



# Viking wedding traditions

Isobella Gray of Donnershafen  
[isobellagrayofdonnershafen@gmail.com](mailto:isobellagrayofdonnershafen@gmail.com)

MKA: Alanna Fitzgerald

# Little ears warning and potential trigger warning

- My presentation contains adult content and may not be suitable for little ears.
- I will be talking about Domestic Violence, touching briefly on sex slavery, as it pertains to this culture.



# Conflict of Interest

- I have no conflict of interest to disclose in this presentation



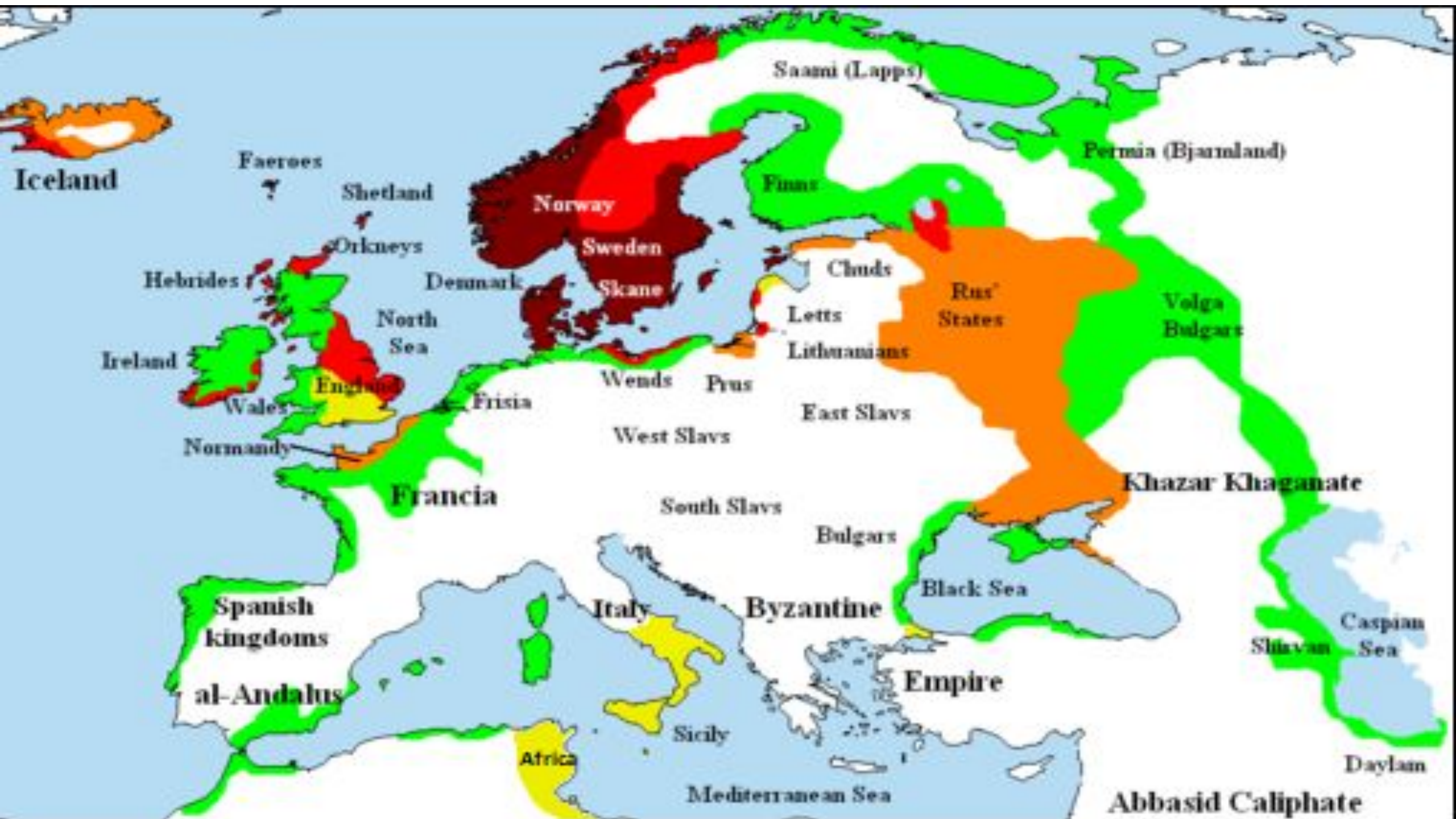
# Vikings

- Time in history: 793 to 1066 A.D.
- Traditional knowledge mostly from Icelandic Sagas
- Ireland, Scotland-Orkney, Shetland Islands, parts of England, Northern France (present day Normandy), Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, Greenland, Russia
  - Other parts of the world were not as successful



# Vikings

- Viking is a modern word for multiple groups that fit this broad culture
  - Generally, sea faring
  - Many were farmers
  - Northmen, Norsemen, Norse
- 3 Social classes:
  - Jarls- aristocracy
  - Karls- Lower class
  - Thralls- slaves



# Choosing a spouse

- Marriage age 12 to 15
- Generally chosen by the family
  - Alliances
  - Support during conflict
  - Financial gain
- Neither Men or women chose their own spouses
  - Men of their clan chose for them
- Potential spouses were found at the Thing, market, social events, and other places
- Widows could choose their own spouse



# *Fastnandi*

- Guardian to maiden/woman
- Usually father, other male relative
  - Could be son if over 16
- Brothers not allows to maliciously block marriages
  - Woman could marry 3<sup>rd</sup> refusal

# Types of Marriages

- Marriage for creating alliances (legal)
- Marriage by capture
- Marriage by purchase

# Courtship

- Courtship did not normally occur
  - Considered inappropriate for a woman's reputation
- Couples were expected to work it out in marriage (or not)



# *Handsal*

- Formal agreement
  - 'sealed' with a hand clasp
- *Bruðkaup*-Bride price= 3 elements
  - Groom paid- *mundr* and *morgengifu*
  - Bride's family paid- *Heiman fyigia*
