a book on one of my favorite medieval Japanese landscape painters, Sesshu.

Hand Loop Braiding

Another of my "free" days was spent in the studio of Makiko Tada, one of the foremost (if not the #1) teachers of Japanese braiding in the world. Normally, I do my braiding on the marudai ("round stand"), which most people feel is slightly post-period. I've seen a lot of research on the Internet that supports the idea that most braiding in period was done using hand manipulation of loops, much like finger-loop braiding. Tada-sensei taught me the basics of the hand-loop technique that is now called "Kute-Uchi" and set me up with some advanced patterns for future study. Though she visits the US regularly, I have not had an opportunity to study with her, so this was a wonderful way to spend the day.

I also spent a few hours on my last night in Japan with a few members of the Palatine Barony of the Far West, and hearing about their experiences as members of the SCA in Japan. Some of them may even be visiting with us here at Pennsic this year.

The show is still running, and they are always looking for new people to invite and new topics to cover. You can search for "Who wants to come to Japan?" and "Nipponi Ikitai" on Facebook to get in touch with them, and I encourage anyone for has an interest in Japanese culture to do so. My trip was a terrific experience and an educational opportunity that I will always remember.

Introduction to Byliny, Russian Heroic Poems

By Luceta di Cosimo, BMDL, Aethelmearc.

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The *byliny* (plural of *bylina*) are Russian epic songs that are loosely tied to historical events of 11-16th centuries. *Byliny* were first collected in the mid to late 18th century. The first serious collection was collected in mid 1700s, by Kirsha Danilov, probably a *krepostnoy* (a serf) folk singer from Ural mountains for his master, a land and factory owner, P.A. Demidov. This collection was first published in 1804. Many other collections followed. The *bylina* tradition seems to have died out in 1960's; however, now seems to be on the rise again.

The scholar who rediscovered *byliny* was P.N. Rybnikov, who accidentally overheard a singer entertaining a group of travellers in 1860 in the Kizhi district, in Northern Russia. By the nineteenth century, the *byliny* survived only in the north of Russia, were performed for entertainment, and were sung by a single singer without music. Rubnikov later collected several hundred *byliny* in many variants, and published them between 1861-1867.

A.F. Gilferding collected about 300 hundred tales from the same region in 1871-1872, which were published posthumously in 1873 as another collection.¹

The term *bylina* (which literally means "something that has happened"), as applied to this sung folk epic was first used by Sakharov in 1830, the performers themselves used the term *starina* ("something that is old").²

Performers and Performance:

By the time *byliny* were collected, peasants in the Northern Russia were the only ones still performing *byliny*; however, there is some evidence that earlier, *skomorokhi* (travelling minstrels) and *kaliki perekhozhiye* (religious pilgrims) were also performers of *byliny*.

While the recorded *byliny* were sung without music; it is probable that the earlier performances were accompanied by *gusli*, a traditional Russian instrument, and the collection of Kirsha Danilov also has some arrangements for a violin.³

Origins and interpretation:

The Russian and Soviet scholarship went through several theories of the origins of *byliny*, depending on the dominant ideology of the time. The origins were first ascribed to either the aristocracy, or to the travelling minstrels (*skomorokhi*). In Soviet times, the theories about the aristocratic origins of *byliny* were unpopular, and it was posited that the peasants, who were the primary sources of the collected songs,

¹ James Bailey and T. G. Ivanova, *An Anthology of Russian Folk Epics*, Folklores and Folk Cultures of Eastern Europe (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), xvi.

² Ibid., xx.

³ Ibid., xxx.

were also their authors. However, the analysis of the songs indicates that the primary pastimes of its heroes (war and hunting) and their honor and moral codes were more similar to the early Russian feudal lords; therefore, it is more likely that they originated in the aristocratic circles, from 11th to 14th c. The authors were probably court minstrels, who may have come from different social classes.⁴

There were many attempts to tie together byliny and early Russian history, however, even though some main characters bear the names of the known historical figures, most likely, the historical events were layered on the existing epic artistic tradition.⁵

Historical background

The majority of byliny take place in Kiev or Novgorod.

