

Dictionary

Background

A set of instructions for the player, delineating the major vitae of the role (see this) and information necessary for the game. The background are made by the organisers, but may be developed in co-operation with the player. Some backgrounds are even made by the players themselves, with little or no alterations from the organiser. Backgrounds range from the bare vitae to lengthy epic pieces. In gamist larps (see this), the background will usually contain hints to one or more plots (see this), in a fate-play the background will contain the fate (see these).

Though backgrounds may in principle be given through any medium, is a written paper by far the most common form.

Source: Trad.

Boffer

Swedish term used to describe medieval style weapons (swords, axes, spears etc) made from some sort of padding around a hard core. The object of such arms is to allow the players to resolve game conflicts with arms without actually harming them selves. Badly made padded arms are often rather lumpy and club-like. Well-made, realistic looking padded arms are often made from latex, and the Swedes sometimes use the term "latex arms" as an antagonist to "boffer arms". Boffer is also used in a degrading manner to describe players who come to larps solely to fight ("Boffertomte") or larps built on armed conflict ("boffers", "boffer larps" etc.).

In Norway, where the term "padded arms" is the general term, boffer arms specify heavily padded arms used for full contact fighting.

Source: Trad.

Bøckmanian maxim

Maxim directed at the plot-structure (see this), and expresses the fact that

The Author

Petter Bøckman (35) grew a beard at 19 and is a zoologist by education, teaching school classes at the Museum of Natural History.

He was one of the founders of the Oslo LARP-scene in the mid 80'ies, and is still around. Having done the »LARP theory for dummies« last year, his current project is making a comprehensive catalogue of LARP-terminology. He has a weakness for dark beer and scientific squabble.

is impossible to control the direction of a game as long as the plot-structure is hidden from the players, and that an action appearing the only logical step to an organiser don't necessarily do so for the players. See also Hidden montage.

For any given problem, there are an infinite number of solutions, and as an organiser, you may take for granted that the players will think of those you did not.

The maxim takes its idea from science-philosophy.

Source: Petter Bøckman, 1993

Cage

An ingame mechanism that prevents the roles (not the players!) from leaving the game area during a play. Such mechanisms can have a multitude of forms: Physical, formal, social or magical, or a combination of these.

Source: Coleman, D. (2001). The Carrot, the Stick and the Box. The larper magazine 1, vol 2.

Character

A term synonymous with „role“ (see this). The term is the one most commonly used in tabletop RPG (see this), and is on occasions used from Sweden and in Scandinavian texts from other countries written in English.

Source: Trad.

Context

Term used when describing larp from a media scientific point of view. When seeing larp as an interactive medium,

it is argued that it must be seen as a medium placed within a context, the larp reality. It compromises not only the game world (see Setting) and roles, but also the player's prejudices, knowledge and abilities.

Source: Torstein Utne, laiv.org

Dekontextualisation

Term that means that the role (not the player) have lost connection to the larp, so that the player is no longer able to relate his or her impressions through the role. This occurs not uncommonly near the end of a larp, when the plots (see this) are mostly resolved, overthrowing the initial social structure of the larp. The consequence is often, though not always, that the player falls out of role (see "Offing"). Dekontextualisation may also happen when the basis of the larp fiction is dramatically altered during a larp, so that the role no longer has a natural place in the larps dramatic structure.

Source: Gabriel Widding/Galadrim debattforum

Deus Ex Machina

From Latin God from the Machinery, an expression from the theatrical world. In larp, it signifies all sorts of ad hoc efforts on the organiser's behalf to forcibly steer the course of plots (see this) within the framework of the game. This includes messengers with messages or letters from outside the sphere of play, monsters, instructed players, angry gods etc.

Deus Ex Machina-problems is likely

to occur in a larp with narrativist organisers and gamist players (see these). It is also a frequent symptom of a GM-controlled larp (see this).

Source: Axel Westlund

Diegesis, (diegetic)

Expression from Film theory, denoting the totality of the story and possible truths within it. In a larp that will translate to „all that is true to the roles“. For the roles in the larp „Pinhead“, in Gothenburg, the city of Helsinki was diegetic (existing in their reality), while the debriefing session was not. See also „Setting“ and „Context“.

Source: Johanna Koljonen/Eirik Fatland

In this anthology, you could read the texts from Carsten Andreasen and Markus Montola to know more about diegesis.

Dionysian zone

A concept from social science, the zone is a point in time and space where Dionysian urges rule the ground and normal social rules do not apply. The concept goes back to Antiquity. It's opposite is the Apollinarian zone, where rule of law and reason prevail. Various authors have described larp as a sort of Dionysian zone, where the players through fictive personae may behave in a way not acceptable in the normal society without repercussions.

The Swedish ethnologist Lotte Gustafssons have used the term “Fortrollad sone” (Transl. Bewitched zone) as a translation.

Source: Trad.

Dissipative

A larp structured such that there are no set outcome, that the outcome is irrelevant to the larp as such or that the roles conflict in reaching the various goals is the aim at the larp, thus creating a branching plot-structure (see this). The expression is adapted from mathematical chaos theory, and its use in larp is controversial.

