



THE



RUNSTONE



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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 \$7.00 per year in the U.S. and Canada, and \$9.00 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. McNallen, Editor-in-Chief; Maddy Snow, production; Jane Fowler, typing.

August 15 is the deadline for the Fall Issue.

~ CALENDAR ~

June 21 - Summer Solstice. This longest day of the year celebrates the height of the Sun's glory, to be followed by the long decline into Winter which will culminate six months hence, at Yule. Symbolically, the Summer Solstice may be thought of as the death of Balder preceeding the end of one cycle and the beginning of another.

July 29 - Olaf the Lawbreaker, known to history as Saint Olaf of Norway, was killed at the battle of Stiklestad in 1030 C.E. on this date. Olaf acquired a reputation for killing, torturing, maiming, and exiling his fellow Norwegians who would not convert to Christianity, and for carrying an army with him about the countryside in violation of the law, to help him accomplish these deeds.

August 9 - On this arbitrarily chosen date we honor Radbod, a king of Frisia who died in 719 C.E. Radbod was one of the early targets for Christian conversion efforts. Just before his baptism ceremony, he asked the clergy what fate had befallen his ancestors who died loyal to Asatru. The missionaries replied that Radbod's forefathers were burning in Hell - to which Radbod replied, "Then I will rather live there with my ancestors than go to heaven with a parcel of beggars." The baptism was cancelled, the churches were burned, and Frisia remained free.

August 25 - Freyfaxi. The last Saturday in August is set aside to make the harvest festival sacred to Frey, a god of fertility, sexuality, joy, and the continuance of the clan. This feast day is characterized by the symbol of the stallion, representing Frey's virility and power.

ALTHING

1984

DATE: August 10, 11, 12, 13

A.F.A. members, potential members and others true to the gods of the Northlands are invited to attend the annual celebration of Asatru. The weekend event will include rituals, workshops, fellowship, feasting and fun surrounded by evergreens and oaks in the forested mountains of Northern California.

If you want to be a part of the work and wonder of our ancient religion, we urge you to complete the form below, so we can plan for an event to surpass all others!

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SONG OF THE STORM

by Simon Musk

Above the bleak mountain range lightning flares and the numbing blast of thunder echos from deep gullies and hidden caves in the valley below. Blinding bright blue light rips open the night like a well-honed sword and above the swirling chaos of heaven's vault, a voice roars, the very thunder itself, 'To battle I go, to war and slaughter'.

Across the sky hurtle two gigantic goats. Foam flies from their mouths and their hooves strike fire and spark from mountain peaks; behind them a scarlet chariot blazes like a comet as its driver steers a wild course. Iron-gloved hands clench the reins and arms like young oak trees flex and ripple as he urges greater speed from the beasts. Slung at his belt swings bane of giant, troll and serpent, short-hafted Mjollnir, only weapon of the Thunder Lord. Straight toward Jotunheim is the course set as the Western sky rains fire balls into the distant ocean. Thor goes to war, one God against the Giant hordes but it is they, not the red-haired slayer, who fear the combat. Odin's son, protector of Asgard, greatest warrior of the Northern Gods, whose glance of piercing blue can crack rock and whose voice can topple cliffs, raises his battle song to the fire-filled sky.

'Let the forces of Chaos quake. Thor goes to battle; let Mjollnir strike down all creatures of darkness, and old night, power of storms, be mine!'

WINDOW ON VALHALLA



Thor squeezed the stars in his mighty hand
Creating a magical hammer of light
And Heimdall guards that red-blooded band
Tossing down mead and lusting for fight

Now those were the gods for a righteous man
Free of the pinching sense of sin:
A strong and tribal knowing clan
Waiting for Ragnarok to begin

Thor never turns the other cheek
But girds his loins for the giants of frost;
In ice-blocked lands in vain you'll seek
For gods who are by man double-crossed

Bob Owens

COURAGE IS BETTER THAN COWARDICE

by Stephen A. McNallen

If most people had to state the single trait most valued by the Norsemen, the majority would unhesitatingly name "courage". And rightly so - for once, our stereotype does us justice. Courage was a thing of inestimable value not only to the Norse, but indeed to all the Germanic tribes and the peoples of ancient Europe generally. We are compelled to rank it very highly, or even first, among the values of our faith, Asatru.

Today we live in a world where the anti-hero has won (or rather has been given) a niche of prominence. The hard virtues have softened, and the stern code of courage and its fraternal twin, honor, are out of fashion. In modern society at large, people are simply not prepared for the trials soon to be visited upon us by history. All the more reason that we who follow the ways of our noble ancestors should be infused with these powerful traits. Let us begin acquiring courage by first understanding it.

Quite correctly, it is often pointed out that there is a difference between courage and fearlessness. The person who does not feel fear may be able to do great deeds, but only because he or she is insensitive or unimaginative. While this may be useful, it is not especially virtuous. The real accomplishment is to fully experience fear, yet to master it. We who opt for the well-rounded enhancement of all our powers in the desire to transcendence so common to our Folk must choose the latter, for we seek awareness and fullness of perception in addition to force and mastery. There is no shame in feeling fear. To know fear is human, and to thoroughly overcome it raises one to the realm of the gods.

Another truism is that courage comes not only in the physical variety, but manifests also as spiritual bravery. Again, some things are truisms because they're true, and the code of Asatru would agree with this statement. We

would take this somewhat superficial analysis a step further, however, and say that there is a substratum which underlies both kinds of courage, and that bedrock is the heroic will. Facing an enemy bayonet charge and facing the threat of losing one's job because of a belief in Asatru have little in common - except that both instances test the individual's mastery of self through a deliberate and unwavering will to take the honorable course.

In reading the sagas, we see such a willful adherence to this high standard of courage. Revenge for a wrongdoing was an absolute necessity, because appearing soft or defenseless meant that one's family and one's self became targets for others who sensed an easy prey. However, retribution was not exacted instantly, in the heart of passion. Rather, the emotional fury had to subside, so that the avenger could demonstrate self control and so that the deed could stand forth as an imperative of duty, not as an act of rashness. Courageous feats (whether of vengeance or not) were best if done deliberately and with calmness, not impulsively. It is worth noting that among the greatest of heroes were men like Beowulf and the semi-legendary Ragnar Lodbrok. Neither died in the brashness of youthful impetuosity, but in the coolness of mature, tempered courage under the mastery of will.

