

In the Nordic mythology there are three main deities reigned supreme over Asgard: Odin, Thor and Frey. Odin was the god who dominated all others. He was the god of knowledge and of war or, more precisely, of victory. He did little fighting because he was primarily a strategist; a tactician who planned conquests, as much by guile as by force.

The Vikings thought of him as travelling far and wide on his eight-legged horse named Sleipnir. A disconcerting divinity, Odin was escorted on his journeys by two ravens, Hugin (Thought) and Munin (Memory).

Odin's women are known as the valkyries – beautiful, strong and powerful women who escorted the slain warriors to the heavenly gates of Valhalla.

«Odin's Women colouring the North» is a production of The MiRA Centre in Norway.

Project Director: Fakhra Salimi

Producers: Joe Frans and Fakhra Salimi

Thanks to the Nordic Council of Ministers for economic support.

DURATION OF THE FILMS: 20 MINUTES EACH

Iceland: Growing up in the North

Young women with minority background talk about their experiences

Sweden: Challenging the Stereotypes

Minority women in politics

Finland: If you can't get a job – create one yourself

Minority women in business

Norway: Different but alike

Minority women in family life

Denmark/Greenland: The Modern Nomade

Breaking the barriers

Design by ezarava.com

[odin's women colouring the north]

Knowledge, strategy, thought and memory are also four central elements in the lives of people who migrate across the globe and become settlers where ever they feel at home or see the opportunities to evolve.

The presence of the people of colour in the Nordic countries is a continuation of the spirit of Odin, travelling far and wide planning ways to improve the lives of his people.

Today therefore Odin's women are not only blond and blue eyed but they possess all the colours.

You can order the films from:
The MiRA Resource Centre for Minority Women in Norway

P.O Box 1749 Vika
0121 Oslo, Norway

Phone: +47 22 11 69 20

Fax: +47 22 36 40 19

E-mail: post@mirasenteret.no

Internet: www.mirasenteret.no



[odin's women colouring the north]

By Fakhra Salimi

The series of five documentary films [odin's women colouring the north] is a meeting with black, immigrant and refugee women who challenge the stereotypes about minority women. They are determined to change the course of traditions in order to create a diversity of roles and the new forms of society.

«When I had finished school in Finland I couldn't get a job because they would always use the excuse that I did not speak fluent Finnish. So I thought: If I can't get a job I'll create one!»

Michelle Sujballi

«When I look at my nuclear family I must say that the two of us are equal. We both work, and take care of our home and children. It's not different from my Norwegian colleagues.»

Ferruh Özalp

«People in Finland think that their country has been good to us. Well, nobody has given me anything for free. I am a hard working person and I feel I have been good for Finland, to build its economy.»

Maggy Daaboul

«The Swedish form of gender equality is very burdensome. It applies only to women with a career, which I find very dangerous. I believe that the responsibility of making your own choices must be given to the individual. That is true equality.»

Fatima Nur

«... I think it's like the first meeting, if you're not taken for a Swede, then you tend to not feel like it and go for other cultures, which if you are, like we all are, multicultural, you go for cultures that you feel accept you a lot more than the culture you're growing up in.»

Babette Lind

«The women in my mother's generation were dependent on a man socially and economically. When women begin to earn their own living they also begin to make demands on the relationship. So not many women in my generation would accept that the husband had a legal second wife.»

Fatuma Ali

«The great challenge to democracy is the power connected to capital which encroaches on our capacity to influence our own lives. That's what democracy is about, not only casting your vote in elections. Letting people vote for different political parties every fourth year doesn't mean that there is democracy.»

America Vera Zavala



Odin's women colouring the north

«As a Palestinian, you are political by definition. You have no choice. The sorrow and oppression that we carry on our shoulders makes us sensitive to all oppressions. I fight for human rights for everyone. It is a part of our cultural heritage.»

Yvonne Ruwaida

«I've never been to Pakistan, so I don't know what it's like. It's hard to explain who I am when people ask me. I don't look Norwegian, so they say: So, you're a Pakistani. But I can't say that, because I don't identify with Pakistan as I've never been there. I guess I am Norwegian-Pakistani if it makes sense.»

Sabha Qureshi

«You have to take a stand. That's what politics is all about.»

Nalin Peggul

«When we first came to Sweden it was difficult. I was nine years old and we didn't speak the language. We were placed in a hotel with other refugees. One night somebody threw stones through the windows. The next day we were told that it was done by neo-nazi youth. I was scared.»

Rita El-Ahmar

«I have told my sons, that when they marry, they must respect their wife. She has a right to an education as long as it doesn't harm the family, and as long as the man does his share of household she can have a job. But she deserves respect under all circumstances.»

Nasim Riaz

«I am not an immigrant politician. I have immigrated to Sweden, so you might rightly call me an immigrant. But I am a politician who represent her party and all the Swedes in general.»

Nyamko Sabuni

«The problem for us second generation immigrants has been that we have not had an identity. Are we Pakistani or Norwegian? With which culture should we identify? I don't want this to happen with my children.»

Sonia Rashid

«Iceland is a very small place with a few coloured people. I can go for days without seeing a black person. Once I walked into a bus, and tried to go straight to the back. I felt that people were staring at me, and my first reaction was typical of a 16-year old girl! «Oh God, my dress is totally different, out of fashion...» But then I realised it was my colour, and nothing else.»

Naysaa Gyedo