Kievan state was founded in the late ninth century, by the Slavic tribes or the Varangian princes (the “Norman” theory – about founding of Kiev by Scandinavians/Varangians was very much disputed in Soviet scholarship). It was ruled by a prince (*kniaz'*), and warrior aristocracy. Accepted Christianity in 988 CE, under Grand Prince Vladimir I (ruled 978-1015). The Golden Age of Kievan Rus lasted from 1019 to 1054 under Yaroslav the Wise. Later the state became more decentralized. Kievan Rus ended with the capture of Kiev by Mongols (Tatars) in 1240 by Batu Khan, grandson of Genghis Khan.⁶

Novgorod

“Great Lord Novgorod” was a large river port and trading city with access to White, Caspian, and Baltic seas, and trade relations with Hanseatic League cities in the 13th c. Was ruled by a merchant oligarchy and an assembly called *veche*. Was threatened by Sweden and Teutonic Order until their defeat by Alexander Nevsky in 1240 and 1242, respectively.⁷

Cycles and main characters:

Bylinas are usually divided into three cycles, based on the themes and main characters.

Mythological Cycle

Deals with themes prior to the founding of the Kievan state, has very epic, larger-than-life characters, the events are not tied to a definite historical setting.

Volkh (or Volga) Vseslavyevich - the only magic user in the epic tales. His name means wizard or sorcerer, derived from *volkhv*. His mother was a human, and his father was a serpent. He is regarded as one of the oldest characters in Russian epics.

The most popular Volkh story describes his conquest of the Indian Kingdom.

Some attempts were made to connect him to Prince Vseslav of Polock (1044-1101), who, according to the *Lavrent'yevskiy Chronicle* and the *Tale of Igor's Campaign*, was a shape-shifter and a werewolf.⁸

Svyatogor (“Holy Mountain”) – a *bogatyr* of immense strength and size, living in faraway mountains. Never does anything really heroic. In two most frequently recorded songs, he meets Ilya Muromets, and after a brief journey and, perhaps, some adventures in the Holy Mountains, Svyatogor dies either by trying to lift the “weigh of the Earth”, or by laying into a coffin, which conveniently happens to be just his size. In some versions of the stories he imparts part of this immense unnatural strength to Ilya Muromets before his death.

Mikula – peasant and a ploughman, whose plough is so heavy that Volga/Volkh (see above) can't move it.

⁴ Felix J Oinas, "The Problem of the Aristocratic Origin of Russian Byliny," *Slavic Review* (1971), 513-522.

⁵ V. Ia. Propp, *Russkiy Geroicheskiy Epos* (Leningrad: Izdatelstvo Leningradskogo universiteta, 1955).

⁶ Bailey and Ivanova, *An Anthology of Russian Folk Epics*, xviii-xix.

⁷ Ibid., xviii-xix.

⁸ Ibid., 5.

Sometimes Mikula keeps the weight of the Earth in a little bag (or a lunch bag), which mighty warriors are unable to lift.

Kievan cycle

Describes the deeds and adventures of *bogatyri* (plural of *bogatyry*, epic heroes, prob. related to Persian *bogadur* or Mongolian *baator*), at the court of Prince Vladimir. Prince Vladimir's court serves as a rough framework narrative device, similar to the court of King Arthur.

Prince Vladimir Little Red Sun - Composite figure, most likely based on Vladimir I, Vladimir Monomakh and Vladimir Yaroslavich (X-XI centuries). A secondary character present in a large number of songs. He hosts feasts, rules Kiev, and gives *bogatyri* their tasks and rewards. Can be unfair, cowardly, and pig-headed.