All very well for those of such celestial stature, you may say - but what about those of us who lead ordinary lives yet wish to honor our gods and our ancestors?

A two-fold approach presents itself. First, since a powerful will underlies courage in all its forms, develop that will in not just one but in several, or many, aspects of your life. Self-mastery will bring with it courage. Secondly and more specifically, do the thing that you fear. One man's successful use of this method is described in the book titled (of course) Will by G. Gordon Liddy. →

COURAGE IS BETTER THAN COWARDICE . . .

Courage, out of fashion or not, is one of the cornerstones of personal behavior for those who follow our gods. We may not all be courageous - or, more likely, we have some measure of courage, but not all we'd like. Whatever our failings or our strengths, it is our duty to try - courageously! - to develop this value so prized by our forbears.



GIULOS

The Aerospace Technology Guild has published a second edition of its newsletter, Sleipnir, featuring "Goals for the Guild" and a look at a missile named after Thor, among other things. Since the last Runestone was published, the ATG has added several significant volumes to its growing library and has made plans for its first bona fide meeting. The Guild will sponsor a presentation at Althing 5 this August to keep AFA members and supporters posted. Individuals interested in the ATG can write c/o Asatru Free Assembly.

The Warrior Guild continues to thrive, with a newsletter which includes everything from survival tips and armored vehicles to philosophical and theological essays on the warrior spirit. Artwork by Bob Stine of Raven Graphics enhances John's editorial expertise. Chances look good that John will leave his mountain fortress in Colorado long enough for a special Warrior Guild presentation at Althing Five! Persons interested in the Guild should address it c/o the AFA.

The Brewing Guild continues in the hands of Guildmaster Jace Crouch, whose articles have graced the pages of The Runestone on several occasions. Readers who have enjoyed his writing as much as we have should investigate the Guild's newsletter, The Frothing Vat. Jace is very much interested in recipes, articles, letters, and notes from brewers or would-be-brewers - why not drop him a line? His address is: 118 E. Downie, Alma, MI 48801.

The Amerysk Folkbond is a Folk-Nationalist guild working towards building a Teutonic folkdom in North America (the Amerysk) and beginning anew a fresh Asatru/Odinist culture. Dedicated to producing American Europeans, the Folkbond publishes the newsletter Folksblaed, which covers everything from language and ideology to alternative energy sources. It is available from P.O. Box 2305, Ventnor, NJ 08406.

Guildmaster Paal Filsinnu will be at the Althing, there to unfurl the banner of the Amerysk in a special ceremony.

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Tape #1 - "INTRODUCTION TO RITUAL"/"INVOCATIONS"

Side One: A discussion of the theory and practice of ritual in Asatru, complete with a step-by-step description of a ritual to Odin.

Side Two: Invocations to seven deities, with a commentary on each. Suitable for use with the ritual format on side one.

Tape #2 - "STORIES FROM SCANDINAVIAN MYTHOLOGY"

Six well-loved tales of the North recorded for children, newcomers to Asatru, and all of those who share a reverence for the legends that reveal so clearly the spirit of our people.

Side One: Odin Visits Mimir's Well
Sif's Golden Hair
Idun's Apples

Side Two: Thor Loses his Magic Hammer
Balder the Beautiful
Tyr and the Fenris Wolf

FREYA'S FOLK

FREYA - THE TRIPLE GODDESS

by Bonnie K. Luchs / Gythja Verthandi-Northern Way

Of all the goddesses I have studied in the last twenty years, I have yet to find one I could relate to as well as Freyja, possibly because I have never found another who so completely exemplifies, in her own name, each aspect of the Triple Goddess concept of the Old Religions: Maiden, Mother and Death-Crone.

Before proceeding to examine each of these aspects of Freyja, she should be identified for those who may be less familiar with her than other goddesses. Freyja, Goddess of Love and Beauty, is the chief goddess of the Vanir, oldest group of deities of the ancient Northern European religion we call Asatru. She is the only "Divine" goddess of this ancient religion who has survived as a fully-rounded and commanding figure.

The Vanir, as a group, predate the worship of Odin and most of the Aesir, as far back as the Stone Age peoples in what is now Scandinavia. They are the "most holy gods" of fertility; closest to mankind in agriculture, kingship of land, prosperity and givers of blessings. Described as "amoral" - not distinguishing between good and evil - theirs is the power of creation of new life, life's increase, and the links with the unseen world through divination by seeresses, as well as through collective festival ceremonies. The "parental figures" most remembered of the Vanir are Njord, God of the Seas and his sister, Nerthus, the Earth Mother Goddess. Their twin offspring, Freyr and Freyja, (whose very names translate as the titles Lord and Lady), are the heirs apparent of the Vanir. As such, they

are the promise and the bond to mankind of renewal and continuum, as with the earth and sea, of rebirth and life after death. More important, they are the critical link in melding with the later Aesir, the gods of the sky, who represent the more intangible behavioral concepts, including the heavenly promise of Valhalla to those of mankind who live, and die, striving for achievement of those conceptual goals.

Freyja as the Maiden: To appreciate this aspect of her triple nature, it is immensely important to bear in mind that we are dealing with a fertility-based religion, and as such, accept the ancient, yet too-often forgotten, concept of what a "maiden" or "virgin" is; simply defined, this is a "marriageable" woman who has accepted no one man to be her husband and lord. The fact that this woman may already have given birth to one or more children only gives proof of her marriageability in a culture and society where fertility was imperative to continue the family, clan and tribe. Throughout history, a barren woman was reason enough for a man to take another, or additional, wife, just as it was the woman's right and duty to take as husband a man who could fulfill the needs of continuance, particularly in the older, matriarchal-line societies. In this light, Freyja as the Maiden Goddess is indeed considered to be marriageable. A good portion of Norse mythology is based on various gods and giants seeking Freyja for their bride, and she is jealously guarded as such by her kinsmen and the Aesir. Yet, as a true fertility figure, Freyja is a goddess of love and lust, sexually free and free with her favors. Men, giants, even Odin himself, lust after her.

