



THE



RUNSTONE



WINTER 1983

NUMBER 46

THE RUNESTONE is a journal of the ancient, yet ever new, religion known as Odinism or Asatru. It is dedicated to that religion and to the values of courage, freedom, and individuality which are associated with it.

THE RUNESTONE is the official journal of the Asatru Free Assembly and is published quarterly. Subscriptions are \$7 per year in the U.S. and Canada, and \$9 per year overseas (airmail). Write to: AFA, P.O.Box 1832, Grass Valley, CA 95945. Please make checks payable to the Asatru Free Assembly.

Staff for this issue: Stephen A. McHallen, Editor-in-Chief, Prudence Priest, typing, and Maddy Snow, paste-up and layout.

February 28 is the deadline for the Spring issue.

Exchange Ads

The Bard, a hereditary Welsh journal of Celtic Paganism, is published quarterly, coinciding with the Celtic Festivals, by the Annwn Temple of Gwynfyd. Subscription rate is \$9/yr. (first class postage) for the US and Canada, \$12/yr. foreign (air mail). Single issues/samples are \$.50. Foreign payments must be made in US funds or by international money order. Make any check/money order payable to: R.A.DeVowe. Mail to: Annwn Temple of Gwynfyd, 5102 N 16th Dr., Lot#3, Phoenix, AZ 85015 USA

Vor Tru is back! Vor Tru (which means "our belief" in Icelandic) can be had for \$7, cash only, from 2922 S.Marvin, Tucson, AZ 85730. This newsletter is especially interesting for its close contacts with the Asatru movement in Iceland.

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Freedom is Better than Slavery

By Stephen A. McNallen

The idea that freedom is better than slavery is so commonly accepted that there would seem to be little more we can say. Why restate the obvious? At this point in Odinst literature, most articles about freedom resort to the staple technique of praising the liberty-loving ways of our ancestors, surveying our history for appropriate documentation, and affirming our own determination to maintain that freedom. While that approach is laudable and necessary, let us try to get beyond that stage and really look at the issue of freedom in our society.

For the fact is, we are not free. The stark liberty of our forebears is - for almost all of us - dead. We have the illusion of living in a free society because we continually confuse the fact of control with the means by which control is maintained. To see things as they are, we must learn to make that distinction.

First let us consider control itself. Odinists believe that there is an inherent human nature, an in-born set of tendencies which shape our values, motives, and actions. Left to develop organically, in accordance with our nature as a people, we would evolve a social system that would tend not to make us act contrary to our natures or impell us to do things we would not do if left to ourselves. In short, we would be free members of the Folk. A controlled, "unfree" society is one where people are made to do things which do run contrary to their nature. This condition constitutes the kind of slavery referred to in the title of this article, and is antithetical to freedom as we define it. Slavery, or non-freedom is an evil in itself, regardless of the conditions which bring it about or the means used to enforce it.

Those means are traditionally secret police, rigged elections, and slave labor camps. Such methods are crude and ugly, but they are not the essence of totalitarianism, they are simply the instruments which sustain it. Slavery maintained by any other means is still slavery. The most pleasant tools of social control do not change the real nature of the totalitarian system, nor do they make it more morally justified.

Today, in the so-called "Free World", we are continually manipulated in violation of our own natures, to ends not consistent with our innate tendencies or our ultimate best interests. This control permeates our society and is in many ways as absolute as that in any formal dictatorship. The means of control, however, are subtle and even sweet. While openly totalitarian systems use harsh and obvious devices such as torture and labor camps to influence behavior, the trick in the industrialized West is to shape the values, attitudes, desires, and tastes from which behavior springs - thus forming invisible bonds which control humans as surely as the cruder ones, but with less chance of revolt, for the chains are comfortable. Our "needs" are shaped by media and advertising. When the system meets these contrived needs we feel grateful, and thus remain loyal to the whole set-up. We are effectively drugged by superfluous consumer goods and pacifying, bovine philosophy. Real choice - that in accordance with our healthy, life- and Folk-affirming instincts - is strongly suppressed. True freedom of choice becomes an illusion that the consumerist/universalist state fosters to hide the fact that we are wearing chains. It is all-important to remember that the fact of totalitarianism is not changed by the superficially humane means of control. By our earlier definition, we are slaves.

This doesn't mean I'd just as soon live in China or Soviet Russia. To trot the love-it-or-leave-it argument is to miss the point. Life is better here, and few of us would trade places with anyone in the Gulag. But that doesn't mean we're really free here, or that we live in a healthy society, it just means the methods of control are more bearable.

With each TV commercial urging us to eat junk food or to purchase gadgets for which an artificial appetite has been created, we are being exploited. With each news story slanted to bolster a suicidal foreign policy, our slavery is made manifest. Every time we walk into a store where Muzak makes us more receptive to buying, we are being brainwashed. Every magazine article, or every governmental decree that lessens the will of our people to resist their continuing dispossession, is a totalitarian act. In each case, a life-affirming instinct of our Folk is being purposefully and deliberately denied - not by physical force, though that option is used when other methods fail - but by the pressure of conformity, or the reassurance of buzz words, or by clever subliminal techniques.

So how do we get free?

First, we have to realize we are unfree. Once that fact sinks in, we see through the social mirage and perceive the mechanisms which keep us enthralled. We see television commercials and TV programming for what they are, and pull the plug. We realize that Macy's and the automobile companies and countless other establishments are artificially creating needs so they can sell their stuff, and we quit buying it. We analyze the newspapers enough to know how the media masters want us to react, and we fail to respond as they'd like. But all of this represents only the first tottering steps toward personal freedom. Ultimately, we must fashion a new and better society, one in keeping with the inborn aspirations and truest instincts of our Folk.