Ilya Muromets- the most popular and most heroic figure of byliny. He was either a peasant or, probably in later versions, a cossack, paralyzed until he was 30 or 33, and was cured by *kaliki pereknozhie* (travelling pilgrims). Became a *bogatyry* in service to Kiev and Vladimir. The most popular tales are: *Ilya Muromets and Nightingale the Robber*, *Ilya Muromets and Kalin Tsar*, *Three Journeys of Ilya Muromets*, *Ilya Muromets and Idolishche*.

He is claimed to be a historical figure, and was canonized as a saint. His body is supposedly on display in *Kievo-Pecherskaya Lavra* (an underground monastery in Kiev). The songs about Ilya were recorded in early 1800, but in 1574 he is mentioned in a letter by Kmita Chernobylski, a village elder, and in 1594, by Erich Lassota, a German traveler, who claims to have seen his grave. Curiously, he is also mentioned in *Tidrek* saga, recorded in Norway in 1250, where he is called Ilias von Riuczen, and in Lombardian saga, *Ortnit*, as Eliaz von Reuzzen.⁹

Dobrynya Nikitich – An important character, usually of noble birth, portrayed as chivalrous and well educated. There are numerous songs about Dobrynya, most popular one is *Dobrynya Nikitich i Zmey Gorynich* (or Dragon) in which he defeats a dragon, and frees Vladimir's niece, Zabava Putyatichna. Historic Dobrynya was an uncle of Prince Vladimir who was spreading Christianity "with sword and fire" in Novgorod and Rostov, together with Putyata, Vladimir's commander in 991.¹⁰

Alyosha Popovich is the youngest of the three great bogatyrs. He is a son of a priest. (Russian Orthodox priests were allowed to marry, so this is not at all unusual.) He is clever, smart, and more of a trickster figure. Unlike Dobrynya, he is sometimes portrayed with negative traits. Most famous song is *Alesha and Tugarin Zmeevich*. Tugarin is sometimes identified with historical Tugor-khan, who attacked Pereiaslavl and was killed on 7/19/1096.

There were some attempts to tie him to the historic Aleksander (Alyosha) Popovich of Rostov, who switched allegiance to Kiev, after refusing to participate in local wars and died in the battle with Mongols on Kalka River in 1224.¹¹

Stavr Godinovich - great Novgorod merchant traveling to Kiev, and imprisoned by Vladimir, jealous of his wealth. Vasilisa, his wife, disguises herself as a Mongol or Lithuanian envoy and saves Stavr from Vladimir's dungeons by trickery. Incidentally, in 1118, a Novgorod commander by the name of Stavr, angered Vladimir Monomakh, and was seized and imprisoned in Kiev.

Zabava Putyatichna - most often is portrayed as Vladimir's niece, who is either married off to other characters, or is kidnapped by a dragon. Sometimes is linked to a daughter of historical figure, Putyata,

⁹ Wasyl Jaszczun, *Vybrane Iz Slavistyky*, Zapysky Naukovoho Tovarystva Im Shevchenka Filolohichna Sektsiia (New York: Nauk. t-vo im. Shevchenka, 1991)., 291.

¹⁰ B. A. Rybakov and B. A. Rybakov, *Iazychestvo Drevney Rusi* (Moskva: "Nauka", 1987).

¹¹ Ibid.

ruthless commander of Vladimir's I, of whom the chronicles say that he "spread Christianity in Novgorod with a sword".¹² Interestingly, Zabava is often ridiculed for being a woman, but is the only one who sees through trickery and deception. She is the only one who recognizes Vasilisa (from the previous paragraph) in drag as a woman.

Princess Apraksiya - Vladimir's daughter, niece, or wife, or may be a relative of another main character, depending on a song.

Novgorod cycle

Sadko – a gusli player and a Novgorod merchant, the only character to make a journey to the underworld and come back. After his many adventures and a safe arrival to Novgorod, he takes a vow to build a church. No direct historical parallels to Sadko exist, but the song is full of historical details about Novgorod. However, a note in a Novgorod chronicle mentions one Sadko Sytinets, who in 1167 founded a "stone church to Martyrs Boris and Gleb", patron saints of sailors. The church was consecrated in 1173, and demolished in 1682.¹³

During the Soviet times, the heroic epic stories with strong national themes were popularized¹⁴, but buliny type stories also included a large number of religious or biblical songs, satire, tall tale type songs, and *fablieu* (low comedy/sexual songs).

