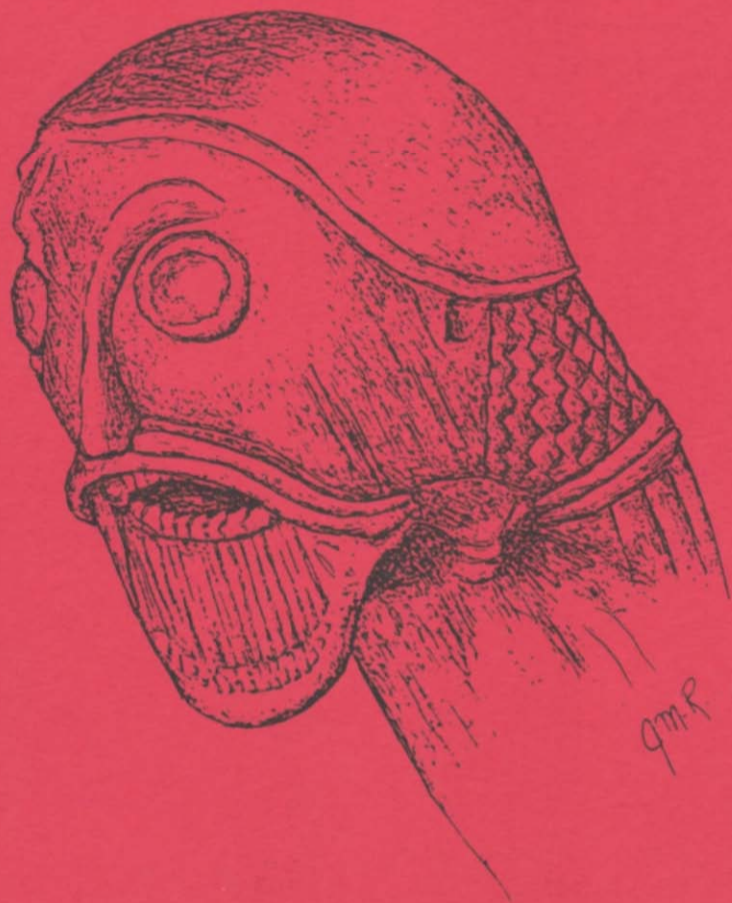




THE



RUNESTONE



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THE RUNESTONE is a journal of the ancient Norse religion, known as Odinism or Ásatrú. It is dedicated to that religion as epitomized during the Viking Age, and to the values of courage, freedom, and individuality which are associated with it.

THE RUNESTONE is the official journal of the Ásatrú Free Assembly and is published quarterly. Subscriptions are \$5.00 per year in the U.S. and Canada and \$6.00 per year overseas (air mail). Write to Ásatrú Free Assembly, 3400 Village Avenue, Denair, CA 95316. Please make checks payable to Ásatrú Free Assembly.

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Calendar

December-February 1980/1981

December 20-21 - Mother Night. This is the night that gives birth to the coming year (hence the name "Mother Night") and marks the beginning of the Jól, or Yule, season. We suggest an appropriate ritual and/or a party to mark the beginning of this festive time. This is the night before the winter solstice and marks the beginning of the Sun's return.

December 31 - Twelfth Night. The celebration which began on Mother Night continues for the traditional Twelve Days of Yule, each day of which is a month of the preceding year in miniature. Twelfth Night marks the culmination of this period.

January 3 - Charming of the Plow. An agricultural ritual of great antiquity is traditionally performed on this date in Scandinavia. Although long since cloaked in Christian disguise, the original rite called upon Mother Earth and Father Sky to bless the fields, and grain cakes were turned under the first furrow. This is a good day to reflect on our dependence upon Nature and our roots in the soil. In the revived Vanir faith, this day is called *arör*, or "plow."

January 9 - A Day of Remembrance for the martyr Raud the Strong. Raud was a landowner of great renown in Halogaland, in Norway. Olaf the Traitor, known to history as King Olaf Trygvason, had Raud captured and tortured to death because he would not renounce Ásatrú. History says that Olaf forced a snake down Raud's throat. Needless to say, Raud's wealth was confiscated by the king.

February 2 - Barri. Known generally as Candlemas among Wiccans, this is the day we celebrate the wooing by the god Frey of the maiden Gerd. It is a festival of fertility, of the planted seed and the plowed furrow, in the same spirit as Charming of the Plow.

February 9 - Another Day of Remembrance for another Halogalander, Eyvind Kinrifi. Olaf tortured him to death by placing a bowl of red-hot embers on his stomach until his belly burst open. Eyvind's crime was steadfast loyalty to the old gods. A good day to reflect on Christian kindness...

February 14 - Feast of Vali. This day is in honor of the family and is a traditional time for the renewal of marriage vows, betrothals, and ties of kinship loyalty.

Our thanks to
Jeanne-Marie Roussey
for our cover!



Announcements

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS. We have moved, and the resulting dislocation is one reason why we are so tardy in answering correspondence of late. All correspondence, queries, exchange publications, and in fact anything intended for the AFA or *The Runestone* should be sent to our new address.