". . . the supreme power . . . covers the surface of society with a network of small complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and most energetic characters cannot penetrate, to rise above the crowd. The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided; men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly refrained from acting. Such a power does not destroy but it prevents existence. . .

I have always thought that servitude of that regular, quiet and gentle kind which I have just described might be combined more easily than it is commonly believed with some of the outward forms of freedom, and it might even establish itself under the wing of the sovereignty of the people."

Democracy in America by Alexis de Tocqueville

". . . what they (the powers controlling things) are really driving for is to make the world safe for international bankers, giant industrial combines, and the mushrooming cartels of international hucksters and pedlars. Every land is to be opened up to chains of shopping plazas, every continent made readily accessible as a field for capital investment with high rates of return, and all humanity broken down into a homogenized mass of disarmed and castrated slaves held in bondage to do the work and - go shopping."

Which Way Western Man? by William Gayley Simpson

Guilds

THE SKALDIC GUILD continues under the able leadership of Jim Wittenberg. "Woden's Word-Sword," the guild newsletter is \$3 per year for guild members and \$4 for non-members. Jim's address is 1321 E Street, #2, Sacramento, CA 95814.

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THE BREWING GUILD also publishes a newsletter called "The Frothing Vat". Guild Master Jace Crouch can be reached at 118 E. Downie, Alma, MI 48801, and a subscription can be had for "a couple of bucks."

* * * * *

THE AMERYSK FOLKBOND - A guild seeking to realize a new people of Northern heritage, bonded to the territory of Amerysk (America). See the article in this issue! Address: c/o AFA Absecon Island Kindred, P. O. Box 2305, Ventnor, NJ 08406.

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THE AEROSPACE TECHNOLOGY GUILD is interested in the aerospace and astronomical sciences, with emphasis on new technological developments and future speculations. Write c/o Asatru Free Assembly, P.O. Box 1832, Grass Valley, CA 95945.

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THE MARTIAL ARTS GUILD's recently published newsletter, "Mjollnir" is available, from Greg Steiner. You can subscribe by sending \$5 to Greg (payable to him) at: 1304 Mariposa, #202, Austin, TX 78704.

NOTE: We have heard that Greg has been having some mail problems. Subscribers who have had trouble reaching him, don't give up; we are working on the difficulties.

THE WARRIOR GUILD is the successor to the Varangian Guard which functioned as a part of the AFA some while ago. This guild is devoted to the spirit and craft of the viking warrior, and attempts to live the warrior's code in today's world. For information, write to the Asatru Free Assembly, c/o Warrior Guild, P.O. Box 1832, Grass Valley, CA 95945.

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COMPUTER GUILD - To accommodate those AFAers who are acutely aware that we don't live in the 10th century, we have launched our Computer Guild. We are interested in the usual business of computer clubs, to include modems as means of keeping us in touch with each other.

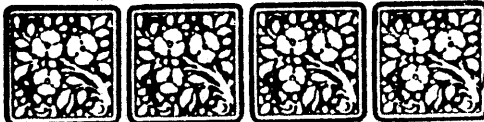
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WANTED: GUILD LEADERS AND MEMBERS

Here are some of the guilds we would like to see organized in the AFA. Readers interested in belonging to, or leading, these guilds are urged to write to us. Your participation is needed!

Survival	Children
Health and Healing	Artists
Nautical Subjects	Musicians

If you simply have an interest in the proposed guild, let us know. If you would like to lead it, briefly state your qualifications.



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But worship the sungod
And all the life-affirming gods.
You can stick with Xtianity
And go to hell,
Or like the heliotrope
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Letting heliotherapy heal you.
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And performs the right rites and rituals
Of life and light.



H. Strutz

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FREYA'S FOLK

Editor - Our Lofn article by Maddy a couple of issues back provoked a lot of response, including permission from Alice Rhoades to reprint her article from Boreas that started the ball rolling on "creative mythology". We would like to share this seminal piece with you now.

How I Got to Know Jarnsaxa

By Alice Rhoades

Many Norse Pagan groups have a pantheon chock full of robust, manly Gods, but only a smattering of ill-defined Goddesses. This is not, as many Craft people have intimated to me, because Norse folk are inherently more chauvenistic than other Pagans. Rather, there is simply a dearth of material on the Norse Goddesses. Of many, only the names remain.

If one is an archaeologist or medieval historian, the matter would have to die there. But Odinism is more than history - it is a religion. No religion practices rituals in exactly the same form that they were done three hundred years ago. Religion, to be viable, must grow and expand. Besides, much of the old Norse lore was passed on orally, and many of the Norse Pagans passed on prematurely when the Christians moved in, so just because we can't find much material on the Goddesses does not mean they weren't worshipped. To the contrary, assuming that a religion reflects the culture it grew from and judging from what we know of Norse society, women played a strong role; therefore, it makes sense that the female deities would be equally strong in their world. Great heroes like Sigmand and Sigurd took good strong women for their mates; would the great Thor, then, have some nebulous wimp for wife?

