

Children of the Heavenly Father

Marianne Løvvik is born and raised on the west coast of Norway, which also has been called "the Norwegian bible belt", in places where faith is a granted and natural part of every day life.

"Children of the Heavenly Father" is based on thoughts and reflections around cultural identity, ethnicity and affiliation. It is a part of the project "Looking for Norwegianness", that is questioning the national self understanding, and what seemingly is familiar, safe, good and true.

This part of the project is a research of amongst other historical authenticity, and faith as fundament for society and culture. What is near and dear, in relation to what is alien and threatening.

The title, "Children of the Heavenly Father", is from the psalm by Swedish Lina Sandell ca. 1850. It is one of the most used songs for baptism in Norway, and probably represents for many people, the warmth and safety of childhood faith.

The Hand Garment, shame headscarf and handkerchiefs

"Handaplagget" (The Hand Garment), the white garment that the bride carries over her hands. The history goes back as far as before our reckoning of time.

- Some heathen people believed that some parts of the body had to be hidden from the spirits, so they could not do, or set harm to it. Other places they believed that the hands that were used for all sorts of work, were unclean, and therefore had to be hidden and not touching holy things or be shown when meeting holy powers.

There have been many sorts of customs regarding this in different countries and different times. - the Christian church took over some of these customs.

"Shame headscarf"

Excerpt from Hardangerbunad then and now, by Gudrun Stuland, in the chapter about "felte hovudklutar" (folded head clothes), that all women wore.

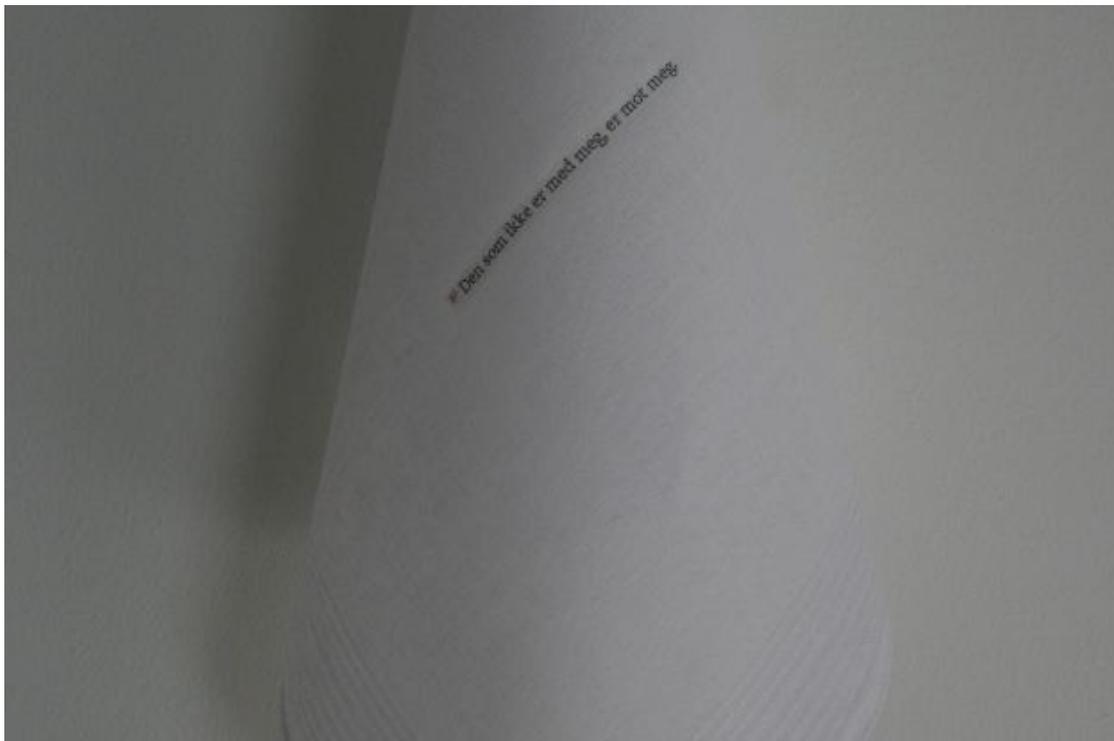
Married women wore this headscarves different than young girls. Those who have had children before marriage were thoroughly marked for it:

- An old lady told that when she as a young wife came to Kvam in 1875, there were two girls that have had babies, and they had to wear folded cloths that was tied behind the neck as the headscarves, but without the band over it. "they were so ashamed of their cloths, and walked with their neck so bended", she said. "If one went off and had babies and later got married, she were not allowed to carry a crown, just the cloth, that was called "førkje-klut" (slut-cloth). It also had several names, like for example "skammaskaut" (shame headscarf), "kuaskaut" (subjugate headscarf), "skammaklut" (shame cloth).



Handkerchiefs - Norwegian Encyclopaedia

Handkerchiefs, are known from the first century BC. It was then used for wiping sweat. From about year 300 AC they are also mentioned as a tool to clean the nose with. The handkerchiefs were originally carried in the hand, over the arm or similar; just when some clothing had pockets in the end off the 1600s, it could be placed there. Handkerchiefs that were carried visible, often had a pure decorative purpose. The look and usage has varied towards our own time.



“He that is not with me, is against me.”