PLEASE HAVE PATIENCE -- I am painfully aware that I have owed replies to many of you for a long time. Growth of the AFA, coupled with the move, have strained our capabilities to the maximum. Every day, we are getting out slightly more replies than incoming queries, but it will still take time to catch up.

HELP! We need a volunteer who would be willing to help handle the correspondence course load. This does not require a vast deal of time but it does demand a regularity that my schedule just does not permit right now. A volunteer would study the relevant material, grade returned lessons, make comments, and mail the next lesson to the student. In return for doing this, the volunteer would get full credit for the correspondence course--and would become an expert on the basics of Asatru, viking culture, and saga literature! Other organizational benefits might be available, too. Present extensive knowledge of the subject matter would be nice but is not a prerequisite--you'll certainly get on-the-job training!

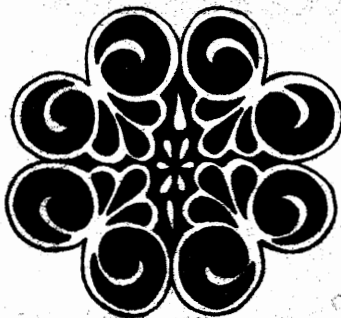
DID YOU SEE THE WAYLON JENNINGS SPECIAL? If you did, you saw the silver Thor's hammer he was wearing on the front of his hat. I couldn't believe it either, but there's no mistaking it. Anyone know how to get mail to him, so he'll know just what it is he's wearing? Always did like ol' Waylon..

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS! I'm afraid some wording in the last issue requires clarification. When I said that the associate membership class was "frozen," I didn't mean that you couldn't also become a member under the new system. All I meant was that no more Associate Members would be accepted; the *number* of such members is frozen. You are of course encouraged to become regular members.

"THE VIKINGS" - a ten-part series narrated by Magnus Magnusson--is running on public television around the country in connection with the spectacular Viking museum exhibit now at the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Magnusson has been busily trying to present a favorable image of the Vikings for some years now; his book *Hammer of the North* (Putnam's, 1977) is a sympathetic look at our religion.

POET GAMBRELL - Poet is still in prison, and his lawyer wants a sizeable sum to start the process that we hope will get him out. Contributions for his defense fund are earnestly solicited and will be promptly forwarded to the people concerned.

For you newcomers, Poet has been convicted of murder under most suspicious circumstances. Certain parties seem to have decided to make a racial issue out of this case of self-defense, and NAACP pressure helped build up an atmosphere of reverse discrimination which resulted in his conviction. Let's set the matter right -- free Poet!



METAGENETICS

One of the most controversial tenets of Asatrú is our insistence that ancestry matters--that there are spiritual and metaphysical implications to heredity, and that we are thus a religion not for all of humanity, but rather one that calls only its own. This belief of ours has led to much misunderstanding, and as a result some have attempted to label us as "racist," or have accused us of fronting for totalitarian political forms.

In this article we will discuss, fully and at length, a science for the next century which we have named "metagenetics." For while that science deals with genetics, it also transcends the present boundaries of that discipline and touches on religion, metaphysics, and (among other things) the hereditary nature of Jungian archetypes. The foundations of metagenetics lie not in totalitarian dogma of the 19th and 20th centuries, but rather in intuitive insights as old as our people. It is only in the last decades that experimental evidence has begun to verify these age-old beliefs.

Anyone familiar with Asatrú knows that the clan or family line holds a special place in our religion. Kinship is prized for both practical and spiritual reasons, and the chain of generations is seen as a time-transcending unity, something not limited by our narrow perceptions of past, present and future. What findings of modern science make this more than a pious conviction? Is there anything special about the genetic bond from a psychic or spiritual standpoint?

Consider for a moment the curious connection between twins. Identical twins, of course, have identical genetic endowment. Hence it comes as no surprise to find that patterns of brain current activity are remarkably similar in twins, nor is it unexpected that Danish scientist Dr. N. Jule-Nielsen has found that twins raised separately have similar aptitudes and personalities. One step beyond these findings we run across the fact that in many cultures twins are credited with extrasensory perception in regard to each other. In fact, Dr. J. B. Rhine, famous ESP researcher at Duke University, is on record as stating that "Cases have been reported to us from time to time of what would appear to be exceptional telepathic rapport between identical twins."

A study of ESP cases will show that other family members are likely to have this rapport as well. How many mothers during wartime have known with uncanny accuracy the exact instant that their sons have been injured or killed? Countless other anecdotes can be collected which might be interpreted as having a genetic basis. Such a psychic resonance could be explained by other hypotheses, to be sure--but when placed in the context of other information that we have, they tend to buttress the heredity connection. And a biological (or partly biological) rationale for psychic phenomena should make the subject more palatable to "hard-headed rationalists."

Going a step further, let's look at reincarnation memories. One does not have to "believe" in reincarnation as it is commonly presented to accept the reality of the phenomenon; there seems to be evidence that people sometimes have memories that don't belong to them--or at least not to the "them" that they normally consider themselves to be. One is free to accept or to reject the literal explanation of reincarnation as it is vulgarly expressed, but there are other explanations for the reports. There is the possibility that these memories, or many of them, are genetic memories. Timothy Leary--who, whether or not one agrees with his drug philosophy, is no small intellect--is only one person who suspects this to be the case. Leary wrote that whether one called it the akashic records, the collective unconscious, or the "phylogenetic unconscious," it could all be ascribed to the "neurogenetic circuit," or what he calls signals from the DNA-RNA dialogue. In other words, these memories are carried in the DNA itself.

