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WIK RANSTI



THE RUNESTONE

The Runestone is a journal of the old Norse religion and is dedicated to the revival of that religion as epitomized during the Viking Age, and to the revival of the values of courage, freedom and personal independence which are associated with it. The Runestone is the official publication of the Viking Brotherhood and is published quarterly. Subscriptions are \$3.00 per year. Write The Runestone, "A" Co. 1 Bn. 39th Inf., APO New York 09034.

NORSE NOTES

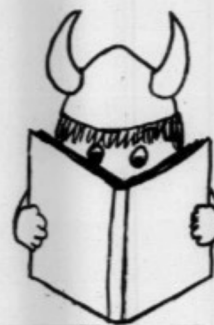
Here is another issue of The Runestone, the second in a crash program to get back on our publishing schedule. While you are reading this, yet another issue is well on the way to being a reality.

I ran across an interesting short story the other day in a collection of horror and fantasy stories called The Berserkers, edited by Roger Elwood. The short story is of the same name, by Arthur Tofte. The tale deals with Vikings and berserkers and expresses a belief that the berserker phenomenon is not fundamentally connected to the cult of Odin, but is a borrowing from another culture. The idea is an interesting one, and has piqued my own curiosity enough to launch a research program.

HELP! Can any of our readers-1) locate The Hallucinogens by A. Hoffer and H. Osmond, and 2) Xerox for us copies of the pages relating to possible use of hallucinogens by the berserkers? If anyone out there could give us a hand on this, it would be appreciated.

At this writing it is too early to judge the success of our efforts to establish skeppslags among the readership of The Runestone. This is a most important project, and we again call it to your attention. Here is your chance to practice the Norse religion.

BOOK



REVIEW

Viking Greenland by Knud J Krogh

This volume of 182 pages is one of only two to come to my attention which is solely concerned with the Norse colony in Greenland.

Viking Greenland can be divided into three portions. The first of these is a careful recounting of what is known about the Norsemen on this, their far-flung island colony. The material includes an historical account, as might be expected, but Krogh also goes into great depth in describing the daily life of the settlers and their way of living. Special attention is given to archaeological and anthropological studies, and the dispute as to what was the final fate of the settlement is thoroughly aired. The factors of climate, economics, trade, Eskimo attacks, piracy, and assimilation are all discussed in some detail.

The portion of the book devoted to the coming of Christianity to Greenland is illuminating, and the quotations from Ivar Bardarson's Description of Greenland (c.1350) describing the immense worldly wealth of the Church even at that time are of great significance.

The second section of Viking Greenland is a series of three Eskimo stories about the Norse settlers. They are reproduced from Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo, by Henry Rink, with woodcuts by a native named Aron. These tales describe a blood feud between an Eskimo and a Viking chieftain, the first meeting between the two cultures, and Eskimo stories about a Norse ruin located near Arsut.

The third portion of the volume is composed of translations of The Greenlander's Saga and, one I'd never read before, The Story of Einar Sökkason--a most interesting story describing episcopal power and ambitions in Christian Greenland.

Viking Greenland is profusely illustrated with dozens of photographs and numerous maps. The book is written in an easily understood fashion and avoids the dry, scholarly tone which ruins so many books. It is published by the National Museum in Copenhagen, and inquiry should be made to them as to the current price.

