



Celebrating the Indigenous Religion of European Americans

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ISSUE #22

Clash of the Gods?
Wotan vs. Tezcatlipoca

Arminius and the Cherusci, *Part 2*

Dr. Chatters on Kennewick Man

"Race Hatred" and
THE RUNESTONE

Two Views of a Regional Thing

VINNISH-
A Language for Vinlanders



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 Europe's descendant people as a whole. In short, this is the faith of our ancestors! Because it is our native belief, we feel a best expression's 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 we consider them, it is useful to know the names and roles of some of the main ones:

- ODIN - Chief of the Gods, associated with wisdom, magic, and ecstasy
- THOR - God of strength and might, defender of Gods and humans
- FREYA - mother of the Gods, wise, involved with family and children
- VALHALL - reserved for valor, sacrifice, and warrior prowess
- BALDR - most beautiful of the Gods, soft-spoken, brave, and good
- SIF - mountain-dwelling Goddess who hunts on skis
- HIMMEL - guardian of the Rainbow Bridge, leading to the realm of the Gods
- DYR - Goddess who keeps the magic apples that restore the Gods' youth
- LOKI - mischievous trickster of the Gods who often works against their aims
- FREYJA - Goddess of love and fertility, but who also has a warrior aspect
- FREYR - a sterile fertility God whose domain includes love, joy, and prosperity
- NORR - 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 close-knit bonds, strength, freedom, and joyful, vigorous life.

THE RUNESTONE is a journal of the Asatru faith. It is dedicated to the Asatru religion and its values and is published for the benefit of our members.

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The opinions in this publication, unless otherwise noted, are those of the author. We read all correspondence, but other commitments may prevent replies. For best response, keep your letters to one page and one or two subjects.

Submissions of articles, photographs, and line-artwork are invited. Please enclose a SASE if you wish to have them returned.

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UP FRONT

The Asatru Folk Assembly, as most of you know, sponsors special interest groups within its overall structure called "guilds." In the last few months, some of those guilds have begun to grow. They're undertaking sizable endeavors, and the result can only be good for the AFA and for Asatru as a whole.

Take the Warrior Guild, for example. It's been around forever - but since last spring, it's taken on a much more involved and active nature. Brothers of the Guild came together for ritual and fellowship at the first Warrior Guild gathering, and phone calls a few days later reached out to Guild members in celebration of Warrior Day. *Wolf Age* arrives in readers' mailboxes six times a year, and it has more to say about active participation in the Guild than ever before. This venerable institution is evolving right before our eyes, and it's exciting to watch.

Then there's the Aerospace Technology Guild, which just got its own web site! But more than that - Guild members are seriously discussing radical, long-term projects that will give Asatru a place in space during the coming century. The exact form these endeavors will take is still being hashed through, but it's clear the ATG has gone a long way beyond merely publishing *Sleipnir*.

Closer to Earth, keep your eyes on the Back to Basics Guild. This one is germinating like a seed, with Julie collecting articles for the first issue of *Nerthus*. Self-sufficiency, simple living, parenting, the pleasures of soil, sun, and soul - these are the rich basics that form its subject matter. The BTBG will be sustained by a lifestyle that we are, together, developing here in northern California and elsewhere.

From the dirt beneath our feet to the stars above our heads, the Asatru Folk Assembly's guilds weave our religion into the many interests that make up our lives. They are vital and colorful strands in the ever-growing tapestry of Asatru culture, and we will all benefit from the creativity they embody.

A JOURNAL OF EVOLUTIONARY ASATRU

The RUNESTONE

Summer 1998

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Huginn & Muninn, P.O. Box 1159, 121 Reykjavik, Iceland. Dedicated to the Nyall philosophy associated with Asatru in Iceland. \$10 US, preferably cash.

Lina, P.O. Box 75952, Oklahoma City, OK 73147. Quarterly journal of Frigga's Web. \$20 annually, \$28 international rate. Make check or money order payable to Frigga's Web.

OR Briefing, P.O. Box 2022, Sandusky, OH 44871-2022. The voice of the Odinic Rite; always good for a fresh perspective on our religion. \$8 per year for non-members, payable to the Odinic Rite Vinland.

Renewal, Box 4333, University of Melbourne, Victoria, 2052 Australia. Very good writing, particularly "Ota's Talking Point," and lots of information that you just won't find anywhere else. \$12 Australian, plus \$4 for airmail.

Theod, P.O. Box 8062, Watertown, NY 13601. A magazine dedicated to the Anglo Saxon religion. Lots of material with an emphasis on "the big picture." \$15 per year.

Vor Tru, P.O. Box 961, Payson, AZ 85547. Journal of the Asatru Alliance. An important publication which has grown with the Asatru community for twenty years. Over 80 pages of content. Highly recommended. \$18 for four issues.

RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Heldnischwerk, P.O. Box 17656, Portland, OR 97217-0656. Divinely inspired wall-sculptures of Freyr, Tyr, Odin, and Thor. Cast in plaster with your choice of finish.

Heritage & Tradition, C.P. 244, Succ. P.A.T., Montreal, Quebec H1B 5K3 Canada. Creators of numismatics, jewelry, and other quality collectibles with Asatru motifs.

Wodanesdag Press, P.O. Box 190, Union Bay, British Columbia V0R 3B0, Canada. Asatru inspired products including booklets, stationery, t-shirts, mead labels, and much more!

World Tree Publications, P.O. Box 961, Payson, AZ 85547. Wide assortment of books, tapes, jewelry, ritual items, rune sets, and probably the world's largest selection of Thor's hammers.

ORGANIZATIONS

Asatru Alliance
www.jcave.com/~eagle

Gert's Theodish Homepage
www2.webzone.net/~gerda/

Odinic Rite
www.lrbcg.com/heathen/

Odinic Rite Vinland
www.lrvcg.com/heathen/orv.html

Wodanesdag Press
www.odin.org

Hnikar's Folkish Asatru Page
www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/5056/index.html

KINDREDS

Calasa Kindred (California)
www.runestone.org/calkin.html

Raven Kindred of the AA (California)
www.asatru.org

Ulfhethnar Kindred (California)
www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/6939/

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www.sb.net/ulfpakki

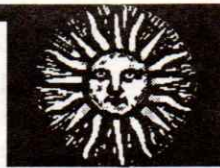
High Reaches Kindred (Colorado)
<http://highreaches.com>

Lone Tree Kindred (Colorado)
www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/2165/index.html

Wolfgar Kindred (Montana)
www.members.tripod.com/~Grauwolf/wolfgardindex.html

Eagle Kindred (Utah)
www.eagleut.com/~eagle

WOTAN vs. Tezcatlipoca



The Spiritual War for California and the Southwest

Something new is happening in the radical Chicano movement. The barrio revolutionaries are getting religion - and their new belief has direct implications for Asatruar everywhere.

Actually, the religion they've discovered isn't all that new. The old Aztec and Mayan deities never really went away, they simply went underground. Tonatzin, for example, is the Mother of the Gods in the old Mexican pantheon - but the Franciscan monks who came to the New World were willing to transform or absorb her into the Virgin of Guadalupe.

The old religion of Mexico is being put to political use by those who want to carve an independent Chicano nation, Aztlan, out of what is now California and the Southwest. Tonatzin is seen as the Goddess who will lead the "children of the sun" into this new land - and the correspondence with the Virgin of Guadalupe provides a link with Catholicism, enabling the revolutionaries to expand their base of support.

Aztlan, Ancient Deities, and Ethnic Cleansing

It's not just a handful of radicals who are reviving native Mexican religion. Ordinary Catholics

STEPHEN A. MCNALLEN

of Mexican descent are taking part, too. At Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in East Los Angeles, the feast of the Virgin has become a two-day event featuring Aztec dancers and a dramatic reenactment of the day the peasant Coatlatoatzin - whom history Christianized as "Don Diego" - encountered the miraculous Lady on a hilltop which had long been holy to the ancient fertility Goddess of the land.