It's interesting to note that in many cultures--in our own Norse tradition and in the Tlingit Indian lore, among others--rebirth is seen occurring specifically in the family line. A person did not come back as a bug or a rabbit, or as a person of another race or tribe, but as a member of their own clan. Olaf the

Holy, the Norwegian king largely responsible for Christianizing that country, was named after his ancestor Olaf Geirstadaálfr and was believed to be the ancient king reborn. Naturally the Christian Olaf could not tolerate such a suggestion, and the sagas relate how he harshly discouraged this belief.

The Tlingits, though, have preserved their native religious beliefs into our own time and thus they are subject to scholarly examination at a much closer range than are our own ancestors. Dr. Ian Stevenson is the alumni professor of psychiatry at the University of Virginia Medical School, and he also has an interest in reincarnation phenomena. In fact, he authored a volume titled *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation*, the conservative title of which indicates his scientific approach to the subject. One of the cases he investigated dealt with a modern-day occurrence of apparent rebirth into the clan line in a modern Tlingit family. While the story is too long to be included in this article, suffice to say that the evidence, while circumstantial, is still impressive. It may not be possible to prove, in strictly scientific fashion, that a Tlingit was literally reborn as his own grandson--nor does it matter. The point is simply that there are metaphysical implications to the bond of genetic kinship.

One wonders, as an aside, if rebirth (whether literal rebirth of the individual personality, or the rebirth of some spiritual essence beyond the "merely" biological) might not be some sort of evolutionary bonus for the clan and tribe, whereby the best, wisest, most spiritually "in tune" characteristics are conserved in the family line.

So far we've worked on the idea that there is a link between heredity and the clan concept on one hand and psychism and rebirth on the other. Let's try a different tack now, and look at Dr. Carl Jung's archetypes.

Jung spoke of the collective unconscious--a level of the psyche not dependent upon personal experience. The collective unconscious is a reservoir of primordial images called archetypes. They are not exactly memories, but are rather predispositions and potentialities. As Jung said, "There are as many archetypes as there are typical situations in life. Endless repetition has engraved these experiences into our psychic constitution, not in the forms of images filled with content, but at first only as *forms without content* (emphasis in the original), representing merely the possibility of a certain type of perception and action."

Most modern students of Jung miss a very key fact. Jung stated explicitly that the archetypes were not culturally transmitted but were in fact inherited--that is to say, genetic. He linked them with the physiological urges of instincts and went so far as to say that "Because the brain is the principal organ of the mind, the collective unconscious depends directly upon the evolution of the brain."

A more precise statement of the mind/body/spirit link, and of the religious implications of biological kinship, would be hard to find.

But Jung was not satisfied to make this connection. He went on to say that because of this biological factor there were differences in the collective unconscious of the races of mankind. Boldly he asserted that "Thus it is a quite unpardonable mistake to accept the conclusions of a Jewish psychology as generally valid (This statement must be taken in context. It is not some irrelevant anti-Jewish remark, but instead stems from the growing rift between Jung and his Jewish teacher, Freud). Nobody would dream of taking Chinese or Indian psychology as binding upon ourselves. The cheap accusation of anti-Semitism that has been levelled at me on the ground of this criticism is about as intelligent as accusing me of an anti-Chinese prejudice. No doubt, on an earlier and deeper level of psychic development, where it is still impossible to distinguish between an Aryan, Semitic, Hamitic, or Mongolian mentality, all human races have a common collective psyche. But with the beginning of racial differentiation, essential differences are developed in the collective psyche as well. For this reason, we cannot transplant the spirit of a foreign religion *in globo* into our own mentality without sensible injury to the latter."

Thus the link between religion, which expresses itself in terms of archetypes in the collective unconscious, and biology--and hence race--is complete.

Jung is substantiated by more recent research as well. Perhaps the most important such study was conducted by Dr. Daniel G. Freedman, professor of behavioral

sciences at the University of Chicago. His results were published in an article in the January, 1979 issue of *Human Nature* entitled "Ethnic Differences in Babies." Freedman and his associates subjected Caucasian, Asian, Black and Native American newborn infants to identical stimuli and consistently received different responses from babies of each race. Furthermore, these differences matched the traditionally ascribed characteristics of each race--the Asian babies were in fact less excitable and more passive, etc. Native American and Mongolian babies behaved similarly, apparently due to their relatively close biological kinship. It is only a small step from inborn temperament to inborn attitudes to inborn religious predispositions, which is only a restating in different words of Dr. Jung's theory.

Let's look again at how the clan mystique, the expression of which in the physical world is a genetic one, relates to the Vanir in particular and the ancient beliefs of Asatrú in general.