The giantess Hyndla censures her for "riding" her human lover Ottar and acting like a she-goat in season at night; Loki taunts her with having bedded down with every god around, including her brother, Freyr. (This last, incidentally, is an important concept found world-over in fertility religions, where the brother-sister "marriage", whether in ritual or fact, or both, was necessary for the continuance. As a matter of fact, the Aesir never castigate the twins over this, although it supposedly kept Njord from bringing his sister/mate Nerthus into the home of the Aesir. Acceptance, or compromise? Necessity for recognized ritual continuance?) Lastly, yet perhaps most important, Freyja represents fertility in fact, not teasing promise, to mankind. Her famous necklace, Brisingamen, she buys with her sexual favors to the four dwarves who forged it. With true female thinking, (and a decided fondness for the treasures of the earth), she rationalizes that it costs her but little to give pleasure for a short time to others, (even without emotional involvement), when she can obtain many lifetimes of pleasure from the unique and priceless necklace, an obvious representation of a fertility and Mother Goddess.

Freyja as the Mother: Freyja is the mother of (H)Noss, (which means Jewel or Treasure), her daughter by the mysterious Od or Odur, who has already passed out of her life by the time she joins the Aesir. Supposedly, he was a wanderer, and lost himself between the worlds; some sources say he left her and some say he simply departed for some unknown reason or place, but whatever the cause, she weeps for him during sleep. The weeping Mother Goddess concept is a universal one; Freyja is a strong figure, who manages nicely, despite her loss. More important, it focuses on the interesting theory of several sources that the wandering "father figure" is none other than Odin, the All-Father of the sky, and the chief Aesir god.

Odin and Freyja are very much alike in their promiscuity, their magical abilities and their relationships to the slain. Yet they represent the encompassing concepts of the differing groups - Aesir and Vanir - civilization and fertility. Cross-breeding the two fittingly produces representative treasures of Heaven and Earth. It is also noteworthy that Freyja is the only major goddess to produce a daughter, following the matriarchal line of the Mother Goddess.

The other goddesses, many of whom, incidentally, are of the Jotun, or giant race, bear the godly sons. Lastly, where Odin is the Runemaster and attainer/giver of knowledge and wisdom, it is Freyja who is the shamaness or volva. She teaches the Aesir witchcraft in the forms of galdur and seidur. She and her brother Freyr are in charge of the light elves and fairies. She is called the "Mistress of Magic and Witchcraft" and is a shape-shifter, as evidenced by her falcon-feather dress or cloak with which she travels to the Underworld and returns with prophecies and knowledge of destinies. She is invoked as the healer, and at the childbirth bed, as well as the marriage bed; she teaches the mysteries of the life cycles. Remember, also, she is equated with Gullveig or Heid, the "shining one", the Golden One of the Vanir; Gullveig was the witch indirectly responsible for Freyja's bond to the Aesir, when they provoked the stalemate war with the Vanir, after attempting to burn her three times - Gullveig's essence never was destroyed.

Freyjā as the Death-Crone: Aside from the afore-mentioned connections with the life/death/rebirth cycles and the darker aspects of magic through seidur - divination, prophecy and other-world knowledge - Freyja's aspect as death-dealer here comes from Odin, and indirectly, her fertility representation in the necklace of the Brisings. Jealous Odin, learning of Freyja's four nights out with the boys, orders the necklace stolen and brought to him. Hoping to shame her and vent a little personal anger in his characteristic fashion, he refuses to return the necklace until she agrees to use her magic to raise the dead upon the battlefield to fight again, and again. (Reincarnation?) She must also divide the slain with Odin, choosing who goes to which heavenly hall. She thus becomes the leader of the Valkyries, "Choosers of the Slain", and it should be noted Freyja gets first pick! She is sometimes noted to ride the wild steeds with the other Valkyries; other times she attends the battle in her chariot drawn by huge grey cats - another link with the Otherworld. The circle of fertility - the Necklace - is only won back by agreeing to continually stir up war among mankind and create death by battle. The circle is complete.

Freyja is the Complete Goddess and is totally female, yet only through her inter-

action with the male deities. If the other Norse goddesses seem a little paler by comparison, it is only because they are representative of the various aspects of Freyja, the Triple Goddess, herself. And that, my friends, is the premise and subject for another whole discussion, yet to come.



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REVIEW

By Maddy Snow

EARTH'S CHILDREN

by Simon and Elayne Musk

An organization devoted to re-establishing sacred groves and trees to their rightful eminence in England has published a booklet written by a couple of accomplished Runestone subscribers in that land. Earth's Children is concise (30 pp.) but brimful of intriguing yet practical information about one couple's pagan worship. A simple style and format bespeaks an honesty of approach reiterated in the meditations, invocations and rituals described. Each of 8 seasonal rites is prefaced by a brief introduction and performed by a balanced partnership of priest and priestess who clearly and pleasingly connect with the powers they summon.

Although scarcely Norse in focus, this work lends itself easily, as its authors state, to adaptation according to the perception or desires of its readers. Simon and Elayne Musk have donated to the Sacred Trees Trust and to pagans in general a well-written, attractively presented, exciting and useful manual. I would recommend it to anyone seriously interested in sensitive, thoughtful individual or small group worship but put off by flashier, paraphernalia-ridden offerings.

Earth's Children can be ordered by sending \$6 to: The Sorcerer's Apprentice
4-8 Burley Lodge Road
Leeds 6, West Yorkshire
United Kingdom



HAVEN  *GRAPHICS*

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TROTH

One of the most important tasks of recent months has been progress towards a definition of just what the AFA is, and what it believes. Without this clear and unambiguous picture of who and what we are, we will never realize our great potential. When we explain our beliefs to others we need to give them precise images, and people attracted to us should understand just exactly what we are about, to prevent disappointment on both sides.

With this in mind, we conceived the need for a sort of "creed" - not unlike the Nicene Creed of the Christians - which serves as a brief yet explicit doctrinal statement. While it would be presumptuous to say that such a creed or troth defined the religion of Asatru, it would be proper to use it as a description of how Asatru is practiced and taught within the AFA. Other groups would be equally free to state their own theological and philosophical ground rules as they wished.