So, accepting that Norse Goddesses should play an important role in ritual, how do you go about reconstructing a tangible personality from a mere name? Well, what I have been doing with Oakrune Circle (the group I worship with) is this: first, I try to find everything and anything in the Eddas and Sagas and runestone inscriptions and anything else I can find that even vaguely refers to the Goddess in question - who her husband, father, children were; any personal traits mentioned; any actions she is said to have performed. Next, I try to find out any etymological meanings that can be gathered from her name - what word roots it may have sprung from and what the meanings of those words are or were. And lastly, I make stuff up! Well, not exactly; but there is a degree of personal contact which can help you fill out the details that have been lost these many centuries, basing your work on the facts you have found. If nothing is known about her but her husband's name, use what you know about her husband to give clues: what kind of wife would Thor have? Also, you can use comparative mythology to help you out (plundering other cultures in good Viking tradition): if the lady is married to a sky deity or weather God, might she not be a Mother Earth figure? You can meditate, often in a very casual and playful manner, creating little stories about the Goddess, trying to see her interacting with Gods and Goddesses you know a lot about: what would this Goddess and Odin talk about? How would she get along with Loki? (Does anyone get along with Loki??) In this way you can usually get enough information to do some kind of ritual; and after several rituals, even more information tends to pop up in your mind.

As an example of some results of this process, which might strike hard-core fact-finders as too cavalier a treatment but which I believe is valid, I am presenting here the material I did on Jarnsaxa, the Goddess Oakrune Circle invoked along with Thor on Midsummer 1980 (we usually like to invoke both a Goddess and a God at any given ritual, which is why I embarked on this mission of Goddess-analysis in the first place). This is what I could find out about her from books: her name means "Iron-Sword"; she's a Jotun, or Giantess; she's referred to as "the co-wife of Sif" (Thor's wife) in the Prose Edda; she is the mother of Thor's two sons, Magni and Modi ("Might" and "Courage"), who eventually inherit the famous hammer. Period. From this, after much mulling and playing around, I wrote a legend about Jarnsaxa and Thor, just to get a feeling for what kind of lady she is. The second thing I wrote was an invocation to Jarnsaxa.

Methods like this can be used to fill out any mythology for which few details are available. It also never hurts to find out something new about well-known deities as well. I don't present these things as divine truth or absolute doctrine; I do present them as examples of a valid procedure for creating rituals out of very skimpy material. So, in good old folk-song tradition, "If you don't like it, you can sing some yourself."

Invocation to Jarnsaxa

Daughter of the Rock,
Daughter of the Storm,
Daughter of Darkness, mighty Jarnsaxa.

In Jotunheim,
In the home of Giants,
In Chaos, there were you born.

Mistress of Thor,
Co-Wife of Sif,
Mother of the heirs of Heaven,
Magni and Modi, the Storm-God's children.

Straight and sharp as a sword;
Hard as iron;
Bright as the jewel on the hilt;
Strong as the runes on the blade.

Within the mountain, you stoke the storm of lust,
the fiery heart of the passive Earth.

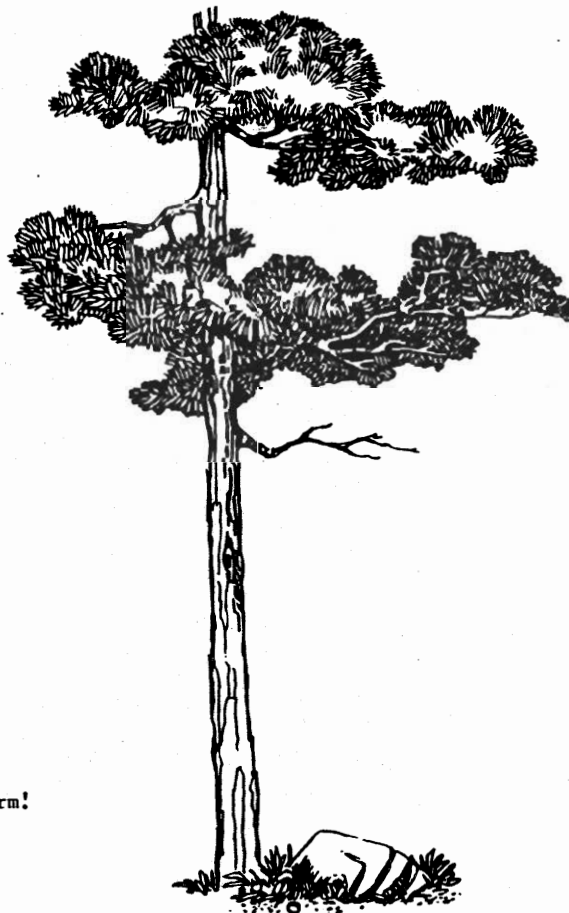
Your heart burns,
Your arms reach,
Your loins hunger.

Stern as the cliff,
Wild as the heath,
Firm as the rock,
You wait, and call.

Ancient Giantess,
We call to you,
We of Midgard --

Come, and fling your dark hair loose into the storm!
Come, and meet your lover, spark for spark!
Come, and strike the primal flames ablaze!

Come to the Circle, mighty Jarnsaxa!
Come!



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The Lessons of Frey

Frey is a highly sexual god, almost always pictured with an erect penis. Fair enough, for that noble member represents the god's best-known trait - but unfortunate too, because in our erotically charged society we tend to focus almost exclusively on the sexual, often to the neglect of other important aspects. In this article let's save the most obvious for last, and see what, apart from the purely sensual, we can learn from the God of the Vanir.

First, we should take note that Frey's erection is an encouragement - almost a command - to procreation. Our forefathers had little time for hedonism, for life was a bit too tough for immersion in the sensual. On the one hand, this meant that pleasure was to be savored when the opportunity arose, but never could it be forgotten that there was more important business at hand - group and individual survival. Today the enjoyments are more constant and the danger more veiled, but the threat to our people is quite real. The birthrate of people of Northern European descent is dismally low. In most countries we are failing to replace even those members of the Folk we lose through death. Frey, and the Vanir in general, are linked to the idea of the continuity of the clan. While it is unfashionable in the declining West to urge people to have babies, Frey tells us outright that we have a duty to continue the line. But this is no somber duty; for the rewards are genetic immortality and a degree of personal fulfillment that the "me generation" set will never know. The first lesson of Frey is that procreation is good for the individual and the Folk, regardless of media mouthings.

