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FALL 1998  
ISSUE #23



Christianity and the Betrayal  
of European Americans

Dangers Beyond the Grave

Protecting the Dead

Let Them Eat Horses

Scandinavian Hofs

*...plus more on the  
Kennewick Man*

# ASATRU

## AN OVERVIEW

Are you new to Asatru, or is this your first copy of THE RUNESTONE? If so, you might like a little background on what this is all about, so you can better understand the contents of our magazine.

Asatru is the original, pre-Christian religion of northwestern Europe. It was followed by the Germanic tribes that became today's Englishmen, Scandinavians, Dutch, and, of course, Germans. A related religion and way of life was practiced by the Celts - our modern Irish, Scottish, and Welsh. Because these two groups are so similar, it's fair to say that Asatru expresses the heritage of Northern European-descended people as a whole. In short, this is the faith of our ancestors! Because it is our native belief, we feel it best expresses our way of looking at the world. It helps us live lives of virtue and honor, in touch with the turning of the seasons and with all those who have gone before us. It is a spiritual path of wisdom and courage in a world that sorely needs these traits.

Our forebears believed in a number of Gods and Goddesses. Some of us think of them as real in the most literal sense, and others view them as symbols that help us understand the divine aspects of the universe. However you consider them, it is useful to know the names and roles of some of the main ones:

ODIN - father of the Gods, associated with wisdom, magic, and ecstasy  
THOR - a God of strength and might, defender of Gods and humans  
FRIGGA - mother of the Gods, wise, involved with family and children  
TYR - renowned for valor, sacrifice, and warrior prowess  
BALDER - most beautiful of the Gods, soft-spoken, brave, and good  
SKADI - mountain-dwelling Goddess who hunts on skis  
HEIMDAL - guardian of the Rainbow Bridge, leading to the realm of the Gods  
IDUN - Goddess who keeps the magic apples that restore the Gods' youth  
LOKI - mischievous trickster of the Gods who often works against their aims  
FREYA - Goddess of love and fertility, but who also has a warrior aspect  
FREY - a virile fertility God whose domain includes love, joy, and prosperity  
NJORD - God connected with the sea as a source of food and wealth

What does our religion value? We preach and practice courage, honor, the importance of family and ancestral bonds, strength, freedom, and joyful, vigorous life.

THE RUNESTONE is a journal of the ancient Northern European religion known as Asatru. It is dedicated to our Gods and Goddesses, the people of the North, and to the values of courage, freedom, and individuality within the context of kinship.

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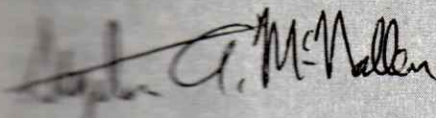
# UP FRONT

Modern Asatru must move in two directions, simultaneously, if it is to accomplish its role in the world.

On the one hand, it must grow ever more deeply rooted in its own wisdom and tradition. Despite thirty years of active religious work (and many more years of gradually expanding scholarship), we are still filling in the gaps in our knowledge and practice. This is understandable, as so much was lost over the centuries, but the reconstruction must continue at the fastest rate we can safely handle. Our articles on shamanism, death, hofs, and the like are examples of this exploration.

This inward work must be balanced by a reaching out to others - not just to convert them to Asatru, but to build alliances with non-Asatru people and institutions. This must be done without compromising our views as Asatruar, of course. By doing this, we multiply our influence in the world and at the same time protect ourselves from any sort of repressive backlash which may develop in the coming years. You'll find this idea discussed in our lead article.

Asatruar have a lot to do, and the AFA intends to be out there on the cutting edge, doing it!



A JOURNAL OF EVOLUTIONARY ASATRU

# The RUNESTONE

Fall 1998  
Issue #23

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# Christianity and the BETRAYAL OF EUROPEAN-AMERICANS

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STEPHEN A. MCNALLAN

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**W**hen I first came to the Gods and Goddesses of Asatru, I still carried a vast cauldron of bitterness in my heart against Christianity, and indeed, against everything remotely connected with the Church. But with the passing of the decades, I see more clearly.

Let's set aside theology, and talk about *people*. Some Christians are hypocrites and bigots...and so are some who call themselves Asatruar. Some Christians are pacifists and weaklings...but others show more guts and endurance than people in our own kindreds. Some Christians have turned their backs on their ancestral culture...while others treasure most parts of it as deeply as do we. The question of cult *versus* character is not simple, and I respect the courage, honesty, and goodness that I find in many Christians.

It is my concern for worthy Christians - men and women cut from our own cloth, brothers and sisters sprung from the womb of the European tribes - that compels me to point out that they have been betrayed by their Church.

*The mainstream American churches have turned their backs on European-Americans. These institutions should be abandoned by anyone with any feeling whatsoever for our European heritage, or any concern for the future of our people.*

## **An Indictment of the Churches**

Consider Catholicism. In America, the Catholic Church has become a Third World phenomenon. Vietnamese, Mexicans, Koreans, and miscellaneous Central Americans are making their numbers felt. Demographics matter, and the culture of the Church is changing, shifting away from its former,

European, center of gravity. "This migration [of Hispanics into the United States] will transform the church by the next century into a predominately Hispanic American institution," according to professor Father Allan Figueroa Deck, author of an authoritative history of US Latino Catholicism, *The Second Wave*.

As goes religion, so goes politics - especially when it comes to issues like immigration, bilingualism, and welfare. Organized Catholicism in the United States has actively aided the ongoing invasion by illegal aliens. The bishop in San Francisco campaigned tirelessly against Proposition 187, which was designed to reduce the flow of illegal immigrants into California. Catholic clergy throughout the state took their lead from him, denouncing the proposition as dangerous and racist.

Many parishes are actively aiding illegal immigrants. At one church in downtown Los Angeles, sixty illegal immigrant men lie down on pews after the last Mass. They may stay here for up to four months while finding jobs and apartments. "If it weren't for the church, my struggle here would be much more difficult," says Rogelio Castro Ramos, a Mexican who slipped into Arizona illegally a few weeks earlier and who sleeps at the church while working as a day laborer.

Church lay workers act as mediators when merchants refuse to let illegals stand on downtown street corners where they are approached for work as construction workers and gardeners. Many of them take part in pro-illegal immigrant demonstrations and protests, as well.

But many Protestants are just as involved in this cultural power shift. Alongside the Catholic

clergy, they work tirelessly on behalf of every ethnic group except European-Americans. Certainly, there are individual Protestants and Catholics who do not participate in this activist theology - but most denominations are influenced or dominated by the ideological opposition. There is a thin line between fighting genuine racism and injustice on the one hand, and wholesale undermining of legitimate European-American interests on the other. Affirmative action? It's only redress for past discrimination...Welfare? Another name for Christian compassion...Hate crimes? The victims are always People of Color, the perpetrators all White kids. Cultural diversity? Sure...but we don't want any European cultures represented at our Diversity Day!

The feelings of guilt and inferiority which lie at the root of Christianity have found new modes of expression in a consuming self-hatred, a wish to not exist. History will accomodate this desire, if we insist!

There are good Catholics, of all races. There are good Protestants, of all races. But the orientation of Christianity in these closing years of the twentieth century is racist, belittling or denying legitimate European-American needs - the need for self-esteem, the need for fair treatment, and the need for existence itself! Christianity has turned its back on us, and we must turn our backs on it.