Such a troth would complement the Declaration of Purpose, which talks about our aims, by indicating the spiritual assumptions essential to achieving those goals.

It may take a long while to achieve a more or less final version of our guiding troth, but that fact should not deter our start. Reproduced here is one proposal. It has been reviewed by several individuals who have offered insightful comments and criticisms, and these have begun the long process of refinement. We are interested in what you, our readers, think of this "first draft." This subject will be taken up at Althing Five to encourage still more discussion.

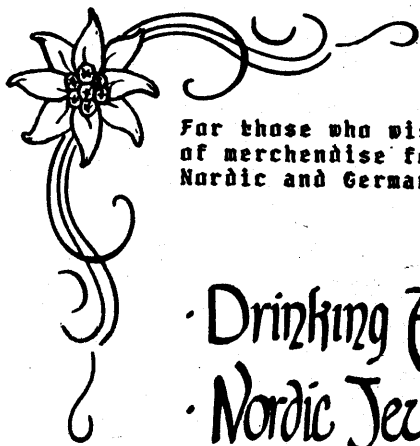
I believe in Asatru, in the gods and goddesses as mighty living forces within us and without us, and in the fatherhood of Odin, first among gods. I believe that these are the gods of our Folk, and that Nature would have us follow them. I believe in the preservation and furtherance of our Folk, the People of the North, as a religious imperative for we live in the gods and they live in us. I believe that we are tied by special bonds of duty and destiny to all People of the North everywhere, and that we are one with our ancestors and our descendants. I believe in orlog, which is the fate we make for ourselves, and in the values and virtues of our Folk as revealed in the history of our people.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

To all of you who responded to our requests for donations, stamps, etc. a very grateful Thank You. You make a difference.

Don't forget Althing 5 is in August this year. We're planning workshops, music, rituals and feasting with old friends and newcomers to our faith. Plan to come to a sunny pine-filled mountain site, this year with easy access and running water! See our full-page ad in this issue.



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How to Live

by Stephen A. McAllen

THE LESSONS OF TYR

Tyr figures prominently in only one of the myths, but that single story tells us all we need to know about his message for us.

Loki's offspring, the Fenris Wolf, had grown to monstrous size and threatened the peace and safety of the gods. It was time for him to be bound so that he could do no harm. Twice the gods tried to chain him and twice he broke free. The third time, they held him with magic rather than sheer force but they convinced him to try on the shackles only by having Tyr place his hand in Fenris' mouth as a pledge - a hostage hand that the wolf promptly snapped off when the bonds held him fast.

Tyr gave his hand so that a threat to the cosmic order could be restrained. Most obviously, the lesson of Tyr is one of self-sacrifice for the good of one's kin. This is a worthy point in itself, and if we learned no other, we would be well served. But what else is there to be gleaned?

Tyr was renowned among the Northern peoples as a god involved in a special way with the Thing, or assembly of the people. This tradition continues today in the Althing of the Asatru Free Assembly, where Tyr is honored in the opening ceremony. Why would such a high honor be regularly given to this deity, rather than to, say, Odin or another of the gods? Simply because Tyr had dramatically demonstrated his devotion to the group as a whole, rather than to his own selfish needs. His firm dedication to all the Aesir makes him the logical choice for a patron when one is seeking solutions to benefit all the Folk, rather than some small interest group. Tyr reminds us, by his self-sacrifice, just what our priorities should be.

Notice, though, that there are rewards for Tyr's sacrifice. First, the wolf was bound. His binding proved painful for Tyr, but Tyr benefitted from the fact that Fenris was bound, just as did all the other gods. He lost his hand but kept his life. Second, Tyr won great honor from the deed. And here, perhaps, is an elaboration on the lesson of self-sacrifice - it can be a wise course to follow, one which serves the individual who gives of himself even as it benefits the community to which he gives. In a healthy society based on values of the Folk (as opposed to the anti-Folk, diseased society in which most of us live) it can hardly be otherwise!

Tyr's bravery is apparent from this mythological tale, and we can readily see why the Prose Edda calls any extremely bold person "Tyr-Valliant." That same source, though, calls the very wise individual "Tyr-Wise". A less obvious attribute, perhaps - until one reflects how often self-absorption and an undue interest in one's own needs (the "me generation" complex) inhibits wisdom by skewing our perceptions. In choosing to give his hand, Tyr demonstrated his lack of personal bias and won the right to be acclaimed as a god of justice and clear perception. From there, it is a short step to wisdom of a more general kind.

Tyr, then, tells us of the duty to sacrifice for our kin, even as he reminds us that there are rewards for that sacrifice. Moreover, he points the way to the clarity that can be had by those who make their own needs and desires correspond to the needs and desires of the family, tribe or Folk. In learning these lessons, we serve both ourselves and our people.



GCIÓFRAEÐI - PART TWO

The name which the early Germanic folk gave to the altered state of consciousness found in shamanism was derived from the ancient Proto-Indo-European root *wat- "mantically inspired," which also appears in the Latin word *vates* "prophet, soothsayer, seer; poet, bard." A Proto-Germanic form *wop meant "occult soothsaying in (alliterating) poetic verses," "poetic oracles" ("mantic poetry"). Poetry in fact has its historical origins among all peoples in a consciousness more primordial than that of modern man, a brain state to which it is still possible to "regress" under certain circumstances. In a section, "Poesy and Possession," of his book, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), Julian Jaynes (p. 370) quotes from Plato (427-347 B.C.E.):

...all good poets, epic as well as lyric, composed their beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed...there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses and the mind is no longer in him.

--Io, 534

This poetry-generating state of possession designated by Proto-Germanic *wop- "mantic poetry" later resulted in Old English *wop* "poetry, song; voice, noise" and Old Norse *odr* "poetry, song; mind."