We've already mentioned Frey, and how he is especially linked to the clan concept. Freya, his sister, also is involved for she is the leader of the female tutelary spirits called the *dísir*. Of the *dísir* we read, in *The Viking Achievement* (P. G. Foote and D. M. Wilson) that

"It is sometimes difficult to keep the *dísir* distinct from valkyries or harsh Norns on the one hand and spirits called *Fylgjur*, 'companions,' on the other, and it is probable that the Norsemen themselves had notions about these beings that varied from time to time and place to place. *Fylgjur* were attached to families or individuals, but had no local habitation or individual name. They appear to have represented the inherent faculty for achievement that existed in a family's offspring. Everyday observation of consonant or discrepant facts of heredity would confirm that it was possible for a *Fylgja* to desert an individual or to be rejected by him."

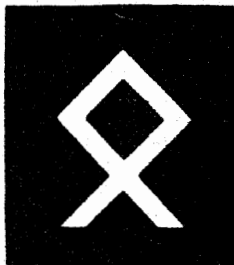
Ancient wisdom meets modern science.

The idea of metagenetics may be threatening to many who have been taught that there are no differences between the branches of humanity. But in reflecting, it is plain that metagenetics is in keeping with the most modern ways of seeing the world. A holistic view of the human entity requires that mind, matter, and spirit are not separate things but represent a spectrum or continuum. It should not be surprising, then, that genetics is seen as a factor in spiritual or psychic matters. And the ideas put forth by those who see consciousness as a product of chemistry fit into metagenetics, as well--for biochemistry is a function of organic structure which in turn depends upon our biological heritage.

We of Asatrú are concerned about our ancestral heritage and we consider our religion to be an expression of the whole of what we are, not something that we arbitrarily assume from without. It also explains why those who do not understand us accuse us of extreme ethnocentrism or even racism--for it is clear from metagenetics that if we, as a people, cease to exist, then Asatrú also dies forever. We are intimately tied up with the fate of our whole people, for Asatrú is an expression of the soul of our race.

This does not mean that we are to behave negatively toward other peoples who have not harmed us. On the contrary, only by understanding who we are, only by coming from our racial "center," can we interact justly and with wisdom with other peoples on this planet. We must know ourselves before we can know others. Our differences are great, but we who love human diversity and variation must learn to see these differences as a blessing to be treasured, not barriers to be dissolved.

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A MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

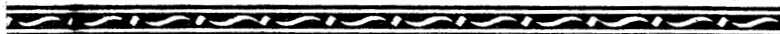
JÚl. After the hectic holiday preparations are finally done, the pace slows, and we are left to think on who we are--and how we are a part of the long chain made up of all our ancestors and all our descendents. At times like these we grope for symbolism to express what is within us, and the traditional ceremonies of our faith come to answer the need. Yet, a family tradition can be every much a ritual as the formal sort, and it is of this that I would write.

This Yuletide I will be sending a message in a bottle. But rather than casting this greeting upon the foaming waters to be carried Hugin-knows-where, I choose instead to send it a-travelling down the stream of time, to my kinsmen there.

When the sun begins its turning in the heavens, I will toss this message forth--by packing away a fine bottle of liquor, to be opened on JúI, 2000 C.E. Hopefully my son and I, along with other clan members, will share it together. But just in case something happens to me, there will be a short letter enclosed, giving my "Hello!" down the years.

Twenty years can see many changes--but why not be more ambitious still? I'm going to send more messages. One will be not twenty, but fifty years down the time stream; probably I'll never drink from it, but hopefully my children and their children will think of me when they crack its dusty seal. My great-grandchildren will sip from the one I'll put away for seventy-five years, and their sons and daughters will sample the one set aside for one hundred years.

And beyond? No, my point is made. The bottle of spirits and the notes that accompany them are loving symbols, no more. The substance--my flesh and blood and spiritual essence, as it lives in them, is what matters. And my real gift to them is my determination to insure, insofar as I am capable, that they exist--and that they exist is freedom, in dignity, and in an awareness of the kinship that links us.



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FIERCE MEN OF FRIESLAND

Friesland is the home of the Friesian people, bordering on the North Sea in both Germany and the Netherlands. The Friesians are a tribe of Nordic giants with obscure origins. Some historians claim they have lived along the southern rim of the North Sea since the days of Roman conquest. Other historians maintain that the Friesians arrived on the coast of Friesland in longships during the 5th and 6th centuries. Whatever their origins, it is agreed that the Friesians were fierce warriors with a deep lust for freedom.

For a time, during the 7th and 8th centuries, the Friesians posed a threat to the Frankish subjects in Belgium and the Netherlands with their quick and daring raids. Pepin, King of the Franks, began a long series of wars against the Friesians and their allies, the Old Saxons of Germany. These wars ended years later when Pepin's son, Charles the Great, defeated them and forced their acceptance of Christianity. Sources reveal that the Friesians lost the wars because they fought on foot against Frankish horse soldiers.

It was during these wars with the Franks that the West caught a small glimpse of Friesland's old paganism. A monk, who rode with the Frankish troops, recorded that the Friesians sacrificed in sacred groves to two deities of war, and that they left stones marked with runes at the sites of battlefields. The monk identified the two deities with the Latin names Mars Thingsus and Baduhenna. Mars Thingsus was a male deity that may safely be identified as Tiwas (Tyr), the Norse god of justice and war. The female deity, Baduhenna, which means "war-mad one," is possibly a minor Germanic goddess named Baudihillie, meaning "ruler of battle." Baudihillie is associated with another goddess named Friagabi, which means "giver of freedom." The tribal name "Friesian" might have been derived from the name Friagabi.