But we need *not* turn our back on individual Christians, which is a very different thing altogether!

### **Christians - Liberal, Traditional Mainstream, and Fundamentalist**

Christianity, as a religion, is utterly indefensible from an Asatru standpoint. Our theologies are completely opposed; the submission of a Christian to his God is repugnant to us, along with the idea of original sin and the repressed sexuality that seems to be part and parcel of Christian belief. In the realm of values, we have many sharp differences. For example, revenge is a time-honored tradition in Asatru, while the God of the Bible reserves the right of vengeance to himself.

When we look at many of the values held by ordinary Sunday church-goers, however, things are different. Consider three basic classifications of Christians: Let's call them the liberals, the fundamentalists, and the traditional mainstream. Each of these have their own traits, and if we lump them all into one big

box with a generic label on it, we're missing some important points.

I'll define the liberals as the politically left, one-world, social justice crowd. They want to donate money to African "liberation movements;" the bayoneting of babies of European descent is regrettable but necessary if it means the end of "White colonialism." You might find them in the sanctuary movement, or organizing in the ghetto. These are the folks who think that White people are the cause of most of the trouble in the world. Clearly, we have no common ground with Christians of this classification, on either theology or values. We're justified in writing them off completely.

The fundamentalists, on the other hand, are the hard-core Bible bangers. Their outstanding characteristic is intolerance. Many of them would pass laws restricting freedom of religion for Asatruar, if they could. An authoritarian mindset is fairly common in this category, and they are very willing to impose their personal morality on others. Fundamentalists want (Christian) prayer in schools, dresses worn below the knee, and a society based on "Biblical values." Asatruar don't have much to discuss with this category, either.

A third classification of Christians lies in between these extremes, and I have called them the "traditional mainstream." They go to church on Sunday, work hard, and are honest - traits which may also be found in the other categories. The difference is that the traditional mainstream is not caught up either in the ethno-masochism of the liberals or the hostility and life-denial of the fundamentalists. Many of them are tired of being pilloried for being European-Americans. They are sick of the perverted swill pumped out of Hollywood, and they're NRA members. While they truly love Jesus (or their image of him), they figure that a person's religion is his or her own business. They might think we're misguided, but they probably don't believe we're Satanic and they're not afraid to drink a beer with us or chat politics.

We need to be talking to these folks.

### **Extending Asatru's Influence**

The great majority of mainstream traditionalists are not likely converts to Asatru. There is an important difference between them and us, and it

has to do with the question of freedom. Like us, these men and women are resistant to human tyrants. If this country was invaded, they would be the hard core of the guerrilla bands fighting in the hills. And many of them are aware of the threat of domestic dictatorship, as well. Paradoxically, these same rugged men and women will kneel before their God, accept his will at the expense of their own, and be his unquestioning servants. They do not see the contradiction between these two behaviors, whereas most of the Asatruar I know feel that *all* tyranny - domestic and foreign, terrestrial or divine - is equally wrong.

This fundamental issue will keep most traditional mainstream Christians from taking up Asatru, even though so many of our other values are compatible. However, many of them can be our allies on specific social and cultural issues. They believe in the family, don't like government interference in their lives, won't surrender their guns, and they have other things to do than wallow in guilt.

We need their support, and they need ours. But there is another very important reason why we need to reach out to them. Someday, there may be a backlash against the policies which have ruled this country for many years. Such reactions are often extreme, and Americans may install some form of politically conservative Christian ideology as the pendulum swings the other direction. This would be bad news for us, since it would lead to religious repression and perhaps to a more general loss of liberties as well. Our Christian neighbors may be tempted by such an answer, however, and we need to be there to help them reject the idea. One way to magnify our influence is to make connections with those Christians with whom we have something in common. By showing them that we are not devil-worshippers or moral degenerates, we can lessen the influence of the intolerant, totalitarian-minded fundamentalists.

### **In Defense of Christians**

I hope it is clear from the above that Christianity, as an alien belief system which ruthlessly colonized our homelands and nearly eradicated our native belief, is *not* what I am defending here. Moreover, we must stand against the liberal world-brotherhood crowd on the one hand, and the fundamentalist bigots on the other. But there are Christians we all know and respect, and with whom we

have things in common. They may be members of our families, co-workers, neighbors we talk to over the back fence. We can't share a religion with these people, but we *can* work together for our common interests.

Asatru isn't going to be a mass movement with millions of followers anytime in the near future - so we need to multiply our impact by making constructive contact with men and women with whom we share some values. You'll be surprised at how many of them will meet us with open hands. ♁

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# DANGERS BEYOND THE GRAVE

DR. BRIAN REGAN

In the universal psychic experience of mankind, there are invisible, ghostly realms of active, intelligent agencies including, but not limited to, the dead souls of human beings. These realms are rarely witnessed by us in the full waking state, but are perceived only when the conscious brain is subdued to slower brainwave states. The frequent reports of the "Near Death Experience," for instance, come out of conditions in which the brain has all but stopped its own activity due to some factor, including being "frozen with fear" in life-threatening conditions which are then somehow escaped.

Because NDEs occur in the same, slow brainwave states as dreams, with which they share many characteristics, I prefer to think of them as a type of dream - a juxtamortal ("near to death") dream.

All dreams, visions, religious apparitions and the like coincide in being unique to the witness. No two are exactly alike, even though they may have many elements in common. Because they depend upon the mind of the witness, and that mind is constructed of biological, ancestral, and personal memories, such experiences will be interpreted differently by different people, or even by the "same" person at a different time.

This does not mean that there is nothing behind the dream, juxtamortal or otherwise. It merely means that, if we want to understand such events, we must ask about their *meaning* for the witness. So we have to know something about that person's biological, cultural, and personal background. The Self, in other words, is the lens through which we see the Other Dimension - and this one, too, for that matter.

So when we survey the juxtamortal, mystical, and religious experiences of mankind as a whole, we find that the meanings of such experiences tend to fall into the same categories. It is these meanings, rather than their individual presentations or "clothing," which are important here.

Most broadly, these meanings can be aligned along an axis of good and bad, understood as life-giving and life-annihilating.

Due to the feel-good New Age mentality of the approaching turn of the millenium, there is much stress on the "good" aspect of the realms beyond the grave and below the personal subconscious. Meanwhile, people whose lives are spent mainly in very fast brainwave states, such as intellectuals, tend to ignore such realms or even deny

their existence. But since the beginnings of recorded history, witnesses from everywhere have reported that these realms do in fact exist - and that, beside an infinite height of ineffable goodness and love, they include a bottomless depth of unspeakable evil and horror.

In the Germanic languages, this realm of undying death was, and is, called *Hel*. The word itself comes from an early, reconstructed Proto-Germanic word, *haljan* (pronounced something like "holly-ahn"). This in turn comes from an even earlier, Indo-Germanic root, *kol-, kel-*, which meant "cover over, hide," as with earth in burial. It thus originally meant simply the grave as the "location," then the netherworldly existence, of the dead.