At the Church of Saint Thomas the Apostle, also in Los Angeles, most of the parishoners revere "folk saints," many with pre-Christian roots. Statues of these pagan-deities-turned-saints, along with appropriate candles and similar supplies for honoring them, are sold at a thriving *botanica* just around the corner from the church.

This coexistence - indeed, the identity - between Christian religious figures and those of the ancient Mexicans should make us reassess a phenomenon which has produced cynical snickers and outright laughs for many years. You've seen the articles in the newspaper and dismissed them; the accounts of Mexicans finding an image of Jesus in a tortilla...or most recently, the Virgin in a cake taken from a housewife's oven. According to the CNN report that provided the Virgin-in-a-cake story, "Reports of the virgin's image have turned up with remarkably frequency in the past year, from a sewage stain in a Mexico City subway station to the dented fender of an old Chevy in northern Mexico."

I, too, used to laugh. But what if this is not just pious hysteria, but is actually the way the archetype of Tonatzin manifests to the humble Mexican people? Obviously it says a great deal about the in-

tensity, the determination to be heard, of the Goddess who stirs in the Mexican unconscious and who today masquerades as the mother of Jesus. I am told that, in Mexico, these mystic events increase just before times of political upheaval...

This is not the first time that Meso-American deities have been mentioned in connection with the California social and political scene. Readers of *The Runestone* will remember the controversy over the statue of Qetzalcoatl erected in downtown San Jose a few years back. Local Christian groups protested, but demographics and culture made it politically impossible to stop this expression of Chicano nationalism and religion.

Chicano organizations are as diverse as any other group, and their ideology is not monolithic. However, the prevailing vision of their would-be homeland, Aztlan, is one from which non-Chicanos would be forcibly expelled. No real effort has been made to hide this fact.

Olin Tezcatlipoca is quite open about this program of ethnic cleansing. He was born as Leo Guerra, but changed his name to that of one of the most revered of the Mexican deities. Tezcatlipoca leads the "Chicano Mexicano Mexica Empowerment Committee" and longs for the day when an insurgent army will arise and reclaim the southwestern states for his people. After killing or deporting European-Americans, they want to rebuild the Aztec empire.

Amazingly, this group enjoys tax exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service.

If the intention to conquer the border states was limited to Mr. Tezcatlipoca, it could be dismissed. Every ethnic group has its radicals, and we're not suggesting that your Mexican landscaper is a knowing part of some vast conspiracy. But the Aztlan concept is, nevertheless, very widespread. It forms the heart of a powerful movement, and is an integral part of the largest, most vocal Chicano student organization on today's college campuses. It is also encouraged, somewhat covertly, by the Mexican government.

War of the Gods

The great majority of Mexican-descended people are solidly Christian, at least on the surface. You'll find them in church most Sundays, and there is no reason to doubt their sincerity. But what lies beneath this ordinary exterior? Can a whole group

of people manifest religious forces of which they're not even consciously aware?

Carl Jung, one of the most famous psychologists of modern times, would say so. In an essay titled "Wotan," he wrote how the God of fury and frenzy - as an archetype in the collective unconscious - had gripped the German people during the early part of the Twentieth Century. This was manifested in many religious and social movements, the most notorious and tragic of which was Nazism. The result was a great spiritual revival on one hand, and war and destruction on the other.

Would Carl Jung's comments on Wotan as an archetype in the Germanic soul also have its parallel in the psychic functioning of the Mexican people? Are Tonatzin and Tezcatlipoca (the God, not just Leo Guerra) moving among their folk, stirring them to conquest?

It seems likely that the Mexican collective soul is being gripped by their ancient Gods in much the same way that the Germans were seized, early in the twentieth century. Turmoil and war were the result then. Can we expect any less from the bloodthirsty deities of the Aztecs, renowned for their warlike ways and human sacrifice on a mass scale?

Battleground California

Those of us who live in California and the other border states are probably more aware of this dangerous situation than people in other parts of the country. Folks from the Midwest or from New England probably think we're alarmist - just a few Eurocentric anachronisms who can't adapt to the changing face of America.

Well, they're wrong. Speaking of California (because that's where I live), I can see two possible scenarios. One is that people of European descent will resign themselves to a subordinate role. In this case, our culture will be replaced by others, mainly Hispanic. Our percentage of the population will continue to drop toward numerical insignificance, and our political influence will shrink accordingly. European-Americans now make up about fifty percent of the California population; by 2020 we're expected to be down to about thirty-five percent. There is no reason to think our decline will stop at that level.

However, there is another possibility: that we will rise from our slumber and resist this tide of cultural and demographic conquest. I am of course referring to non-violent resistance, in the form of legislation, a cultural rebirth, and an awareness of ourselves as a people who deserve to survive. Some will say that we have no "right" to do this; that the very act of resistance is "racist," and that our role is only to be overwhelmed by another people and their way of life. Get used to it, they say - California is only a foretaste of the rest of the country's future. The nation is changing, and we're supposed to adapt...or to accept our marginalization quietly.

I disagree. As one who loves my ancestors and who is not willing to throw away what they have won, I have no honorable choice but to fight for my people and my culture against all odds. No healthy organism willingly submits to its own disempowerment and death.

If California and the American Southwest are to be cultural battlegrounds, who better to lead the European-American counterattack against Tonatzin and Tezcatlipoca than our own Gods of the North?

Of course, the vast majority of European-Americans will not accept Asatru - just as most Mexicans will not formally adopt Aztec religion. But that really is a minor point. From a historical, political, and psychological standpoint, it is the archetypes that count. On our side as on theirs, only a few people will knowingly and overtly follow the old Gods - but all of us will, in a sense, be dancing to their tune.

Religion - Personal and Collective

Most Americans think of their religion as dealing with them as individuals, or as something that involves them and, perhaps, their friends at the local church. With many Asatruar, it is not so different. They come home from their job at the office, watch a little TV, eat dinner, and maybe read from the sagas or the Edda in the evening. Maybe they do some rune work and talk to the Mighty Powers for a few minutes each day. Every now and then they go to a gathering, hold a blot, or pour a libation to the land wights.

In indigenous or tribal cultures - the context in which humanity evolved over very long stretches of time - it is not like that. Religion does of course concern the individual, in terms of blessings and luck and eventually in one's destination after

death. But it is also a matter affecting the welfare and the survival of the group. The Gods are linked not just to a *person*, but to a *people*. They are intimately intertwined with the destiny of the tribe.

It is this communal aspect of religion that so often escapes people today. Urban men and women practice shamanism not to heal their tribesmen or to ensure a productive hunt, but for...self-fulfillment. We have forgotten that, although individual religious experience is important, the Gods still speak through the community, the tribe, the Folk.

This larger perspective on religion is where we see the struggles between entire peoples, and the movings of Wyrð that shape nations. It describes what is happening in the American Southwest today.

A Challenge to Asatruar

So what are Asatruar to do? What is our duty? Since the AFA is not a political organization, we must leave each of you to act in accordance with your judgement. But this struggle is not primarily a political one; it has an immense spiritual component. There are things you can do that will make a difference, especially if you live in the areas most threatened (However, take note that communities in Virginia, Wyoming, Washington, and Alabama are being overwhelmed with illegal immigrants; this is *not* just a border phenomenon). Most of the things you can do boil down to the basics: Support your Gods and Goddesses - honor your ancestors - stand by your kin and your culture.

But there is one more very important thing. We must sink down roots in the soil, and insist on our right to be here.

A few hours ago, a woman on an Internet newsgroup told me that if I didn't want to accept the spiritual guidance of American Indians - if I insisted on honoring the ways of my forebears - I needed to pack up and leave for Europe! She was in earnest, not speaking metaphorically. She'd gladly hold the door while I packed, she added.