Due to the interference of Charles the Great, the Friesians lost contact with their old faith and entered the blind circle of Christianity, but they never lost their lust for freedom. In the 9th century they revolted against Charles the Great's successors and again began harassing the Flemish and Dutch. Today's world still sees some animosity between the Friesians and Dutch.

Five hundred years after Charles the Great, we find mention of the Friesians in Dante Alighieri's *Inferno*. Like most Europeans of his day, Dante regarded the Friesians as troublesome misfits incapable of culture. Since the average height of a Friesian male was six feet, four inches in height, Dante placed them on the same level in hell as he did Goliath and other legendary giants.

Even though the Friesians had such a poor image in the eyes of other Europeans, history reveals them as pioneers in the field of religious tolerance. The Friesians had lost contact with their old pagan beliefs, but they never lost touch with the ideals that made their paganism great. During the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century, when other nations were being washed with the blood of various religions, Friesland was the only area in Europe where a person could believe how he wanted without fear of what the local ruler might do. Religious refugees from Belgium and the Netherlands found a home among the giant Friesians they had always hated, and in the intervening years their blood has been absorbed in Friesian veins.

The Friesians were fierce warriors who embodied the noble characteristics of valor, independence and justice. They are an example to everyone of the greatness in Norse paganism.

Fierce men of Friesland!
 Warrior giants of old!
 Inspire us to fight
 our daily battles with all
 your daring, honor and speed!



GODS OF MY FATHERS

I have sought you, Great Ancestors, in musty naves
 Tried tracing you by sunlit pillars
 Even the stones of Egypt felt my queries
 I did not find you there.

It was not the gentle Christians
 Nor puzzling Greeks posing paradoxes
 Nor Nile-blessed Egyptians
 Nor even Gods-enrapt Hindus
 Who ravened the foggy North
 Or gave their name to furious.

But simple men and hardy
 Who butchered, artists with fire and iron
 Who plundered, canny for silver
 Who raped, stealing the future
 Who wandered, fate-driven

Merchants in furs, and amber and slaves
 From the Black Sea to Vinland the Good.

Debaters in councils, jealous of rights
 Builders of homesteads, defenders of kin
 Seekers of deeds, hungry for glory
 Ruthless riddlers worshipping poetry
 Thinkers wedding mind and sinew

And in their gods my soul's ancestry
 However buried in the dross of now
 Fine gold in an ancient howe
 It awaits the robber who risks the demons.

They have spoken to me in pine woods
 I have heard them in the rivers
 Seen them in thunder and Northern lights
 I have felt them in stillness after rain.

They loom now, near visible
 And they summon.

RŪNA

The word "rūna" means "(female) secret advisor" (the feminine form is preferred in Norse when personifying abstracts.). As a column in *The Runestone* it is intended to present a program of rune-lore (esoterica) to the Asatru community. It is one of the official outer organs of the *Rūnagildi* ("Rune-Gild") and of IRSA (Institute of Runic Studies, Asatru)--more about this in future contributions. In the coming years, a variety of gild-sibs writing in "Rūna" will explore various topics in Esoteric Odinism.

What is a "Rune"?

Before we may begin to understand the runic system we must first discover the true and most basic meanings of the individual runes, and in order to do this, the true and ^{deep} level meaning of the concept "rune" must be determined.

"Rune" has by now become synonymous with "letter," but this is hardly accurate. Originally, the two concepts have nothing in common. The etymology of the word is difficult. It is perhaps connected to Proto-Indo-European *reu-1: "to bellow, roar," but the term is really only common to the Germanic and Celtic dialects, and is more probably derived from a Proto-Germanic form *rūno-: "mystery, secret" as a technical term in the culto-magical field.

In any event, this latter meaning of "mystery" is reflected in all the attested dialects, and is indeed the original significance of the word. It is found in the Old Norse *rūn*: "secret, wisdom-- magical sign-- written character," Gothic *rūna*: "mystery," Old English *rūn*: "mystery, secret council," Old Saxon *rūna*: "mystery, secret," Old High German *rūna*: "mystery." The root also occurs in Old Irish *rūn*: "mystery," and in Middle Welsh *rhin*: "mystery, secret." It was also borrowed into Finnish from Germanic in the form of *runo*: "a magic song, stanza." Our new English word "rune" is not a direct genetic descendent from the Old English *rūn*, but rather a borrowing from 17th century scholarly Latin which had borrowed it from Germanic.

The semantic transition from "mystery" to "letter" is not too difficult to understand. The mysteries, and secret lore, came to be symbolized by certain ideographic signs, and when these were later systemized and used as a form of writing, the technical term came to be used for both the sign and the thing symbolized by the sign. (There will be more concerning the institutions which guided this process in later contributions to this column.)

With this basic foundation, we may now explore the deeper levels of meaning to be found in the complex concept "rune." From an early time each runic sign had a particular numerical value which it held by virtue of its position in a definite runic order. It also had a special name, a certain shape, a phonetic value, and a whole set of ideas which were attached to this complex. These characteristics may be arranged in a three-fold structure:

- I. Content: ideological significance
- II. Form: stave-shape and phonetic value
- III. Context: number and order in a rune-row

In order to begin to understand what a rune is, one must always keep *all* of these aspects in mind simultaneously.