Germanic religion was distinguished particularly by shamanism, in which a religious specialist (shaman) deliberately induces a Near Death Experience, or juxtamortal dream. Like many other peoples, the Germanic northerners symbolized the body's own central nervous system as a tree: the World Tree. Its name in Old Norse was *Yggdrasil*, or "Yew-horse." Yew (*Ygg*) was a name of Odin, the lord of the shamans, who "rode" hanging on the sacred yew tree until he experienced the juxtamortal dream. Overcome with

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exhaustion and hunger, he temporarily left his mortal body and descended to the abode of the dead...to Hel.

Possession by the spirits was not something to be taken lightly. The most intense devotees of Odin were warriors who yielded their bodies up to him [Or to their totem animal, through Odin's inspired frenzy - Editor] in battle and went into a "berserkr" rage, in which they had animal strength and could not be harmed by fire or iron weapons. ("Berserkr" meant literally "bare-shirted," i.e., with no shirt, so that the forces of the netherworld could more easily control the warrior's body. Note how modern witches often perform some of their rituals in the nude, "sky clad," to eliminate all barriers between the Self and the Non-Self.) The English word "berserk" is a faint memory of the superhuman ferocity of those possessed men. In a time of incessant war between tribes and nations, their powers were critically necessary and highly valued. But they paid a heavy price in personal relations, since the psychic force could come over them at any time, and they might unwittingly kill their friends or next of kin in these possessed rages.

The dead were consulted by shamanic witches called "Hel-runners" (*halju-runnos*) in the first few centuries of our era. These female devotees of Wodan were so feared that the historian of the Goths, Jordanes, reports several centuries later (ca. 551) the rumor that they mothered the Huns by having intercourse with evil spirits. The Hel-runners are closely paralleled, to all reports, by the Tibetan *de lok*. The term means "returned from the dead" and

refers to those, mostly women, who (usually voluntarily) enter a non-breathing, virtually brain-waveless coma for up to a week or more, travel to the abode of the dead including its various heavens and punishment-type hell, then return with messages from the dead or from the Lord of Death (corresponding to Wodan). Tibet's isolation and *Bon* religion, closely related to Central Asiatic shamanism, enabled it to retain this archaic institution until at least a decade after the 1950 Chinese conquest. Hel-running *de loks* may in fact still exist today in that unhappy land, despite the Communists' savage suppression of Tibetan culture.

These fragments of history and anthropology give us a tiny glimpse of the awesome complexity and ferocity, as well as beauty, found in the world beyond the grave. From the reports of shamans who have lived much closer to our own time, we know that the world is inhabited not just by human-like entities, but also by inhuman monsters of terrifying evil and great intelligence. It is common nowadays to trivialize such reports and attribute them to the "primitiveness" of "ignorant savages," etc. But mysteriously enough, many of those currently living who have experienced the juxtamortal dream have come back with tales of hideous beings and spine-tingling horrors awaiting them on the "other side." Indeed, one writer, physician Maurice S. Rawlings, in his book *To Hell and Back* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993), sug-

gests that as many as *half* of all juxtamortal experiences are "hellish" ones, but that the experiencers subsequently suppress, misinterpret, and forget what they have gone through. A Christian who has seen strange and frightening deathbed phenomena, he believes that too many of the standard NDE reports are unreliable because they are not taken immediately after resuscitation, and that the data is biased toward the "feel-good" accounts as a result.

The Old Norse *Voluspa* ("Revelations of the Sorceress"), written a thousand years after the Gothic Hel-runners, uses symbolic language to describe a Hel which had by that time become viewed as the final abode of evil-doers:

**A river bears westward through a baneful valley  
spears and swords; its name is Fear**

**Far from sunlight stands a hall  
on the Shores of the Dead; its doors face north.  
Deadly poisons drip through its roof,  
snakes were woven to form its walls.**

**She saw men wading through heavy streams;  
some were oath-breakers, others had murdered,  
some had lured women to love.  
There the Serpent sucks on corpses,  
the Wolf rends dead men.**

(Patricia Terry, *Poems of the Elder Edda*, Rev. Ed. 1990)

Other Norse texts refer to hell as both a place and a hideous giantess, Hel, who guards the place. While these Norse references may, according to some scholars, have been influenced somewhat by Christianity, they are even more similar to Asiatic beliefs in an infernal place of punishment found in Japan and elsewhere, as well as to the ideas of the pagan, pre-Christian Greeks and Romans.

The fact is that most religions the world over, and especially shamanic ones, have believed in some version of hell. With the "new shamanism" of the Near Death Experience yielding yet more reports of this state, we should be all the more cautious about rejecting out of hand the idea of this ghastly condition.

The univese - and today a majority of scientists thinks ours is only one of many, many universes, but the only one that supports life (the "strong anthropic principle") - is upheld by a *will*. It is a will to life, a will that living beings survive by accepting the problems of life and become ever more intelligent, knowledgeable and capable. (While not accepting the idea that there is an intelligent will involved, evolutionists call this principle "evolutionary epistimology," meaning that evolution is a learning process.)

In the shamanic symbolism of our Northern ancestors - the body of their mythology which has come down to us - this all-embracing will was given the name of *Weird* (Old English *Wyrd*). It was usually translated by the Latin words for "fate," "destiny," "fortune," and the like. But in mod-

ern English these worlds have lost their supernatural overtones and become merely substitutes for "series of random accidents," "chance outcome," and are inadequate as translations.

In the juxtamortal dream, this cosmic will - *Wyrd* - is often perceived as divine, unconditional love, identical with the "light" (which equals the cosmic Intelligence) so frequently seen. But *Wyrd* also has a dark side: *Hel*.

The Aesir, led by Wodan-Odin, together with the Vanir, are bedeviled by forces of evil, which they are fated to battle in the doomsday war of Ragnarok. These malevolent hosts include the giants, the Wolf, the hound of hel named Garm, the Black One, dwarves, dark elves and, above all, the malevolent Loki. One of Loki's titles, found (ca. 1200) in *History of the Danes* by Saxo Grammaticus, is revealing - *Utgard Loke*, or "Loki of the Outer Realms." To Saxo, the Christian who recorded it, this meant "Loki of the Outer Darkness," or Satan. Such characters symbolize the countless fearsome spirits lurking in the blackness of the netherworld, a world well known to Germanic shamans.

According to those who have dreamt the juxtamortal nightmare, human repudiation of the cosmic directive to climb higher on the evolutionary path leads to dreadful agony for the individual after death. In the world's religions this is always seen from a human perspective; the individual soul enters into a state of perpetual confinement or torment affecting mainly itself. But more important than the individual, though never discussed, is the meaning of such loss for the cosmic Intelligence - for the cosmic inframind, which created a multi-universe cosmos for the express purpose of producing intelligent life as "sense organs" of itself. The rejection and defeat of the cosmic will is a crime of truly infernal proportions.

The *Voluspa's* mystical description of *Hel*, given above, reveals the individual consequences of frustrating the will of *Wyrd*, but it also reveals the tragedy of this shipwreck for *Wyrd* itself - which has strained for fifteen billion years to produce us. ☸

### A tip of the horn...

.to the European American Issues Forum for working to establish a "European American History and Heritage Month," to be celebrated in October. This month includes Leif Erikson Day, Columbus Day, Oktoberfest, and Samhain (Halloween) - a treasure of European pride! You can find the EAIIF's web site at [www.eaif.org](http://www.eaif.org).