On the other hand, a pre-Proto-Germanic form *wat produced Proto-Germanic *wod-. The first time we see a descendant of this latter root it is in the Gothic word *wod* - (without the ending) and means "possessed" (as by a demon). The word is used in the Visigothic translation (done between 350-380 C.E.) of the Gospel of Mark (5, 15-18), of a man possessed by a "legion" of unclean spirits. When exorcized by Jesus, they entered a nearby herd of swine which thereupon rushed headlong down into the lake and drowned. Here the stress is unambiguously on the paranormal invasion of a man's body and mind. The modern English derivative of Proto-Germanic *wod-* is *wood* (rhymes with "food") and is practically obsolete. But in all the non-Gothic Germanic languages (Old Norse, German, Dutch, etc.) in which it is attested, *wood* and its cognates mean "furious, berserk,*" and the original reference to the paranormal has been obscured. But *Wooden* (the Gothic must have been **Wodana*) meant originally "He who is wood," that is, "He of possession." It was because the Germanic warriors of the ferocious first millennium of our era, the epoch of the migration of nations, needed literally supernatural power to secure their futures, that the eleventh-century Adam of Bremen (in his *History of the Bishops of Hamburg*) said of *Wooden's* name, "it means 'furor'" (id est furor). But the warrior dedicated to *Wooden* was not merely a man enraged; he did indeed have preternatural power. About 1220 C.E., two centuries after Christianity had subjugated the North, Snorri Sturlusson handed down to us a faint echo of the unearthly might once possessed by the followers of *Wooden*:

"...his men went without mailcoats, and were frantic as dogs or wolves; they bit their shields and were as strong as bears or boars; they slew men, but neither fire nor iron could hurt them. This is known as 'running berserk'."

--Ynglinga Saga, 6

(quoted in H.R. Ellis Davidson, *Gods and Myths of the Viking Age*, N.Y.: Bell Publishing, 1964, 1981. p. 66.)

NO ECSTASY

by Brian Regan

This provisional definition of wood and Wooden will have to do for the moment. We will, however, explore its meaning in full depth later in this series of articles.

Finally, if we can believe at least some part of the reports of Wooden's origins as reported by Jordanes (sixth century C.E.), Saxo Grammaticus (twelfth century) and Snorri Sturlusson (thirteenth century) about Wooden having been an actual human being, then the name "Wooden," like the names "Christ" ("The Anointed One"--translation of Hebrew Mashiach [Messiah] and "Buddha" (The Awakened One"), was in fact originally a title, given, in this case, to a Germanic shaman who possessed incredible parapsychological powers and was acknowledged to be divine after his death. Indeed, he had so many similarities to Christ that the Visigothic Christians used the shamanic word "gallows" (Gothic galga) to translate the word "cross" (Greek stauros) in the biblical description of the crucifixion of Christ.

The ancient Norse Havamal contains a very realistic description of the initiation rites of Wooden on the shamanic gallows, the Yew-drasle, in a short passage (Havamal ¶138-140) which, in spite of its being written down in the tenth century, may in content be a thousand years older than the rest of the poem:

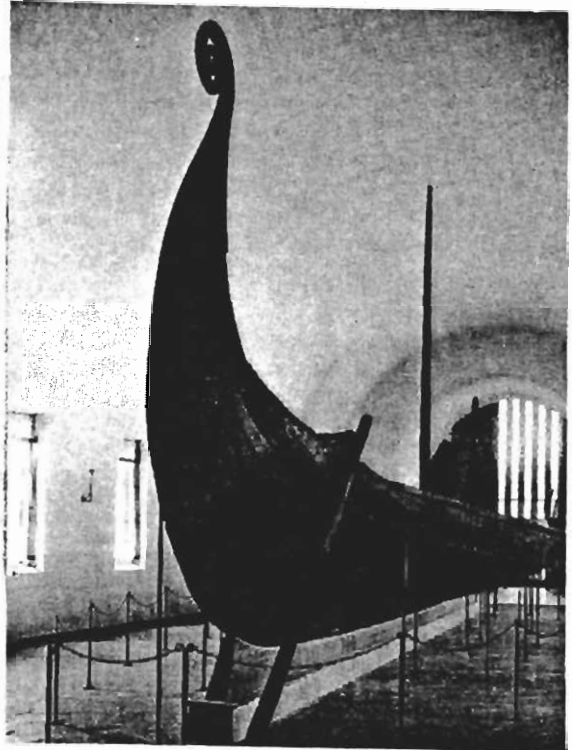
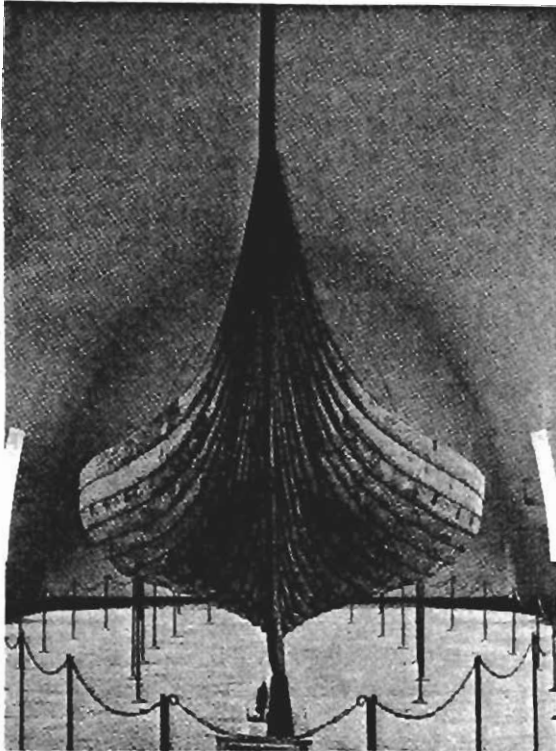
I know that I hung
on the windy mast
nights full nine,
Wounded with the spear
and given to Wooden,
myself to myself--
On that mast
of which none knows
whence the roots run.

None did me kindness with loaf
or with drinking-horn.
Down I delved:
I took up the runes,
yelling out, took them;
then fell back down from there.

Nine mighty chants
did I take from [my mother's brother, Mime,] that famous son
of Bale-thorn [the giant] ([my mother] Bestle's father).
And I got a drink
of his costly mead:
the ladle, "Manticpoetry-stirrer."

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BIRTH OF A NATION

by Hansel

For many years, people of Northern European ancestry, mostly "Okies" and "Arkies", harvested almost all the fresh fruit in America. It was hard work and took a certain type of individual to stick with it, but most of them were able to raise their families and live comfortably. The family was the basic social group, and although you could count on meeting old friends at the same apple camp each September, tribal feelings were almost nonexistent. This was their downfall.

