



THE RUNESTONE



THE RUNESTONE is a journal of the ancient Norse religion and is dedicated to the revival of 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 publication 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 (airmail). Write to the Ásatrú Free Assembly, 1766 East Avenue, Turlock, CA 95380. Please make checks payable to "Ásatrú Free Assembly."

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Calendar

June through August, 1979

June 8 - Lindisfarne Day - On this day in the year 793 C.E., three Viking ships swept down on the isle of Lindisfarne, off the English coast, and more or less officially began the Viking Age. The repercussions of this raid, which included the sacking of the local monastery, shocked all of Christendom. The summer of the North had begun.....

June 21 - Midsummer. This is the summer solstice, when the Sun's power reaches its zenith and the long, slow slide into winter begins. On this day we honor the Sun and wish it well on its journey through this part of the seasonal cycle. This festival is sacred to the god Balder, and to Frey.

July 29 - Olaf the Lawbreaker, known to history as Olaf the Saint, and King of Norway, was killed at the battle of Stiklestad on this day in 1030 C.E. Olaf was made a saint by the Church for his skill and enthusiasm in killing, maiming and torturing people who refused to give up Ásatrú. To help him accomplish these deeds he carried an army about the countryside with him, in violation of Norwegian law--hence our name for him.

August 9 - This day is reserved for honoring Radbod, a king of Frisia who died in 719 C.E. He was one of the early targets of Christian missionary activity, but just prior to his baptism ceremony he asked one of the clergymen what fate had befallen those of his ancestors who had died in the old faith. When the priest answered that they were without doubt burning in Hell, Radbod proclaimed, "Then I will rather live there with my ancestors than go to heaven with a parcel of beggars." The baptism, to say the least, was cancelled, the churches were burned, the priests killed or driven away, and Frisia remained free.

August 30 - In the old days, there seems to have been a harvest festival celebrated in late August. Frey was apparently the patron god of this holy day, and the festivities included horse fights--the stallion, of course, being an animal representative of Frey. This festival has not yet been declared an official part of our religious calendar, but may be so established by next year as our research into the Vanir-faith continues.



Announcements

HELP! WE NEED A LAWYER, preferably in the State of California, to help us on several key projects. Anyone out there care to volunteer some time to the cause?

HELLO, ILLINOIS? We have a special mission--and a special need-- for volunteer help in the vicinity of Marion, Illinois. We have been in contact for some time now with a small group of men in the prison there who want to start a *skeppslag* behind bars. We are giving them all the support from here that we can, but they would like to contact kinsmen on the outside who can assist them, serve as treasurer, etc. These men seem to be extremely sincere. This would be a great way to serve Ásatrú. If other religions can minister to men in prison, certainly we can do so, too! Any volunteers???

IF YOU'RE A VETERAN, and particularly if you're a Vietnam veteran, you should know about Charles Hayes. As a 'Nam vet, Charles suffers from unjust stereotyping--you know, the "kill-crazy baby burner" image that some people have. We think that prejudice is one reason he has been committed (railroaded?) to a state hospital. We've spent hours visiting this man and we're not convinced he got a fair deal. His story is too long to tell here, but why don't you ask him? He'd like to hear from you. Drop him a letter and ask for his side of the story. Address it to: Charles A. Hayes III
Unit 37
3102 E. Highland Ave.
Patton, CA 92369

Chuck is a follower of Ásatrú, and a warrior who has paid his dues, and more. Show him you care! See his letter elsewhere in this issue.

Yes, this IS one of the reasons we want volunteer legal assistance.

THE RELIGION OF ODIN - A HANDBOOK is the name of a volume available from:

Viking House
P.O. Box 160
Red Wing, MN 55066

Although the book does have its shortcomings, it is a landmark of sorts and is one more sign of the present and continuing Odinic revival. It is 153 pages in length (8"x11" pages) and costs \$8.95. This is a pretty impressive size; in standard paperback format it would have numbered many more pages. We suggest you pick it up; it stands to become a collector's item.....

And, while we're mentioning books, there's a new release titled *Viking Hoaxes in North America* by Jeffrey R. Redmond, a Runestone subscriber. We haven't seen a copy, but it claims to be a scholarly work that debunks some of the more spectacular claims of Viking penetration into North America, while of course admitting that Vikings did land on this continent. It can be obtained from Carlton Press, Inc., 84 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10011, for \$3.95 per copy plus .60¢ postage and handling.