THE VIKING ARCHAEOLOGY OF JELLING

Part II*

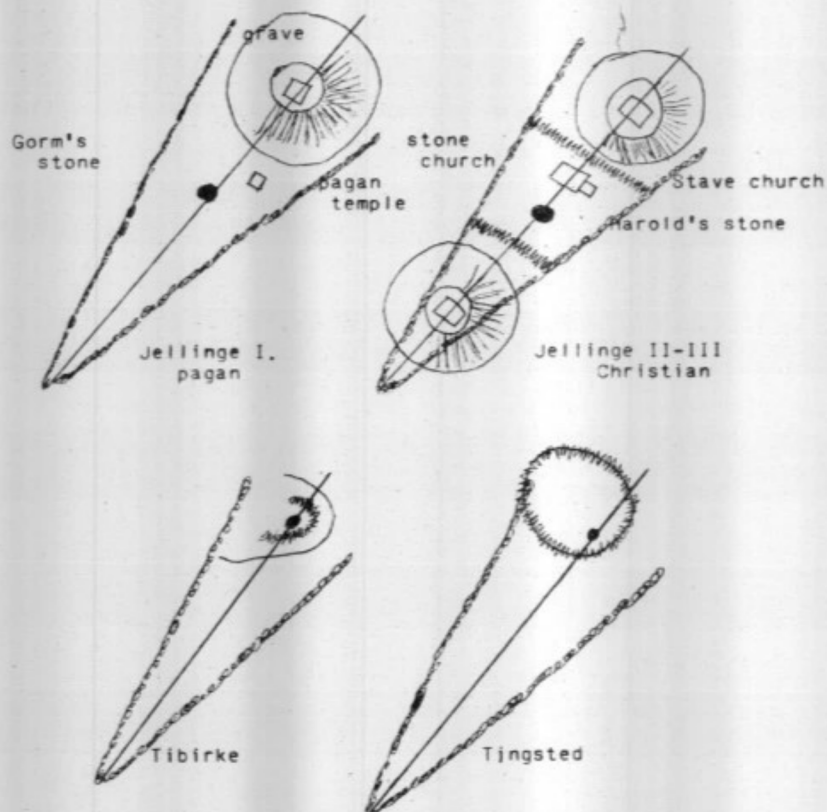
Perhaps the portion of the Jelling Complex which has caused the greatest controversy is the line of monument stones, called "bauta", which enclose the southern mound. These large stones, 6½ feet apart, formed two converging lines whose apex was a bit south of the southern mound, which was thus enclosed in the angle of about 25 degrees which they formed. One explanation, perhaps the more conventional one and the one put forth by Olaf Olsen (*Horg, Hov og Kirke*, Copenhagen, 1966, p. 288) is that this arrangement of stones is either a unique one without parallel in Scandinavia, or it is merely the remains of one of the traditional "skibsgetning", or boat-shaped graves--albeit a huge one. Such elongated stone outlines often surrounded Viking graves, and seemed to symbolize the ship, which in a few cases was actually included in the grave of a royal personage. If the Jelling arrangement is one of these, it is much larger than the usual ones, measuring 179 feet long and 26 feet wide at the northern, or open, end.

Another theory has been put forth by Ejnar Døggve, who dug at the site during the 1940's and into the 1950's. He found that if the lines were continued to the north they neatly enclosed the northern mound, and that the walls of the later cemetery fell along these lines. Døggve felt he had discovered a type of pagan holy site known as "Vi", characterized by an angle of stones encompassing a mound and a church at the northern open end. A similar site, he believed, existed at the site of the church of Tibirke, in northern Sjælland. Here there were two earthen walls forming an angle with the same dimensions as the Jelling configuration. The church lies on a hill to the north. Farms in the neighboring village were carefully located outside of the angle, and a spring (a sacred spring?) was at the point where the two lines converged. Døggve's excavations at this site in 1917 had revealed nothing more than stone fill. Still another ritual site was supposedly in Tingsted, on the island of Falster. At Tingsted the church also stood on an elevation. The angle was the same as at Tibirke, though the overall size was slightly larger, "Thing" assemblies were held there until 1720.

Døggve felt that the old temples at each of these locations must have been located on the spot where the more modern churches stood, as this practice was a common one employed by the early Christian missionaries in the North. Based on this, in 1947 and in 1951 he dug carefully under the church in Jelling. Beneath the clay floor of the church, he found yet another clay floor, this one with a posthole sunk into it. Døggve concluded that this was the floor of the old pagan temple.

* This is Part II of the article on the burial mounds in Jelling Denmark. Part I can be found in Volume 2 Number 4 of *The Runestone*.

History has its small ironies. While in the midst of his work on these "Vis", Døggve realized that for forty years he had owned a summerhouse situated in just such a "Vi".



Some authorities, however, take a dim view of this entire theory. Olaf Olsen, mentioned earlier, is one such person. In his earlier cited work, Olsen states that there is not "the slightest doubt that it is an illusion to suppose that a V-shaped enclosure, with apex pointing south, represents a particular type of pagan cult site. This leaves the impressive enclosure by the north barrow at Jelling, but whether this is a boat-shaped burial

or not, it is above all a monument to the dead and not a ritual place for the living."