Soon, the influx from Mexico began. One could not blame the Mexicans for trying to improve themselves; rather, the fault lies with greedy farmers who viewed a labor glut as the best way to keep wages down. It was a good scheme. It worked. It worked so well that soon there were almost no people of our heritage toiling in the fields. The mega-farmers had a Hispanic underclass to exploit - except that it didn't work out that way. The foreigners had advantages: the refusal of the United States to enforce its borders, and their own willingness to live tribally. They would live fifteen to a room, eat out of a common pot, and ride ten to a car to get to work.

We feel that there is still an opportunity for a tribe - one of our own making - to have a decent living, a hardy lifestyle, and a feeling of connection to each other and to the land. It's a way we can write about because we live it, as migrant farmworkers.

You would start picking citrus in Florida, probably in November (where the yet-to-be Odinist tribe has a promise of work for up to nine months). Cherries begin in California during May and can be followed into Washington, ending at Flathead Lake, Montana in July. Pears in August are followed by the big money-maker...APPLES! After the apples, it's south again for the citrus.

This schedule isn't written on stone. Pine tree planting can provide an excellent income as can blueberries. The details have yet to be worked out, of course. A group on the road together would be able to save quite a bit of money. Resources could be pooled for such things as food, vehicles and repairs. Each family unit would have its own tent, clothing and bedding, while it would be feasible for the group to own a propane-heated shower or the like. A group would also wield purchasing power for buying clothes and other items and, "if you live in a tent, you beat the rent!" Many issues would have to be ironed out. Do we pool our money, keeping a small amount, or do we keep our own finances, passing the hat as needed? What do we expect of new members? The list goes on and on.

Looking to the future, group assets may allow the purchase of land for a "home base" for the growing family. Legal incorporation would make us a truly Folkish nation within the hostile political state.

Anyone interested? Before you answer, let me say this: it's HARD WORK. Men and women will have to carry 60 or more lbs and be able to carry, and work on, a ladder. If you're totally out of shape you'll soon get into it, but not without a little pain! You may have nights without a bath or only a cold one. Many times you'll bathe in a lake or a river, although that can be fun after a hot day's work. You'll have to be able to roll along in spite of the problems inherent with rustic living.

The first "core" people should probably be couples without children. Children are the means of perpetuating any tribe and as such are to be especially valued, but the first year of tribal living would probably be best spent in preparing a solid foundation, with a sound financial base and, in general, formulating the tribal society. Likewise the equal male-female balance that couples would present would eliminate many of the "hormone" problems that occur with a population of unattached singles. Once we have a secure framework, mothers and children can be provided with a secure, loving environment. By that time the group would be large enough for young adults to find love and marriage. And then we would all experience that which is greater than the sum of its parts...the tribe, the extended family; a living entity! HAIL ODIN!

For more information on doing this, write to Hansel, c/o The Runestone.

15

NIETZSCHE AND MODERNISM

by Kenneth Anderson

It has been said of Friedrich Nietzsche's conception of the "overman" (superman) that the overman was not merely a "revolutionary" whose actions were directed toward a whole new future which "transcended" the past, but that the overman was also a "reactionary reformer". While Nietzsche's overman could not be considered a nihilist or merely a destroyer, since he was primarily a courageous creator, alas, I do not think that Nietzsche's overman was essentially the voice of tradition or a force of renewal for what has been lost. Nietzsche's great work, "Thus Spoke Zarathustra", contained some of his deepest thoughts regarding the overman and there is virtually nothing in this work to indicate that Nietzsche considered the overman a voice of tradition or a force for renewal.

During the course of his sojourn Zarathustra resolves to seek companions to assist him in the destruction of old values and the creation of new values after the masses have rejected him. Zarathustra expects those who would become his companions to move through three stages that Nietzsche compares to the camel, the lion, and the child. First, seek the truth and don't complain about the hardships of truth-seeking, as a beast of burden (camel). Second, reject all systems of values externally imposed (as a lion). Third, make a new beginning out of the "innocence of forgetfulness" and as a child-spirit create a new world of values. Nietzsche urges "great souls" to detach themselves from political systems because all who serve the state must serve externally imposed sets of values and morals. Nietzsche clearly thought that creative men were "restricted" when they used their minds to reinforce political systems—Zarathustra urges the "higher souls" to simply cut out the unpleasant "rabble". Zarathustra does not wish to preserve man, but to overcome him. Creative souls must not merge themselves with the crowd but must accept the "burden" of "creative selfishness", and learn to bear the solitude that accompanies it. Man must "overcome himself" again and again.

It should always be understood that Nietzsche considered the "great soul" and the creator of new values as an exceptional and very rare person, nevertheless it is striking to compare the character, tone and guiding beliefs of modernism with Nietzsche's conception of the overman. Nietzsche's overman and modernism in the arts offer many of the same ideals, rejecting old values, elevating the spirit of the child, creating "new" worlds of values, rejecting politics, refusing to serve externally imposed sets of values and morals, and advocating "creative selfishness".

Nietzsche himself said that he "contained multitudes" and Nietzsche has been claimed as the "father" of many movements, yet I am suggesting that Nietzsche was the unintentional father of modernism. Nietzsche's conception of the overman significantly supersedes his writings on the regeneration of the Indo-European (the "blond beast") and unavoidably overcomes Nietzsche's earlier thoughts on the reconstruction of a pre-Socratic artistic and cultural ethos.

Insisting that the overman be a creator of "new" values and "beyond good and evil" actually implies that the overman can, or should, be "free" from deterministic survival and reproductive drives, since survival and reproductive drives evolved traditional values and moralities as a successful means to survival. Traditional moralities and national values are not nullifying chains upon the power drives of great men, (as Nietzsche suggested regarding the overman). Great men need traditional moralities and national values as much as traditional moralities and national values need great men. Both sociobiologically depend upon each other over the long term.