- War support
- Agreements and handshakes must be made in front of at least six men

# Preparation For the ceremony

- Ceremony can take place:
  - Immediately after the contract is made
  - Up to three years after
- Travel
- Food and mead
  - Celebration would last a week
  - Couple would drink mead for a month

# Preparing the bride

- Prepared by married family members
- *Krasen* removed
  - Bridal wreath/crown placed
    - Family heirloom
  - Hair would be left down and uncovered
    - Only unmarried women wore hair untied and uncovered
- Bath house
- Dressing





# Preparing the groom

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- Required to obtain an ancestral sword
- Also visits the bath house
  - Accompanied by male family member attendants

# Officiant= Gothi



- Could be male or female

# Goat, boar, or horse



- May have been sacrificed
  - Blood gathered and used for blessing in the ceremony
  - Animal was used as part of the wedding feast
- If not sacrificed
  - Dedicated to the appropriate God/Goddess
  - Kept as a sacred beast

# The ceremony



- Ceremony took place on Friday
  - Frigg or Frigga's day
- First full moon

# Exchange of the swords



- Bride led in by younger male kin holding her sword
- Groom presents his sword to his bride
- Bride presents her sword to her groom

# Rings

- Finger rings were also exchanged
- May also exchange arm bands
- Bride's ring placed on the hilt of the Groom's sword



# Handfasting

- Unclear if this is a Viking tradition
- Practiced on Isle of Man in 1600
- Word Handfasting found in Danish = Håndfæstning, Norwegian = Håndfestning or Handfesta
  - Joining hand to strike a contract
  - Marriage would fall under this



# The Wedding Celebration



- After the ceremony couple may race to the celebration hall
  - Losers had to serve the winner
- Groom would strike the main timber with his sword
  - Sign of strength/protection for bride when she gives birth
- Feasting & Celebrating begins

# Consummation of the marriage



- At least 6 people were required to witness the consummation
- Bride put to bed
- Groom put to bed
  - Groom removes the bridal crown