People like this - who, interestingly, are the first to accuse us of racism or intolerance! - need to get the message that European-descended peoples, true to their ancestral ways, are here to stay. Our forebears fought and died to carve out this place in the world. We will not abandon their graves.

Mighty psychic forces, and powerful religious impulses, are on the move. The old Gods of Mexico, and the Gods of ancient Europe, are stirring their respective peoples. The spiritual descendants of the Aztecs are looking northward, coveting land which, they have convinced themselves, should be theirs - and, perhaps quite unconsciously, they are moving to conquer it by mass immigration, by language, by cultural influence. A dangerous few want to conquer by force of arms.

But then, they haven't reckoned with Odin and Thor, and Frey and Freya, or the other Mighty Powers of Asgard and Vanaheim! Nor have they figured, in their calculus of conflict, on the spiritual will of ordinary Asatruar.



BITS and PIECES

The Oldest Solar Observatory on Earth

A team of German archeologists is studying elliptical structures in parts of Bavaria which date back about 7,000 years - and which seem to be solar calendars far older than any found elsewhere on Earth. Some of the structures, which were first discovered twenty one years ago in aerial photographs, may be attributed to a neolithic culture which was centered in today's Austria, Hungary, and Czechia. The investigating team thinks that "these neolithic engineers must have had a knowledge of mathematics, astronomy, and geometry far exceeding the average person of modern times."

Plunder by the Yard

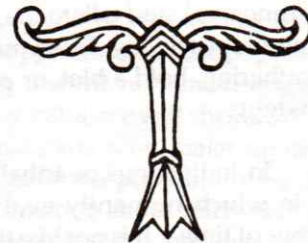
Need a spiffy tunic? Or Viking-era woman's clothing that doesn't resemble those square-and-clunky dresses out of the standard books? Plunder by the Yard may be able to help you! Write to Diana at Wolfgar Kindred, 1211 Main Street, Suite 202, Billings, MT 59105 for a copy of her catalog. Or you can find information at: <http://www.angelfire.com/mt/sifbless/plunder.html> if you're cybernetically connected. Service is personal and prompt!

Support the Kulturkampf!

Ultra has just released *The Nitha Fields*, a seven-song compilation CD featuring contributions from Fire and Ice, Blood Axis, Waldteufel, Alraune, Lux et Tenebris, and Allerseelen. Musical styles range from bleak electro-minimalism to Euro-heathen percussion. The cost is \$15 in the United States, and \$18 everywhere else.

They also produce a neat Irminsul pendant, one inch tall, in sterling silver. The Irminsul was the cosmic pillar of the Saxons, an important cult monument toppled by Charlemagne during his campaign in Saxony in 772. The Ultra version features a twin raidho rune, signifying power and forward momentum. These are \$30 in the US and \$34 elsewhere.

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ARMINIUS

AND THE CHERUSCI



What transpired in the first part of this article...

Arminius led the Cherusci in revolt against Rome, and destroyed three legions in the woody vastness of Teutoberger Wald. The battle was won, but the long war against Rome was far from over!

Segestes, Arminius' father-in-law, called for Roman intervention in a fight between the Cherusci and his own tribe. The Romans were only too happy to oblige, and Segestes fought alongside the Emperor's forces as the war which had simmered for years now broke into a furious boil...

by HNIKAR

Tacitus tells of a speech given by the thirty-three year old Arminius to the Cherusci: "My fighting has been open, not treacherous", he said, "and it has been against armed men and not pregnant women. The groves of Germany still display the Roman Eagles and standards which I hung there in honor of the Gods of our fathers." He continues, "Let Segestes live on the conquered bank, and make his son a Roman priest again - with a human being to worship!...If you prefer your country, your parents, and the old ways to settlement under tyrants abroad, then do not follow Segestes to shameful slavery- follow Arminius to glory and freedom!"

How much of this speech is derived from Tacitus' love of the old freedoms of the Republic, how much by his position in the Senatorial party? Doubtless, much. And yet it is likely that he was not far off the mark in presenting Arminius as a kindred spirit in this regard. In his youth, Arminius had watched the disciplined might of Rome march into Germania. When he was able, he went to join his people, to stand by their sides on the battlefield. Some, like his brother Flavus, sought to become Roman. Arminius, on the other hand, came to realize the value of his ancestry, and of the old ways of his people - and of "the Gods of our fathers," the ancestral Gods we Asatruar honor today.

The Cherusci responded to the call with warlike gusto, as did many other tribes. Germanicus sent a detachment under Lucius Stertinius against the Bructeri, where in the midst of a campaign of terror, he also recovered the Eagle of the XIX Legion. A reconnaissance mission headed by Caecina was then sent to the Teutoberger Wald to ensure a safe approach, followed by the army of Germanicus. The bones of the Romans slaughtered six years earlier littered the forest. Tacitus writes, "On the open ground were the whitening bones, scattered where men had fled, heaped where they had stood and fought. Fragments of spears and of horses' limbs lay there - also human heads, fastened to tree trunks. In groves nearby were the outlandish altars at which the Germans had massacred the Roman colonels and senior company commanders."

As an augur, Germanicus should not have handled the objects of the dead, yet he helped to bury the fallen.

Germanicus pursued Arminius deep into the wilderness. Finally he sent his cavalry against the Germans. Arminius proved his merit as a commander once again, using the classic tactic of withdrawing in order to lure the enemy into position, then using hidden

troops to envelope him. It was only by bringing up his regular forces that Germanicus was able to avert disaster, and the battle broke off without a victor.

The season was late, so the Romans made their way towards their winter quarters. A force led by Caecina, however, found itself cut off while seeking to cross a swamp over which a narrow causeway had been built in earlier years. Again the leadership of Arminius was telling - by forced marches and the use of shortcuts he had placed his warriors upon the gently sloping woods overlooking the bog. Assessing the situation correctly, Caecina erected a camp there in order to repair the old causeway while fending off Arminius. Even so, attacks upon the heavily armed Romans, slipping in the mud, by the experienced marsh-fighters took their toll. Were it not for the fall of night, the faltering Romans may have been overwhelmed.

The Germans showed further ingenuity by diverting streams from the surrounding hills onto the low ground, making the repair of the causeway all the more difficult.

The mood of the Romans was somber. They had just been to the site of a great Roman defeat at the hands of these very warriors they now faced. The sounds of "savage shouting and triumphant songs" in the night, the heavy scent of the marshy rot about them - what an alien and terrifying place this wild land must have seemed! In Caecina's dream that night, blood-drenched Varus rose from the marsh and called to him, extending his hand. Caecina, for four decades a Roman warrior, for four decades part of the conquering legions of Mars, brushed the hand aside.

Black night parted for the dawn. The Romans on the flanks had pulled back, and this gave Arminius a clear approach. The renewed fighting surrounded Caecina, whose horse was slain beneath him. Victory neared again, but the Germans let it from their grasp, as they turned prematurely to looting. The Romans were able to battle their way onto firm, open ground where they set up hasty defenses.

Terror reigned among the Romans that night, who felt themselves defeated, and greed ruled the Germans, who were certain of victory. A horse broke loose in the Roman camp and many Romans fled in terror from an imagined attack, only to be stopped by Caecina himself. The Germans quarreled. Arminius wanted victory and glory, and wished to let the Romans make their way back into the swamp.

He understood the tactical advantage given him in the marsh, and knew that the terror-stricken Romans, granted a step toward escape and then attacked, would be difficult for Caecina to control. His uncle Inguiomerus, however, wanted to capture prisoners and undamaged loot, and therefore urged that the camp be surrounded and the Romans attacked where they stood.

With the next dawn, Inguiomerus' plan was tried. Given a chance at battle on firm ground, and time to prepare, the Romans were ready. Horns and bugles filled the morning air, and the startled Germans found a fierce battle instead of the cowering opponents they had expected. The momentum had shifted, and the Germans were defeated. For this, Caecina was awarded a triumph.

Arminius made his escape and awaited another day.