Source: Stenros, J.: Genre & style. Lecture at Knutpunkt02, Stockholm

Dogma 99

A declaration on larp in the form of a manifest, written by Eirik Fatland and Lars Wingaard. The aim of the manifest was to set strict guidelines along the “less is more” principle for the organisers, thus forcing them to find new and creative ways of making larps. Though few true Dogme-larps have appeared, the manifest has stimulated discussions on the subjects it addressed, and in that regard it has been a success.

The original Manuscript may be found at: <http://fate.laiv.org/dogme99/en>

Source: Amor fati/laiv.org

Dogme 99 is printed in this anthology.

Dramatism

A style of making or playing larp, which values how well the in-game action, creates a satisfying storyline. The dramatist player will emphasise acting out the role in a way that serve the story (see “Meta considerations”). The dramatical organiser will seek to

structure the larp such that it unfolds along his/hers storyline. Different kinds of stories may be viewed as satisfying, depending on individual tastes, varying from fanciful pulp action to believable character drama. It is the end result of the story which is important.

Dramatism is one of a tirade of larp-styles that make up the Three Way Model of larp (see this). The style is thoroughly denounced by the Turku manifest (see this). Several authors argue that dramatism, when seen from the organisers point of view, is synonymous with narrativism (see this)

Source: John Kim, The Three Way Model

Ekstatikoi

A Greek term from theatrical science, used by Aristotle to describe a style of playing a role through putting one self in the roles shoes, as opposed to merely simulating (see "Euplastoi"). The expression is used by Mike Pohjola and others as synonymous with immersionism (see this) when describing style of playing larp.

Source: Mike Pohjola

Eläytyminen

Finnish term, meaning something like "really putting yourself into the shoes of your character and his/her environment". The term is usually interchangeable with immersion (see this).

Source: Pohjola, M. The manifest of the Turku School/laiv.org

Euplatoi

A Greek term from theatrical science, used by Aristotle to describe a style of playing a role through seeking to recreate all the minutiae of that role: The voice, gestures, dress etc. as opposed to simply try to put one self in the roles shoes (see "Ekstatikoi"). The expression is used as synonymous with simulationism (see this) when describing style of playing larp.

Source: Mike Pohjola

Fable

The "grand line" of a plot (see this) played on a larp, in the abstract. The expression is often used in connection with Fateplay as a substitute for the term "Main plott" (see this). See also "Fateplay".

Source: Eirik Fatland/Amor Fati

Fantasy

A literary genre where magic is a part of the diegetic (see this) framework and the technological development and aesthetic is comparable to that known from medieval Europe. This setting is enormously popular in larp, and most, if not all, larp-groups have on occasions done fantasy-larps.

Though fantasy-settings by definitions had magic as part it, magic does not need to be part of the larp. The setting may span from gritty realism, though in a fictional world, to glossy power-struggles between gods in a cataclysmic world. Fantasy is sometimes divided into "high" and "low", depending on the amount of

magic in the game. The high-fantasy setting has proven to be especially prone to the “Peasant problem” (see this).

The setting is known by its English name in Scandinavia. The literary genre’s original name is “Sword & Sorcery” (SS, as compared to SF).

Source: Trad.

Fate

A list of simple instructions given to a participant in a Fateplay (see this) so that the player through following them will fulfil his/her part of the Fateweb (see this). A fate is written in such a way as to minimise the risk of misunderstanding and in such a way that the instructions may be acted out without obstacles. Every fateplayer is an instructed player (see this), but not vice-versa. The term “fate” is narrower than “instruction”. For instructions to be called “fates” they must be a part of the fateweb (see this).

Source: Adapted from Amor Fati

Fateplay

A game event or improvised theatre play where a fateweb (see this) is interpreted and transformed into improvised acting by the fact that all participants follow their characters fate. Fateplay may be tabletop RPG or larp-event where all are given fates. An improvised theatre play, however, is held before a non-interacting audience.

Source: Adapted from Amor Fati

Fateweb

A simple, stepwise story that forms the basis for improvisation in a Fateplay (see this). A Fateweb is made by reducing the larps’ desired fable (see this) to the simplest possible units.

Source/Kilde: Adapted from Amor Fati

Game master

Expression from tabletop role-playing (see this) denoting the leader controlling the imaginary game world. In Danish larp, game master is used to describe an organiser actively partaking in the game, thereby being able to influence the course of the game by direct means. The role of the actively playing organiser is also known from the rest of the Scandinavian scene.

In Norway, the term has a slightly different meaning, see “SL”.

Source: Bruun, J. (2002), Sabbats Lille Liveordbog

Game mechanics

Any system of rules made to allow players to act out aspects of the game that would be impractical, illegal or impossible to do for real, such as magic, cyber technology, armed conflicts or use of drugs. Game mechanics range from highly complicated systems of armour protections and disciplines of magic to a single-number all-round “toughness factor”. Historically, younger groups seem to rely heavier on game mechanics than older groups, and the phenomenon is often seen as an inheritance from the tabletop

RPGs.

Source: Trad.