Olsen continues by expressing his belief that there was most likely no pagan temple located on the site of the church at Jelling. "In Denmark the excavation carried out by Ejnar Døggve from 1947-1951 at Jelling Church revealed faint traces of two wooden buildings on the site, the earlier of which was claimed by Døggve to be a temple from the Viking period. More recent excavations in Danish churches have established that two wooden churches frequently preceded a Romanesque church on the site, and in view of this it seems more reasonable to assume that the earlier wooden building at Jelling was in fact the first church on this site. A complimentary excavation carried out in 1965 by Knud J. Krough has substantiated this assumption."

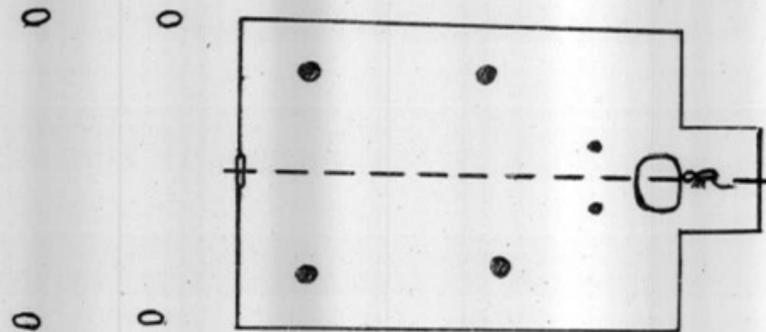
So the controversy continues. It is unlikely that the issue will anytime soon be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties.

The church at Jelling is of interest in itself. Beneath the present structure is the remains of what was once one of the typical "stave churches" which dotted newly converted Denmark. The physical remains are meager. Three postholes and a corner with an oak board are all there is, but the layout reveals the usual two posts for an arc of triumph, a heavy post for the four main supports and the corner between the church and the choir. An altar stone of most unusual configuration was discovered, consisting of a hunk of granite with rosette-shaped garnets imbedded in it. Given to the pagan tendency to give special significance to natural oddities, there has been speculation that it may once have been a heathen sacrificial stone which was consecrated for use in the church by the local bishop. On the other hand, Danes could hardly be expected to lose their interest in beautiful or unusual things over night, upon their conversion to Christianity.

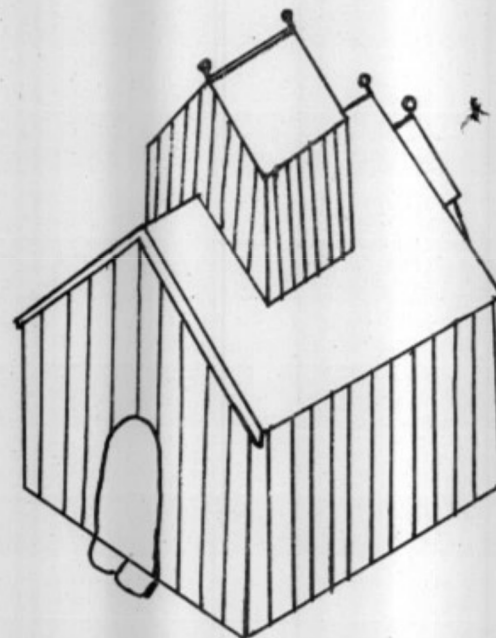
Such is Jelling -- a place of controversy, mystery and clashing opinions, just as it was in the time when our religion met the invading one and suffered its first setbacks. Jelling, whether or not it was a special place called a "Vi", marks one more battleground in a religious conflict which continues to this day. Let it be to us an inspiration, that someday we will again be ascendant and men will build their mounds, plant the sacred groves, and be free.

The illustrations for the "Jelling" article are patterned after those found in The Norsemen by Eric Oxenstierna.

The cover illustration is of the silver cup which was found in the burial mound at Jelling.