Structure

Bylina, even though now known primarily in printed form, is a form of oral performance, and thus has several devices facilitating oral performance and comprehension. It is pretty formulaic, and has standard types beginnings and endings:

Zapev- an epic interlude, may start a song, has nothing to do with the plot of the song, and is pretty generic, can be applied to many different bylinas.¹⁵

Zachin – A generic start, usually deals with the setting, a common *zachin* describes the feast in the palace of Prince Vladimir. (Same *zachin* can be used in several bylinas.)¹⁶

Kontsovka – a short formulaic end, a signifier that the song is done.¹⁷ May invoke a blessing, a wish for good weather or a good fortune.

It is linear, without subplots, flashbacks, or secondary plots.

It shares great number of motifs with other oral folklore forms, such as fairy tales and legends, and other epic stories, which are not necessarily unique to Russian folklore.

It usually consists of a single episode. The composite epics, which contain several adventures are more rare.

Some elements/devices are commonly used in *byliny*¹⁸:

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 261.

¹⁴ Margaret Ziolkowski, *Soviet Heroic Poetry in Context : Folklore or Fakelore* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2013), 127.

¹⁵ Bailey and Ivanova, *An Anthology of Russian Folk Epics*, xxiv.

¹⁶ Ibid., xxiv.

¹⁷ Ibid., xxiv.

¹⁸ Ibid., xxiv-xxvii.

Other helpful resources:

Slavic negative antithesis- a negative form of comparison: “a bright falcon didn’t swoop down on the geese... Russian bogatyr swooped down on the Tatar army”, etc. several negative antitheses can be strung together for more epic effect.

Adding style – passages which line by line describe something in simple sentences something that could be easily summed up with one phrase.

Epic hyperbole – claims of extraordinarily heavy weapons, superfast horses, or listing unbelievable numbers talking about armies or riches.

Tag lines – signifiers to the audience about a change in the song. For example, the common “hail to you...” indicated that the speech will be addressed to someone.

Formulaic epithet-noun phrases- repetitious descriptive epithets that persist from song to song, some are specific to byliny, some also encountered in other forms of folklore. Examples: mother damp earth, bright falcon, Saracen Mountains, Circassian saddle, green Moroccan leather boots, etc, etc.

Glossary of common *bylina* terms:

Bogatyr – Russian word for a hero/warrior

Aurochs- Large European wild ox, extinct since 16th century

Boyar – aristocracy member in Kievan Rus

Druzhina – a warrior prince's retinue

Gusli – an old stringed musical instrument, which was plucked

Kaliki perekhozhie – wandering religious pilgrims

Voyevoda – an old term for a general

Yarlyk – a Tatar document granting governing privileges to Russian princes

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V. Kalugin, *Struny Rokotakhu*, Sovremennik, Moscow, 1989

A.E. Alexander, *Bylina and Fairy Tale, the Origins of Russian Heroic Poetry*, Mouton, The Hague, Paris, 1973.

Yu. I. Smirnov and V. G. Smolitskiy, *Dobrynya Nikitich i Alesha Popovich*. Nauka, Moscow, 1974.

V. Bakhtin, *Ot Blyliny do Schitalki*, Izdatelstvo Detskaya Literatura, Leningrad, 1982.

I.F. Hapgood, *The Epic Songs of Russia*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1886, reprinted by Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut in 1970.

From the website of Liudmila Vladimirova, of Caid (<http://www.sca-russian.com/>) :

<http://www.sca-russian.com/stavr.doc> - a translation and documentation of the bylina about Stavr Godinovich, with a very helpful bibliography.

<http://www.sca-russian.com/poetry.html> - poems about SCA fighters done in Russian epic style.