Gamist

Adjective describing a player enjoying beating a fair challenge in a larp, or setting one up if you are an organiser. The challenges may be tactical combat, intellectual mysteries, politics, or anything else. It may also be used to describe a competitive style of game. The gamist player will usually be concerned about solving a plot (see this). The term "plotter" is synonymous, but is mostly used in a derogatory manner.

Source: John Kim, The Three Way Model

GM

Abbreviation of Game Master. The expression come from tabletop RPG (see this) and has seen extensive use as a general term for organiser in young larp-scenes in its original English form. GM traditionally signifies the organisers of the larp: Those making plots, writing backgrounds, taking care of the logistics etc. Other expressions have been devised, but as new groups form with their root in the tabletop scene, it is still encountered. Source: Trad.

GM-controlled larp

A Norwegian expression from the first half of the 1990's, denoting a larp where the organisers want a strong narrative structure, but the players want a free structure. Such a larp is bound to run into problems (see the "Hidden

Montage"), and the organisers will try to put it back on tracks by a number of ad hoc actions in a Deus Ex Machina-manner (see this).

Critiques of the GM-controlled larps pointed to the player-controlled larps (see this) as an ideal, thus foreshadowing the story vs. the telling discussion in the Swedish scene in the early 2000's.

Source: Trad.

GNS-model

GNS model – Model made by Ron Edwards seeking to describe the aim for RPG in general as a result of three styles: Gamism, narrativism and simulationism (see these). The model is aimed at both organisers and players, and covers all forms of RPG. This makes the model somewhat inaccessible and with limited descriptive power for Scandinavian larp.

The model deals with the reason for role-play through the concepts of exploration and premise. A player wishes to let the role explore the setting, and the elements the player find interesting constitutes the premise for further gaming. The premise is thus the players wishes, and as such a meta-consideration (see this). The role's actions are exploration. It is in the relationship between these two that the above-mentioned styles of play appear.

The model has seen some use in the more theoretically oriented circles. Particularly in the narrativism versus simulationism debate, hotly debated

in Sweden in the early 2000's.

Source: Edwards, R. 2001. GNS and other matter of role-playing theory, Adept Press.

Hardcore larp

A rather diffuse term that has seen various definitions. The Norwegian group Weltschmerz defines it as an approach to playing where the players don't want simulate or pretend anything - not even the actions that bring real harm, pain and suffering. Other authors have variously defines it as any larp involving strong physical hardship, or as any style of play where total immersion (see this) in a physically challenging setting is sought

Source: Weltschmerz/Trad.

Harver

Norwegian term, roughly translating to harrower (from the agricultural implement) meaning someone who go to a larp primarily for fighting. See "Boffer".

Source: Trad.

Hidden montage

Expression adapted from film theory, where it denotes the common conventions that helps audience interpret the storyline behind the series of scenes that make up a traditional (i.e. Hollywood) film, thus making the erratically changing scenes appear as a smooth continuum. In larp the expression cover the numerous conventions that are necessary to make the plots (se this) of a larp run

smoothly. The montage may include such conventions as "all men in black cloaks are evil", "a bang and a bright light is magic being performed" and "if the smith is mentioned in your role you are expected to talk to him".

Martin Erickson claims that as there are no way of enforcing a perfect hidden montage on your participants, a game with hidden plots will always experience hang-ups (see also "the Bøckmanian maxime"). The only solution to this problem is either to not have plots, making a purely immersionist larp (see this) or force single solutions on the players, making it a fateplay (see this). The theory is controversial.

Source: Ericsson, M. The story versus the telling. Discussion on Knutpunkt02, Stockholm

Hobbyist

Term used to describe someone strictly considering larp a hobby that should not be "theorised to death". Also used by Fatland to describe one opposed to view larp as a form of art.

Source: Eirik Fatland/laiv.org

Iff

Abbreviation of In-live/off-live. Iff is a Swedish expression denoting a situation where a few players play despite that the other players are not, or play in an area not considered a part of the game, like an off-live area (see "Offing"). Iff occurs temporarily and spatially limited within a game, involving only a few players. When the Iff state involves all or most of the larp,

the situation is more properly termed “Onff” (see this).

Source: Camilla Mörn/Galadrim debattforum

IL

Norwegian term, an abbreviation of Intrigue leader, an expression from Ravn (see this) still in use. It originally denoted the leader or the one responsible for making intrigues/plots and roles (see these) and the contact person for the players, both before and during the larp, as opposed to the “SL” (see this). The added responsibilities of contacts with the player separate the IL from the “Larpwright” (see this). Later the expression became synonymous with organiser.

Kilde: Ravn/Tommy Finsen

Immersionist

Adjective describing a player who values living the life of the role, feeling what the role would feel. Immersionists insist on resolving in-game events based solely on game-world considerations. Thus, a fully immersionist player will not fudge rules to save its role's neck or the plot, or even change details of background story irrelevant in the setting to suite the play. An immersionist organiser will try to make the plots and setting such that they are believable to the players. See also Eläytyminen.

Source: Mike Pohjola. See also The Three Way Model

Impro

Short for Improvisational theatre.