### And the OTHER tip of the horn...

to the President of Ireland, who recently complained that the Emerald Isle needs a more "diverse" population! Given the demographic fragility of the northern European countries, her call for more non-Irish and non-European immigration is tantamount to genocide. (And some of us thought the *English* were the enemy!)



Rune Name: **GEBO**  
(gift, hospitality)

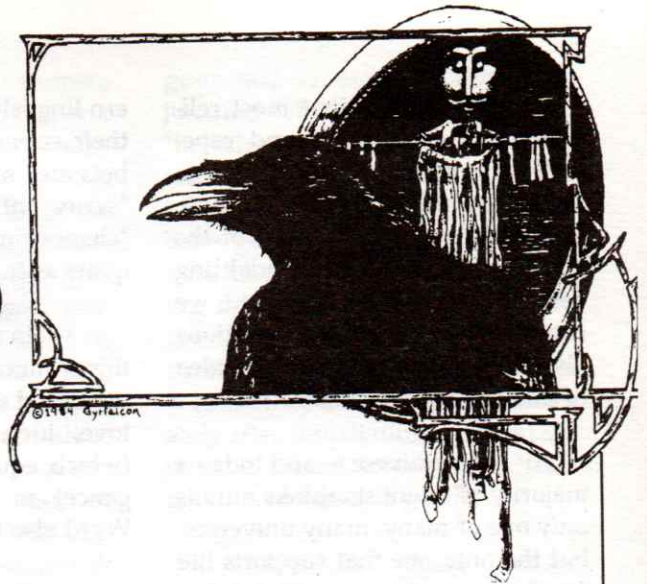


#### KEY CONCEPTS:

Gebo embodies ideas of sacrifice, exchange, and loyal interaction between two beings. Mutual interests and fair partnerships are manifested in gebo as are the ideals of generosity and hospitality. Within gebo we find the reception of magical power granted by the Gods.

AFFIRMATION: The gifts of the Gods meet my needs. I am loyal and generous.

# Protecting THE DEAD



STEPHEN A. MCNALLEN

***Most religions recognize that the realms beyond the visible world are not uniformly friendly. Modern Asatru has developed funeral rites designed to send the soul to its proper destination, but there are gaps in our practice which need to be covered. If the customs of other cultures are any guide, it is clear that our funeral rituals need to be supplemented by additional practices.***

**S**afeguarding the soul (or soul components) of the dead is a logical step in ensuring a proper rebirth in the family line. As such, it is of paramount importance for the long-term survival of our Folk.

So what can we do?

As trite as it may sound, we can begin our death preparations by living spiritual lives. The strength of one's *hamingja*, or magical force, and the *fylgja* or guardian might, will influence the control one has over the death transition and the post-mortem state. Accomplishing deeds of honor, then, benefits the individual not just in this life but in the next as well. As Edred Thorsson has pointed out, this is not so much a matter of morality as it is of *power*.


As friends and kinsmen of a dying person, we should ensure that their death bed is warded by Thor's hammer. Chants and prayers to the individual's patron deity are also appropriate.

Shamans tell us that the newly-dead person enters a dreamlike state characterized

by confusion and illusion - hence the value of lucid dreaming as a training technique for death. The prayers and chants of kinsmen can bring focus and guidance in this condition.

It is our duty to send the dying on their final faring with love, strength, and confidence, and death bed rites should reflect these qualities. One does not have to be a *gothi* or *gythja* to do this; these practices can and should be implemented by ordinary Asatruar each time the need arises.

Incidentally - just as we protect the dying from possible malevolent forces, so anyone experimenting with seid, shamanic work, or trance conditions should ritually protect their working area with Thor's hammer or other appropriate symbolism!

On the other end of the death-resting-rebirth cycle, we need to consistently use the rite of water sprinkling and naming, the *vatni ausa*, to welcome the ancestor into the nine day-old infant. Only by reviving and popularizing these rituals can we properly do our duty to our ancestors, and ensure their return to family and clan. 

## A Call for HEL-RUNNERS!

Brian Regan tells us of the Gothic "Hel runners," or *halju-runnos*, who scouted the terrain of death and reported back to the world of humans with their findings. Their role, like that of the *volvas* and *seithkonas* of saga times, was the vital one of linking the living and the dead. By implication, they played an important part in the ecology of life-death-rebirth that is undergone by all of nature, including us humans.

Modern Asatru has no Hel-runners, but we need them.

I am calling for a project to train Hel-runners, and set them to the task of mapping the admittedly fluid and shifting realms beyond this life.

Asatru will benefit in several regards. Our repertoire of organized shamanic experience will be greatly increased. We will gain answers to fundamental questions concerning the afterlife condition which will enable us to minister to the spiritual needs of Asatruar. We will be able to better contend with those other religions which compete for the loyalty of our Folk.

This project will avoid New Age generalizations, and will instead plumb the depth of our Northern lore. Our "psychonauts" will send the result of their journeys to one central repository within the AFA, which will compile them for eventual comparison and distribution. This will be coordinated with the AFA's Seith Guild.

Precise design of this vast series of experiments will have to await discussion by the participants, but we must start somewhere!

If you are Asatru, and consider yourself skilled in shamanic/seith work, and want to take part in this endeavor - send a message to:

**Halju-Runnos, c/o Asatru Folk Assembly**  
PO Box 445, Nevada City, CA 95959  
or to [asatru@oro.net](mailto:asatru@oro.net)!

### VICTORY!

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OCTOBER 1998

Thanks to the dedication of the *European American Issues Forum* and AFA supporters, California State Resolution #91 received unanimous approval by the state legislature and was signed by Governor Wilson on August 26, 1998.

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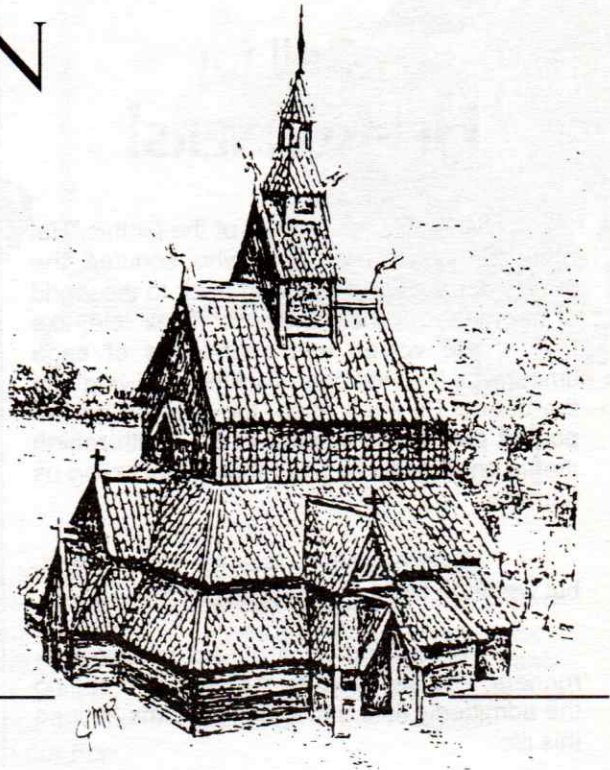
P.O. Box 445 Nevada City, CA 95959