SKEPPSLAG NEWS AND CONTACTS

The San Francisco Bay Area Skeppslag offered up a Thor-Blót on March 24, an Odin-Blót on May 5, and another Thor-Blót on May 26. These rituals are becoming more and more effective with experience, and we are pleased with the progress we are making--while striving always for improvement. Anyone in the area who would like to contact this Skeppslag can write to us at The Runestone.

In the San Diego area, Shawn O'Riley is our contact man. His skeppslag there has been meeting regularly since a meeting on May 6. In February they performed a modified Odin-Blót, and more action is planned for the future. Interested persons can write to Shawn at 1808 - 3rd Ave., San Diego CA 92101.

Isaac Moll is our man in Washington State. To see him about activity there, you can reach him at 607 N. State St., Bellingham, WA 98225.

People wanting contact with fellow Norse pagans are:

Greg Steiner
443 South Courts
U.N.I.
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

James Hampshire
750 Carnation Drive
Winter Park, FL 32789

Thomas L. Gunter
2101 - 11th Ave.
La Marque, TX 77568

Charles A. Hayes III
Unit 37
3102 E. Highland Ave.
Patton, CA 92369

Robert P. Hopkins
P.O. Box 92
Orchard Park, NY 14127

Helge Möller
Blokland 2, 1 tr
DK 2620
Albertslund, Denmark

SP6 James T. Turner
569-82-4940
IHCC, 2nd SUPCOM, Box 245-2
APO NY 09160

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An
ASATRUARATAL

(list of those faithful to the AESir)

is now being compiled. This is intended to serve as a register of all asatruarar, both individuals and groups. It is hoped that this listing will help promote intercommunication and fellowship within Asatru, based upon mutual interests, etc. All those appearing on the register will receive a free copy. To appear on the Asatruaratal send the following information: 1) name, 2) address, 3) Asatru- affiliations, 4) special interests and/or talents pertaining to Asatru, etc. -- to:

Edred Thorsson
1602 Grayford
Austin, TX 78704

Why Ásatrú ?

by George Saunders

Perhaps the most difficult question to answer regarding the faith of the Norse is this: Why do I, or anyone, choose to believe in such things? The Viking Age has been over for a long time; by what transmutation of logic do I find myself a proponent of this religion, and moreover recommend it to others?

The answer is not difficult, except perhaps in its framing, for how does one express a deep emotion? The tales of the Gods are part of a heritage extending into the remote past. It is a reality, a frame of reference that acknowledged many truths about the world and ourselves as a people. Such truths, despite the ravages of other religions and philosophies, still have moral force today. We still admire individualism, courage in a difficult position, a yearning for knowledge, a wanderlust or desire to explore, and so many other emotional needs which are utterly alien to much of what our fellow man feels. It is no accident that this driving force has taken us from our rude huts of Northern Europe, across the vastness of the oceans and then across the vastness of space to set foot upon our moon. Today there are still many species of humanity that cannot, nor will they ever, appreciate or conceive of the essence behind such a venture. It is not part of their nature.

In this age of questioning, of seeking for truth, we have become separated from the origins of ourselves as a people. These can be found in the North, and can best explain the reluctance of many of us to accept in our hearts the teachings of Oriental prophets. It is no coincidence that many, even though they are reared in a religious context, have this unidentified aversion to Christianity. Despite the claims of preachers who speak of guilt and sin, the fundamental fact remains that this uneasiness in our soul is the inner stirring of our better sense, against a world-view that is alien to our nature. Our ancestors certainly did not revere submission to any deity or earthly leader as slaves, and in the tales of our Gods, base submission is scarcely to be found. The religion of Ásatrú then is a view of the world based on a mature assessment of reality. As H. R. Ellis Davidson, noted authority on the Norse religion, has stated, "The great gifts of the gods were readiness to face the world as it was, the luck that sustains men in tight places, and the opportunity to win that glory which alone can outlive death. This attitude is an adult one, far removed from that of a spoilt child. It explains why the myths have still a strong attraction for us...." There are few "easy" answers and this coincides with our experience in life today. There are rights and wrongs, but there are, alas, no simple answers to our human condition, nor will we find any by trusting an essentially Middle Eastern religion as a guide. No one has come back from the dead to prove the veracity of a Biblical interpretation of the Universe, nor will they. The logic of a Christian view of life cannot then be authenticated. Common sense would indicate that the Hereafter (if any) is as unstructured and uninterpretable as the reality of the living. Left with this fact, we can live our lives for the here and now, and for those who will come after us. Whether or not there will be a world left for our children to inherit is fantastically more important than pretending to spend our lives preparing for a Judgement and fanciful Eternity in Heaven. Real problems demand real answers, for Evil and our greatest challenges are here on Earth--today. That is the essence of the religion that our forefathers left us.