He hadn't long to wait. In 16 CE, Germanicus came again for battle. The Angrivarii rose as he made his way toward the Cherusci, and Lucius Stertinus was put into his accustomed role of killing and burning. At the Weser, the Romans and the Germans faced one another across the river. Here a meeting of brothers, separated by war and by their attitude toward Rome, took place - Flavius on the Roman side, an eye missing from his sword-service to the Emperor; and Arminius on the other, commanding men of many tribes at the peak of his prowess. Flavius spoke of the greatness of Rome, of Roman wealth, of Roman harshness toward its enemies and mercy for those who submitted. Arminius spoke of patriotism, freedom, family, and "the national Gods of Germany". Clearly, Arminius perceived the Germans as a people united by a faith. The brothers nearly came to blows as the discussion became heated. Arminius shouted threats and insults in the Latin he had learned in the Roman army, thus letting the Romans know of his utter contempt. It was Lucius Stertinus who restrained Flavius.

Batavians under Chariovalda were sent across the river against the free tribes, there to die for Rome at the hands of their kinsmen.

Germanicus, through an informer, knew that Arminius planned a night attack upon his camp. Due to the resulting vigilance of the Romans, the Germans withdrew without casting a spear. Germanicus knew, too, that Arminius planned to seek battle in a forest sacred to Donar, whom Asatruar today call Thor. To Donar, who had roared in triumphant thunder-claps

in the Teutoburger Wald, would be offered a Roman army!

The Romans were to call the battle Idistaviso. It took place on a level plain, with a forest behind it. The trees, however, contained very little undergrowth to entangle and hamper movement. The forest sloped upward - in the heights were the Cherusci, beneath them their allies. At the onset, Arminius seemed to lose control of his troops - impetuously the Cherusci fell upon the Romans, who simply outflanked the Germans with their cavalry and began to roll them up from all sides. Eight eagles flew toward the forest, and Germanicus hailed these symbols of Rome as omens of victory. Arminius smeared his face with his own blood - his skin colored red like the Romans honoring Mars in triumphal processions - and battled his way free again into the wilds of his homeland. Others were speared in the river or became sport for the bowmen when they climbed into the trees.

Tacitus tells of a further battle, in which Arminius - wounded or weary - did not fight vigorously, and calls it a great defeat for the Cherusci. He says, "Germanicus, who had torn off his helmet so as to be recognized, ordered his men to kill and kill. No prisoners were wanted. Only the total destruction of the tribe would end the war." Elsewhere he writes that Arminius was fought to a stalemate, but never beaten. Given later developments, it is safe to say that Tacitus embellished the account somewhat. Sympathetic as he might have been to Arminius' fight against tyranny and for the old ways, he was still a loyal Roman who would have wanted to believe that some retribution was made for the slaughter of his countrymen at Teutoburger Wald. A more likely explanation is simply that the Germans withdrew from an inconclusive series of fights.

Whatever the case, Germanicus was recalled by Tiberius, who said that "...the Cherusci and other rebellious tribes, now that we have duly punished them, can be left to their own internal disturbances." Indeed, this proved prophetic; very little time passed before Arminius and Maroboduus were at one another. Maroboduus, chief of the Marcomanni, led the Suebian confederation. Two Suebian peoples, however, sided with Arminius - the Semnones and the Lombards. Arminius' uncle, Inguiomerus, and a number of Cherusci went over to Maroboduus. Arminius won, partly because Maroboduus' plea for Roman aid was refused.

It must have been galling for the Romans to see Arminius still the preeminent power in Germania. With the defeat of Maroboduus, too, the prospect loomed large that the still-young Arminius would present a greater threat. How safe was the Rhine frontier? Could a great German confederation arise?

Segestes enjoyed a comfortable exile in Gaul, Maroboduus in Ravenna. Arminius roamed the forests free.

A chieftain of the Chatti, Adgantes, offered to poison Arminius, but Tiberius refused such underhanded trickery. Nonetheless, envy and distrust of Arminius grew, due to his growing power - which, perhaps, he wielded too harshly in his drive to unite the Germanic tribes. Men with a vision, idealists, are often blinded to humanity. The Cheruscan succumbed to the treachery of kinsmen and was murdered. Dead at the age of 37, he is still alive in our hearts. He drinks of the mead we offer him at *sumbel*, at the side of the Gods he honors to this day.

By 47 CE, the Cherusci were so reduced by internal feuding and endless warfare with the Chatti that they asked the Roman Emperor Claudius to appoint a king over them. From Rome, there arrived a warrior, horseman, and prodigious drinker. On his mother's side he was Chatti - his mother was the daughter of Actumerus, chief of the Chatti (any relation to Adgantes?). On his father's side he was not merely Cherusci. His grandfather was Sigimer, father of Arminius. His father was Flavus. Thus Italicus became king of the Cherusci. One learns of history that the story never ends - he was expelled some years later in repeated in-fighting, to be later restored by the Lombards.

By the time Tacitus wrote the *Germania* in 98 CE, he described the Cherusci thus: "[T]he Cherusci have been left free from attack to enjoy a prolonged peace, too secure and enervating - a pleasant but perilous indulgence among powerful aggressors, where there can be no true peace. When force decides everything, forbearance and righteousness are qualities attributed only to the strong; and so the Cherusci, once known as 'good, honest people', now hear themselves called lazy fools...."

Whatever the ebb and flow of Cheruscan fortunes, the bright legacy of Arminius the freedom fighter, beloved of our Gods, shines still in our memories. The fame of his deeds will last for eternity! ❖

DR CHATTERS on KENNEWICK MAN

by STEPHEN McNALLEN



I received an email from a *Runestone* subscriber last week which really caught me by surprise. Dr. James Chatters, the only human being to have done any real study on the bones of Kennewick Man, was going to speak that coming Saturday in Sacramento - right down the road from us! Within hours we had alerted several AFA members and made preparations to show up for the presentation.

The large hall was well-filled with students, university staff, and other interested men and women. Dr. Chatters began somewhat awkwardly, but soon warmed to his topic and gave us a treasure trove of information on Kennewick Man and the peopling of the Americas. Much of this material was new to us, and relates directly to the AFA's involvement in the case now before the federal court.

As an objective scientist, Dr. Chatters was careful not to suggest that the famous skeleton had any direct European connection - although he did not rule that out, and in fact specifically listed Europe as a possible origin for Kennewick Man's people.

Haplogroup X

One of the more interesting revelations concerns mitochondrial DNA. Heretofore, scientists had analyzed Indians in terms of four standard mitochondrial haploid groups, called A, B, C, and D. Recently one more classification, called X, has been added. Haplogroup X is rare in American Indians, but occurs in the archaic, Caucasoid skeletons of ancient America. It is also found in Europe and in the Middle East. Dr. Chatters admitted that this indicated some sort of connection between these far-separated populations, but cautioned that the nature of that relationship is not clear.

Morphology of Nevada Finds

Another significant statement had to do with Wizard Beach Man, one of Kennewick Man's contemporaries, who was found in a shelter cave in Nevada. According to Chatters, the Wizard Beach skull is the "most Indian" of any of the remains from the archaic period - but it is on the "very fringe" of the morphological range associated with American Indians. The implication is that the other skeletons from the archaic period are even less Indian than this, and do not overlap the Indian category at all.

Spirit Cave Man (who is currently being claimed by the Paiutes), on the other hand, has a skull very much like that of Kennewick Man. He is described as most resembling a person from a "western Eurasian" population. I found this an interesting phrase; just what would you call the western part of Eurasia? Might it not simply be...Europe? To top it off, Spirit Cave Man displays haplogroup X, connecting him with the people of Europe and the Middle East.

Three Routes

Before moving on to the question-and-answer session, Dr. Chatters summed up the three routes by which Kennewick Man's

people might have come to the Americas. One is a coastal trek around Southeast Asia and across the Bering Strait. The second - which Chatters himself appears to prefer - has them coming across the top of Eurasia in a band extending from Europe to Siberia, and the third route is over the "Atlantic Crescent" from Europe.