42 pages

**\$5.00**

# SCANDINAVIAN HOFS

TIM BISCOPE



**T**horolf Mostrarskegg, in roughly the middle of Iceland's Age of Settlements (About 874-930 CE), left his home on the little island of Most on the western coast of Norway and moved to Iceland. Upon his arrival he constructed a new pagan temple, called in Old Norse a hof, lived his life, and died. His arrival in Iceland is recorded in both the *Islendingabok*, the "Book of Icelanders," which was composed by Ari the Wise between 1125 and 1130 CE, and the *Landnamabok*, "The Book of Settlements," compiled by Ari and Kolskeggr Asbjarnarson slightly before the *Islendingabok*. His temple is vividly described in *Erbyggja Saga*, in chapter four -

"Thorolf had a large temple built there with its door in one of the side walls near the gable. Just inside the door stood the high-seat pillars with the so-called holy nails fixed in them, and beyond that point the whole building was considered a sanctuary. Inside the main temple was a structure built much like the choir in churches nowadays, and in the middle of a raised platform lay a solid ring weighing twenty ounces, upon which people had to swear all their oaths. It was the business of the temple priest to wear this ring on his arm at every public meeting. There was a sacrificial bowl on the platform too, with a sacrificial twig shaped like a priest's aspergillum for the blood of animals killed as offerings to the Gods to

be sprinkled from the bowl. Inside the choir-like part of the building, the figures of the Gods were arranged in a circle right around the platform."

A controversy has raged over the authenticity of this description of Thorolf's hof, mainly because it was written 350 to 400 years after Thorolf constructed his temple, and 230 to 290 years after Thorolf's descendants were forced by law to dismantle the temple by Iceland's conversion to Christianity. This debate is very similar to the one which surrounded Homer's account of the Trojan Wars, which effectively ended in 1873 when the German archeologist Heinrich Schliemann actually discovered Troy in western Turkey. The debate surrounding the description in *Erbyggja Saga* did not end, however, when a building believed to be a temple was excavated in northern Iceland, and its outline closely agreed with that described in the saga.

No longer was the debate centered around whether or not the temple itself was a figment of a talented Icelander's imagination. In fact, the real debate which arises about the heathen temples of Iceland and the rest of Scandinavia before and during the Viking Age is whether or not they were a fairly original concept or just a copy of structures build by the Christian church.

The answer to this question can only be found by confronting it from two different angles. The first is through etymology, and the other is through objective analysis of the architectural differences between the Scandinavian churches and other churches in southern Europe during the period in question.

## Etymology

Hans K. Vogt tells us in the *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* ("Languages of the World - Germanic Languages") that "[a]rchaeological evidence suggests that a relatively uniform Germanic people at c. 750 BC were located in southern Scandinavia and along the Baltic coasts from the Netherlands to the Vistula." The language of these people is called Proto-Germanic. However, since there is not written documentation of the language from this period, it has been reconstructed by looking at the similarities between the groups of languages which have blossomed from it.

By about 250 BCE, Proto-Germanic had fully developed into five distinguishable groups, which Vogt lists as North Germanic in southern Scandinavia excluding Jutland; North Sea Germanic, by the North Sea and in Jutland; Rhine-Weser Germanic, along the middle Rhine and Weser; Elbe Germanic, along the middle Elbe, and East Germanic, between the middle Oder and the Vistula.

An eastern German migration began when the Alani, Basterne, Burgundians, Gepids, Goths, Heruli, Rugians and Seire left their homeland between the Oder and the Vistula, as well as southern Sweden in the case of the Goths, between 100-150 CE. The exact reason for this migration is unknown, but it probably stemmed from overpopulation. These tribes travelled south until about 214 CE, when they arrived in the Ukraine. Of these tribes we are concerned mainly with the Goths, who were divided into the Visigoths and the Ostrogoths. They crossed the Danube in 250 CE and began to range west over Europe until about 711 CE, when the Gothic peoples unfortunately lost their political power to the Arabs who were invading Spain (Iberia) at the time.

Most of our knowledge of the Gothic language comes from an incomplete translation of the Bible, made for the Visigoths living along the lower Danube about 350 CE. From what we know of their language, *alhs* was used to designate a temple.

Anglo-Saxon tribes began a mass migration from the North Sea and Jutland region to the British Isles around 450 CE, laying the foundation for the England we know today. No manuscript or manuscript fragments of written Anglo-Saxon exist before c. 700 CE. We don't know when Anglo-Saxon was first written down. What we do know is that their word for temple was *ealh*.

Gothic *alhs* and Anglo-Saxon *ealh* are phonetically very similar, enough so that a researcher is left with two things in mind. First, because of the roughly 350 years between the written documentation of the Gothic and Anglo-Saxon language, there is a possibility that some kind of migration of word and concept took place. The other available option is that there is a Proto-Germanic word which already existed for the concept of a pagan temple.

It has to be remembered that when thinking of the possibility of a Proto-Germanic word for "temple," we are really talking about the existence of pagan temples prior to 750 BCE in Northern Europe - something which has not been confirmed by archeological evidence.

No temples of the Goths have been excavated from the period before their arrival in the Roman Empire, in 250 CE. This does not mean that they did not have any temples, but it could mean that they developed their concept of such buildings through their exposure to Greco-Roman civilization. Although the idea of the Goths developing the Germanic temple and then spreading it from eastern to western Europe in the process of their journeys is an appealing one, it is not entirely true. Western Germans had been exposed to the Roman Empire since 113 BCE, a full 327 years before the Goths settled in the Ukraine. The Roman historian Tacitus, in his writings of the late first century CE, also tells us that Germany had temples - at least a full century and a half before the Goths crossed the Danube. No one has yet excavated such a structure.

If a Proto-Germanic word existed for "temple," then we are left wondering why the word had changed so radically in Scandinavia to the Old Norse term *hof*. Some scholars believe this is because it was a word developed, relatively late, in Iceland. However, I feel this is a mistake. Instead, I believe the Scandinavians merely took a different route in the development of a pagan temple than did the southern Germans.



A burial mound, or *haugr* in Old Norse, was not only a place where the dead rested. It was also a site where communion with the spirit world was possible. This took place in a ritual called *utiseti*, or "sitting out."

A *horgr* in Old Norse is a pile of stones consecrated with the blood of sacrifice, and it was used as a kind of primal outdoor altar on which offering to the old Gods was made.

The *haugr* and *horgr* have three basic elements in common: Both are mounds, although one is much larger than the other; both are used to commune with the spirit world; and they are phonetically similar. So it is not entirely illogical to conclude that possibly the *horgr* developed out of the use of the *haugr*, which traces its roots to Bronze Age Scandinavia (1600-450 BCE). There may also be a Proto-Germanic connection here, because in Old High German a *harug* and in Anglo-Saxon a *hearg* were used to designate a holy place.

Pre-Christian sacrifice was often conducted in the open or in groves and forests. Tacitus noted the use of holy groves among the continental Germans in the first century. The Anglo-Saxons used the word *leah* for the holy grove; in Old Norse *lundr* and in Old High German *lucus* carries the same meaning. These various words may suggest that there was a common Proto-Germanic term from which they evolved. It also suggests that sacred groves were known among the Germanic pagans before Thorolf left Norway for his new home in Iceland.