Another message for us from this robust deity concerns the ever-popular topic of guilt. We have been made to feel guilty for our wealth, for the great deeds of our ancestors, and of course for our sexuality. In some ways the sexual guilt trip is the key to all the others, for it represents all the life-affirming urges: the will to life and to power, the urge to honest ambition and justified anger, and the instinctive life in general. Frey says, "No more misplaced guilt!" Some impulses should produce feelings of shame - but not these! Frey smashes this false morality with animal vigor, and urges us to do the same. This way we can shake off the subtle chains of control that paralyze us on so many fronts.

A study of Frey's nature reveals that his sensuality is complemented by the warrior traits. It is not enough to plant the seed, the seedling must be stoutly defended in a harsh world. Too often people tend to be either "lovers" or "fighters". Frey unifies these into a virile whole and warns us against leaning excessively to one side or the other. We must endeavor to develop all the aspects of our personality essential to the survival of the individual and the Folk. Be a well-rounded follower of Asatru, capable of loving and fighting!

Finally, Frey does stand for sexual pleasure. He reminds us that enjoyment for its own sake is good even as he affirms the role of responsibility, in this as in all other parts of our lives.

Let us praise Frey, then, and learn well the lessons he would teach us. Some of them are pleasurable, some are liberating, some are fraught with duty, but all of them can help us be whole, effective people.

by Stephen A. McNallen

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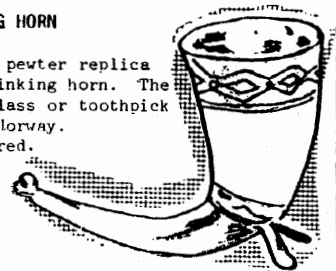
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A Lay of Tyrtaios on the Virtue of a Noble Death

by Jace Crouch

Heroic poetry is a forte of the Indo-European folk. From the Urals westwards all the way to Big Sur and the Yukon, warriors have for millennia held a special place in our hearts and minds, be we Hittite, Celt, Dorian, Teuton, or American. Songs celebrating our heroes have appeared from time to time in *The Runestone*, usually newly translated from their Teutonic tongues by our fellow Odinists, many of whom have happily wed scholarship with racial/cultural pride. The following song is another such translation, but, being as it is a little out of the ordinary for *The Runestone*, a longer than normal introduction is in order.

This heroic poem is not from the sea-lanes of Scandinavia, but from the Peloponessus of Greece. It is not from the 9th Century A.D., but from the 7th Century B.C. So what, you might ask, does that have to do with Vikings? Well, the poem is from Sparta, written by the Spartan general Tyrtaios, and is in celebration of a noble death in defense of the fatherland. Sparta, as is commonly known, was a Dorian civilization of the Peloponessus that was based almost wholly on the warrior ethic. In some ways it even resembled the fabled Jomsviking warrior brotherhood of the Baltic lands. The Greeks themselves were a sea-faring warrior folk (though the Spartans tended to stay on land), and they had a great deal in common with the Teutons of the Migration age, the Vendel period, and the Age of the Vikings (See H.M. Chadwick, *The Heroic Age*). I like to think that the 300 Spartans who fell with Leonidas at Thermopylae, defending Europe from the Persian invaders, were themselves Vikings. They likely died with a song in their throats, much as did Harald the Stern some 1500 years after them.

This Spartan war song is not widely known, even amongst academics. The few translations I have seen capture little or nothing of the archaic, cadence-like meter of Tyrtaios' elegaic poetry. His songs were sung both in battle itself, and afterwards, in what was the Spartan equivalent of a Mead Hall. Such songs have more in common with the "Kakamal," the Marine Corps Hymn, and the the "Panzerlied" than with Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind." As such, this song may be of some interest to the readers of *The Runestone*.

Ancient Greek poetry is not based on the end rhyme commonly known to us moderns, but on meter, cadence, and an occasional alliteration or assonance. Accordingly, when I first read the poem (E. Diehl, *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca*, 3rd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 11-12), I was convinced that, in English, it would sound best in a Eddic verse pattern: half lines linked by alliteration and stress, grouped into short stanzas. The poem as printed below is such a redaction.

I must stress that it is a redaction and not a literal translation: such is ever the case with poetry. I agree with those academics who say that a poem is best read in the original language, but I do not agree with them to the degree that I reject translation. By all means, read literature in the original if you can, but do not forsake it if you can not. Tyrtaios, or Homer himself for that matter, would have a paltry audience were there no translations available. Literal translation, while it is desirable for many reasons, is often not literature. Literary translations, on the other hand, are often not honest enough. This particular redaction is, I hope, somewhere between those all-too-common extremes of poetic translation.

I hesitate to put either my own name, or that of Tyrtaios, to the following poem. The song is not my own, nor is this redaction the sin of Tyrtaios. I can only hope that the readers of this redaction apprehend in it the martial spirit of our Indo-European ancestors, specifically, the Spartans. I hope, too, that were Tyrtaios to read this, he would recognize in it somewhat of his own hand, and not send me homewards carried lifeless on a shield, which was how the Spartans tended to show their displeasure.

Let bolster your breast with blazing courage.
Bright life is behind you: blink not at death
 when the foeman stands before you.

Leave not the aged, whose legs are nigh lame,
the lines of Laconia alone to hold fast,
 lest they die in the breach, while you live.

'Tis fell to the folk when dead fall the aged
ere fight the young men: the fierce youth in foray
 the foe host must meet.

'Tis gruesome to see grandsires on the ground,
the grizzled warriors, greathearted graybeards,
 spitting their souls into dust.

