

AFA UPDATE

A PROJECT OF THE ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY

Issue 49

Odin's Day, August 25, 2004

Contact email: afa@lanset.com

Please tell your friends about *AFA Update* and suggest they subscribe! They can do so by going to AFA_Bearclaw-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

.

ASATRU AND THE COMING STRIFE

I've said many times that Asatru is a "hard-time religion". Consider our virtues: Courage, honor, loyalty and all the rest are forged in times of social stress, not in idyllic consumer cultures. The Germanic Way does not naturally grow in times of ease and luxury; too much comfort makes us soft. While certain aspects of our faith remain appealing even in comfortable times, our philosophical core is well suited to survival in tough times.

But never fear - if William Strauss is right, the easy times are about to come to an end.

Strauss, right or wrong, is no dummy. He graduated from Harvard College, went on to Harvard Law School, and studied at the Kennedy School of Government. He's an accomplished author and playwright. When not putting words on paper, he works as a lecturer and consultant on what he calls "generational trends" - and it is this whole theory of cycling generations that makes him predict that the world is entering a period of trial.

Strauss contends that human societies run through cycles of four generations, each generation with different characteristics. The cycle runs over and over, down through the years. Each generation has a symbolic nature, characterized successively by the archetypes of the Prophet, Nomad, Hero, and Artist. The years between 2005 and 2025 will see what Strauss calls "the fourth turning," signifying the rise of the "Hero" generation.

In concrete terms, it comes down to what's happening in the world around us. Terrorism is only going to increase. The global confrontation with Islam is made inevitable by demographics; the booming population of the Islamic countries must expand geographically. Cultural conflict will increase as more and more Moslems migrate to the West. All this happens at a time when the rift between poor and wealthy is growing, and

Strauss does not exempt the United States from the chaos that will engulf much of the planet - he predicts this country may be split by civil war and economic disaster.

Countering the Islamic challenge will be the Hero Generation. Strauss also calls them “the Homeland Generation” - today’s young children, who will never know what the world was like before 9/11. They will accept restrictions on our freedoms and limitations on our privacy that would be intolerable to us, because they will have grown up with these compromises in the name of security. (I don’t like that, and I don’t think Strauss likes it either, but he says that’s bound to be the result of the terror-defined human environment of the coming years.)

The good thing, however, is this: The Hero Generation will believe in “honor, reputation, civic duty, and strength of family.” Sound familiar? It would be hard to find a more Asatru-friendly list of values, and this new attitude will represent a window of opportunity for the Germanic Way - but only if we are ready for it. We can’t take this situation for granted, because Christianity is a versatile faith that has historically adapted itself to those values. The Church under Franco, or some elements of French traditional society, are only two examples of tough, hard-time Christianity (The softer varieties beloved by “progressives” will cease to exist). We’ll have our work cut out for us; this aristocratic Church will thrive in stressful times, just like us - and it will not tolerate competition.

Those of us who follow our ancestral Way must start working now, before the coming storm breaks upon us, if ours is to be a viable philosophy. That means hard work - making our message known to more people, tightening our standards, refining our beliefs, and preparing competent leaders. And the AFA intends to be right there at the cutting edge, helping to make it happen!

FREYFAXI /THING’S TIDE

Our local celebration of Freyfaxi/Thing’s Tide brought together around twenty adults and almost a dozen children to feast, give blessing to Frey in the holy grove, and sit at sumbel around a roaring fire.

We also took a good look at the Rune called Jera, central to this time of year.

The name of this stave has been known as “year,” “harvest,” and “the good season” at various times and places in the Germanic world. Edred Thorsson links it with the concept of “cyclical development.” Take a look at it, and you see two angled lines, bent in the middle and seeming to revolve around each other. It is a dynamic symbol, with two components suggesting opposing yet interacting polarities - fire and ice, summer and winter, male and female, sky and earth, Hegelian thesis and antithesis. Constantly influencing each other in a dance of cause and effect, these halves manifest the world between them, cyclically yielding a harvest of events. The literal harvest of crops is only

one example of the ongoing fruits of the endless “arising, being/becoming, and falling away to a new arising.”