Man is not unfavorably or detrimentally "confined" by deterministic sociobiological drives. Perhaps the only "freedom" will come with ultimate, universal success in fulfilling (not being free, from) the drives of survival and reproduction. The true "overman" will be achieved by way of successful evolution, and success in natural selection has been best achieved through sociobiologically bonded nations led by great men who advance themselves and their people best by means of tradition and renewal and only in conjunction with new creative patterns. Great men seem to be gifted in distinguishing what must stay and what must go. The great man synthesizes previous worlds into the new world; he can add to, but not work against, the sociobiological past.

We respect and deeply admire Nietzsche's superhuman intellectual vindication of the pagan world and aristocracies but Nietzsche's version of the egocentric overman actually justifies modernism in the arts and modernism in the arts has caused the death of the arts.

We are irrevocably attached to drives which necessarily bond us to sociobiological imperatives in the interest of survival and reproduction. Nietzsche's passionate attempts to expose and discredit the Judaic-Christian priests led to discrediting all priests and religions. There is a big difference, for example, between the placating "altruism" of Christianity, which Nietzsche abhors, and the heroic altruism of pagan Odinism. Without tradition-bonding "religions" and "priests" the destructive aspects of the unchecked warrior and artist can overwhelm the sacred foundations of society. Nietzsche said that the ultimate expression of the "will-to-power" is the "creation of values", but ultimate success in survival and reproduction is the goal of value-creating.

Even though Friedrich Nietzsche labored nobly in the world prior to the brilliant, scientific insights of neo-Darwinist sociobiology, Nietzsche was probably the greatest psychologist who ever lived. He knew human nature better than any man before him, and perhaps since. Nietzsche sacrificed his own biological advancement like a supreme priest, and we will all continue to benefit from his glorious, intellectual defense of the noble human spirit.

Modernist art has created an artistic and moral holocaust mainly because it has lost contact with, or completely denied, the human sociobiological perspective. Great art offers superior sociobiological bonding for the individual, the family and the nation. Art is the sublime manifestation of the drive to survival and reproduction.

References

Thus Spake Zarathustra

Beyond Good and Evil

The Birth of Tragedy.....Friedrich Nietzsche

On Human Nature, Harvard University Press.....Edward O. Wilson

The above article was reprinted from The Drama Circle Quarterly Letter, Spring, 1984, by permission of The Drama Circle, P.O. Box 70174, St. Paul, Minnesota 55107.



WOTAN

3125 19th St., Suite 297, Bakersfield, CA. 93301

As you are maybe aware, Odinism has taken a great step forward in the last two years. Steve McNallen and the Asatru Free Assembly are forming an Odinist community in Northern California near Grass Valley. Tom Padgett, leader of the Los Angeles Odinist Fellowship, is organizing successfully in Southern California. In New York, Garman Lord gave birth to a new Germanic magazine called Vikingstaff. We have made a great deal of progress and should be proud.

However, the time has come to push ourselves. Having Odinist happenings in New York and California is great, but we can do better. There is no reason why we can't have meetings in every state in the union.

It is this reason why I am forming an organization with the purpose of advertising Odinism. The only way we can convert a person to our movement is by letting him know we exist.

Within the last six weeks, I have bought enough ads to theoretically reach 20,000,000 people. It would take one person more than a life time to reach that many people by simple word of mouth.

If one Odinist can bring the word to millions of people, think of what several hundred Odinists working collectively can do!

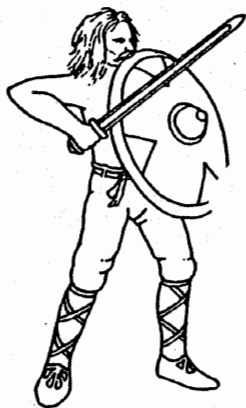
If you are an Odinist and wish to see the movement become successful, I suggest you fill out the form below:

 Yes, I believe in Odinism. Here is my contribution of:
___\$5 ___\$10 ___\$25 ___\$50 ___\$100 ___other.

I wish to organize in my area. Enclosed is an essay summarizing my beliefs. Please send me the names of all interested people in my area.

Make checks payable to Wotan, 3125 19th St., Suite 297
Bakersfield, CA. 93301.

We at the AFA wish to thank Wyatt Kaldenberg for the very worthwhile efforts he is making in behalf of Asatru. His willingness to make great sacrifices of personal money and time has borne fruits for us and for other organizations. May the Gods smile on you, Wyatt!



JADIS

Jadis
(Days of Old)

Last night I dreamed of a day long ago:
When the sun seared a red-stained battlefield
Where you were a Kelt knight with sword and shield,
Fighting fiercely and well a Norsemen foe,
Sword-slain falling with each resounding blow.
In shining argent cuirass you did wield
Weapons savagely in a sanguine flow,
Until to Sigrun your hot blood did yield.

A fair Valkyrie in fine wrought chain mail
And a black bear cloak, my voice in her throat.
You would not fight her, but treacherous tale;
You slew her - disguised in new armor coat.
She, with my visage lies dead in the dust.
Has grief not wounded your breast, as it must?

Ilona Stamer

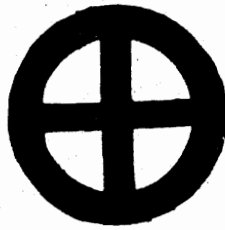
Note: "Jadis" was written after a sword practice meet of the Society for Creative Anachronism in which I participated. Ilona.

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— Irv Slauson —

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MOOT POINT



Dear Steve,

...I'm still working on the invocation to the God Heimdall. After that I will begin to do some research on Ull, God of Archery and Hunting. We'll see what develops. I enjoy that tape you and Maddy made. I'm looking forward to the next one. Perhaps you should consider a general tape, about our beliefs, the AFA, what it stands for, and include in the packet samples of The Runestone, the pamphlet "Why Asatru?" and other materials and send them unsolicited to various strategic members of groups you'd be interested in contacting, such as the Scandinavian-American Friendship Society, and other organizations--a sort of introduction audio/visual presentation of what we're about.