Yet fair to see youths, full fierce, in the fighting.
O, youths full in flower with hot flaming life:
 to give and receive death is meet.

Lauded by men, women lust for their loins,
in laughter and life youth is likesome to see:
 yet finest when fallen in battle.

Let stand your stout legs, bold scion of Sparta
root them steadfast to earth, slay the foeman at hand:
 set your teeth to your lips and hold fast.

Family and Tribe

BY Paul Doerr

Most people, of course, will continue as they are, living blindly until the dragon has them in its jaws. Some, who may be more intelligent/imaginative/far-sighted and concerned about their own future or that of their children will try to consider and choose among the possible alternatives.

One such alternative is a gathering into families or tribes. A tribe could consist of a group of families. A family could consist of a man, his wife or wives, the children, relatives and other dependents; a woman, her husband or husbands, the children, etc.; a group of unrelated individuals; some other combination which is self-perpetuating and self-replacing/increasing.

If a disaster involving serious and long-continuing strife continues over a period of time with loss of life, this attrition and loss of members must be replaced from somewhere. Fertility is one source, immigration is another, acquisition from outside is a third. If the numbers are not replaced or increased, the family will decline until it cannot survive.

The family (and tribe) must be kept strong; filled with women, children and warriors. Women and children must learn the methods of home defense and war because, in some situations, it will be necessary that they fight for survival right along beside the warriors. It is possible that the home could be attacked when only women and children were present. Women and girls may be attacked individually when caught alone. A strong force is also needed for labor to grow/produce/collect/capture/prepare/preserve the foods and supplies the family will need to survive the years.

The tribe will have defined its ideals, which would become the laws which will govern the relationships within the families and tribe. These ideals/laws may be somewhat modified from family to tribe but would not necessarily apply to relationships with that vast multitude of persons/groups/nations who are non-members and live in lands outside the family/tribe holdings.

Several tribes could be combined into a loose federation or "nation". This confederation would act as one against an enemy or a threat to the tribal civilization, ideals, lifestyle. Those outside the tribe may be friends and the tribes would act as friends or neutrals neither helping nor hindering the group but able to select spouses/members from these people. If outsiders are enemies, the tribe will defend itself against these by any means found to be sufficient.

The family and/or tribe is a sovereign nation and will so regard itself, with its own laws and customs. The family stands firmly for its members and is a permanent place of refuge for them all, even for those who choose to go out into the non-tribe world for whatever reason except a crime against the family. The tribe will comfort, protect and defend its members to the limits of its ability consistent with the faithfulness of the person involved. Those who go out and are hurt always have shelter available. Once a member, always a member, except by the individual's choice.

Some of the ideals which would govern the existence of the family would be: unity, love, equality, justice, honor, mutual caring, honesty, devotion and responsibility one for another, esprit de corps, dependability, one for all and all for one.

In each member of the family must be developed that solidarity and sense of oneness, that fanatical love and loyalty and devotion that will give the family the permanence of a mountain and force of a flood. Among the members of a family, there must be no bad faith, no dishonor nor disloyalty, no reason for lack of trust one in another. Each member must be an armored bastion in an unconquerable citadel. Love one another. Of course disagreements will arise among people no matter how devoted they may be, but always fight for, and be ready to die for, your kin against everyone else. Your family, your kin is yourself,

your loved ones, your continuity in the world, your home, your people, you. You are an indispensable part of it just as it is an indispensable part of you. You are one. It is your home, always there when you need it, ready to welcome you/protect you/soothe your hurts, to love you. Without it, you are nothing. It is you. You are it.

These and others are the principles, the laws, the life of the family, the way within the family, the precepts which guarantee the eternal existence of the family and your continued life, safety and freedom. Those within the family are kin. They are part of you. Those outside the family are friends at best. They may be enemies. Whichever: friend, neutral, enemy; they could profit from your loss. The laws of kin apply to kin, not to those outside. To deliberately fail the kin is a disgrace and is unworthy. He who wantonly fails his family is unworthy of life among the kin.



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The world outside the family is hard and greedy and cruel and will crush the family and enslave its members if it can. Money and power are its gods. It is an enemy. It is to be distrusted and watched carefully. The laws of kin need not be observed in dealing with outsiders. They should be told nothing of family and kin. To lie to them is no wrong. Actions should be avoided whenever possible that would cause them to attack the family because they have vast superiority in numbers and material, but they must be defied in defense of the kin, group or individual.

NOTE: Paul publishes a variety of documents which may interest our readers. His address is P.O.Box 1064, Suisun, CA 94585