So what does this mean for us? What lesson lies behind the abstract principle? I think there are several:

- Change is possible. The transformation from seed in the earth to growing plant is a profound one, and we should remember this when we despair at the possibility of making a change in ourselves or in our environment.
- Change is usually gradual, rather than sudden. Sometimes it seems abrupt, but looking closer we see that the preparation has been long and painstaking. Certain processes take a minimum amount of time; babies take a certain amount of time in the womb and seeds a certain time in the ground.
- The process of cyclical development seen in Jera is not a moral one. It has nothing to do with intention or motivation, but is instead a mechanical process of cause and effect. As Thorsson puts it, “the seeds do not ask who planted them or why, only how they were planted.” So forget about the world being fair in any human sense, or that you “deserved” such-and-such a result. If you truly deserve it, because of right action you have taken, you will get it!

VICTORY AT THE WHITE HORSE STONE!

[Steve’s comment: I know that many of the people reading this issue of AFA Update spoke out against the despoiling of the sacred site known as the White Horse Stone. Congratulations to the Odinic Rite, and to all of us who helped to secure the triumph detailed in this update from the OR!]

Statement from the Odinic Rite:

On 19th August, Members of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council rejected an application by telephone company Orange to install a 15 metre tower within yards of the White Horse Stone in Kent, England.

The application had almost gone unnoticed until a local resident found out and remembered that the Stone was used by Odinists/Wodenists for rituals and celebrations. He asked his friend to contact these groups on the internet and she contacted The Odinic Rite who sent word around the world asking people to contact the council with their objections. Over 100 people heeded this call.

The council meeting heard submissions from Hengest Thorsson of the Odinic Rite, Lee of Woden’s Folk and from the local resident who had contacted the

OR.

The Councillors were then able to give their comments and all agreed that this mast would be completely unsuitable in such an area. They also condemned Orange for their lack of concern for the special status of the site. Some councillors spoke out in support of the religious groups present and showed a genuine interest in the "history lesson" they were given. After unanimously voting to reject the application, an addition was added to the effect that "minority" religious groups with links to a monument should be consulted about development plans which involve that monument.

The Odinic Rite would like to thank all who took the time to object to this application and particularly the members of Woden's Folk who attended the council meeting.

ODIN LIVES! SPONSORS CONCERT IN OHIO!

Odin Lives! Radio is please to announce that Väsen will be appearing in the Holland Theater, Bellefontaine, Ohio, on Monday, September 20th, 2004 at 7pm EDT.

Väsen is *the* premier Swedish folk music ensemble. Featuring Olov Johansson playing the Swedish keyed fiddle (nyckelharpa), Roger Tallroth on guitar, Mikael Marin, viola and percussionist André Ferarri, Väsen helped launch the Nordic Roots revival in Scandinavia and the United States.

Tickets are only \$15 in advance, and can be purchased directly from *Odin Lives!* Radio by visiting the events page at:

<http://www.odinlives.org/events.html>

IMPORTANT DATES

September 9 - Day of Remembrance for Herman of the Cherusci. Herman learned the art of war under the Romans, then deserted the Imperial eagles to lead his tribe in revolt against the Mediterranean intruders. In the fall of the year 9 CE, he annihilated three legions in the Teutoburgerwald, a victory which saved Germania from Roman occupation. Plant an oak tree, eat in a German restaurant, and remember Herman with a glass of fine beer from the Fatherland!

September 22 - Winter Finding. This, the fall equinox, is the time when day and night are of equal length. This is one of the times the harvest may be celebrated in the Northlands, and you can observe it with a meal giving thanks for the powers of the soil.

Raise a horn of your favorite drink to our God and Goddess of fertility and prosperity - Freya, and her brother Frey!

Hail the Holy Ones!

Hail the AFA!

Stephen A. McNallen
Asatru Folk Assembly

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND WHO SHOULD BE GETTING THESE UPDATES? He or she can subscribe by going to AFA_Bearclaw-subscribe@yahogroups.com.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE at <http://www.runestone.org>.