I would still like to work on re-creating lost myths, such as the one you mentioned on the tape where the God Frey used an antler in combat with Beli. Research could be done on myths of other cultures, similar in outlook, Welsh, Celts, Germanic, Indo-Aryans, etc. and compare to see if they have any vaguely similar stories/myths. Then look up all the attributes that can be found in the Eddic poems, heroic poems like Beowulf that resemble those characters, and lastly compare it with archeological evidence (like the sacrifice the Germans made of destroying all the weapons of a defeated host), place names, etc. and use a little intuition, and voila! A reasonable myth emerges. It would take more than one person to produce a myth, but it could result in many benefits, such as enlarging our understanding of our heritage, cooperation together to produce something lasting, and make an important first step in the recreation of myths, now lost to us. Also it would give us practice in making stories set in the future.

Well, must go, the typewriter is out of ribbon.

Hail Odin!

George Saunders

Sound ideas, George! I would only add that such research should be done in an atmosphere of religious dedication by people well experienced in the art of listening to the wisdom within. As you imply with your mention of intuition, this process requires a balance of logic and inspiration.

Greetings Steve,

I'd like to make a few comments now that I've viewed the A.F.A.'s meaning and motives for 3½ years. I now definitely possess a positive impression of the A.F.A. and desire to become more involved, especially with an artists' guild. I left the army as a tanker a year ago to attend an art school and want to become an official A.F.A. member upon graduating in a couple of years when my financial situation is secure.

Meanwhile, I would sincerely appreciate any information on the warrior guild (do they still publish a journal?) and the current level of interest in an artists' guild.

Before closing, Steve, I want to commend you on two recent articles. "Freedom is Better than Slavery" and "Honor is Better than Dishonor" were extremely well thought out and written in my opinion. Both subjects indicate to me the superiority of the A.F.A. and Odinism to all other organizations and religions presently in existence. I look forward to more such outstanding articles on such vital matters in the future.

Skjold Skull

Yes, the Warrior Guild is not only publishing, it's charging on to ever greater deeds. See the mention on our "Guilds" page. And as for an Artists Guild - let's throw it open to our readers. Who's interested in starting or joining such a group? Let US know!

Thank you for the comments on recent articles, and your compliments in general. The AFA has a lot of fine people who deserve credit for what it has become!

Dear Steve and Maddy,

Can you believe that after all of these years of subscribing to the RUNESTONE I just might get to see this letter in print in Moot Point? Just might be something to show my grandchildren 50 years from now when they ask about the beginning of Asatru in 20th century society.

Seriously, I am writing to personally congratulate both of you for your fine efforts in producing the ritual tape. After several replays I feel that my ritual ability has improved 100%, and most of the other members of the L.A. Odinst Fellowship feel the same way. I can wholeheartedly recommend the tape for anyone who really desires to know just what our religion is all about. With this tape, it doesn't matter where someone is, what printed material he has or doesn't have, or even if one is totally isolated from other Odinsts; now everyone can have the next best thing to private instructions from both of you.

Enclosed is my subscription renewal along with an order for the newest tape that you have out. As Dan West mentioned in his last letter, many of our folk simply do not have, or take the time to read nearly as much as they should, so these tapes are a definite step in the right direction.

ODIN LIVES!

TOM PADGETT

Chairman, Odinst Fellowship of Greater Los Angeles
P.O. Box 2123, Reseda, CA 91335

That's high praise coming from a man as accomplished as yourself, Tom. We encourage readers in the L.A. area to drop you a line and check out your activities.

Dear Friends,

This is an answer to your questionnaire in the Spring issue of The Runestone. My mailing address is the same as given above, and I received the pamphlet on Freya's Folk sometime ago--a brief introduction to Freya and the role of goddesses and women in Asatru--an exciting publication I might say.

In addition, I am writing about one of the Nordic goddesses--Nehellenia, whose name means nether world. Indeed, her name is a derivative for Hel (Nordic queen of the underworld). She is a Dutch goddess, also called Holle -- from which Holland was named.

If you would like to print the above, I will be most appreciative.

Blessed be,

Norman Taube

Dear Steve,

It's been a frustrating week. I had a television in the house for a few days and that was a mistake; I read a book pointing out in depressing detail the deterioration of language; a giant corporation told me I hadn't paid a \$90 bill (I had) and insisted that I pay again unless I can prove they lost it!; everywhere I went I heard the mentally enervating strains of Muzak attempting to calm me when I needed and wanted to be angry. I felt tied in the tentacles of an octopus: it was stifling and inescapable.



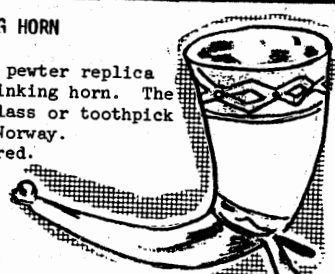
So it struck me how important it is to recognize that our problems in living free and healthy lives are not caused by one or two aspects of 20th century American existence - Christianity or left wing politics for instance. The entire framework that surrounds us - that supports us and that is supported by us - contributes to our lack of vitality. There's an interconnecting web: fine and hard to see but deadly.

I think it's essential that Odinists understand how much of the system or how many parts of the system encourage our people's spiritual inertia. We need to see the octopus or the web if we're going to fight.

But I'll add, more cheerfully, that I did something positive with my irritation. I finally made a bumper sticker saying:

Odin Lives!

Maddy

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Panegyria - A pagan oriented journal and newsletter of the Aquarian Tabernacle Church, Inc. and the Center for Nontraditional religion. Charter subscriptions \$5/yr., will be \$8. P.O. Box 73, Index, Washington 98256.

Vor Tru is back! Vor Tru (which means "our belief" in Icelandic) can be had for \$8, 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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Yes, *The Runstone* is now accepting advertising. Our NEW advertising rates (adjusted for the sake of reality!) are as follows:

1/8 page -	\$4.00 per issue	4" wide x 2½" high
1/4 page -	6.00 per issue	8½" x 2½" or 4"x 5"
1/2 page -	11.00 per issue	8½" x 5"
full page -	20.00 per issue	8½" x 11"

We reserve the right to reject any ad - but if you've got something of interest to our readers, you'll find that advertising with us is a sound investment! Above rates are for camera ready, black and white copy. Your ad should be drawn to the listed size as we reduce all copy (to 75%).

FOR THOSE WHO ARE READY:

Inquiries concerning membership in the

ASATRÚ FREE ASSEMBLY

are welcomed

P. O. Box 1832
Grass Valley, CA 95945