Movement created by Keith Johnstone. The foundation is Theatre sports, a high paced and hilarious form of improvised on-stage lunacy.

Source: Stafflund U. 2001, Glossary of interactive forms, Interactive Arts magazine.

Indrama

Word coined in Norway by Eirik Fatland, to describe any structure that, with “artistic intention” allows for multiple participants to interact through improvising according to pre-determined characters, but without inter-player game or strategy elements. “Artistic intention” is to be understood in the sense of art theory, not as “intention to create art” but as a particular method and mentality on the part of the creator. This view must be understood as a reaction against the attitude “this is just harmless fun and games” (see Hobbyist).

Examples of structures that can support indrama include, but are not limited to: Larp, freeform role-playing, multiplayer online games, some drama techniques and some (but not all) applications of “environmental” and “interactive” theatre.

Source: Eirik Fatland, Postings on Laiv.org, 2001

Institutions of larp

Assuming that like all human activity, organising larp is done for a form of reward, Ragnhild Hutchison, using economical science, has described the phenomenon of outsourcing various aspects of larp-making (monstering,

FX, larpwright etc). She argues that reward (e.g. personal gratification, honour and social standing) will increase as larps grow in complexity, but so will also the effort. By outsourcing, the organiser will be able to increase the reward per effort to the point where organisers receive a net gain, despite having to share the honour with piece-organisers.

Hutchison's writing mainly concern the structural development of the larp-scene as a result of the increasing complexity of Scandinavian larp.

Source: Hutchinson, R. 2002. Larp at a deaggregated level. Postings on laiv.org, 2002

Also see the article Institutional development of larp in Oslo in this anthology

Instructed player

An "Instructed Player" (IP) is any player who receives specific and personal instructions on how to act after the larp has begun. The expression is sometimes used to describe tool-roles, like messengers and other "extras" that are not properly classed as roles.

Source: Adapted from Amor Fati

Integrative

(adjective) A larp structured such that the plots (see this) of all roles in the game is aimed at one or a few common goal(s), thus creating a narrowing plot-structure (see this), the opposite of Dissipative (see this). The expression is adapted from mathematical chaos theory, and is used in larp is controversial.

Source: Stenros, J.: Genere & style. Lecture at Knutpunkt02, Stockholm

Inter-immersion

Expression proposed by Swede Elge Larsson, to denote a higher state of immersion (see this). Stating that immersion is just a tool, he argues that the player will not experience reward without the role being confirmed. Thus larp is at its best is when two players succeed in sharing the illusion and thus create the larp reality together in mutual confirmation. The expression must be seen as a sort of Platonian ideal, a perfect state to be sought that may not fully come to reality.

Source: Larsson, E.: Lajv som väg till upplysning, lecture at KP01, Oslo

Intrigue

Norwegian expression from Ravn (see this) used to describe a plot (see this) with only social components, to separate them from the more magic- and item-oriented plots of traditional fantasy larp. Later, the expression came to signify all forms of plots, and thus synonymous with plot in the general sense of the word, and was therefore abandoned.

Source: Ravn/Trad./laiv.org

Key Manifesto

Manifesto published by Tomas Mørkrid March 2001. The manifest is directed at organisers and does primarily concern itself with creating the social structuring and hierarchy of larps. It is in the form of 10 "principles" and five sets of "keys"

(hence the name), following from the principles. The keys are fairly simple and straightforward guidelines and reads well as a simple checklist for even inexperienced organisers.

The Key manifesto lacks the provocative revolutionary qualities of the Turku Manifesto and Dogma 99 (see these), and has received limited attention despite its very useful nature. The original manifesto may be found at: <http://www.fabula.no/manifest.html>

Source: Tomas Mørkrid

Laiv/lajv

Scandinavian approximation of the pronunciation of the word "live", used as an abbreviation of the full term "Live role-play". The term was coined in Sweden in the early 1990's and accepted as a simple way of separating the word from its original meaning. It has since come to dominate as a term for larp (see this) among larpers in Scandinavia, replacing earlier, more cumbersome terms. "Lajv" is the Swedish form, "Laiv" the Norwegian term. In Denmark, "live" and "laiv" are both used.

Source: Trad.

Lajvien

Swedish expression covering the sum of conventions of a traditional larp (see this). On a fantasy-larp, with an underdeveloped setting, the players will generate the lacking information based on experience from similar larps. This fictional reference constitutes the so-called Lajvien. It is larp clichés

of the generic fantasy setting, the smallest common denominator and the foundation one falls back on where nothing else is specified.

Some authors, especially protagonists of the Sestia movement (see this), have pointed to Lajvien as a limiting factor in development of fantasy larps. They have proposed that a total break from fantasy is necessary to escape Laivien and renew larp.

Source: Håkan Hugsson og Jonas Nelson, Galdrim debattforum

Larp

Abbreviation of Live Action Role-Play, a form of role-play where the participants (termed players) take on fictive personalities (called roles or characters) and act out their interaction in a predefined, fictive setting (see this). The form differs from tabletop RPG (see this) in that the players act the interaction out physically, hence "live action" Though the form may have some use in psycho-therapy and the setting may be virtually anything, most larping is done for fun, and the setting is traditionally fantasy or science fiction. See also "laiv/lajv".