In the world in which the Norse lived, there were no convenient answers. Life could be long, or jokingly short, but however long a man's life was, he could strive for excellence, he could strive for an honorable or glorious life, however far short he might actually fall. The trying, the striving, is what makes us so different from the rest of humanity. We do not give up easily, and the emergence of a Norse faith here in the Twentieth Century is tangible evidence that this is so. There still lives a spirit of the West if, after 1,000 years, the old ceremonies to Odin are once again practiced from Europe to Iceland to North America, touched so long ago by the prows of our ancestors' longboats. There is an irrepressibility there, a matchless nobility of the soul that has been and always will be the envy of the rest of mankind. It is also no coincidence that this nobility has once again emerged in the world.

Today as never before are these values needed in the West. On every hand we are besieged, both by external enemies and those among us. A religion of independence, of self-sufficiency and heroic achievement is absolutely essential if we are to cope with invasions of our culture, our political institutions, and our privacy that accelerate daily. From taxation to domestic intelligence to employment, our lives are increasingly scrutinized and examined by impersonal bureaucratic agencies. We rapidly have reached the time when our social security numbers are more important than our given names, and events which touch our lives originate half a globe away. This abomination will be our future, unless we exercise our ingrained streak of stubbornness, our unwillingness to become enslaved, combined with the rationality that has always been the measure of the West. The tales of the Gods can inspire us to lead lives of meaningful significance. We should have no need of deities which resemble security blankets, for how can one preserve one's liberty while worshipping a religion where craven submission is glorified?

Conceiving of any deity may well be difficult for many, as it is for myself. In an age of Space Travel, how can Odin and Thor and the rest of the Gods be relevant? Science and Asatru are certainly not incompatible if we stop to realize that our knowledge gained over the last millenia has taught us of the multiplicity of realities, that the frontiers of our understanding seem to stretch before us as always, out of reach. The Gods, then, in some other dimension, or as symbols of courage, fortitude--and yes, even of duplicity--mirror our own circumstances, even though on an elevated plane. These deities can demonstrate any of a number of such characteristics and it is therefore not surprising that more than one was envisioned. Whether symbol or reality, however, they still deserve our allegiance, but certainly not as slaves! To do them reverence is to take up the sword of freedom, not to place the yoke of thought-control upon our necks. The Gods demand much; courage, a will to live, a striving, but we give up nothing in the believing, as do we abjure from the pleading for favors.

The Norse Gods in the final analysis are highly appropriate to our Age. The long interlude of fear is over, for if Asatru had any fault, it was that we were not ready for it until now. It is only now that we can laugh at the frantic efforts of the Christians speaking of Hell and Judgement, for as Friederich Nietzsche once said of Christianity, "We know better!" We stand at the threshold of our Destiny--what better religion to profess than one based on courage, respect and achievement? If we believe and yet find our religion unfounded we have lost nothing, but with Judgement and a vengeful Jehovah others have lost a great deal--their self respect. Our choice is clear, either we choose to be challenged or we choose to surrender to fear and weakness. My choice at least is clear--for me, for the Twentieth Century, for the new Age of the West, Odin indeed lives!

NORSE ZODIAC ?

