

AFA UPDATE

A PROJECT OF THE ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY

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ALIENATION AND DENIAL OF THE ANCESTORS

“You keep saying I should be ‘proud of my ancestors’ - or even proud of my particular branch of the human race in general. But I CAN'T be proud of them. I'm not them. I'm not Beethoven or Erik the Red or Shakespear. Their accomplishments are not mine, and I can't take any credit for the things they did, not even second-hand. I just happened to be born into this group.”

Maybe you've heard this refrain from time to time. I've run across it on one particularly nasty web site - the name of it escapes me, but it is one of those allegedly “anti-hate” sites that, well, hates people like us. Every now and then the same thoughts come from someone who was obviously influenced by that web site, or another one like it.

Well, what do we say, Asatruar? How do we answer this? Let's follow this idea to its logical conclusion.

The argument presented above assumes the isolation of every human being. It takes for granted that we do not and can not identify with any group. Did this person ever feel pride that a brother or sister overcame a horrible handicap to achieve something really excellent? Could such a human atom, floating free in society, take pride in a parent who triumphed over poverty? Indeed, this line of reasoning can only lead us to conclude that we are all utterly alone. The only connections with other humans become ones of economics, predation, sexual gratification - or some combination of these! Many, if not most, of our highest ideals crumble under this kind of utilitarian materialism (One might even say “dialectical materialism.”).

This is very convenient for the world-managers, of course. With loyalty only to self, motivated solely by money and the pleasures it can buy, we become the soulless economic units that can make their otherwise unworkable plans feasible at last. Whether you call it the “new Marxist man” or simply “economic man,” the result is the same.

In the real world, the kind of person who makes the superficial argument against ancestral pride outlined at the beginning of this essay probably would not want to see any of these consequences. He or she most likely just hasn't thought it through. Not many of us would knowingly walk this road to dehumanization and slavery.

For those of us who follow the Way of the European peoples, however, there is another reason why the "no pride" argument fails. The proponents of this concept claim we cannot feel pride in the achievements of our ancestors because we are not those ancestors; our membership in the ancestral line/ethnic group/extended tribe is a random accident of birth.

And, of course, we disagree. We would say that our birth within the ancestral line is far from accidental. In the Germanic world, rebirth - at least of certain soul components - is seen as occurring within the kin group. Each of us is an interweaving of related life manifesting again and again in Midgard through the millennia. Because we are in a sense our own ancestors, the argument of alienation is flawed from the beginning.

Our connection with kin, ranging from the immediate family to the clan and tribe and larger groupings, is the spiritual element that overcomes the schemes of the bureaucrats and planners. Every time we renew the link with those who have gone before us, every time we celebrate our heritage, every time we acknowledge our continuity, we say "No!" to the cold, gray state.

Only when we realize a stream will we stop drowning in puddles.

KENNEWICK MAN RISES AGAIN!

The restless bones of Kennewick Man are once again in the news. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has upheld the finding of a lower court and proclaimed that a group of plaintiff scientists have a right to study the remains of this 9,300 year-old skeleton.

For any of you who have been living in a cave in the Himalayas for the last six or seven years, here is a summary: The ancient bones were found along the Columbia River in the state of Washington. From the very beginning, they looked Caucasoid. The government decided to hand these politically-incorrect remains over to local Indian tribes in accordance with a law called NAGPRA, or the "Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act." A group of scientists filed a suit to stop this handover, and the Asatru Folk Assembly filed a separate suit on religious grounds. Our argument was that if Kennewick Man (as the skeleton came to be known) was a European, we deserved to know that - and the remains should not rightfully be given to the Indians.

The Asatru Folk Assembly eventually dropped out of the case because of the mounting financial drain and the time required to successfully fight a case in Federal court. They had us outgunned, but more to the point we had a mission to run - the revival and

promotion of Asatru. But the scientists, with their massively greater resources, eventually fought their way through to victory.

We extend our congratulations to these intrepid scholars. Hopefully they will be able to carry out the studies needed to determine just who Kennewick Man is - whether he is related to the Ainu as some suspect, or whether he has roots in Europe.

THE UNTOLD STORY OF KENNEWICK MAN

There's a new book available that tells a lot about behind-the-scenes happenings during Kennewick Man's earlier court appearance - particularly in regard to government machinations and bias. *No Bone Unturned* by Jeff Benedict is the story of Doug Owsley, the top Smithsonian forensic scientist involved in the case. The volume is really about Owsley and includes a lot of material on his other investigations, but the chapters on the Kennewick episode discuss sneaky doings by the White House, the femurs that came up missing from the collection only to strangely reappear when the limited study was completed, and more. It's a well-told story that flows smoothly from page to page, so you'll find it pleasurable as well as informative.

IMPORTANT DATES

February 14 - Feast of Vali. Valentine's Day? Not really...rather, a day devoted to Vali, a Norse deity connected with rebirth. Mediate on the following question for Vali: If we are born again into the family line, how should this affect our actions here and now?

March 9 - Day of Remembrance for Olvir. Olvir was a Norwegian who organized sacrifices to the Gods in defiance of King Olaf Tryggvason. When Olaf caught him planning rites for the coming of spring, he killed him. Olaf's co-conspirators were murdered, mutilated, exiled, or fined, depending on their degree of complicity. Honor this Asatru martyr by welcoming the Goddess of Spring on Ostara, thus proving that Olaf did not, in the long run, succeed.

March 21 - Ostara, or Easter, is a Germanic Goddess whose name was carried over into the Christian calendar. Praise her on this day for the springtime and the dawn, and revel in the rebirth of life at winter's end. Celebrate her day with bunnies, eggs, and the other pre-Christian symbols that characterize this day. Greet her at a sunrise service with outstretched arms.

Hail the Holy Ones!

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