Viking Food: What Ingredients were available?

Maighstir Uilliam (Liam) MacantSaoir – OP

Ingredients for Norse/Viking foods varied widely throughout the lands occupied by the Vikings. There was a great deal of product available from hunting and gathering, as well as, domestically raised and farmed items. In this article, we will discuss what items were available and how it ranged from different settlements throughout Northern Europe.

Archeological evidence from several sites give us a good idea of what foods were consumed. Sadly, the first documented recipes were not in print until the thirteenth century. So, we do not have a clear understanding of how items were prepared together. We also have Norse Sagas to rely on for the availability of ingredients.

In the Sagas, there were several descriptions of food eaten, *Grettir's Saga* tells stories of consuming dried fish, seabirds and seabird eggs. The *Laxdæla Saga* refers to eating whale and salmon meat. *Njal's saga* lists; butter, cheese, salmon, stockfish, oat and barley meal, and horse meat. *Eirik the Red's Saga* refers to "malt", "meal" and "corn" probably referring to barley, porridge from barley or oats, fish, whale and seabird eggs. Lastly *Egil's Saga* refers to salmon, seal, whale, and seabird eggs as food items.

Through archeological evidence we find much of what was documented in the sagas coincides with what has been found at sites throughout Europe. Many of the archeological finds show evidence of domesticated animals for meat sources and gardening for non-meat food sources.

In the Jorvik (York) in present day England we find there is evidence of the use of many different types of meat, poultry and fish for protein. Many varieties of fruits, vegetables and grains.

- Meat -- red deer, beef, mutton/lamb, goat, pork
- Poultry -- chicken, geese, duck, golden plover, grey plover, black grouse, wood pigeon, lapwing
- Freshwater fish -- pike, roach, rudd, bream, perch
- Saltwater fish -- herring, cod, haddock, flat-fish, ling, horse mackerel, smelt
- Estuarine fish -- oysters, cockles, mussels, winkles, smelt, eels, salmon
- Dairy products -- butter, milk, eggs
- Grains -- Oats (*Avena sativa* L.), wheat, rye, barley
- Legumes -- fava (*Vicia faba* L.)
- Vegetables -- carrots, parsnips, turnips (?), celery, spinach, brassicas (cabbage?)
- Fruits -- sloes, plums, apples, bilberries, blackberries, raspberries, elderberries (*Sambuca nigra*)
- Nuts -- hazelnuts, walnuts
- Herbs/spices/medicinals -- dill, coriander, hops, henbane, agrimony
- Cooking aids -- linseed oil, hempseed oil, honey
- Beverages -- Rhine wine (a sweet wine that tastes like green apples)

In Birka, Sweden, you see some of the varieties of food change, just as the variety of food in the United States will change from state to state, we see the variety of what can be grown and what is available change from settlement to settlement. In Birka we find:

- Meat - Pork
- Fish – both fresh water and salt water varieties.
- Ingredients found in breads -- rye, wheat, spelt, oats, barley, emmer wheat; linseed; sprouted pea: unidentified *Vicia* legume (mix of barley plus one of the wheats seems to have been most common)
- Fruits -- sloe (*Prunus spinosa*); hawthorn (*Crataegus calycina*), plum (*Prunus insititia*)
- Nuts – hazelnut

Using evidence from the archeological finds at Hedeby in Denmark, we find the following food items:

- Meat -- pork, beef, mutton/goat
- Poultry -- chicken, duck, goose
- Fish -- herring
- Fruits -- plum (*Prunus domestica* L. ssp *insititia*), sloe (*Prunus spinosa* L.), cherries, elderberries, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries

In the Oseberg, Norway dig, there is evidence of:

- Meat -- pork, beef, mutton/goat
- Poultry -- chicken, duck, goose
- Fish -- herring
- Fruits -- plum (*Prunus domestica* L. ssp *insititia* C.K. Schneider), sloe (*Prunus spinosa* L.), cherries, elderberries, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries.