Source: Dogme 99/Trad./Laiv.org

Larp contract

Any social contract which – articulated or not – (a) defines a situation which necessitates the physical impersonation, and allows for the mental impersonation, of roles who may co-exist and interact in an ideally similar diegesis, (b)

defines the relations between this collective diegesis and reality, and (c) defines methods to resolve or avoid inconsistencies between individual diegesi creating a collective diegesis. Source: Eirik Fatland, postings on laiv.org 2003

Larpwright

Swedish term for someone making the written materials for a larp. The larpwright is a result of outsourcing parts of the burden of organising a larp, making the organisers free to concentrate on other aspects of larpmaking (see “Institutions of larp”). Writing along strict guidelines from the organiser, the writer’s responsibilities ends with writing, and he or she may even not be present at the larp itself.

The larpwright is common in Sweden, and some Swedish organisers with a bit of talent in writing have made quite a name for themselves as larpwrights. The larpwright is rarely found in other Scandinavian countries and must not be confused with the Norwegian phenomenon of IL (see this).

Source: Gunnar Fredrikson

Live-steel

Live-steel – Term used to describe medieval style weapons (swords, axes, spears etc) made from (more or less), authentic material. The expression is also attributed to larps where these are used. Live-steel fighting is naturally tightly restricted, and several rule-systems allowing their use in larp in a safe manner exists, ranging from

pure game mechanics (see this) to full contact fighting.

A certain difference between Norwegian and Swedish praxis is found: Several Swedish groups use a system where arms are never even drawn, but the conflict safely resolved by comparing combat values. In Norway, live-steel fighting is mostly limited to re-enactment groups (see this) and larp fighting is done physically.

Source: Kongshirden anno 1308/Trad.

LK

Abbreviation of Norwegian Laiv Kompatibel (trans: Larp compatible), a term from Trondheim. Something is considered LK if it does not to any great extent break with the illusion of the setting (see this). The expression is mostly used concerning modern items for use on fantasy (see this) larps.

Source: Håkon Mosseby, postings on laiv.org

Logistics

A military expression, covering all the practical aspects of a larp as an arrangement away from home. As Scandinavian larps often are quite long, and with a strong outdoor tradition, these aspects may be rather important. Bad logistics have toppled several potentially fine outdoor larps. Typical topics are drinking water for the players, sanitary considerations, transportation, applications and notifications to the various authorities etc. Logistics are sometimes jokingly referred to as “boy-scout’s

knowledge”.

Though logistics usually fall to the organisers, it is sometimes outsourced to the FX-team or to groups that specialises in this trade (see “Institutions of Larp”)

LRP

Abbreviation for Live Role-Play, see “Larp”.

Main plot

The “main lines” in the plot-structure on a larp. These will usually be the same as the basic idea behind the larp, and is customary to tie most plotlines to these. The expression is synonymous with “Fable” (see this).

Source: Hellerud, H. V. 1993. Om å skrive plott. Lecture at Ravens Arrangers Course, Oslo

Meilahti school

A Finnish school that seeks to understand larp and tabletop games (see these) as a single form. This is also true of the Turku school (see the “Turku-manifest”), and seems to be the norm among Finnish theorists, setting them apart from most other Scandinavian theorists. The School is dedicated to a purely descriptive approach to larp/RPG and wish to developed a language to describe it independent of those from other areas, such as film and sociology.

Source: Hakkarainen, H. & Stenros, J. The Meilahti school, Thoughts on Role-Playing.

The Meilahti School is printed in a revised edition in this anthology.

Meta-considerations

Any consideration based on the player’s, not the roles interpretation and evaluation of the in-game situation. Dependent on the players aim for the game, such considerations may lead the player to take realistic or unrealistic decisions in the game. However, all such decisions are based on viewing the larp as a larp, not as a real situation.

Examples include, but are not limited to: Theatrical play to live up the game, decisions made against the interests of the role to further the organiser’s aim for the game, conscious play to include other players in the plot, conscious play to gain points and advantages in a competition between players (not characters).

Meta-consideration is considered bad form in immersionist games, but as a necessity in narrativist games (see these)

Source: Petter Bøckman

Meta-playing

An expression covering a situation where a player is taking non-diegetic (see “Diegesis”) actions as a part of playing the role. This may occur when two players need to sort out technicalities of game mechanics (see this) or when play has broken down to such an extent that there is no longer is any point to playing in character (see “Offing” and Onff”). However, meta-actions are always taken in the interest of the role, so that normal play may resume as soon as the situation is

resolved. Meta-play is thus the direct opposite of meta-consideration, where the actions is diegetic, but the reasons are not (see "Meta-consideration").