The floor plan of the old stave church at Jelling



Reconstruction of the old stave church at Jelling

cist ideal, whether it be in Nazi Germany or elsewhere, is to sacrifice all--even the basic self--to the State or the collective. This "idealism" (as Hitler called it) is seen as the exact opposite of "egoism and selfishness". How often we have run across those very same words in the tracts of other anti-individualist creeds--from mysticism to Christianity to Communism! This absolute collectivism was recognized by Goebbels, when in 1944 (Der Krieg als Weltanschauungskampf, Berlin) he stated, "The difference between National Socialism and all previous systems, particularly the system it is now conquering, is that its starting point is the community, not the individual." A popular Nazi slogan during the same year was "The common interest before the self interest!" It had been coined some years before, but the meaning was still the same. It was the mass that counted, not the individual.

One of Fascism's great inconsistencies, and the one which bears most directly on the matter at hand, is exemplified in its abhorrence of parliamentary government, yet its willingness to become a mass movement. Parliamentary systems, and democratic institutions in general, are seen as a "Jewish invention" based on the fallacy that by adding zeroes any number other than zero can result. That is, numbers do not necessarily make for wisdom and the vote of a majority means nothing whatsoever if the majority is composed of idiots, traitors, weaklings, or other undesirable. At the same time, Fascism is prepared (at least in theory) to submit the election of a total and absolutely authoritarian Fuhrer to the simple vote of a majority of the people, and without any of the checks and balances to be found in a separation of powers or a Federal type system found in most republics which tend to dilute the will of the majority in order to preserve the rights of the minority. The answer, according to the ideology, would be that only Aryans would be allowed to vote in the selection of this supreme leader. Unfortunately, this argument is sound only if you assume that there are no stupid Aryans, any with a political ax to grind, or even who simply lack good judgement.

That Fascism is a mass movement and one which preys upon the basest and crudest emotions of the wide range of people is demonstrably true and also serves as a point which is inconsistent with the contempt of parliaments to be found in their literature (especially the archetypal volume of Fascist lore, Mein Kampf). An entire chapter of Hitler's definitive work is dedicated to war propaganda, as well as are numerous verses throughout the book. Propaganda, we are specifically informed, is not a device aimed at the intellect of the scholars and the elite, but at the emotions of the masses. The masses, by their sheer numbers, are what is important; they must be the orators target, for "without the mighty force of the mass of a people, no great idea, however lofty and noble it may seem, can be realized." And yet, supposedly, it is this mass character which is so despised when it manifests in the form of a parliament! The same cupidity and lack of intelligence which is rebuked in one place is praised in another.

Marx - other side of same coin!

The subject of war is one more area in which the Norse and the Fascist opinions are at odds. To the Fascist war is solely a function of the State and exists only for the preservation of that State. Indeed, even Hitler conceded that, after the survival and domination of the superior species was assured (by which he meant Aryan man) total and everlasting peace could be enjoyed. In the Norse concept, on the other hand, war is very much an individual matter. Courage and manhood were ends in themselves, not the mere means of glorifying the State or preserving the species. Despite the undeniable heroism which was at times exhibited by the Nazi fighting man, for example, the overall philosophy was a corrupting and degrading one which led to inglorious and disgusting acts. What heroism can there be in exterminating the weak and defenseless, those who can not fight back? If it is true that the valor of our enemies does us honor, then any such acts are decidedly non-heroic.

The entire Nazi-Fascist system was based on lies, from beginning to end. Hitler's rendering of history as related in Mein Kampf was filled with historical distortions designed to support his unceasing drive for total and uncompromising power. Such philosophy as the movement possessed was largely a mask which the dictator manipulated to achieve his own ends. It is indeed a tragedy that so many brave warriors, on both sides, during World War II were led to their doom by the Nazi mirage.

There can be no mistake--despite Hitlerian rhetoric about Germanic values and the pseudo-pagan aspects of some portions of the movement, true Norse ideals are not to be found in the way of Fascism.

"It seems to me that nothing would be more foolish than to re-establish the worship of Wotan."

Adolph Hitler, October 14, 1941

"German super individualism--a phenomenon, I am sorry to say, which is praised in many quarters."

Adolph Hitler, undated

NOTES ON CHANGING THE WORLD

If you are aware of current trends, you probably know that the values which lie at the core of our Norse religion are under steady attack. Individualism is everywhere under assault by different shades of collectivists, courage is being steadily replaced by cowardice and submission, and independence is slowly giving way to group-centeredness. We have been steadily on the retreat for centuries, though we have left a number of brilliant delaying tactics in the path of our withdrawal. As an adherent of the Norse religion you may have noticed this unhappy set of circumstances and thought resignedly, "What can i do to change the course of history? I'm only one person."