In Jarlshof, Shetland Islands, Scotland we find the following:

- Meat -- beef, lamb/mutton, pork, possibly venison and whale
- Fish -- ling, saithe, cod

In Dublin, Ireland there is extensive evidence of food items consumed including:

- Meat -- pork, beef, mutton/lamb, hare
- Poultry -- chicken, wild goose
- Saltwater fish -- cod, ling
- Estuarine fish -- cockles, mussels, oysters, scallops
- Grains -- wheat, oats, barley, rye, *Chenopodium album*, *Polygonum* spp.
- Legumes -- fava (*Vicia faba* L.), peas
- Vegetables -- wild celery, wild carrot (*Daucus carota*), cabbage, turnips, radishes
- Fruits -- cherries, sloes, blackberries, hawthorn, apples, rose hips, elderberries, rowanberries, strawberries, *Vaccinium myrtillus*
- Nuts -- hazelnuts
- Herbs/spices/medicinals -- poppyseeds, black mustard, fennel
- Cooking aids -- rapeseed oil (*Brassica campestris*)

With this evidence, we can see that Viking/ Norse foods had a great variety of items to choose from and a significant number of things to mix together for meals. Anyone can imagine the amazing foods that could be made by various combinations of food items.

Sources:

Carolyn Priest-Dorman "Archaeological Finds of Ninth- and Tenth-Century Viking Foodstuffs"

<https://www.cs.vassar.edu/~capriest/vikfood.html>

Viking Food Guy "Viking Cooking: A Reconstruction" <http://vikingfoodguy.com/wordpress/papers/viking-cooking-a-theoretical-reconstruction-from-the-archaeological-and-written-record/>

Hurstwic "Food, Diet and Nutrition in the Viking Age"

http://www.hurstwic.org/history/articles/daily_living/text/food_and_diet.htm

Beginner Scribal Series

Greetings --

There have been many requests for classes on the scribal arts for the ABSOLUTE beginner, and now they are available, thanks to Antoinette de la Croix:

A Beginner Scribal Series in BMDL at Tech Shop, A sequential learning series for folks who want to try their hand at painting scrolls and are not sure where to begin.

Part 1 Saturday, Feb 11, 1-5pm Orientation and Materials

Part 2 Saturday, Feb 25, 1-5pm Beginner painting techniques & brushwork

Part 3 Saturday, March 11, 1-5pm Calligraphy

Part 4 Saturday, March 25, 1-5pm Painting your first piece of art

Part 5 Saturday, April 15, 1-5pm Painting a notecard or prize scroll

There is a \$5.00 Materials fee for Parts 2-5 payable the day of the workshop. You must preregister with Antoinette de la Croix at ScribalTour20162017@yahoo.com so that she can have supplies for the correct number of students.

TechShop is at: 192 Bakery Square Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15206 Parking is available in the garage nearby and is free for the first two hours ONLY. Curb parking may also be available. Come early and get a tour, this place is absolutely awesome! <http://www.techshop.ws/pittsburgh.html>

Questions about the content of the classes can go to ScribalTour20162017@yahoo.com, for anything else, contact me.

Hope to see you there!

Elss

First Fridays

Starting on Friday, 3 March 2017 at 6:00 p.m., Kieran and Odriana will be hosting "First Fridays" in their home in Hampton Township. For this meeting, please bring a covered dish -- and not just any covered dish -- bring either your favorite medieval recipe or a new medieval recipe to share with others. If you're unfamiliar with medieval cooking and need some direction, here are a couple of useful links for beginner recipes that you can try:

Godecookery - "A Boke of Good Cookery"

<http://www.godecookery.com/goderec/goderec.htm>

Medievalcookery - "Medieval Recipes"

<http://medievalcookery.com/recipes/>

Print out or write up your recipe and tell us a little bit about what you find interesting about the dish or what you enjoy about the dish. We'll talk medieval cooking and hang out.

For those of you who aren't so much into cooking, but are into Heavy Weapons, there will be some unofficial practicing taking place. Bring your armor and have some fun.