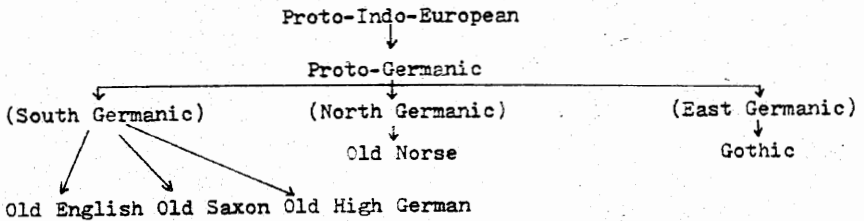
Runes exist in all realms of being at all times, they exist within the human psychophysical complex and in the multiverse, or world. In fact, the runic correspondences between these (apparently) distinct realms constitute one of the great *runes*. The runes distinguish between "this" and "that," but at the same time they form bridges between the two. All things "have their runes," i.e. their essential secrets or mysteries which lie behind their appearances--and appearances are often

deceiving. Through an interaction of the world-runes and the man-runes (those of the human psychophysical complex), the rune-vitki ("runic magician," or "wise one") is able to first gain knowledge, and then use that knowledge in accordance with the wisdom gained, to become a more potent force in the world.

Each rune is a dynamic force unto itself, yet it exists within a tightly woven ecosystem of energy. What is most useful to keep in mind about the runes is their multiple aspects within an integrated model of wholeness, and to see the runic sign-sound as a key that unlocks a *whole rune*.

The runic system provides us with an indigenous, symbolic meta-language with which we can explore ourselves and the multiverse, express our experiences, and indeed shape our consciousness. Such an indwelling meta-language is an invaluable tool in the emergence of Asatrú--but as with all "languages" one must learn to speak, to understand, to read, and to write before one may effectively use the language. In the next "Rúna" we will begin to explore the ABC's of this meta-language--the FUTHARK.

¹ A (*) means the form is reconstructed according to strict linguistic rules in a hypothetical language, i.e. Proto-Indo-European, Proto-Germanic, etc. The genetic, chronological relationship between these hypothetical languages and the attested Germanic dialects may be illustrated:



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WHY YOU SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE AFA LAND FUND.....

We Northern Europeans are a practical bunch. We can handle abstractions with ease, but we are most at home in the material world, the world of doing as well as of thinking--hence our strong sense of history, which deals in things and places as well as in ideas.

Asatrú, in this country as elsewhere, has ideas. We have people who accept those ideas. But now we need a *place*--the *boden* to match our *blut*, so to speak. In a broader sense we have our local regions and our European homelands, but we need something more specific, something more identifiable--a concrete locus in space-time.

We need a modern-day equivalent to the ancient holy site of Uppsala. Not a carefully preserved monument, rifled by archaeologists and powdered with the dust from the tourists' clumsy feet, but rather a living, vital religious center--Uppsala as it was a thousand years ago, not as it is today.

We can have it, with your help.

A proper parcel of land could serve all of us as a special center for Asatrú. On it we could hold all our future Althings, as well as lesser seminars and meetings. We can teach our children there, in summer camps where they can escape the physical and spiritual poison of the city. Both the Varangian Guard and People of the Lord and Lady would have the special places they need for their members. The uses of this land would be manifold, extending our capabilities, broadening our horizons, and enriching our faith.

With each and every issue we have shown that we mean business. *The Runestone* grows longer and more professional in appearance. Subscriptions continue to climb. People from all around the country write us, wanting to form kindreds of the AFA. *Make no mistake, we are here to stay!* Your trust placed in us will not be disappointed. This is an important project--for you, for Asatrú. Let's all pull together to make it work.



THE LAST VIKING is a trilogy by Poul Anderson that you won't want to miss. It is a fictional account of Harald Hardrada's life--but it is scrupulously accurate in every detail. Harald, for those of you who don't know of him, was one of the greatest of the Viking leaders and, unfortunately, one of the last prior to the current revival. He was also a leader of the Varangian Guard in Byzantium (now Istanbul), and all members of our warrior fraternity will definitely want to read this story of his life. The three volumes are published by Tobra Books. Your local book store can order them for you. They're in paperback and are a bargain.

If the Ásatrú Free Assembly is going to go anywhere, it must have a direction in which to go. The statement below does not pretend to define Ásatrú.....but it does give direction to the AFA as an organization. It states what we want to accomplish in the world. If your own feelings are consistent with this statement, you may wish to join us and help us work toward these goals.....