An important question to ask now is, what do the worshippers do if they live in sparsely-wooded areas? Could they have innovated within their religion and constructed a hall as a substitute for a grove, calling it a *hof*, or sometimes not even changing the word at all and choosing to call it a *horgr*? The two pillars inside the entrance could, in this case, be symbolic of entering a wooded area.

When, exactly, did the continental Germanic *alhs* and *ealh* split from the Scandinavian *hof*? Perhaps after 250 BCE, when the five distinct groups of the German language emerged?

## Architecture

When the saga writer described the inside of the *hof* as being "built like the choir in churches

nowadays" (*Erbyggja Saga*, Chapter 4), he or she was actually referring to the twelfth and thirteenth century stave churches of western Scandinavia. Several of these have survived up until this day, practically unaltered. Examination of these early structures leaves the researcher wondering from where this style of architecture came. At first glance it is obvious that this is not a design which originated in southern Europe. To understand the stave church, it is important to remember that the first Christian church in Scandinavia was not constructed until 850 CE, and it was built in southern Denmark. Then years later, the first church was erected in southern Sweden. In Norway, however, Christian churches were not built until considerably later.

The most likely explanation for the development of stave churches in Scandinavia is that the early Northmen who converted to Christianity took an already existing style of religious architecture and adapted it to their new faith. This would have the advantage of making conversion to the new religion easier for their fellow countrymen, as they would be congregating in a structure similar to the one in which they had always worshipped. This is in accord with the Church's strategy of adapting their religion to the beliefs and practices of the people they were converting, making it more palatable to the locals.

Some Asatruar had seen Christian churches by the time Thorolf moved to Iceland. But the question is - were there enough Scandinavians exposed to the concept of a church during and before Thorolf's era for the idea of a temple to be extracted from it? My research suggests that this was most likely not the case.

## Conclusion

Was the evolution of the pre-Christian Scandinavian temple affected by the Graeco-Roman pagans, and then later spread by Christianity? In light of the substantial lack of evidence, it is hard to discount the migration of ideas from southern Europe to Northern Europe, or *vice versa*. Archaeologists have yet to determine when the earliest temples were built by the Germanic peoples, or where they built them. At the very least, though, it is possible to conclude that the Northmen were capable of independent thought and may have developed the *hof* on their own, as their religion evolved over time.



# Let Them



# Eat Horses!

DR. DAVID ANTHONY

**W**hy do most Americans and Europeans find the idea of eating horses so unappetizing? Horseflesh is, after all, extremely nutritious - it is particularly rich in vitamins, iron, and abuminoids - and can be very tasty. It is eaten enthusiastically in Khazakstan and other Central Asian countries, as well as in some parts of Europe and French-speaking Canada.

The aversion felt by most modern Americans and Europeans originated as a religious taboo in the early Middle Ages. The sacrifice of a horse and the consumption of its sanctified flesh were central parts of very widespread pagan rites in ancient Europe. The early Christian church forbade the consumption of horseflesh because it was so regularly associated with pre-Christian ceremonies. Pope Gregory III (AD 731-741) banned the eating of horses as "an unclean and execrable act."

Although the papal ban seems to have greatly reduced the

consumption of horse flesh in most of Europe, the ritual sacrifice of horses continued for a surprisingly long time. Horses were slaughtered at the funerals of King John of England in 1216 and the Holy Roman Emperor Karl IV in 1378. As recently as 1781, during the funeral of cavalry General Friedrich Kasimir at Trier, his horse was killed and deposited in his grave. Even more surprising, churches were sanctified with horse sacrifices, perhaps conducted secretly by the workmen who built the church buildings. Modern construction workers found horse bones embedded in the floor of St. Botolph's at Boston, Lincolnshire, and in the belfry of a church at Elsdon, Northumberland. Eight horse skulls were discovered in 1883 in the stonework of the pulpit at Bristol Street meeting house in Edinburgh, Scotland; others were discovered embedded in the foundation of the choir stalls at Llanraff Cathedral, Wales. As late as the 18th century, Dutch peasants would place a horse skull on the roof to keep bad luck away from the home.

Why were horse sacrifices so widespread in ancient Europe, and why did rural Europeans cling to these superstitions for so long?

In prehistoric Europe and Asia, supernatural spirits and powers were thought to reside within fire, water, mountains, thunder, the vault of the sky, rocks, and trees. We still recognize the god that inhabits trees when we "knock on wood." The power and beauty of the horse was easily translated into divinity. In the myths of the Romans, the Greeks, the Celts and the Germans, we can detect common and extremely ancient horse rituals that are paralleled in rituals described in the *Rig Veda*. The *Rig Veda* was a religious text compiled in northern India and Pakistan before 1000 BC (possibly as early as 1500 BC) by people who called themselves Aryans. It is quite possible that some of the horse rituals that appear both in the *Rig Veda* and in pre-Christian Europe originated before 3000 BC among the speakers of proto-Indo-European. This language, now long dead, was the mother of most of the languages of Europe, as well as those of ancient Iran and India.

In the *Rig Veda*, horses were closely linked with specific gods, and the sacrifice of a white horse or a champion racer was associated with events such as the consecration of a new king. After the sacrifice, the flesh of the horse

was eaten, and its head and legs were laid out or erected on a pole as an offering to the gods. Here are selected verses describing the Vedic horse sacrifices, translated from the Sanskrit by Professor Wendy Doniger:

---

His mane is golden; his feet are bronze. He is  
s re~iffr as thought, faster than Indra.

The celestial coursers, reveling in their  
strength, fly in a line like wild geese when the  
horses reach the racecourse of the sky.

The racehorse has come to the slaughter,  
pondering with his heart turned to the gods.  
The goat, his kin, is led in front; behind come  
the poets, the singers.

You do not really die through this, nor are you  
harned. You go to the gods on paths pleas-  
ant to walk on.

Let this racehorse bring us good cattle and  
good horses, male children and all-nourishing  
wealth. Let Aditi [a goddess] make trs-  
freef~om sin. Let the horse ~e~ith our offer-  
ing achieve sovereign power for us.

---

The horse's head was thought to be a source of power by itself, an idea that seems to have survived among the peasant cultures of Europe. One of the most intriguing myths in the *Rig Veda* concerns a man, Dadhyanc Atharvan, who learned from Tvastr, the maker god, the secret of making mead, an intoxicating honey drink. The Asvins, or the Divine Twins who are themselves occasionally represented poetically as a pair of young horses, insisted that Dadhyanc tell them the secret of the mead. He refused. They cut off his head and replaced it with the head of a horse, through which he became an oracle and told them the secret they desired. In other

hymns in the *Rig Veda* horse heads flowed magically with honey.