Kilde: Kim Thomas Siverstsen

Mixed fateplays

A fateplay (see this) may contain traditional plots (se this) and still be a fateplay. In theory a fateplay may also be held inside the surroundings of a larp containing plots. This is called "a mixed fateplay". In mixed fateplays the fateweb is a separate and closed part of the action, which does not influence and is not influenced by the plots of the rest of the larp. See also "Fateplay"

Source: Adapted from Amor Fati

Monster

A role whose function in the game is be an antagonist to the other players. The players doing monsterring is usually acting on the organisers instructions, and is only in the game for a limited time. They are thus not considered players as such. Commonly, the monsters take the shape of monstrous, powerful semi-human beings (orcs, werewolves, robots), hence the name. Exemptions do occur: Some games features monsters that have actual player roles either within or outside the game society for the whole game. Some monster may be perfectly ordinary people in a monstrous situation, like soldiers belonging to a foreign power. In a setting of two power-full groups fighting over a stretch of land, the scouts from the

two groups may be monsters for their opposites. The expression is occasionally used to describe other forms of tool-roles, like messengers and other "extras".

The Norwegian term "SIS" reflects a more strict view on monsterring, see this.

Source: Trad.

Mundis

Finnish expression, from Latin mundanis (worldly), used to signify non-larpers.

Source: Trad.

Narrativism

Adjective describing a style of playing or making a larp (or other RPG) that emphasises the experience of the epical story. The Sestia movement and the people behind Manifest Sunday (see these) have been proponents of the narrativist larp. Narrativism is further one of a tirade of larp-styles that make up the GNS-description of larp (see "GNS model"). Several authors uses narrativism as a more precise expression for dramatism (see this).

Larp being notoriously hard to control (see the "Bøckmanian maxime"), the narrativist larps must contain some restraining elements such as fates (see this) or severe limitations on space and information to keep the plots on track. Martin Ericsson has addressed the problem, see the "Hidden montage".

Source: Brodén, M. & al. 2001. The Manifest Sunday. The Book - Kutepunkt 2001, Red: A. Alfsvåg; E.

Eidsem Hansen, I. Storrø & T. Finsen.
Oslo

NIL

Abbreviation of New Institutions of Larp, see “Institutions of larp”.

Offing

Abbreviation for “going off-live”, that is for the player to leave the role and distance him self from the play. Offing is considered bad form in all larps, and is generally due to boredom, badly written roles or plots (see these) or a failure to identify with the role or situation (see “Immersionist” and “Decontextualisation”).

Offing includes failing to respond to the roles name, bring up non-diegetic topics and using information gained in a non-game situation. Scandinavian larps, often being very long, sometimes have special areas set of for those needing a break from the game. See also “Utgård”

Source: Trad.

Onff

Abbreviation of On/Off. Onff is a Swedish term denoting a situation where there is no set distinction or confusion of whether the situation is a part of the larp or not. It can also denote a situation where there is a mix of playing and not playing participants. The Onff situation occur when a whole game is breaking down, or when the game is actually over, but the participants do not want to break out of the game reality (see “Immersionism”).

When Onff occur temporarily and spatially limited within a game, involving only a few players, the situation is more properly termed “Iff” (see this).

Source: Carl Heath/Galadrim debattforum

Organiser controlling

A Danish expression describing the phenomenon of organisers controlling the narrative structure of the game through influencing the players’ decisions. The expression is similar, but not identical to the Norwegian expression GM-controlled larp (see this).

Source: Bruun, J. (2002), Sabbats Lille Liveordbog

Padding

Norwegian adaptation of the English term, used to describe medieval style weapons (swords, axes, spears etc) made from some sort of padding around a hard core. The object of such arms is to allow the players to resolve game conflicts with arms without actually harming them selves. The equivalent Swedish term is “Boffer” (see this).

Source: Trad.

Peasant problem

A phenomenon often occurring when the roles (se this) ability to influence the game is highly unevenly distributed. The players of the lesser roles, often playing peasants (hence the name) in a fantasy-setting, will then out of frustration or boredom

fall out of role (see "Offing") or try to influence the game in a manner not planned by the organiser (see the "Bøckmanian maxim"). They may seek to amend the situation by playing the roles boisterously (trading influence for visibility), play contrary to the setting (see "Saklig") or even make an ingame revolt.

The problem is not uncommon in high fantasy larps (see "Fantasy").

Source: Trad.

Player

A person participating in a larp (or other RPG) event. A player is normally not involved in making the larp, nor does he possess all the information the organisers have put into the game. A player is given a role (see this) with the necessary instructions, and is himself responsible for playing that role.

Source: Trad.

Player-controlled larp

A Norwegian expression from the first half of the 1990's, denoting a larp where organisers make no attempt at steering the larp in any direction, making it a gamistic or immersionistic larp (see these). These larps do consequently allow for very little narrative structure and are frequently rather chaotic.

Critiques of the player-controlled larps pointed to the GM-controlled larps (see this) as an ideal, thus foreshadowing the story vs. the telling discussion in the Swedish scene in the early 2000's.

Source: Trad.

Plot

Puzzle for players to solve on a larp, either as a general story-line, a more personal mystery or a as conflict between roles. The term is problematic: Several partly overlapping, partly conflicting definitions exist. The expression is also used in literature and film theory with different meanings. The one commonly used in larp is more closely related to the literary expression. Plots are normally initiated by the organisers, and form a major part of what the roles are expected "to do" on a gamist (see this) larp. See also "Main-plot" and "Intrigue".