A DECLARATION OF PURPOSE OF THE ASATRÚ FREE ASSEMBLY

For our ancestors, ourselves, and our descendents we of the Asatrú Free Assembly dedicate ourselves to the following purposes:

- To live the ancient faith of Odinism in all its holy manifestations,
- To call all of our brothers and sisters of Northern European descent back to this, their native faith,
- To foster in the breasts of our people a deep love of freedom and a hatred of all forms of tyranny,
- To work in harmony with Mother Earth, relinking with her seasons and cycles, and healing her wounds,
- To preserve the cultural and biological identity of the Northern peoples, from whose soul Odinism sprang,
- To restore community, banish alienation, and establish natural and just relations among our people,
- To promote diversity among the peoples and cultures of Earth, in opposition to global monoculture,
- To work for peace among our brothers and sisters of Northern European ancestry, regardless of the nation of their birth, that we not take up arms against them,
- To explore the universe in keeping with the adventurous imperatives of our kind,
- To use science and technology to promote the well-being of our people while protecting the natural environment in which we live,
- To restore our people to wholeness by tapping the deepest spiritual wisdom of our ancestors, that we may thus relate properly to ourselves and to the other peoples on this planet,
- To affirm the eternal struggle and strife of life, to welcome that strife as a challenge, to live life wholly and with joy, and to face eternity with courage.

-SHORT REVIEWS-

The Holy Book of the Devas: an Herball for the Aquarian Age by Rev. Paul Beyer.

I was frankly somewhat at a loss for words when asked to review this book. It has little to do in any direct way with the faith of Asatru, being more aligned to the other "mainstream" traditions of Neo-Paganism.

Further reflection, though, moderated this view. I have never seen a word in any Odinst/Asatru journal on the use of herbs--yet our ancient tradition abounds in such lore. Remember the old Anglo-Saxon manuscript *Lacnunga*, from which we get the barely-Christianized invocation we use at Charming of the Plow? Essentially this is an herbal manuscript. And only a few days ago I was reading from *Sigurdrifumal*, where Sigurdrifa (Brynhild) tells Sigurd how to cast a leek in his ale-cup to detect poisons. There is a wealth of such material that has yet to be studied, and *The Holy Book of the Devas* is a reminder of that fact.

But this volume won't bore (or amuse) you with far-out magickal spells for the use of herbs, although it does teach upon their astrological properties and their uses. Instead you'll find a Goddess-oriented creation myth, and a lot of material about *devas*, which in this context (as opposed to its usage in the mythology of India) means plant spirits. Tangential to our purposes at best, you say? Perhaps--but the *devas* sound an awfully lot like our *dísir*, the female tutelary spirits at the command of Freya, responsible for fertility and the maintenance of life. All of which points out how far we have yet to go in restoring our ancient faith.

If, then, you want to explore these new horizons, particularly those regarding the Vanic mysteries, this book may be a useful starting place for speculating, fantasy, and adaptation. You don't even have to believe in the Aquarian Age to enjoy it. And Prairie Jackson's fine drawings are indeed worth the proverbial ten thousand words. It's 52 pages in all, available at \$7.00 from Rowan Tree Publications, P.O. Box 8814, Minneapolis, MN 55408.

Escape from the City by James Hunaucker and Richard Howington.

Survivalism is a word to be added to the vocabulary of the Eighties. It means, simply, making it through the coming "hard times" (variously seen as war, famine, economic collapse, etc.) securely. *Escape from the City* is a book about making it through a city in the final stages of collapse to your previously-prepared refuge in the countryside.

I'm reviewing this book because so many Odinists--so many Pagans--so many of our Northern European brothers and sisters live in the cities even though we know deep down inside that cities are unhealthy, both physically and spiritually. If things do become rough and our streets turn into models of social activity in the image of Watts and Miami, you'd need to know what to do. *Escape from the City* purports to tell you, and if you are new to survivalism it may indeed be helpful. Most of the booklet deals with selecting equipment--an assault rifle, pistol, pack, first-aid kit, sleeping bag, and so forth. For those who have read some of the other material in the field--Tappan's *Survival Guns* and other classics--a lot of this will be a re-run, for others it is a good overview and introduction.

I wish methods and tactics had been covered. Knowing how to pick an escape route out of the city, how best to arm yourself to fight off mobs attacking your vehicle, how to prepare that vehicle for escape from the city, and other topics would make an excellent book. Maybe I'll write one.

At any rate, this booklet is a thoughtful guide to selecting your getaway tools. It's compact and meaty, 24 pages of small print. It can be ordered from Armageddon Press, P.O. Box 1145, Princeton, WV 24740

Y Y Y Y Y Y Y



MOOT POINT

LETTERS

Heilsa Einarr, allshérjargoði!

First of all I wanted to drop you a line to let you know that we have officially founded a kindred of the AFA here. This was carried out as part of the Harvestfest on 9/21/80 e.v. The rite consisted of a kindred-foundation *blót* to Freyja and Freyr, and a ritual feast. There were twelve people present, and all but one took active part in the *blót*. I think we will be able to form a lasting kindred here. At least we are off to a good start. If possible, could you run an announcement of this in the next *Runestone*? Mitch (Eadwin) will be the first to be inducted into the kindred. This will be carried out through a combination of the Norse *vatni avsa* rite and of the Frankish Baptismal Vow formula (in reverse of course!) That is, where the original "asks" the "convert" to forsake all the devils Thunaer, Vuodan and Saxnote and to accept the trinity--this form will reject the X-ian forces, and re-connect the *ásatrúari* with the old triad (in some form). I think that each kindred should send in a registry form to the *alishérjarþing* to which names, honors, etc., etc., may be added. This so that you will know the status, activity, etc., of each kindred....