The Indians and the Engineers

I raised my hand and asked if Chatters would comment on Indian legends describing a non-Indian people present before their own arrival. He admitted that this was a widespread feature of the oral lore, and gave as an example the "red haired giants" of Nevada, as well as the "light skinned, mean-spirited people" who preceded the Indians in the Pacific Northwest. To still other Indians the older group was the "stick people," and their artifacts and burials were of no concern to the newcomers who displaced them. In the case of the red haired giants, that displacement was by murder and genocide, in what is now known as Lovelock Cave.

Chatters found it interesting, too, that while Indian remains would sometimes sit in a storage locker for several years before their respective tribes would get around to claiming them, this was not the case when it came to Kennewick Man. They wanted him right away, immediately! Could it be they know who he is - and want to get him out of sight as quickly as possible before people start asking awkward questions about who was here, and when?

Whatever the motivations of the Indians, Chatters saw no secret in the behavior of the

LATEST NEWS

In June, the AFA participated in two and a half days of mediation on the Kennewick Man case at the Federal Court House in Portland. We are still very much involved in this situation, and continue our battle against discriminatory laws that make no allowance for the existence of anyone other than Indians in ancient America!

Three documentaries are in production which will include the AFA's role in this unfolding saga. In mid-July, a British TV crew will be getting our views on tape after we all partake of a traditional feast. Yesterday we met with the "point man" who gave us every indication that the AFA's position be presented fairly. This a well-funded production which will include interviews with all the key players. The firm hopes to sell this documentary to a major U.S. television company.

Army Corps of Engineers, which until recently was the custodian of the bones. He described their colonel as a stereotypical military man, who knew what his mission was: as Chatters put it, "to keep the Indians happy." Unfortunately, keeping the Indians happy has enjoyed a higher priority than little details like truth, impartiality, or justice!

All in all, it was an illuminating evening - a microcosm of

the Kennewick Man case, all compressed into an hour-long lecture. The mystery and the scientific attempts to pierce it, the frantic attempts to cover up the facts, the bright promise of a whole new paradigm for the settling of this continent - all were present. Only the ending of the story was not revealed to us. We shall have to wait and see the conclusion for ourselves, and for this individual who has spoken to us through more than ninety centuries!



A TIP OF THE HORN ---

A tip of the horn... To gutsy Jerry Griffin, an admission counselor at the (very liberal) University of California at Davis. Mr. Griffin wore a kilt during the campus "Diversity Day." When supervisors demanded he change into "appropriate" apparel, he stuck by his guns and told the Sacramento newspaper that "It seems we can push the diversity issue as long as it's socially

acceptable to some groups. But when it comes to white Europeans or Europeans in general, then it becomes not acceptable." An outpouring of public support has forced the university to apologize to Mr. Griffin.

AND, THE OTHER TIP OF THE HORN ---

And the other tip of the horn... to the US Army Corps of Engineers, which recently "carpet bombed" the site where Kennewick Man was discovered with layers of rocks and dirt. Why? To save it from erosion, of course! We suspect that their greater fear is erosion of politically correct dogma which dictates that no Caucasoid peoples inhabited ancient America. Talk about literally burying the evidence!



"RACE HATRED"

and The Runestone

by Steve McNallen

Longtime readers will be interested - and possibly amazed - to learn that *The Runestone* "promotes race hatred."

Yes, it surprised me, too. But it *must* be true. Who am I to argue with the watchdogs of political correctness? News of our hatemongering appeared in a newspaper titled, appropriately enough, *The Stranger*, published in the Pacific Northwest. Wedged between sex show ads and various other pieces of urban high culture was an article titled, intelligently, "Kennewick Man was a Nazi."

You'd think that the name of the article, all by itself, might indicate that we were dealing here with a pretty high paranoia quotient. After all, Kennewick Man has been dead for more than nine thousand years. But to author David Newman and his "research assistant" David Mozzochi, probably everyone except themselves is a potential Nazi. (Nelson Mandela may be exempt...but Michael Jackson is *very* suspicious!).

Mozzochi is connected to one of those "anti-hate groups" that seem, paradoxically, to hate other people with a mindless passion understandable only to the kind of ideologues one finds on the totalitarian fringe. His particular organization is the "Coalition for Human Dignity," which we have lately taken to calling CHUD...Some of you may remember a minor horror film of the same name; and yes, there *is* a resemblance!

Newman and Mozzochi pile guilt by association on top of plain old fashioned lies, excluding all the evidence that might interfere with their fantasies. In short, it was the same pathetic garbage in which their ilk love to traffic. Most of it is eminently forgettable.

One piece, however, is so illustrative of the

radical left's thought processes that I cannot resist holding it up for your examination. It is precisely the part of the article which is supposed to convince the reader that *The Runestone* promotes race hatred.

...The Runestone, AFA's newsletter, pursues a subtle brand of race hatred. For example, one issue quotes black nationalist Leonard Jeffries as saying he'd like to leave his children a world free of white people. Runestone adds: "How does that make you feel, descendants of Vikings?"

You have, of course, instantly spotted the race hater in this paragraph. It's me. No, *not* Jeffries, who calls for genocide against people of European descent - but me, for suggesting that there's anything wrong with the idea!

So now you know. All this time, you've been reading the work of a hardened racist criminal, a European-American so wrong-headed that he actually criticized a Person of Color for suggesting the extermination of his kin! What audacity!

What sort of a mental world must people like Goodman inhabit? It's peculiar enough that he would think my protest to be "race hatred," while having not even the slightest reprimand for Jeffries' truly hate-filled speech. It is even stranger that he thinks that ordinary people, real folks of any race, would agree with his delusion.

If the "watchdog organizations" are going to protect us from those skinhead armies threatening to take over the nation (They'll be glad to tell you all about that) - who will protect us from their own paranoid, Stalinoid madness? ♦

Heilsa, Gudrun!

Our gothi did a blot last week, and part of it was a galdr based on the alu formula - you know, with ansuz, laguz, and uruz. Later in the day, we had classes on how to use the elhaz statha to increase our hamingja. Ragnar said this would help us lay down good orlog, and that the nornir would smile on us. (Well, I have to go practice my idrottir for the Regional Thing, so I'm outta here!

FARR heill!

swedish?

english?

finnish?

Vinnish!

STEPHEN MCNALLEN

Huh?

To anyone outside modern Asatru, the above hypothetical note might as well be written in Sanskrit.

It's not, of course. As Sheila pointed out to me last week, it's written in Vinnish!

Vinnish is the language spoken in Vinland, just as Finnish is the tongue of Finland. By Vinland I don't exactly mean the land colonized by the Vikings on the eastern seaboard of North America a thousand years ago, though there is a connection.

Some Asatruar use the term Vinland to refer to the land mass of North America, much as Indians call it Turtle Island (Yes, they do; and no, I don't know why). Technically, our usage may or may not be correct. The Vikings never defined just where the borders of Vinland stopped, so I suppose California *could* be considered the far reaches of that realm. Maybe that's stretching things a little - but no more than calling the whole continent Turtle Island! None of that is ultimately the point; what matters is what we choose to call this place, today.

But the modern Vinland is much more than a chunk of land. And it certainly is not the same thing

as "Canada plus the United States." Vinland is defined not only by geography, but also by social factors such as religion and language. And the language we speak here is Vinnish.

Vinnish has its roots in Standard English, but it contains countless words which are unique to it, or which are used in unique ways. The names of the Gods and Goddesses and the runes, words for our religious rites and the implements used in them...the list is quite a long one. True, our grammar has remained the same as English, because we are not isolated from the larger culture, and Vinnish has had only a few decades in which to develop. As we form our own distinct communities and customs, the number of new words will grow and the differences from English will become more pronounced. Some African-Americans have claimed Ebonics as a separate language; the development of Vinnish could follow a similar path as we become more and more of an identifiable community.