Early in the last century, Finn Magnussen, an eminent scholar of the Eddas, came up with the following Norse equivalents to the signs of the Zodiac, from his studies of the *Grímnismál* and Chapter 17 of the *Prose Edda*:

Celestial Mansions	Tutelary Deities	Corresponding to the Sign of the Zodiac	In which the Sun enters
1. Ydalir	Ullur	Sagittarius	Nov. 23
2. Alfheimr	Frey	Capricorn	Dec. 23
3. Valaskjálf	Vall	Aquarius	Jan. 22
4. Sökkvabekkr	Saga	Pisces	Feb. 21
5. Gladsheimr	Odin	Aries	March 23
6. Thrymheimr	Skadi	Taurus	April 22
7. Breidablik	Baldur	Gemini	May 22
8. Himinbjörg	Heimdall	Cancer	June 21
9. Fólkvangr	Freyja	Leo	July 25
10. Glitnir	Forseti	Virgo	Aug. 24
11. Nøatún	Njörd	Libra	Sept. 23
12. Landvít	Vídar	Scorpio	Oct. 23

"The *Grímnismál* positively designates Valaskjálf as the third mansion, Sökkvabekkr as the fourth, etc., in the order that Finn Magnussen has arranged them, though we doubt whether he be strictly warranted in making Ydalir the first, and Alfheim the second mansion. The fourth, fifth and sixth strophes of the *Grímnismál* are, literally, as follows:

4. The land that I see lying (before me) near the AEsir and Elves is holy. But in Thrúðheim shall Thor remain until the Gods perish.
5. Ydalir it is called, where Ullur hath built him a hall. In the beginning (of the world) the Gods gave Alfheim to Frey when he was cutting his teeth.
6. The third habitation is that where the blithe Gods roofed the halls with silver; it is called Valaskjálf, which was chosen by the God (As) in the beginning (of the world).
7. The fourth is called Sökkvabekkr, etc.

"Several passages in the Eddas and the Skaldic poems show that Valaskjálf here is meant for Valhalla; the god who chose it (for his abode) can therefore be no other than Odin. Finn Magnussen, however, assigns Valaskjálf to Odin's son Vall. He also makes Ydalir the first mansion, and Alfheim the second, though we might obviously conjecture with much the same degree of plausibility that Thrúðheim is designated as the first habitation, the second being either Ydalir or Alfheim, probably the former. At all events, by assigning the second mansion to Frey, Finn Magnussen makes the Sun-god correspond--and it must be confessed very appropriately--to the winter solstice, when the sun is, as it were, annually born, and may, therefore, be represented as an infant cutting its teeth."

Note: The above is taken from the book "Northern Antiquities," translated from the French of M. Mallet, Bohn's Antiquarian Library, London, 1847.

Ed:- This poem refers to some of the signs that accompanied the rebirth of Asatru in Iceland a few years ago. An act of parliament was required, and things looked bleak for the small group of pagans led by Beinteinsson. Then things began to happen--a power failure, a volcanic eruption... and Asatru is now recognized once again in our Holy Land.



The Gods Awake!



by George Saunders

The winds they tell of bitter years
When Christians mocked our creed;
Of twisted minds and alien fears,
For which we have no need.

Our kinsmen burnt and cruelly killed,
As Pagans they all died;
And we were told, "as God has willed,"
Yet now we know they lied.

They stole our hearts and raped our Will,
To Rome our gold did flow;
And made us read the Bible's swill,
Our Gods we did not know.

Then darkness was dispelled by Hope,
New courage then did bloom;
As Western Man began to grope,
For truth to fend off doom.

Two wars we fought amongst our kin,
Before we cleared our eyes;
To see our fratricidal sin,
Of monumental size.

In Iceland cold the Gods awoke,
Beinteinsson called their names;
The ancient runes and blöts he spoke,
Aloud on Thingvellir's plains.

The bonds began to fall apart,
Odin freed thus spake;
"The war against our foes doth start,
Their power we will break."

The ancient words held true that night,
As all the lights went black;
When Asatru was denied the right,
To claim our people back.

And Holy Mount did quake and rend,
For Thor did show his rage;
A message dire this soon did send,
To hail a Pagan Age.

Then Iceland's chief proclaimed his word,
For a Pagan Church of State;
The lights they were restored we heard,
On that prophetic date.

Now Helgafell her fury slowed,
As soon as this occurred;
Our brothers they were on the road,
To spread Asatru's word.

Our eyes are turned to Asgard high,
The Gods we hear them now;
As Pagans heed the Lur-horn's cry,
Our loyalty we vow.

From East to West our Goths speak
Of Odin, Frey and Thor;
Their cause it is no longer weak,
We will retreat no more.