These ritual themes have been investigated archeologically by the IAES and its sister organization in Samara, Russia, the In-

stitute for the History and Archeology of the Volga. Excavations led by Dr. Igor Vasiliev have unearthed ritual deposits of horse heads at Syezh'ye, a Copper Age cemetery dated about 4500-5000 BC in the Samara River valley in Russia. On the ancient surface above a group of nine Copper Age graves, Vasiliev's team found two horse skulls lying with various ornaments, broken ceramic posts, and stone tools within a red-stained patch of

powdered ochre. The horses were part of a funerary offering, the oldest of its kind yet found. At Dereivka on the Dneiper River in Ukraine, the now-famous horse with bit wear on its premolar teeth was part of a head-and-hoof deposit at the edge of a settlement dated about 4200-3700 BC. It was found with the remains of two dogs, which probably were part of the same ritual offering. In a grave in the Elista steppes, south of the lower Volga in Russia, excavators found the skulls of 40 horses deposited in a Catacomb-culture grave dated about 2500 BC. But the most fascinating discovery of this kind was a find that could have been the grave of Dadhyanc himself.

At Potapovka, near Samara on the Sok River, excavations conducted from 1985-1988 exposed four burial mounds, or kurgans, dated about 2200-2000 BC. Beneath kurgan 3, the central grave pit contained the remains of a man buried with at least two horse heads and the head of a sheep, in addition to pottery vessels and weapons. After the grave pit was filled, a human male was decapitated, his head was replaced with the head of a horse, and he was laid down over the filled grave shaft. This unique ritual deposit provides a convincing antecedent for the Vedic myth.

Discoveries like these help us to understand how human attitudes toward horses have been molded by the history of religion. The IAES will continue to explore the origins and development of ancient horse cultures when we return to the field in Russia in 1999.

---

FURTHER READING ON THIS  
SUBJECT

**Institute for Ancient  
Equestrian Studies**  
Hartwick College  
Oneonta, NY 13820

*The Rig Veda; an Anthology*, One hundred and eight hymns, selected, translated, and annotated by Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty. Published by Penguin Books, 1981.

*The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, by Arthur Berriedale Keith. Published by Motilal Banarsidass in Delhi, Patna, and Varanasi, 1925. Authorized reprint as Volume Thirty-one of the Harvard Oriental Series in 1970.

"*The Tail of the Indo-European Horse Sacrifices*," by Wendy Doniger (at the University of Chicago) in *Incognita* (Leiden) 1:1-15, 1990.

# IN THE SPIRIT OF KENNEWICK MAN

## Blot to Odin

On Wednesday, July 15, a dozen members and supporters of the Asatru Folk Assembly gathered to offer a blot to Odin. The reason: to ask All Father to open communications between the living and the dead, giving us spiritual insight to the message Kennewick Man has to tell us. Odin's ability to speak with the dead, and his role as a leader of those who have left our earthly realm, made him the natural focus for our ritual.

We have maintained all along that the Kennewick Man case is primarily spiritual, rather than political or legal. While we must use every means to attain justice, it is important that we listen to our souls, as well.

## DREAMS ABOUT KENNEWICK MAN

Dreams and intuitions are important in this regard - and indeed, some of us are reporting powerful dreams about this ancestor from long ago. We are compiling these into a coherent form, not to share them with outsiders, but simply to help us understand the significance of Kennewick Man. If you have had such dreams, we ask you to tell us of them; your confidentiality will be respected.

## A Subscriber Writes...

...Through your efforts...the ancient past of the settling of two continents must be re-examined by all. The migration of our Folk has completed a large circle in time and space in the Americas - one that began at our far western shores maybe ten thousand years ago, and completed on our eastern shores of Vinland 1,000 years ago.

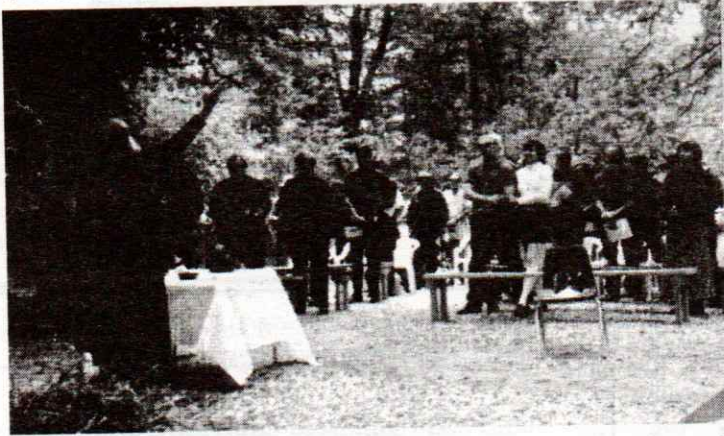
Our ancestors traveled far both in time and space and have continued with voyages to the Moon, Mars, Jupiter and beyond. Our ancient ancestors started in Midgard, in far eastern Europe and western Asia, the middle of the known world. They traveled both east and west, north and south. Guided by their Gods, heroes, and kings, and their own free will and ambitions, the Folk have spread across parts of Asia, all of Europe, Scandinavia, the British Isles, Iceland, Greenland...to North America, Central and South America, Australia...

We have walked on the Moon and traveled in outer space. We have ventured deep into our planet's oceans. And we have explored the depths of the human body and mind.

For us of the Folk, our most ancient forebears are represented by Kennewick Man of Vinland. Kennewick Man is our past and our future!

## A Closing Thought

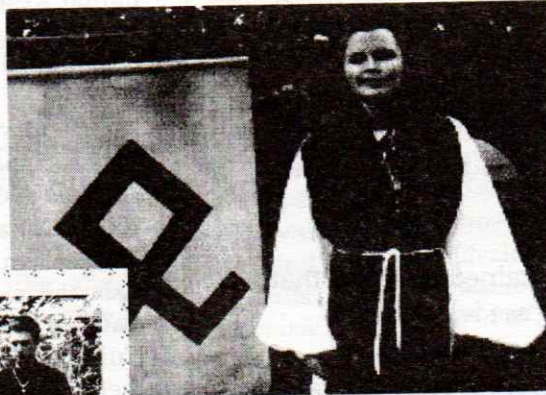
"Those who will not defend their ancestors forfeit their own right to a future."



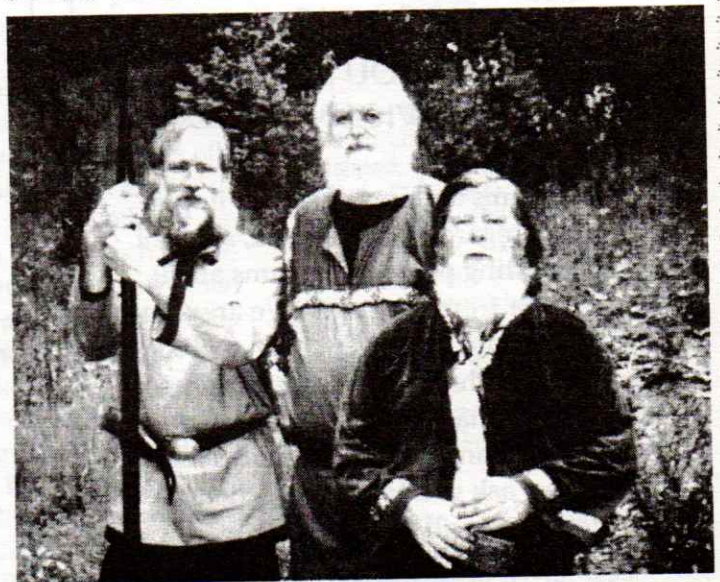
# Regional THING

IN PICTURES...