Heill Óðinn!
Heilt Ásatrúarþing!

-Edred Goði

P.S. I also have a P.O. Box (for contacts of the Rune-Gild, local Ásatrú contacts, etc.)

P.O. Box 7622
Austin, TX 78712

Y Y Y Y Y Y Y

Steve--Greetings!

Two things I feel I should mention: 1) No one seems to have any idea what HOTTG is all about. Here is a short policy statement: Hall of the True Gods is a non-sexist, non-racist, non-violent group legitimately recognized by the State of Maryland as a "religious corporation." It is devoted to the study, practice and development of Norse beliefs. Its activities include research, recreational ritual, crafts, contact with other Norse-oriented groups, and Norse cultural and religious instruction for its members. 2) The historical club from which we sprang, Markland Medieval Mercenary Militia is going to race its 32' viking ship FYR DRACA against the 26' viking boat of the Philadelphia-based Leif Erikson Society. The race will take place on September 13th at 4:00 p.m. E.D.S.T. and the winning crew gets treated to a keg by the losers. The race will be near Annapolis harbor starting and ending at the U.S. Naval Academy. If the Washington Post or Baltimore Sun cover the race, it could make the wire services. The name of the L.E.S. boat is RAVNEN. It has 6 oars; we have 12. But they have a better sail-weight ratio. Wish us luck and look for us on the news or papers.

Sincerely,

-G.C.

May your way be speedy.

Dear Co-religionists!

The last issue of *The Runestone* was a bombshell. It calls on us to put our money, that is, our real energy, where our mouths are. And that is welcome. Ahead of us is perhaps one of the greatest challenges faced by religious man: Building a way for man to live by. And this kind of challenge calls for some pretty basic commitments.

What are we to do? Are we going to continue with Asatrú as a "spare-time" faith? Are we going to try to rebuild the Old Norse religion? Then forget it. Why waste money and time? Asatrú cannot be reclaimed, rebuilt from the vandalism of Christian scholars. And it shouldn't be. In its ancient form Asatrú was ideal for its age, but this is not the 10th century after That Man.

No. We cannot revive Asatrú the way it was. But perhaps it can be more, much more than it was.

For the truth of Asatrú remains. Look for a moment at the cosmology of the Eddas. Observe the subtle interplay of the gods and their enemies. These things have much to tell us, if we approach them with courage and respect. Never did a religion demand of its followers as much as Asatrú. Asatrú tells us the fate of the universe we know, then expects us to have the guts to come up smiling. And it tells us how to do it. Read the *Voluspa* and the *Havamal*. There is the heart and mind of Asatrú. Meditate on the runes (Edred Thorsson, I await your book's appearance) and learn insights for today.

We of Asatrú are not a bunch of tweedy antiquarians, hauling out our moth-eaten imitation furs and painted-wood swords for some sort of vinyl and plastic snap-together feeble imitation of Viking ritual.

We are survivors. We are bitter warriors striving to save ourselves from a terrible, de-humanizing, almost zombie-ish so-called civilization, which devours individuals like a child does twinkies, then rejoices in mechanical toys and vicarious emotion, which has as its real norm something between a modern hospital and a television soap-opera, a perfect wedding of efficiency and anti-emotionality with banality and glitter.

We are survivors. When we dare to say "These Gods ARE!" we find, sometimes to our astonishment, that we speak the truth, and they are beside us.

We do not stand simply for Western Man. We stand for MAN! And our allies in Asgard stand with us.

So here we are. We have been called upon to give more of ourselves. We can do this. And as we do it, as we truly commit ourselves, we will hear the Gods and Goddesses talking to us.

And there will be new rituals to celebrate the Gods. And eventually, and count on this, a new Mankind will emerge from the Nursery of Asatrú--strong, defiant, independent, intelligent, loving--nobler than any this world has seen.

Let's get to work. The Gods count on us to clean up their creation. We've got a religion to grow into, and a world to remake.

-Tony Dillon Davis





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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE
 ÁSATRÚ FREE ASSEMBLY

I AM an individual of sound mind and body, responsible for my actions and acting without coercion. I declare myself to have accepted the timeless religion of my ancestors, known as Odinism or Ásatrú, as my own, and I have studied the beliefs of the Ásatrú Free Assembly as expressed in that organization's literature and specifically in their Declaration of Purpose. After careful consideration I am now applying for membership in the Ásatrú Free Assembly.

I understand that, as a member, I am expected to contribute one percent of my income, before taxes, to the Ásatrú Free Assembly. If I am not a member of a local kindred I will send that amount directly to the organization. If I am a member of a kindred, the kindred will keep ninety percent of that one percent for use at the local level and the remainder, or one tenth of one percent of my income, will be sent to the Ásatrú Free Assembly to support its activities. I will also maintain a current subscription to the Ásatrú Free Assembly's magazine, The Runestone.

I further understand that membership is required of all kindred members, but that acceptance of any individual into a kindred is a privilege, not a right.

 SIGNATURE

 TYPED OR PRINTED NAME

 DATE

 ADDRESS

 AGE

I am a kindred member/ non-kindred member. (Indicate one.)