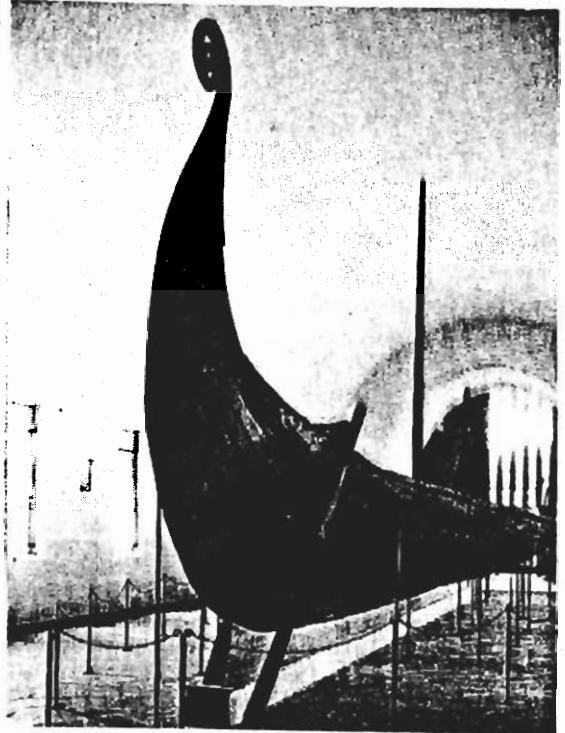
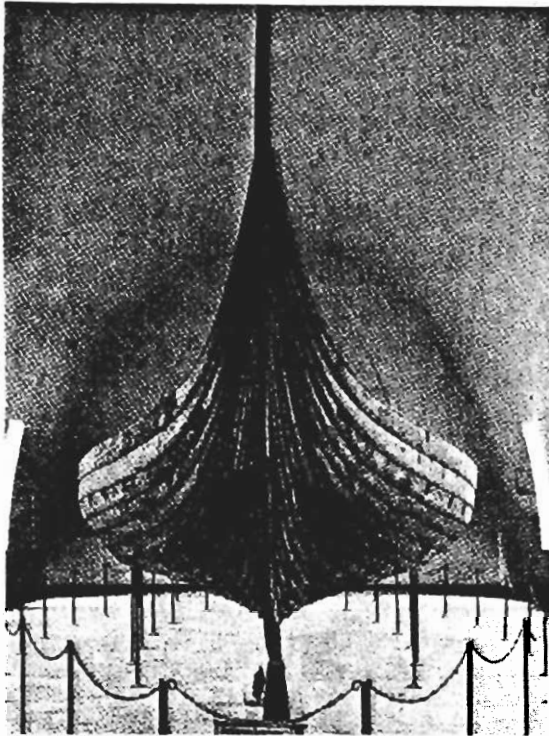
Announcements

Prudence Priest has left our staff to pursue other interests, and is no longer associated with the A.F.A.. Freya's Folk, the particular part of the Asatru Free Assembly which was her special focus will be carried on by other willing hands. Prudence was always somewhat "on loan" to us from Wicca, and she did a lot for us, but now she has returned to that which has always held her first loyalty.

M. Elayn Harvey of The Starwood Keep is researching the forms and names of The Goddess and working on a book of prayers and rituals. She is interested in corresponding with other readers on the subject of woman and pagan worship. Anyone who would like to write to her may do so at 2722 Cascade Ave. Enumclaw, WA 98022

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Concentrating In, Stretching Out

Man moved from defending himself to defending his family, his clan, his tribe, his town, his province, his country, the countries his country was allied with and so on. Next, he will defend continents, hemispheres, globes, planets. Smaller roots connect with larger roots to make the cosmic network of Yggdrasil roots.

We all farm the same earth, fish the same ocean. Yet being a nationalist means believing that your patch of earth, your stretch of ocean is best, even if you know it isn't. Voltaire told us to cultivate our own gardens and Goethe advised everyone to sweep before his own door so that the whole city be clean. Cultivate your garden and the whole earth will bloom. Sweep before your door and even the filthiest cities will flower in cleansing godliness. Some earth is more fertile than in other places. Some waters are richer in fish. Even if your patch of ocean or earth isn't rich, work to make it so. Begin by believing it is so. Cultivate the garden of your gods and make a contribution to the wholeness of on-going life. Work with your gods.

The historian looks upon literature as a manifestation of historical forces. The writer sees history as a part of literature. Lawyer, anthropologist, sociologist regard man primarily as a social animal. The theologian sees the soul as central while the scientist looks upon everything as a function of already recognized or yet to be explained scientific phenomena. Each discipline believes it is unique, superior, that it holds the key to man's nature, to all of nature. That is good; that contributes to and advances on-going god-life. Together, all make up Wotan's totality. Wotan rides the globe on eight-legged Sleipnir, surveying all. Hugin and Munin continue to keep their appointed rounds and bring back messages from everywhere to the one and total Holy Woden source. Make the best contribution you can to the sacred source.

By H. Strutz

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The Outlaws

A Film Review By Sangetall

R. W. TAYLOR

Icelandic motion picture director Agust Gudmunsson's "The Outlaws" (produced in Iceland, 1981) is one film all Asatru Folk will find to be entertaining as well as educational and instructive. It is a feature length, color film, in Icelandic, with English subtitles. It is based faithfully on the classical Icelandic text of "The Saga of Gisli". The story's setting is Iceland's violent, action packed era of the ninth century c.e.

Much as English film director John Boorman drew most effectively upon Sir Thomas Mallory's "Le Morte de Arthur" for his epic film, "Excalibur", Gudmunsson takes as his basis for "The Outlaws" the heroic, dramatic saga of the outlaw Gisli. The tale centers on the issue of fate (an issue central to the faith of Asatru) as Gisli, the hero, is repeatedly challenged and tested in his determined quest to avenge the death of his sworn blood brother.

The cinematography visually conveys the stark and rugged beauty of Iceland's west Fiords. The sets, costumes and weapons are authentic in appearance. The acting, provided by a cast of native Icelanders, is excellent and convincing. The dialogue is simple and direct in its economy of words, imparting an importance and authority to all that is said in the film.

The action and violence in the film is neither exaggerated, nor is it underplayed, but instead, strikes us with a sense of the grim reality it endeavors to portray.

We watch as brave men grapple and battle with one another beneath a blue and indifferent sky; as indifferent to their aspirations and fears as fate itself. The ring and clang of their weapons is quickly muted and absorbed by the surrounding waste - places where they struggle.

A near perfect balance of dialogue and action (word and deed) develops the theme to a violent, yet heroic finale, sustaining a high level of interest that never falters nor fails. Gudmunsson may be credited with creating his film in the same spirit and with a like mentality as that which the authors of the sagas, themselves, employed.