Parking on our property is limited, however, the near side of the parking lot next to our property is available to you for parking. There is no sidewalk, so we recommend dropping your passengers/armor off at the house and then parking next door.

No RSVP necessary, just show up between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and spend some time with us.

Kieran MacRae and Odriana vander Brugghe



Youth Fighting Practice Schedule

Youth fighter practice will be held from 2-5 pm this Sunday at the Pittsburgh Chinese Church in the North Hills (map here: <https://goo.gl/maps/PLr6qcNL8dk>). From the parking lot, go around the side of the building to the first door and up the stairs to the top floor. Loaner gear is available.

Schedule for the coming month:

- Feb. 12 - practice at the Pgh Chinese Church
- Feb 19 - practice CANCELLED due to AEdult Swim
- Feb. 26 - practice at the Pgh Chinese Church
- March 5 - practice at the Pgh Chinese Church
- March 12 - practice at the Pgh Chinese Church
- March 19 - practice at the Pgh Chinese Church
- March 25 (Saturday) - youth fighting at [Donnan Party 2017](#) in Ballochlagan (Wheeling, WV)
- March 26 - practice at the Pgh Chinese Church

I hope we'll see you there!

Arianna



alendar

February - 2017

15 Scriptorium 9pm The residence of Kameshima Zentarō Umakai and Isabel Fleuretan

18-19 AEdult swim Hosted by the Shire of Abhainn Ciach Ghlais

March - 2017

3 First friday 6pm 3000 Harts Run Rd, Allison Park, PA 15101, USA

11-19 Gulf Wars Hosted by the Kingdom of Gleann Abhann

15 Scriptorium 9pm The residence of Kameshima Zentarō Umakai and Isabel Fleuretan

25 Donnan Party 10pm Hosted by the Shire of Ballachlagan

April - 2017

5 BMDL officers meeting

7 First Friday 6pm 3000 Harts Run Rd, Allison Park, PA 15101, USA

8 Festival of the Passing of the Ice Dragon 9am Hosted by the Barony of Rhydderich Hael

19 Scriptorium 9pm The residence of Kameshima Zentarō Umakai and Isabel Fleuretan

27-30 Blackstone Raids Hosted by the Barony of Blackstone Mountain

Sundays

Archery Practice (Times pending, Weather permitting)

2pm Fighter Practice

2pm Youth Fighter Practice

Mondays

7:30pm – 9:00pm Debatable Lands Choir (Private Residence)

Tuesdays (CMU Campus)

6pm – 8pm Fencing Practice (Cour d'Or)

Wednesday (Every 3rd Wednesday of the month)

7pm – 9pm Scriptorium (Private residence)

Thursday (The last Thursday of every month)

8pm – 10pm Dance Practice

Barony Meeting

General Barony meetings are held bimonthly on the odd numbered months (Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep, & Nov)

Officers Meeting

1st Wednesday of every other month on the even numbered months; 8:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. (on the campus of Carnegie Mellon University).

The Canton of Steltonwald Officers and Meetings

This office did not submit a report. The information for the Canton may need updated.

<http://www.steltonwald.org/>

The College of Cour d'Or

The College of Cour d'Or is currently dormant. For information regarding local colleges and Universities, contact the Baronial College Liaison.

Extras

- Sign up on the Althing mailing list to have the Althing emailed to you every month at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bmdl_althing/.
- Download or read the Althing online every month at <http://www.debatablelands.org/althing/>.
- Subscribe to the Barony mailing list at <http://lists.andrew.cmu.edu/mailman/listinfo/sca-bmdl>.
- Find the Barony home page at <http://www.debatablelands.org/>.
- College student?
Join the SCA-medieval-interest@googlegroups.com mailing list for announcements of campus and local activities.
- While not official, there is valuable information to be had on various BMDL Facebook groups, such as [The BMDL Ride Board](#), [Debatable Lands group](#), and [the SCA group](#).

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