It is important to note that Vinnish is *not* an artificial language. Its growth has been entirely organic, as people with common concerns borrow or create words to serve their needs. No one sat down and decided to make up a language for Asatruar in America, it just developed out of what people do.

Does language matter? Darned right it does! It is the way by which a people express themselves; it is an outpouring of their soul. Ask the *Afrikaners* - or the *Navajo*, for that matter. From a pragmatic and political standpoint, language is one of the six determinants recognized in the international forum for defining a nation - in the sense of the Sioux nation, or the various Celtic nations. (The others five things are heritage, geography, culture, political system, and desire for common association.)

And we *are* a nation, or even an emerging collection of related nations. In the course of the next century, this fact will become even more obvious. And just by being who we are, and doing what we naturally do as Asatruar, each and every one of us is participating in a momentous historical change.

Vinnish? Speak it often, speak it proudly, help it grow and evolve. It is a part of Asatru's flowering on the soil of this continent, as we sink our roots ever deeper! ♦

GUILDS

Warrior

Aerospace Technology

Back to Basics

Genealogy

Seith

WARRIOR GUILD

In late April, the Warrior Guild of the AFA conducted the first-ever meeting devoted exclusively to that group. Over the course of a weekend, Guild members plotted the future of the Guild - did *blotar* to Tyr and to Odin - practiced warrior skills - and formally initiated members into their brotherhood. Some good time was also spent just sitting in the sun, or around the campfire.

One thing that came out of the weekend was additional roles for the Guild. These include a determination to explore and practice the full range of Teutonic warrior spirituality - all those amazing things out of the sagas! - and to make the Guild an outstanding example and role model of the warrior virtues.

When April 30 rolled around, all members who could be reached got a personal phone call from the Guildmaster, so a toast could be drunk for Warrior Day.

Wolf Age now appears six times a year, ensuring frequent contact between the Guild and its members. Subscriptions, or information on the Warrior Guild, can be obtained through the AFA.

AEROSPACE TECHNOLOGY GUILD

The ATG now has its own web site at <http://home.earthlink.net/~apendrag/atg/>

On it, you will find articles from back issues of *Sleipnir* and a daring proposal designed to ultimately carry our religion and our Folk beyond the bounds of Earth. There's even a program into which you can put values such as thrust, weight, and specific impulse to determine if your SSTO (Single Stage to Orbit) rocket will achieve orbit!

The most recent *Sleipnir* devotes most of its pages to a discussion of the "Asospace Initiative," which is a yet-to-be defined long range plan for the Guild's activity. In fact, there's a contest for the best idea, with an Estes model rocket starter kit, or its monetary equivalent, as the prize.

Interested people can contact the ATG via the Asatru Folk Assembly - and you do *not* have to be an AFA member to get involved! Subscriptions to *Sleipnir* are \$8 per year.

BACK TO BASICS GUILD

Julie writes: Well, the BTB Guild is no longer talk; we are now living the life that so calls to us. We have finally put ourselves on the farm and are loving every moment of it. We have a mature orchard with eight fruit trees and five nut-bearing trees. We have about twenty grape vines and roughly 350 square feet of raised beds filled with vegetables, fruits and herbs. We have ten bared rock chicks that will be providing us with eggs and meat and within the next few weeks we will be adding a milking goat to our collection. With all this we will seldom need to see the inside of a grocery store, which in turn will save us lots of money.

The newsletter that I have talked about will be making its debut this fall. We will be calling her *Nerthus*. There will be lots of interesting ideas and things to learn. I will have a section about the experiences and the trials and errors of our Himinbjorg homestead. I would be interested in getting a manuscript from anyone who would like to add an article. I'm looking for articles about herbal remedies, natural health, gardening, living the old ways, spirituality of our everyday lives, raising children the heathen way, home schooling, and everything else along these lines!

Thanks to those who have contacted me so far! When not working in my garden, I can be reached at: Julie Tobin, c/o the AFA, or email at Nerthus@cwo.com.

OTHER GUILDS

Genealogy Guild - Contact Sheila at the AFA.

Seith Guild - Teutonic shamanic techniques. Write Ragnar Schuett, PO Box 2366, Loveland, CO 80539 or email RagnarS145@aol.com.

TWO VIEWS OF THE WESTERN REGIONAL

thing

May 23 - 25, 1998

Grass Valley, California

We arrived at the encampment shortly before sundown and were very pleased to see that we had not missed dinner! The hour-long ride to the McNallen homestead had been enjoyable, since we had the company of Annabel Lee and Michael Moynihan, whom we had picked up at the airport. When we pulled into the long driveway, I was amazed at how many cars were already there; the meadow was dotted with tents! Not long after unloading our two children I spotted Haakon of Gjallarhorn Kindred. I had not seen him since the *Althing* in September, but the time and distance had not dimmed the affection I felt for this friend, or the warmth of his hugs.

My children were too excited to sleep and did not retire until 11:30. I was not long behind them, and my husband Kevin followed shortly after. During the next few hours I would wake to hear the joyful sounds of friends in the background, smile to myself, and return to sleep with the contentment of knowing that we were surrounded by wonderful people.

Seven AM found Kevin and I rolling out of bed. Sheila was already up, and had the coffee pot going full force. People wandered up randomly and were thrilled to have hot coffee, since it was a cool morning. After a simple breakfast

we assembled under the oak to prepare for the Tyr blot. Valgard handed out the various ritual items and the procession was led by the sound of drums.

We all gathered in a clearing that holds a lot of power. It is surrounded by ancient fruit trees, and in the center of the circle is a horg made from stones found on the land. Looking around, I realized that we could have been transported back in time - there was nothing in our view that was modern, except for the clothing some of us were wearing. The blot performed by Valgard was powerful, and the blessing of Steve McNallen's knife was inspiring. When we dispersed, it was awkward trying to bring myself back to the ordinary world. But as I had much to do I shook the fog from my head and went to the house to clean up from breakfast.

The afternoon flowed well. We had a business meeting that got heated, as it tends to do when passionate people have views that differ. But all walked away afterward without enmity, and we loosened up with Irish dance steps taught by Annabel. Most preferred to watch, but adventurous souls ventured onto the dance floor and took a chance! Then Michael talked to us about his new book, *Lords of Chaos*, which is deservedly selling quite well [See

the review in this issue - Editor].

This took us up to time to begin dinner preparations. We had a kitchen full of men and women trying to prepare the meal. Dusk began to close in around us, so we dined by torchlight and candles.

Later, we assembled around a blazing fire and began the first of three rounds of the sumbel. The power felt in the circle was strong on this night, as each of us called upon the Gods and the ancestors. Afterward, we enjoyed dessert and then sat around the fire listening to the beautiful music of Annabel, Markus, and Steve Von Till. Kevin and I retired in the wee hours, and we could hear people up long after us, enjoying each other's company. ♦

JULIE TOBIN

I arrive early Friday evening about 5:30 to find Steve McNallen in the driveway greeting people as they arrive. After quick introductions I pitch my tent. The site is lovely, dense northern California forest and meadows. I have been told that tonight will be very informal so I wander up to the house and move between several different groups, all discussing some aspect of the

faith. But perhaps the most memorable moments Friday are late evening. Sitting quietly around the remnants of the fire Steve, Valgard, and Bud Oliver talk about what they see as the challenges to the faith and the directions they hope to see things move. I even found the temerity to comment once or twice. The weekend will not slow down to this easy and relaxed pace again 'till Monday.

SATURDAY

A busy day is planned and carried out. Breakfast hits the tables on the veranda around 8:00. More people have arrived since I turned in and more will continue to arrive throughout the day. I won't get into menus but I will say that through the weekend I am continually amazed. From a single kitchen they manage to put up to 60 or more servings on the table. They also manage to have it on time and absolutely delicious. Sheila, Julie and all the other ladies who pitched in have my complete admiration and gratitude!