Of particular interest to Asatru Folk are a number of scenes depicting ancient Nordic customs and practices.

In the early part of the movie we witness the enactment of an ancient blood brotherhood ritual as four men are at work cutting and raising up a long section of sod in the turf, leaving the two ends fast. Completing their labor, they then set a spear shaft under it, tent pole fashion. All four men pass under the canopy of turf, then they all draw blood and allow their blood to run together in the earth that was scratched up under the sod, and mix it all together - earth and blood. They then kneel and swear that each will avenge the other as his brother, invoking all the Gods to bear witness to their oath. But when the final act of the ritual arrives, the shaking of hands, Thorgrimm speaks thus: "There is burden enough in this for me if I do it with these two, Thorkell and Gisli, my brothers-in-law; but I have no ties with Vestein." and he withdraws his hand. And we sense, with this gesture, the inception of future troubles.

Another scene depicts a rite of final passage. A procession approaches, bearing a body. The Gothi leading the processional is chanting in Icelandic. We immediately sense from the rhythm and intonation of his chant that something poetic and sacred is being sung. The subtitles appear:

"Cattle die, kindred die,
Every man is mortal;
But the good name never dies,
Of one who has done well.

"Cattle die, kindred die,
Every man is mortal;
But I know one thing that never dies,
The glory of the great dead."

And with this visual recognition of the words of the Val - Father, Odin, we (Asatru Folk) are spiritually transported home to the wisdom of our hearts.

Many other scenes and events such as these are chronicled in "The Outlaws", making it as educational and inspiring as it is exciting.

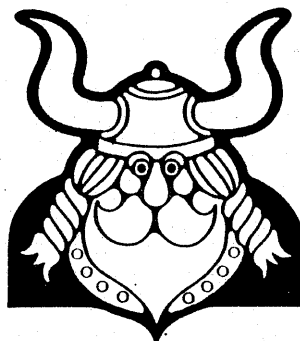
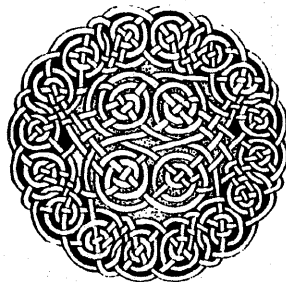
When "The Outlaws" first opened in Iceland, it received rave reviews and was an unqualified box office success - in a country where 70% of the population must see a film in order for the film to break even financially. The film was shot on location in Iceland at Hitardalur, a picturesque, west Iceland valley. Unlike so many big budget extravaganzas milled out by Hollywood, Gudmunsson has created a motion picture of great dramatic power, substance and beauty. The film achieves an epic significance and a tremendously authentic feeling, despite the fact that, by American standards, it was produced on a shoe-string budget.

"The Outlaws" and another film by Gudmunsson, "Land and Sons", both premiered in Chicago the same evening (for just a one show engagement each). Both films were produced by the Icelandic film company, Isfilm, which was formed by Gudmunsson and a group of Icelandic associates in 1978. The Chicago showing, unlike the mass turn-out when the film premiered in Reykjavik, was attended by no more than four dozen viewers (forty-six of whom were obvious members of Chicago's small Icelandic speaking community). To my knowledge, this has been the only American screening of the film.

Readers of The Runestone desiring to see "The Outlaws" might try contacting any nearby universities which may have a film society, or any movie theaters in their areas which specialize in showing diverse international films, suggesting that they obtain a copy of Gudmunsson's finely wrought production and provide a screening for it. The screening I attended, for example, was jointly sponsored by the American-Scandinavian Foundation in

conjunction with Facets Multimedia, an experimental movie theatre in Chicago.

Failing to acquire any results from your efforts to view the film locally, I can only suggest that it might well be worth the trip to Reykjavik. After all, 80,046 Icelanders can't all be wrong!



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To Wooden for Evolution of Earth

By Brian T. Regan

O Wooden, surreal
spear-wounded one,
god most high
rider on the gallows,
delver in the depths
reader and writer
Make us ware,
of the will of Weird,
Help us beware
and fight him with the force
O worker of wonders,
grant us the gift
For the Ravengers are here,
Earth is endangered,
Swill and the swarthy
the unfit and ugly
while the folk of the future
Woodent, Woodent, Woodent!
write the runes
Destroy the giants' strongmen
let Thunder thwart them,
O god of orgasmic ecstasy,
Renew the souls of Northwhites,

ruler of realms,
Father most wise,
of heroes and the hanged,
god of gore,
beyond death
of secrets in runes:
O Wooden most wise,
and Memory's well;
of the Wolf in the world
of Tew the Fearless.
Wooden most great,
of aiding the gods.
and Rainrake is now,
and evolution ending.
now swell over Midyard;
are on the way up
seeks suicide as its fate.
Wield your magic wiles;
which rearrange the world.
who in delusion find their strength;
and make their end thorough.
give your race renewal.
and heal the realm of Nearth.

Editor - Mr. Regan uses "Wooden" (rhymes with "broodin'") as the modern name for Odin. This is an impassioned prayer we have used several times at Home Kindred with good effect, and we would like to share it with you.



MOOT POINT



Dear Steve,

Since we will have our own child to raise as a pagan, I have been searching for books on a child's level. One I have found which is out of print (real shame, too) is titled: The Children of Odin - The Book of Northern Myths by Padraic Colum. Macmillan Co.

It is well worth looking for in used book stores. One idea I had was for a coloring book of our Gods and their mighty deeds. I'd be glad to get together with anyone on this idea. Well, how about even video tape stories? Just thoughts!

