



THE ONTOLOGY OF SUPERNATURAL ENCOUNTERS IN OLD NORSE LITERATURE AND SCANDINAVIAN

4th symposium of Old Norse Folklorists Network

**University of Tartu, Department of Scandinavian Studies
December 10-12, 2015**



The 4th symposium of Old Norse Folklorists Network is dedicated to the question of the ontology of supernatural encounters in Old Norse-Icelandic literature, myth and legend, as well as in later Scandinavian folklore. It focuses on the controversial issue of “truth” or “real experience” behind narrative depictions of such encounters, and seeks answers to questions such as the following: How were encounters with supernatural beings, or visits to supernatural places conceptualized and understood by the individuals or communities who experienced them, and what was their relationship to accepted “norms of truth”? To what extent were supernatural beings perceived as physical beings and how was their physical appearance interpreted? How can we use various kinds of sources to gain knowledge of these matters? What are the long-term continuities in the ways that the supernatural has been understood in the Scandinavian and geographically close (Baltic, Finnic etc) cultural areas? In spirit of the previous events of the ONF series, the conference seeks to stimulate discussion on these issues and to bring philological and folkloristic perspectives on both Old Norse and later sources into closer contact with each other.

Keynote lectures:

John Lindow, University of Berkeley: “The essential other: Continuity and discontinuity in worldview”

Mikael Häll, University of Lund: ”Carnal Spirits of Nature and Demonic Bodies of Vapour. The Ontology and Sexuality of Supernatural Beings in Early Modern Swedish Folklore and Demonology.”

Organizers: Daniel Sävborg (University of Tartu), Karen Bek-Pedersen (University of Southern Denmark), Mart Kuldkepp (University College London)

For more information please contact conference secretary Kristel Pallasma: +372 566 80 213