And men and Gods in future times,
Shall mark this Fated course:
That with these fey and wondrous signs,
Was renewed the faith of the Norse.



In *The Runestone* over the past few years we have reviewed quite a number of books on the old religion, the Vikings, and related subjects. For the first time I find myself in the position of having to recommend that a certain book is a waste of time and should be avoided. That book is *The Vikings: Rise and Fall of the Norse Sea Kings* by Rudolf Poertner.

I know of no other book which gives such a uniformly bad--and incorrect--impression of the Vikings. Why Poertner has chosen to do this is something which only he can know. It is apparent that he has done a lot of research and generally gone to a great deal of trouble, yet I was able to catch him in glaring errors and in absolutely horrid value judgements. Here are some of the worst:

"Viking dress emphasized vanity, snobbishness, conceit and vulgar effects: naked arms and muscles, gaudy breeches, scarlet silk robes. In short, the naive ostentation and dandyism of the newly rich.... Their language, too, tended to be showy, windy, crudely overblown--like an unintended parody of what was best in the language of the bards."

On the page immediately opposite this attack, a beautiful plate of a Thor's hammer amulet is rather inadequately captioned as an "Ornament from the Swedish island Oland."

Poertner cites two incidents in which men hid large quantities of treasure so well that they could never again be found, even by those who had hidden them. This, supposedly, is evidence of an insane love of material goods, the ultimate in miserly behavior. He neglects to inform his reader of the popular belief that whatever treasure a man hid in the earth would join him after death in the next world--which puts an entirely different light on this behavior!

Odin is dismissed as a "Genghis Khan in the Clouds" in one chapter subsection, and the trading town of Hedeby as "Babylon on the Baltic" in another!

Throughout this volume all the old stereotypes are upheld, and great weight given to monkish maunderings. The theory of the drug-inspired berserker's rage, considered unlikely by other authorities, is resurrected here, along with a statement to the effect that the berserker was an ideal.

Poertner describes a type of execution supposedly accorded to member of the upper class, in which the offender was drowned in ale. Perhaps he is right and I am wrong--but the closest I recall to this is one ancient king who stumbled drunkenly into a huge vat of mead and was accidentally drowned.

Whatever else this book may be, it is not reliable as an information source nor as a description of the Norse ethos. It is perhaps the most hostile and biased book I have ever seen on the subject. My recommendation is this: If you want to read it, go to the library, but don't subsidize this drivel with your money.





MOOT POINT

Editor's note: In our last issue, a reader inquired about the Old Norse names of the months. Edred Thoreson has given us a detailed answer:

...Speaking of months--here is some information which I came up with on the subject of the Germanic calendar. The Norse seem to have gone to a solar calendar long before "christianization"--perhaps under some influence from southern cultures, by way of trade routes, etc. However, the lunar cycles remained an extremely important part of the ritual calendar. For example, Tacitus mentions in the *Germania*, "they (the Germanic people) assemble on certain particular days, either shortly after the new moon or shortly before the full moon. These, they hold, are the most auspicious times for embarking on any enterprise." (*Germania*, chapter 11). Lunar time reckoning probably played a determining role in the "computation" of festival days, etc. Although the principle criteria may have been certain signs--such as the appearance or disappearance of certain plants or animals. The month names, and their approximate correspondence to the modern calendar (for Icelandic culture) are:

Name	Translation	Time (for 1978-79)
1. Gormánuðr	Slaughter - m. ("gore")	Oct. 14 - Nov. 12
2. Frer	Frost	Nov. 13 - Dec. 12
3. Jól or Hrut	Yule	Dec. 13 - Jan. 11
4. Þorri	"Waning" or "ebbing"	Jan. 12 - Feb. 10
5. Góí or Gomanuðr	Snow or snow - m.	Feb. 11 - Mar. 12
6. Einmánuðr	Single - m.	Mar. 13 - Apr. 11
7. Gaukmánuðr	Cuckoo - m.	Apr. 12 - May 11
8. Skerpla or Stekktið	Sharp or fold ^{**} time	May 12 - June 9
9. Solmanuðr or Selmanuðr [*]	Sun-m.or"sel"month ^{***}	June 10 - July [†] "eke"(July 15)
10. Miðsumar or Heyannir	Midsummer or Haymaking-m.	July 16-Aug. 14
11. Tvímánuðr	Double - m.	Aug. 15 - Sept. 13
12. Haustmánuðr	Harvest - m.	Sept.14 - Oct. 13

The weeks, probably, were five days long, and called the *fimt*.