Enjoy your weather,
Hail Odin
Josef Tillo

Runestone readers who might want to collaborate with Mr. Tillo can address mail to him in care of the AFA. Best of luck on your projects, Josef!

Kaere Steve:

I really liked your '84 Calendar, and found it to be really enlightening - I liked also the style of artwork!

The Anthology is tops! I'll be ordering another 4 issues come next pay period. They'll be hardbound and deposited in the Atlantic City and Ventnor public libraries!

The Anthology is by far the closest work the AFA has had to a "Bible". I think it will be the primary work of the AFA and it certainly outdistances all other works on the subject. . .

Thorsteinn's latest VOR TRU for Einherjar-month contains another astonishing piece of news - that of the uneventful Malthing in Iceland. Apparently some kinsmen have found that the Asatruar movement in Iceland is treading dangerous waters by inviting in a home-grown sect of universalists under the doctrine of Astrobiology.

I'll let you read it when Thorsteinn mails it to you! Write back when you've come up with anything that sticks in your craw, even if it's my letter to you!

My best to Maddy and the kinder. . .

GLAD YULE!

Paul Bigelow

Thanks for the praise, Paul! We're pleased you like our latest projects, and we hope our future ones will also win your approval. Our readers can find out more about VOR TRU by consulting the exchange ads in this issue.

Dear Mr. McNallen,

I appreciate the info. you sent and enclosed is \$7.00 for a subscription to

The Runestone.

Some of the books you recommended were not available. I have done research on Viking culture and shipbuilding, but I can find next to nothing on the religion. Some of my major questions are: How do you pray in Odinism? How do you ask for help or guidance and what do you do in return? Thanks again.

Guy Sines

Dear Mr. Sines,

Thank you for your letter. I will try to answer some of your questions.

The best form of prayer is right conduct. Consciously try to live your life in accordance with the virtues of Asatru, and be mindful of the gods as you do so. Strive to improve yourself and serve the Folk, aware as you do both that you serve the gods.

More formal prayer is possible. Just "speak" to the gods, whether a single sentence or a longer mental, or spoken, message. You may want to write prayers of your own and use them for certain occasions, such as on rising in the morning. Around here we do a "Greeting to Sol", where we praise the risen Sun and ask to share in its light and radiance.

Finally, there are full-fledged rituals. We've put together a book of these we hope to publish soon.

Asking for guidance is the passive form of prayer. Call upon the gods and then enter a meditative state, relaxed, free from all distractions. Take time to listen to the "voice within" that links us to divinity. Becoming aware of this source of wisdom comes easier with practice, and we should all cultivate the ability to tap into this inspiration. Another alternative is to cast runes, but this takes knowledge as well as the development of meditational abilities. Perhaps we will run a future article in The Runestone describing this technique, for those who are interested.

I am glad you understand instinctively that the gods are not some sort of cosmic welfare workers: we humans must do our parts as well. At the least, we should continue to stand by the gods on whose favor we call, that they will stand by us. Our relationship with the gods is one of mutual, and mutually supporting, friendship and kinship.

Hail the Gods!

Stephen A. McNallen

Dear Steve,

Please note the following:

1. The old post office box for the Auld Kirk is no longer in effect. Please address all mail to the Auld Kirk or its officers care of me, R. Bruce Kline, 1916 Spruce St. Phila. PA 19103, or Dale Poore, Constable, The Auld Kirk, 71 Melville Lane, Willingboro, NJ 08046.
2. Auld Kirk is working on the idea that a summer Moot will be held this year on the East coast and is working with Else Christensen's groups with this understanding. Long before the English government took control of the North American areas, the Pine Barrens of South Jersey had Swedish and Finnish settlements already established. As the quiet forest lands of this unique ecological area are still in the same condition as when these Folk settled here, the Kirk felt that it might be an appropriate location for a summer Moot. The Mullica River area is our prime consideration as it was the home of the first known perm-

anent settlement of our Folk in the Americas during the modern age. A recent map found in Finland shows coastal features that are very similar to the southern bays of New Jersey and is dated in the period of the late 12th century. Captain Sven Gabrielson told me several years ago that some of the old Finnish seafaring families believed that their families fished the waters off the East coast since Viking Days and that a land far across the Western Seas is part of their family folklore. . .

Regards to you all,

Yours, Aye!

R. Bruce Kline
Stewart, Auld Lirk

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your rapid response to my request for a subscription to Runestone, an excellent newsletter with a high standard of scholarship and writing. Your group and its ideas are of interest to me, and I hope this will be but the beginning of our friendship.

I am an "independent scholar" who specializes in the study of the Roman frontier and army in Northern Europe along the Rhine and in Britain between 27 BCE and 180 CE. I am particularly interested in the "culture clash" between the Mediterranean Roman and the Northern European, especially as related to the woman. At the moment, I am developing the characters and plot for a novel, or rather a series of novels set on the Rhine frontier in the area of Cologne and Xanten (BDR) and later, Roman Britain at the time of Queen Boudicca. One of the turning points of my first novel will be the battle of the Teutoberger Wald, and the meaning it has for us today.

In addition to being the above, I am 100% Northern European, tracing my ancestry back to 13th Century England. My name is derived from the Old Saxon, "Min-thrall", meaning "my thrall". On my mother's side, I am the descendent of Dorchesters, Chesters, Otisis (my middle name), and Gulicks (from Frisland). My father's mother's mother was from Germany, the very region of the Teutoberger Wald, a factor which inspired me to develop the above-mentioned novel. Thus, in an attempt to rediscover my ancestral beliefs and philosophies, I am searching for our original religion before Christianity metastasized into Northern Europe and effaced it with its false gods and goddesses.

Thus, in friendship.

Mary O. Minshall.



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