Source: Trad.

Plot-structure

A plot (see this) as it appears if drawn up schematically, so that the action A will produce an effect, which may again be altered by an action B. One differentiates between "open plot-structures" where several solutions to a given problem may exist, and the "closed plot-structures" where a problem may only be solved in one (or a restricted number of) ways. It may also denote the total amount of plots in a larp, and the way in which these connected to each other. In a larp where the plots are given in the forms of fates, the plot-structure will be synonymous with the "Fate-Web", see these. See also "Integrative" and "Dissipative".

Source: E. Eidsem (1992): *Plotteori*, *Guru Fanzine*, nr 1, Oslo and Amor

Fati

Plot-theory

A theoretical approach to the way plots (se this) work in a larp. Plot-theory was forwarded by Erlend Eidsem in 1992, and was the first serious attempt at a generalized description of the workings of larp. The work describes various plot-structures (see this) and is still a valuable tool for larp-making. Source: Source/Kilde: E. Eidsem (1992?): Plotteori, Guru Fanzine, nr 1, Oslo and Amor Fati

Plotter

A player primarily concerned with solving plots (see this). The term is frequently used as a deegratory expression for gamist (se this) players or larps. Source: Trad.

Postlarp charisma

Expression proposed by Swede Elge Larsson, to denote a state of mental creativity that some experience after a larp, creating an aura of physical and mental well-being. Describing larp as an artistic creation where New Reality is made, Larsson argue that larpers are like gods in the creative act. The postlarp charisma stems from this New Reality and the player's godlike state in it lingering after the larp.

The expression is partly a reaction to the better-known "Post-larp depression" (see this).

Source: Larsson, E.: Way of enlightenment- lajv som opplysning, lecture at KP01, Oslo.

Postlarp depression

Expression denoting the occasionally low emotional state players experience following a larp. Larps are often highly social, exiting and intense, but at the end the emotional rush is necessarily severed and the internal social connections of the game are broken. The resulting depression may be seen as a sort of emotional withdrawal symptom.

Source: Eirik Fatland, posting on laiv.org, 2001

Ravn

Norwegian larp-organisation based in Oslo, erected in 1991 and still operational. Starting larp in Norwegian capital, Ravn has had a huge influence on the early years of larp in Norway. A number of common Norwegian larp expressions have its origin in Ravn.

Source: Ravn, <http://ravn.laiv.org>

Role

The fictive persona through which the player (see this) act and experience the fictive world in a larp or any other form of RPG. As such, the role is essential to larp in all forms. The term is widely used in various other fields, and its use in larp (see this) is closer to that of the theatre. In tabletop RPGs the role is usually called a "character", and this expression is occasionally found in larp-texts.

The role is usually presented to the player in the form of a "background" (see this), delineating the major vitae

of the fictive persona and information necessary for the game. The nature of the role, the relationship between player and role and the way the role is interpreted is the subject of several major works, notably the descriptive GNS and Threefold and three Way models (see these) and touched upon in the various manifests, notably the Turku manifest and Key manifesto (see these). The relationship between player and role is a source of theoretical controversy and still not satisfactory resolved.

Source: Trad.

RPG

Abbreviation for Role-Playing Games. The expression denotes all forms of role-play, bout games that are played out verbally and physically, often being divided into tabletop RPG (see this) and larp. All though interactive, multiplayer computer-games may be seen as RPGs, they are only rarely considered when discussing the phenomenon.

Source: Trad.

Saklig

(Adj.) Norwegian expression, meaning “realistic” or “appropriate”. In a larp context it denotes realism, authenticity or historical correctness. “Saklig” embraces everything diegetic (see this) to the larp, both objects such as costumes, food, buildings, props, weapons, tools etc, as well as actions, events, statements, body language and other forms of communication. E.g. in a Viking setting, knitted clothes

and potatoes would be incorrect (“usaklig”), while coarse wool and gruel would be correct (“saklig”).

The emphasis on correctness (saklighet) will usually vary greatly between different larpS. An immersionist (see this) larp, for example, will usually have higher demands for correctness (“saklighet”), than a narrativist larp. Correctness (“saklighet”) will to a varying degree suffer from any meta-considerations (see this).

Source: Christian Fahlstrøm

Sestia

Abbreviation of Second Stage – Interacting Arts, an expression coined by Swedes Nordwall & Staflund to describe a form of larp or other means of conveying stories that emphasis a feedback between the story as provided by the organisers (or director/actors) and the participants (or spectators). Though not necessary to the form as per definition, the Sestia-events so far has relied heavily on mixing level of abstraction and on mixing fora like larp, radio, film and theatre, at the sacrifice of realism for each forum. See also Narrativism.

Source: Adapted from Staflund U. 2001, Glossary of interactive forms, Interactive Arts magazine.

Setting

The imaginative world within where the larp is set. It may denote diegesis (see this), but is more often used in a more restricted sense, either referring to the geography, metaphysics and

history of the larp-world in question, or to the general genre of the game, such as Viking-setting, western-setting, et cetera.

Source: Trad.