Around 9:30 we all gather to get agendas for the weekend and to discuss how things will work.

By 11:00 we are all assembled for the procession to the grove for the Tyr-Blot. Valgard hands out ritual items to be carried by participants and leads the procession. This poor, solitary country boy from Wyoming is just a tad excited since this will be my first Blot. Valgard leads the way down the driveway and across a meadow. The path leads through a short stretch of woods and then opens up into a small grove. As soon as you enter you can feel the residual power from repeated ceremonies held on this spot. We form the circle and Valgard is indeed impressive as he calls the Gods. Also impres-

sive is Steve's oath taken while blessing a dagger he named Arm Biter. An oath that shows his dedication to all we hold holy and dear. If Steve wants the oath spread beyond the group that witnessed it he will have to do that himself.

The ceremony ends and the procession returns to the house where we break for lunch and socializing. I am barely able to do either since I am overwhelmed with feelings from the Blot.

The next couple of hours are set aside for AA business. Even though I have a good idea what will be discussed from Friday's talks and even though I have some strong opinions on some of the issues, still I am not a member of an AA kindred and would not have felt comfortable joining in the discussion.

Instead I wander over to Valgard's tent and spend the time chatting with Valgard's sister. A remarkable woman, intelligent, possessed of strong opinions and a rock steady faith. The time flies and the only way I know the business meeting is over is the people begin wandering out and the music starts.

Annabel intends to teach folks Irish dancing. Since the traceable portion of my family tree goes back to 16th century Dublin I am interested in watching. And *just* watching. I am wearing my jungle combat boots and have at least three left feet on the dance floor. She does manage to teach some of the more coordinated members of the group some steps.

Michael Moynihan hosts a discussion of his book *Lords of Chaos*. I am unfamiliar with the church burnings or this music genre so I am unqualified to comment except to say the meeting was well-at-

tended and discussion lively.

This moves us into what is billed as a feast and undeniably qualifies (I still haven't figured how they managed those meals) and from there into my very first Sumbel. I gather with the others with my horn that has never felt the touch of mead (I've never had any mead in me, either. It's not a big seller in Wyoming and my abilities with my hands are on a par with my dancing).

Valgard opens the ceremony and I can almost feel the Gods arrive to join us. The horn quickly moves around the circle to me and I manage to stand and make my toast without stuttering or shaking. I do, however, need to sit down quickly afterwards. Three or four people after me is Markus Wolff. He stands and toasts the Gods in what I assume is German. Regardless of the language, when he speaks the emotion and passion evoked is hard to describe. The words seem to pierce my heart and soul. This man's depth of feeling is overwhelming. I can't help but think that the unis would toss this man out on his ear for a toast in German. Their loss. I would not have missed that moment for anything.

The evening ends with music and talk and I wander off to my tent trying to integrate all these emotions into my being. I lay awake for a long time pondering and listening to the music from up the hill.

SUNDAY

I sleep through breakfast this morning. The thousand mile drive, two late nights and sleeping on the ground are starting to take their toll on this old man.

I do manage to get it in gear early enough for the Rite of Binding to the Land. Once again the procession leads us to the now familiar grove. What follows is a very touching ceremony. Led by Steve, a group of 15 or so California residents make a pledge, with earth, air, fire, and water, that this is their land. The land of their ancestors and the land of their descendents. My interpretation is that this is a statement of "this far and no further".

This is followed by the Viking Games. I spend the time 'till lunch watching the games and talking with various groups. I know I should have participated but really, folks, a 51 year old fat man does not view throwing spears and axes and the caber as a particularly enjoyable way to pass the time.

After lunch, Steve leads the group through a ceremony as performed at Asatru Community Church meetings. At first it seems rather strange and bastardized, yet by the end I see the value of the format. The average Joe off the street would find this familiar enough to be comfortable and different enough to be interesting. Besides, it does seem to be drawing people to Asatru.

During the rest of the afternoon there is a women's ritual held and an AFA caucus. Unable to qualify for the women's ritual and unwilling to comment on the AFA caucus we'll move on right through dinner and to a much anticipated Sumbel.

We gather around the fire and Steve calls on Odin to open the Sumbel. I am more comfortable this time and find myself listening closely as people call on the Gods. I hear great depth of emotion and commitment. Then the horn returns to Markus and I feel a sense

of anticipation after my experience of the night before. Once more he calls to Wotan in German. His fire and passion seem to wash over the entire group and I find myself looking at the shadow surrounding us, half expecting to see a figure in a floppy hat and cloak. I can't pick him out, but I know he has joined us this evening.

The women's ritual has had a profound effect on the women in the group. Many Goddesses are called this evening and a much greater variety of Gods. As a group we have become very comfortable and open with each other.

Just as the previous evening, after the final round the music and conversation begin. Unfortunately the California skies call a halt to the proceedings as the light and intermittent showers of the evening become more persistent and heavier. I am ready to climb into my bag anyway and trundle off to my tent.

MONDAY

It has rained fairly steadily through the night and I find myself up and moving quite early. While packing my gear down to my car I realize that many people left last evening and I estimate only 15 or 20 remain this morning.

Even though it is well before the scheduled time for breakfast, when I arrive at the house two large steaming carafes of coffee are set out and two coffee makers are running at full blast as we all try and fight the damp and chill. Informal groups form and break up as everyone tries to have one last conversation with as many as possible.

Once again the pace has returned to the relaxed and infor-

mal one I found on Friday. Slowly goodbyes are said as more people leave. By 11:00 I also am on the road.

Overall I hardly know what to say. The logistics of the event were handled smoothly and on schedule in the eyes of the attendees. I did watch carefully enough to know that this happened due to the sometimes hurried efforts of our hosts. Spiritually, the event was a complete success. Socially, while there were as many differing opinions as there were people present, disagreements were civil and anger was never seen. I met many interesting folk and made many new friends. If you weren't there you missed an excellent weekend. If you haven't made plans to attend next year then you need do start doing so now! ♦

TERRY ARMSTRONG

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BOOK REVIEW

Lords of Chaos

by Michael Moynihan

Reviewed by Dresden Steelkilt

In the darkness of an overcast Norwegian night, a national icon - a stave church - blazes with fire, supposedly set by adherents to an underground branch of music call Black Metal. This was the first of what would become a series of church burnings, murders, and grave desecrations attributed to the listeners and band members of this musical genre.

What does this have to do with Asatru as we know it? *Lords of Chaos*, by Michael Moynihan, explores this question in depth. This book has led me to examine my own experience.

As a teenager in the mid-1980's I was drawn to the Heavy Metal scene, and I followed many of the groups that were to inspire the Black Metal musicians of today - bands like Venom, Slayer, and Mercyful Fate. It is difficult, even after years of reflection, to understand the social factors that sparked my interest in this very martial and somewhat antisocial brand of music. Was it the result of growing up in a Godless society? A society stripped of its morality, and any sense of community? Lucky for me, I discovered Asatru through an ad in a well-known science magazine - and I was hopeless as a musician, so I joined the army instead of pursuing a career in metallic music!

A significant number of Black Metal bands are influenced by a primitive form of Satanism, or employ Nazi symbolism, again without fully understanding the philosophy involved. There are also a few groups that have begun to explore a kind of Odinism. This fact has serious implications for those of us who have discovered our ancestral religion. *Lords of Chaos* explores the connection between this growing musical subculture and the awakening of Asatru worldwide.

A central character in this book is the controversial Varg Vikernes. He is the sole member of the musical enterprise he has named Burzum. Vikernes was found guilty of murdering his former associate, Oystein Aarseth aka Euronymous. Vikernes is also the person suspected of starting the fire at the first church burning, at Fantoft. Since his internment he has become an outspoken advocate for Odinism, and this has been reflected in the lyrics to his music.

Vikernes continues to have influence in this subculture, and is in contact with an assortment of rightist groups as well as with members of the German band Absurd who have also been jailed for murder.