^{*}The "eke-nights" are added on to this month to lengthen the Norse system to equal the full solar cycle. (6 days this year).

^{**}When the lambs are weaned.

^{***}Summer pasture.

Each month would be 30 days long, with 5 "eke-nights" (one *fimt* added at Solmánuðr.

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In contempt of the slave religions, please renew my subscription to "The Runestone"; also send me, when convenient, four copies of "What is the Norse Religion?".

A few months ago I read a rather interesting novel, "The Dragon Under the Hill" which had to do with the Lindisfarne raid. Damn good article on "Satanism". Also, what was noted in the "Yoga" article about providing children with "Heroic Literature". Too young for any of my own. However, when I was in the first grade, my mother sent me off to Sunday school to learn of the "Good" Book. Not only did I seem to have an instinctive distrust of accepting Hebrew folklore as literal truth, but the persons that were singled out as "heroes" did not, to me, seem worth admiring. Then I read a "young readers" edition of *The Iliad and The Odyssey*. Wow! It certainly was absurd to compare some Old Testament prophet to a hero like Hector or Ulysses.

So, here I am today, a devout agnostic Pagan.

Good luck to you,

-M.O.L.

Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y

Dear Steve,

I would like to thank you and all the people who support me. When I do get out, I promise that I will do my best to help the AFA and the Varangian Guard. You people have shown me that some people besides myself care what happens to me and the rest of the free world. I am very proud to know people such as you and to be able to call you kinsmen. Knowing you has really helped me, for I thought I was alone in my beliefs. I have one thing to say:

HEIL ODIN!

-Charles

NOTE: Charles is the veteran mentioned in the "Announcements" section of this issue of The Runestone. We hope you'll give him support in the form of a card or letter, letting him know he hasn't been deserted.

-Editor

England

Many thanks for your kind advert of my stuff (Ed: This refers to his catalog of arms, armor, etc.)... I was just a bit alarmed over the exaggeration "huge", it is a modest 30 page effort. I would hate to disappoint folk.

Re SKULD--I think it is the start of something good from an hitherto unexpected direction--certainly worth all the support we can give. I wonder if Mayer might later be persuaded to print partly bi-lingual (like Northlander)?

On G.C.L.'s question about month names... The Odinit Committee ones are from old German folk usage... Even with an accurate Norse name list that is no end to the problem because the reference I have states that the Norse months (due to agricultural and geographical differences) tend to overlap our present month system by as much as half a month...

-Peter Seymour
96 Dartford Ave.
London N9, England

Ed: Your catalog may only be thirty pages in length, but that still comes out to a couple of hundred different items! I doubt anyone will be disappointed; as far as I'm concerned it's worth the \$3 price.

Denmark

...Ironically enough, when the new education Plan 90 was announced by the Social "Democrat" education minister some time ago it showed less history-teaching hours than before. The trend among us, the common peasant, is a strong and increasing interest for history (and archaeology) and a steadily growing market for historical books.

The tourists visiting our country will see a lot of Danes wearing Thor's hammer around their necks and every second silver/goldsmith and jewelry shop is selling them and similar types of Norse style jewelry but I think that is a false picture. They are maybe not Christian, many of them are so-called "atheists" and socialist. The rest of them will, if the fashion tomorrow tells them, wear a dead and mummified canary around the neck.... A real, sincere Norse pagan would be regarded as a disturbed person and/or would be made the laughing stock to the public and filed for later use. This is of course my personal view...

-Helge Møller
Blokland No. 2, Itr
DK 2620 Albertslund
Denmark

Editor: Helge welcomes correspondence with fellow followers of Ásatrú, particularly women.

Sweden

When Frank Zappa says "I think it's time most kids found out they are part of a nation (why not culture? - G.S.) that was built on a giant lie" he is right, but I still wonder if he really knows what he is talking about.

And if "John" Lennon said Beatles were more popular than Jesus, he was hardly aware of the fact that his own name was a consequence of the Jewish-Christian influence (derived from Jesus?).

