

AFA UPDATE

A PROJECT OF THE ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY

Issue 60

Odin's Day, February 2, 2005

Contact email: info@runestone.com

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

REVIEW OF ON BEING A PAGAN, BY ALAIN DE BENOIST

I have stated from time to time - most notably in my article in *Tyr*, Volume 2 - that we who follow the Germanic Way need to be philosophically savvy. We must be able to debate our intellectual opponents, whether they are the local minister or a trained Jesuit. Perhaps most importantly, we need the well-rounded training in the history of ideas that will enable us to explain the case for Asatru compellingly and coherently to intelligent Christians who might, given the right circumstances, join our ranks.

A magnificent tool for accomplishing this task arrived in my mailbox a few days ago. Inside the usual padded envelope was a book titled, simply, *On Being A Pagan*. The author was Alain de Benoist, creator of some fifty books and several thousand articles, mostly in French. Mr. de Benoist is perhaps best known as a founder of the scholarly and profoundly pagan "French New Right."

I had known for some time that Ultra, the same publishers that have brought us the remarkable *Tyr* volumes, had intended to produce this first English translation of de Benoist's opus. I am not disappointed in the result. It is a "must-have" work, and I am so convinced of its importance that I have ordered copies for distribution via the AFA website.

Apart from the ability to express and defend our beliefs in a sophisticated way, what does *On Being A Pagan* offer us? The thing that first leaps to mind is the word "maturity." In the first chapter, the author tells us that his greatest fear is not that paganism might disappear - indeed, it has never really gone away despite the most prolonged and pervasive repression in the history of the human race. Rather, the greatest concern is "its reemergence under primitive or puerile forms, kin to that 'second religiosity' that Spengler rightly described as one of the characteristics of cultures in decline. This is also what Julius Evola wrote about as 'generally corresponding to a phenomenon of escape,

alienation, and confused compensation, which is of no serious consequence on reality...something hybrid, decrepit, and sub-intellectual.”

The message is clear. When civilizations are falling apart, people become desperate. Those who perceive the problem often react instinctively, turning back to their racial or cultural roots for security and, hopefully, for answers. However, the solution is not to be found in resurrecting old forms and repeating the past in a literal way. What is needed, instead, is to bring the essence of the past into the present where it can be applied by men and women living in this age. Translated into the special case of Germanic religion, this means not trying to imitate the ninth century (or the sixth, or the first). Instead, we must bring the distilled values and soul of the past - precious drops from the Well of Wyrd - into our own lives and times, and with them revivify our people. Cultures die, nation-states die, but the Folk and their spirit do not have to die with them. They can survive and thrive by bathing in the eternal essence of the Gods and the Ancestors.

On Being A Pagan contains a multitude of other lessons for us, each as important as the one just discussed. Does that mean you will agree with every point de Benoist makes in this book? Not at all. Some will find him too cerebral. (No surprise, since his approach is necessarily intellectual.) Probably de Benoist would be uncomfortable at one of our blots - but then, philosophers often live in a world outside our own comfort levels. Any such objections to On Being A Pagan are inconsequential when compared to the richness of ideas put forth in this volume.

This is an important work. You can order it from the AFA for \$20 plus \$3.50 for postage and handling.

VIKING BURIAL TURNS OUT TO BE A MARKET SITE

What British archeologists thought was a Norse grave near Barrow, in Cumbria, turned out to be a marketplace, instead.

The most impressive artifact so far is a merchant's weight decorated with dragons and other figures, but other objects are emerging from the soil, as well. The British Museum has offered to assist in excavations.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/cumbria/4225677.stm>

LATEST ON THE “SAVE VIKING WATERFORD ACTION GROUP”

The “Save Viking Waterford Action Group” is fighting to protect a very important Norse find near Waterford, south of Dublin, Ireland. The greatest challenge comes from political interests that believe a new freeway through the site is more important than history or heritage.

The SVWAG responded to recent comments by Waterford City Councilor Pat Hayes, calling them misinformed. Hayes, in both council chambers and the local media, claimed there was no evidence pointing to a major Viking settlement at Woodstown.

The SVWAG Chairperson, Dr. Catherine Swift, responded forcefully:

“On Mr. Hayes’ doubt about the significance of Woodstown, may I direct him to the comments of the National Roads Authority who say: “It’s one of the most important Viking site remaining in Europe.” Or perhaps he will listen to Professor Dagfinn Skre of Oslo University who said: “this is a very important site with potential to yield major new discoveries”. Then there is Dr. Patrick Wallace of the National Museum of Ireland who called Woodstown “of monumental importance internationally.” Or Professor Martin Biddle of Oxford University who says Woodstown is “hugely important in Viking archaeology.” If Mr. Hayes doesn’t trust the word of the most eminent historians in Europe and the NRA, perhaps the fact that 5,000 artifacts have been discovered on the site after a brief and cursory dig will convince him of the international significance Woodstown.”

For further information on the SVWAG please contact 086-0679708 or save@vikingwaterford.com. Updates are available on the website www.vikingwaterford.com

<http://www.waterford-today.ie/index.php?id=13026&what=1&issue=234>

SOME THINGS I BELIEVE

More than twenty years ago, I wrote a short statement to summarize my own beliefs in regard to Asatru as practice within the AFA. Looking at it now, I can see how it could be amended - some things removed, others qualified, still other things added - nevertheless, it still rings true for me, personally. You of course are free to agree or disagree. I present it for your consideration.

“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.”

DONATIONS!

The Asatru Folk Assembly is a 501 c (3) religious organization, and donations to it are tax-deductible.

ODIN LIVES!

The groundbreaking radio program Odin Lives! is broadcast every Thursday night at 8 PM Eastern Time on a frequency of 7.415 MHz. This broadcast is repeated the next Tuesday morning at 12:15 AM on the same frequency. You can learn more by going to their web site at <http://www.odinlives.org>.

IMPORTANT DATES

February 9 - Day of Remembrance for Eyvind Kinnrifi. Eyvind was another martyr to our native faith. King Olaf tortured him to death by placing a bowl of red-hot embers on his stomach. Eyvind died, and Valhalla received another hero. Salute his courage by doing some deed to promote the Way of our ancestors, and perform Blessings to the Gods and Goddesses.

February 14 - Feast of Vali/Disting - The Feast of Vali is not really Valentine's Day, despite the date...rather, it is dedicated 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?

Disting is sacred to the female ancestors and the Goddesses. The earth was traditionally prepared for planting at this time, and local assemblies, or "Things," met to discuss legal matters and to give the people a chance to get together and socialize.

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.

Hail the AFA!

Stephen A. McNallen
Asatru Folk Assembly

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND WHO SHOULD BE GETTING THESE UPDATES?
Please refer him or her to AFA_Bearclaw-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

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