One especially thought-provoking chapter in *Lords of Chaos* is titled "Resurgent Atavism," in which Vikernes discusses the Oskerei myth. The Oskerei were a Germanic death cult connecting the living and the dead, and among other things it featured the sort of face painting common among some Black Metal bands. What is most interesting is that this does not seem to be a conscious imitation, but rather a resurgence of archetypal forms from the collective unconscious.

This volume contains 358 pages, is well composed, and is visually satisfying. From the front cover to the end there is a wealth of photographs and illustrations that highlight the provocative text. The depth of research, and the skillfully-done interviews needed to produce this book, are a testament to the determination of Michael Moynihan and his Norwegian co-author, Didrik Soderland.

Lords of Chaos answers many questions, and yet it raises many more that will only be answered with the passage of time. I recommend this book to every follower of Asatru, for its insights into a musical subculture that might easily bring vital new blood into our religion - or could result in prejudice and persecution of our folk. ♦

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MOOT POINT

Heilsa, Steve:

Congratulations on Issue #20 of *The Runestone*. Your magazine seems to improve in appearance and content with each issue.

I thought Roy Kosonen's reply to the "Christian Challenge" was nicely done. Of course, other responses are possible. Perhaps the most effective comeback to the old fallacy about *Voluspa* foretelling the coming of Christianity is to point out that the poem doesn't say what the Christians claim it does.

The lines in question occur in verse 65 (actually a fragment of a verse):

*Tha komr inn riki at regindomi
oflugar ofan, sa er ollu raethr*

[Editor: My fonts won't do this passage justice, but you get the idea...]

Although most translations employ some variation of the word "godhead" (and the Christian Challenger rests his/her whole argument on this), no such term is present in the original. The seeress merely foretells the coming of an *inn riki* - a term that in every other context is translated as "the mighty," "the powerful," or even "the wealthy." We would laugh if the translator of *Njal's Saga* rendered the name *Guthmundr inn riki* as "Gudmund the Godhead!" Yet the Christian translators of *Voluspa*, seeing a chance to score a cheap point for their religion, did not hesitate to pervert the text of one of our greatest poems to conform to their own theological preconceptions.

But, the Challenger might respond, surely *regindomi* means the great judgment - doomsday - and what other mighty being than Christ would appear to sit in judgment at the end of the world? The problem is, this interpretation of *regindomi* is reasonable only if you already believe that *inn riki* refers to Christ! Otherwise, as the great scholar Sigurdur Nordal pointed out, a conscientious translator would look for a meaning more consistent with the overall theme of the poem. On this basis Nordal (and others) suggested "realm of the god(s)" as a plausible translation of *regindomi* in this context. This yields something like, "The mighty will come

to rule over the godly realm" (after Ragnarok) - a verse that is wholly consistent with the prophetic vision of the *volva*, yet dispenses with any but the most strained interpretation as a forecast of Christianity.

Cordially,
Rorik

Heilsa, Rorik!

Bravo! You've just deflated the entire argument of the "Challenger" - looks like it was wise of him to remain anonymous!

Hail the Aesir and Vanir!
Steve

Heilsa, Steve!

In Roy Kosonen's excellent response to the Christian challenge, he mentions that our ancestors had a concept of a supreme God of the universe. Although this idea is seldom discussed in modern Asatru, I have always found it extremely interesting. It makes sense to me to identify Wodan's grandfather Buri as this remote Supreme Being. He was, after all, the ancient ancestor of most of our Gods. To have sired the Aesir and Vanir, Buri must be a Cosmic Sky God of vast proportions and immense power! Of course a case could also be made for the Great Mother Authumla, who appears to be even older. It is a shame that we have so little lore concerning these primal deities. I was wondering, Steve, what you might think about all this.

Hail the Holy Aesir!
Jeff

Heilsa, Jeff!

I think these are fertile grounds for further research! I'd be interested in seeing more the subject, if anyone would like to write it up for *The Runestone*! See the next letter for more informative comment on Roy's article.

Hail the Gods!
Steve

Hailsa, Steve;

...I have been following the events concerning Kennewick Man through *Vor Tru*, *The Runestone*, and also some other sources on this issue. One area of disappointment, though, has been the lack of mention that there is no way to dispute the settlement of a branch of the European race in Vinland as long as any other "Native American." This has been proven over and over again, and to approach it any other way is degrading to us as descendants of these European people...

...Another thing I have not seen, which is surprising, is mention of Barry Fell. Fell is, or maybe was, an anthropologist/archeologist who did many years of research and published two great books, in my opinion concerning the habitation of the eastern coast of Vinland. *America B.C.* and *Bronze Age America* cover this topic well and authoritatively, with facts and references given to skeletal remains, stone carvings, and dwellings. I read these books a few years ago and highly recommend them to anyone interested in the subject.

People like Jonathan Mozzochi, who is probably of European descent, really need to stop labeling everything that is pro-European as racist. [*Editor - Mozzochi is a left-wing activist of some repute who hides his own particular brand of bigotry behind a facade of "anti-racism."*] He and others of like mind can hang on to their feelings of white guilt if they want, but they really should do so silently for the sake of the rest of us.

I don't hate anybody for the color of their skin or their racial origin, and in fact have friends of different races. But regardless of skin color, I have zero tolerance for unbudging fools.

Hail the Holy Aesir and Vanir!
Hail the Folk!

Edward

Heilsa!

Thank you for your comments and your information. I haven't gone into Fell's work simply because of time and resources, though of course his material deserves to be considered along with all the rest.

As for Mozzochi - well, he heads a hate group masquerading as an anti-hate group. Such is the nature of American culture at the close of the twentieth century!

Hail the Ancestors!
Steve

Steve:

Your article on "Fog and Fire" was excellent. I hope you will continue to expand on the theme that Asatru is an antidote for the Cultural Marxism being foisted on us from all sides. Whatever Christianity was at its inception, it had become theological socialism by the Council of Nicea. While Christianity may be a waning movement, this Cultural Marxism is alive and well. As you note, there will always be people willing to surrender responsibility to some religious or political "godhead" than those who are willing to accept the burden of responsibility for their own behavior and conduct...

Ed

Hail, Ed!

This is one of my favorite themes, so no doubt you'll be seeing more of it!

Hail Odin!

Steve



RUNE NAME: *Kenaz* (torch)

KEY CONCEPTS: *Kenaz* transforms and regenerates. In the image of a torch, this rune symbolizes controlled energy, channeled power. Within it, creativity, sexual desire, and charisma are worked by the will to serve human purposes; at life's end, the fire of cremation points to rebirth.

AFFIRMATION: Creativity flames within me. The craft of my ancestors reappears in my work.

CALENDAR

JUNE 8 - LINDISFARNE DAY. In the year 793, three Norse monks fled to a remote monastery at Lindisfarne, officially starting the Viking Age. Toast to the age and leaf through a good book about our sea-wolf ancestors.

JUNE 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR SIGURD THE VIKING. Sigurd outshines Sigmund's noble son. His courage and nobility won him fame for centuries. Recall his glory by listening to Wagner's *Die Walküre*. Be generous, in imitation of Sigurd's goodness of heart.

JUNE 21 - MIDSUMMER. This is the sun's moment of greatest power and longest daylight. After today, the sun's decline begins. Decorate your home and burn a candle in her honor.

JULY 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR UNN THE DEEP MOUTHED. Unn, a strong-willed matriarch who established dynasties in the Orkneys. Remember her by doing something to make your family line stronger and more permanent. Honor all the women of your clan today.

AUGUST 9 - DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR KING HLOTHAR. Hlothar was a missionary and upheld Asatru in his country against the missionaries. Remember the Goddess Frigg, "Giver of Freedom." Remember the words reversing the Christianization of the Vikings: "God is dead, forsake all worship of him, and worship the Gods and Goddesses of Asatru." Remember the Gods and Goddesses of Asatru.