Hosted by Calasa and  
Ulfhednar Kindreds



*For a full description of the event, read "Two Views of a Regional Thing" in RUNESTONE #22.*



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# M O O T P O I N T

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Greetings, Steve,

...There was a report in today's *Daily Telegraph* (25 May 97). Some professor is doing research into near death experiences and he wrote of a woman who said she had felt herself being attacked by a thing which she described as being like the emblem of the Isle of Man, that is, the tryskale. She said that this thing was dragging her down into a deep pit and that she had to fight against it in order to survive. The strange thing was that during this experience the doctors thought that she was dead as there was no recorded brain activity.

This sounds very much like the "three-headed thurses" of our lore, and the article mentions this thing has been reported on several occasions...

Regards,  
Ted

Heilsa, Ted -

*This relates very well to our article in this issue on the dangers that await the unprepared on the other side of the life-death barrier.*

*We are not trying to use fear as a religious tactic, but most religions acknowledge the existence of hostile forces in the afterlife. We Asatruar need to reinstate traditional death rites for the safe journeying of the deceased!*

Hail the Gods!  
Steve McNallen

Heilsa, Steve!

As promised, I conducted another solitary Odin-blot here in my bedroom. Tonight it went much better than last night - the weather is not as hot and sultry, and I don't feel constrained by a need to be somewhere else.

Anyway, I conducted the blot as presented in the *AFA Book of Major Blots*. I took it slowly, pausing a couple of times to close my eyes and lean on my *gandr* (a hiking staff which I've engraved with the futhark) in trance-like meditation. When I do a solitary blot, I like to invite Odin to linger with me and enjoy my beer, as a sort of bonding between buddies, or perhaps between myself and a beloved but powerful grandpa figure. Tonight I especially emphasized my request to grant you success in the fight for the truth about Kennewick Man...

For Truth, Honor, and Victory,  
Roy

Greetings, Roy!

*Thank you for doing blot to Odin on behalf of the Kennewick Man. The fundamentally spiritual nature of this struggle is something we must always remember.*

Hail Odin!  
Steve McNallen

Hi, Steve -

...As adults I feel we are all individually responsible for our own spiritual health and evolution. But I see that our Folk are suffering from a profound sense of alienation and spiritual bankruptcy. The symptoms take many forms: depression, addiction, mental illness, suicide, etc...Living is a difficult process even in the best of circumstances, and I have come to believe that a great part of our suffering is caused by living "out of synch" with our natural way, which our Folk have long forgotten. I am in the process of trying to rediscover what that natural and healthy way is. I am studying how my ancestors lived, what they thought, what they felt, and how they bonded with each other and with the Earth. They weren't perfect but I think they were happier than we are today...

...Emerging from the fog is an ongoing evolutionary process for those of us who decide to take up this heroic struggle. Today the principal custodians of this fog seem to be the forces of political correctness and our own government more than the new Christian religion. Steve, I cringe whenever I hear the words "global village" or "globalization" because I know those terms mean the destruction of our people by continuous deterioration of any distinction, identity, separateness or uniqueness that people have as groups.

I'm so happy that I have joined forces with the AFA...This truly is part of the "hero's journey" of which Joseph Campbell speaks. May the Gods bless you for trying to show our Folk a better way.

Tim

Dear Mr. McNallen,

I have noticed that Penda, the last major [non-Christian?] English king, receives no mention among Asa-people. Bede, in his *Historia Ecclesiastica Anglorum*, indicates that Penda was a Bretwalda, i.e. a "broadwielder" of authority over Britain. He apparently was high king of the English, and predates Alfred the Great's kingdom over all of England. Since his power was based in the kingdom of Mercia, he was a continuous target of Christian intrigue. During his long reign, they never were successful in converting his kingdom until Penda was killed on the battlefield in 654.

A grandson, Wulfhere (Isn't that a neat name?), was so impressed with his honorable example that he resumed loyalty to the ancestral Gods before ascending the throne.

The building of the English state is attributed to the success of Mercia expanding at the expense of Papist intrusion, particularly during Penda's reign. Penda has always been my favorite English king, so I'm disappointed that only Norwegian hicks are honored on the calendars I've found on the web.

Sincerely,  
Peter

*Heilsa, Peter!*

*We've never meant to ignore Penda; we ran an article on him back in the 1980's. All who have fought for the true Gods of our people need to be honored - including those you refer to as "Norwegian hicks." So does anyone out there know Penda's birthday?*

*Hail our Gods and Heroes!*  
Steve McNallen

# CALENDAR

## **SEPTEMBER 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR HERMAN OF THE CHERUSCI.**

Herman learned the art of war under the Romans, then deserted the Imperial eagles to lead his tribe in revolt against the Mediterranean intruders. In the fall of the year 9, he annihilated three legions in the Teutoburgerwald, a victory which saved Germania from Roman occupation. Plant an oak tree, eat in a German restaurant, and remember Herman with a glass of fine beer from the Fatherland.

**SEPTEMBER 22 - FALL EQUINOX.** Also called Winter Finding, this is the time when day and night are of equal length. Today is a harvest festival, and you can celebrate it with a meal at which you express thanks to the Gods for the powers of the soil. Raise a horn of your favorite drink to Freya, and to her brother Frey.

**OCTOBER 8 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ERIK THE RED.** In addition to being father of Leif, Erik was a stalwart fan of the strongest of the Gods, Thor. Recall Leif's sire with a toast, and by praising Thor for such robust Vikings. Do something for a friend, in imitation of Thor, the friendliest of the Gods!

**OCTOBER 9 - LEIF ERIKSON DAY.** No, it's not a religious occasion *per se*, but it is a great opportunity to boost Nordic culture. Lots of people don't know that President Johnson established this observance back in 1963 - so you'll have to tell them. Inform several of your acquaintances, and write a letter to your local newspaper boasting of our Viking heritage (Don't attack Columbus, though).

**OCTOBER 17 - WINTER NIGHTS.** This date on our calendar is in honor of the disir, female fertility spirits ruled over by Freya. Our female ancestors are also counted among the disir, so this is a good time to recall outstanding women in your family line. Do you have photos of them you can look at? The mood of Winter Nights is one of conserving resources against the scarcities of the coming cooler season. A libation of ale, milk, or mead is traditionally poured onto the earth as an offering to the disir.

**NOVEMBER 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR QUEEN SIGRITH.** Sigrith, the widow of King Erik the Victorious of Sweden, was offered marriage by Olaf Tryggvason...on the condition that she become a Christian. She refused, saying, "I do not mean to abandon the faith I have had, and my kinsmen before me." Olaf swore at her and struck her with a glove, an act she repaid years later when she incited the battle in which Olaf died. Do five things for Asatru, one for each finger of Olaf's glove. Meditate on the qualities of a suitable mate.

**NOVEMBER 11 - FEAST OF THE EINHERJAR.** These are the chosen heroes who sit in Odin's hall. Honor your dead kin, or the famous heroes, who gave their lives for family and Folk. Celebrate Veteran's Day. If you have friends or relatives who died in battle, visit their graves. If that is not possible, offer a toast in their memory. Consecrate your personal weapon in a ritual of your devising.