Since the religion which we follow is based on the individual, it is apparent that spreading or preserving that religion, or changing the world in general, must begin with the individual. With ME, and with YOU. The foremost task of every person who claims to follow the religion of the Norsemen is to change his own life, to remake himself in the Norse pattern as he, the individual, sees it. Thus, changing the world starts at home. Before you try to spread our religion to others, see that your own house is in order, and that you are working steadily to realize the Norse ideal in your own life.

Now is the time for all Norsemen to establish their own personal program of self-improvement. The forces of slavery and universal mediocrity which hope to annihilate our beliefs will not wait while we dally. Examine your own life. How is your physical fitness program going? How long has it been since you meditated upon our sacred religion, or tried viewing the events of your daily life in respect to it? How long since you read from the Eddas, or from any book on our Viking forefathers?

We are engaged in a worldwide struggle, at this very moment. The next few decades will bring events of cataclyptic nature, as foretold in our stories of Ragnarok. Our strength will depend ultimately on what each one of us does on his own, as well as in concert with his fellows, to strengthen our devotion to our religion and the things we hold dear. Let us not be found lacking, for freedom is only for the diligent and Valhalla only for the brave.

"ODIN LIVES!"

ECO CORNER

This section of The Runestone is set aside for the subject of individual action to support our ecology, for two reasons. First, our religion is a religion of nature, of the free and wild places on the Earth. Secondly, the worsening ecological crisis will result in more regulations and less freedom, unless we solve it ourselves.

Imagine a world in which only a certain select few could own automobiles, because of fuel shortages or air pollution. Imagine the rationing of food and water, with all of the power such controls would place in the hands of government. Suppose that, because of a paper shortage, the State could dictate what books could be published and which ones could not. Worse yet, what if you were sterilized by court order, simply because the ecosystem couldn't bear the strain of an increasing population? As horrible as those thoughts are, and as much as they cause our Viking love of freedom to rebel, they could be around the corner, if we don't do something about the ecological mess we live in. Ecodisaster could impose controls and dictatorial measures as absolute as any world has ever seen. Combine the pressure of environmental crisis with the power-accumulating tendencies of government even in unstressful times, and you have a double danger to the freedom and individualism which lie at the base of our Norse religion.

Let's do something about it!

Here are some things you can do, effective immediately, courtesy of Environmental Action, Inc., Room 731, 1346 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036:

- *Buy milk, soft drinks, and beer in returnable bottles and return them.
- *Store food in re-usable, washable containers with lids (don't use plastic wrap). If you have to, use metal wrap and recycle it.
- *Re-use gift wrapping paper and ribbons. If a present comes in a box, don't wrap it.
- *Don't buy disposable items. Use cloth dish towels, napkins, and diapers, metal utensils, and china plates and cups. If your work place uses disposable items, complain--and then bring your own coffee mug.
- *For picnics, keep a spare set of bright plastic dishware and re-use it when you are away from home.
- *Keep a blackboard by the telephone for household and phone messages, rather than using paper.
- *Share magazine subscriptions with friends. Pass old magazines on to hospitals or convalescent homes.

These ideas are only a beginning. Use them. Remember, the ultimate outcome of the ecology crisis depends on you, the individual working on his own initiative.

ADS - ADVERTISEMENTS - ADS

Green Egg is published 8 times per year and a subscription is \$5 per year. GE is a broad-spectrum publication of the pagan movement. Write:

The Church of All Worlds
P.O. Box 2953
St. Louis, Miss. 63130

Here's another group of followers of the old Norse gods:

The Odinist Movement
Box 731
Adelaide St
Toronto 210
Ontario, Canada

A fine publication, known formerly as The Waxing Moon, which survives by donation rather than by set fee is:

The Crystal Well
Box 18351
Philadelphia, Penn.
19120

A new publication of the occult is The New Broom from Dallas. Write:

The New Broom
Box 1646
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There is an occult shop in New York which is selling copies of The Runestone for us. For a catalog, write:

The Warlock Shop
300 Henry St.
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201


Here are some other Pagan groups you may be interested in:

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Make checks payable to Stephen A. McNallen for both donations and subscriptions.