Simulation

Term used to describe larp as such in Norway in the 1990-ies to the extent that larps by Ravn (see this) was actually termed summer-simulations, winter-simulation, horror-simulation etc. In Finnish terminology it is used to describe a style of playing with emphasis creating a believable setting (see "Simulationism").

Source: Tommy Finsen/Pohjola. M. The manifest of the Turku School/laiv.org

Simulationism

A style of playing or making larps that focuses on exploration of the setting (see this) as the priority of play. The simulationists seek to behave and play as realistically as possibly within game reality. Note that setting need not be realistic in it self, but the simulationist player may be greatly concerned with the internal logic of that setting. Simulationism taken to the extreme will turn into re-enactment of a fictional society. See also "Saklig".

Simulationism is one of a tirade of larp-styles that make up the GNS-description of larp (see "GNS model"). Several authors see simulationism as synonymous with immersionism, and the Turku maifest (see this) sees simulationism at the only other valid style of play outside immersion.

Source: Edwards, R. 2001. GNS and other matter of role-playing theory, Adept Press. See

SIS

Abbreviation of Norwegian Skummelt I Skogen (transl. Scary in the woods), an expression loosely translating to monsters (see this). The expression comes from Ravn (see this) and deviate from the more general "monster" in specifying a few important aspect of scaring players: SIS has to be 1) scary, thus mysterious, and it has to be 2) in the woods, thus outside the "tamed world", mostly unseen and not a part of the society. The SIS is a tool for the organisers, and as such strictly instructed and not considered players. The differences may be subtle, but basically translates into that a true monster, in order to remain scary, must never be a role with basic, understandable needs and affections. Confusingly, the expression is sometimes used to describe other forms of tool-roles, like messengers and other "extras" from lack of other relevant terms.

Source: Ravn/Trad.

SL

Abbreviation of Norwegian SpillLeder (transl. Game Master), the one arranging and supervising a game. The expression comes from Ravn (see this) and is a direct translation of the "Game Master" (GM) as used in tabletop role-play. The SL is responsible for all "external factors", that is those not falling under the dominion of the IL

(see this).

See also “Game master”

Source: Ravn/Tommy Finsen

Tabletop RPG

A form of RPG (see this) where the roles (usually called characters) are all fictional and the whole game is played out verbally, usually around a table (hence the name). A game master controls the world, apart from the roles being controlled by the players. Physical actions involving the roles are simulated through some sort of game mechanics, usually involving rules and dices.

Source: Trad.

Third-stage

Phrase coined by Gabriel Widing and Erlend Eidsem. They regard larping in the traditional sense of the word as the first stage. When larp is using modern technology and themes to tell a story, it is considered a second stage (see “Sestia”). The third stage is where larp influences society, trying to awaken people to take an active part in society. This form does not take place in a fictive setting, and is thus not larp per se, nor is it seen as such by the creators. The form has some similarities with hidden theatre and performance art.

Source: Hansen, E. & G. Widing: Art, activism and third stage indrama, lecture at Theoriseminar, Kunsternes Hus, Oslo 2001

Threefold and Three Way models

Two descriptive models of role-play.

The Threefold Model deals with tabletop RPG (see this), dividing styles of making and playing games into gamist, dramatist and simulationist (see these). Though the model cover tabletop gaming, it has formed the basis for works of larp, mainly the Turku manifest (see this). The model has been attempted converted to a model for Scandinavian larp as the “Three Way Model”. It divides larping into gamist, dramatist and immersionist (see these).

Sources: Kim, J. H.: The rec.games.frp.advocacy FAQ, Part I: The Threefold Model and Bøckman, P.: The Three Way Model, Revision of the Threefold Model for Scandinavian larp. The latter article is printed in this anthology.

Traditional larp

Though no set definition exists, a sort of consensus exists as to the extension of the term. It cover a fairly gamistic (se this) larp, with a fantasy (se this) setting, 20 to 100 players lasting for 2 to 5 days, play going on continuously day and night. The larp usually focus on a small town or an Inn, and its problems with some sort of monster (see this). Though Eirik Fatland has augmented strongly against this type of larp being common, it continues to re-appear in newly formed scenes and enjoy enduring popularity. See also “Lajvien”.

Source: Trad

Turku-manifest

A declaration on larp in the form of

a manifest, written by Mike Pohjola and named from his native city, Turku. The aim of the manifest was to form a corrective to the two prevailing styles of play in Finish larps: Dramatist and Gamist (see these). The manifest, while giving good guidelines for the Eläytyminen (see this) style of playing, has come under heavy critique on the international scene for being overly elitist, and has stimulated quite fierce debate. The original text may be found at: <http://live.roolipeli.net/turku/school/index.html>

Source: Pohjola. M. The manifest of the Turku School/laiv.org

The Turku manifesto is printed in this anthology with a revised foreword.

Turku-style

- The style of playing or making a game, as delineated in the Turku-manifest, i. e. immersionist or simulationist (see these).
- The type of larps commonly played in the city of Turku. These usually last for 2 to 5 hours, involve a limited number of players and usually have a city- or building-based setting.

Source: Lars Wingård