I am not going to take you down to any "strawberry fields", but I would like to show you around in Midgard a little. Midgard is the answer to a cultural crisis, whose symptoms can be seen almost everywhere today. C. G. Jung's collective unconscious is bubbling up in all kinds of strange creeds - like "ecstasism" and other occult phenomena (astrology, tarot, magic, witchcraft). Modern art is a true mirror of our time. There's something insane in it. The technocratic bureaucracies seem apparently untouched, but "the green wave" has meant a lot to disturb the self-confidence of the scientific West. The West is losing its power and the future looks rather dark. You have a feeling destruction is just around the corner.

Nietzsche and Spengler saw it a long time ago. Existentialism and nihilism are practically the same thing, as just to exist is being dead. Freedom from life is equality with matter. Everywhere you find these popular masks of death in philosophical disguise, in religion as well as in politics. And this "death-oult" is a very serious symptom of the crisis in question.

In a way the christians have always worshipped a "corpse". And the moral of Jesus will always lead to death, if you really follow it. The same thing with the ideal of equality. "Communists" and christians just don't exist. Only dead-ones. The ideal is being dead and it has always been for the weak. I think this is the secret of the surprising success of christianity and communism. There is also the soul-dead robot, the collectivistic mass-people without their own personality. But we must not hate them. Only love will help them up from their decay. Love and wisdom.

Darwin, Stirner, Nietzsche, Wilde... they can't help you out of this mess, but maybe they can give you a clue. The risk is you get more confused than you already were. But you have to try something, so what do you do? Don't forget the "underground" completely, but you've got to be critical. And perhaps you will finally find the road to Midgard.

-Gudrik

Switzerland

Our report from Switzerland is not good news. You recall from the last issue that we announced the publication of SKULD, an Odinit newsletter for our French-speaking co-religionists of Europe. The early demise of SKULD, along with important comments on the status of European Odinitism, is the subject of this report from our correspondent there. Perhaps our readers can offer encouragement, or aid?

Dear Friend,

With this letter, I send to you No. 4 of "Skuld"; this issue will be the last.

I expose in this No. 4 my main motives for the interruption of the publication. Naturally, I have material and financial difficulties (practically no subscribers... but numerous "friends" want to receive it free, without anything in exchange!), but that is not the most important, it's always possible to find money.

More important: I think that the "Odinism" as conceived by the majority of the European comrades is not a good way, because they use it as a camouflage for political activities and make with it a substitute for the religion or a pseudo-spirituality.

In this form, it appears to me that it's not the best way for the apparition of an authentic nordic spirituality with reference to our ideal hyperborean heritage.

The disappearance of "Skuld" is not negative; I call all the French-speaking "Odinists" (and others interested, also) to a large discussion and a serious reflection, to a purification of our themes. We must now go to the essential, with men of real spirituality, seriously selected, and build an authentic Order for the diffusion of our ideal. We must go to a rebirth of a nordic spirituality, but not by being necessarily attached to some historical forms.

I hope to hear from you soon again, and I send to you my best Fagan greetings.

GLOIRE A NOS DIEUX ET A NOS HEROS!

P.S.: I will perhaps re-publish "Skuld" in some months, but it will be something quite different--but naturally, with the same ideal!

We must build a really religious movement! The APA is certainly one of the best in this way.

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A REMINDER: Also part of the AFA is our warrior fraternity, the Varangian Guard, and our group specially devoted to the deities of growth and fertility, People of the Lord and Lady ("Lord" and "Lady" being the translation of the names Frey and Freya, respectively). Inquiries are invited!



WE NEED BOOKS -- Some of our readers have trouble finding material on the Vikings in general and on Ásatrú in particular. A few are prisoners and have even fewer opportunities to learn about our faith. We are setting up a lending library for these people. If you've got any duplicate volumes in your collection and would like to put one of them to work, we'd be glad to accept them for this purpose. Or you might keep us in mind while browsing through the book sales regularly held by most libraries.

One book we'd really like is *The Vikings* by Howard La Fay. National Geographic's policy forbids them from selling us copies, but perhaps some of our readers who happen to be National Geographic Society members will help us out. We'll even reimburse them! Again, here's a chance to do something solid for the cause.