

The Masonic Asatru

by Bill White

Icelandic writer Snorri Sturlason, compiler of the Prose Edda and the Heimskringla, is a central figure in the world of Asatru, the worship of the Old Norse gods. But Snorri's work, the Gylfaginning, which begins The Prose Edda, is unusual. In it, Gylfi, who is to be initiated (the "ginning") approaches Odin's hall and encounters the Nordic god as the "thrice-high", a likely reference to Hermes Trismegistus. Further, in the Codex Wormionus, a 14th century AD variant of Snorri's text, there are references to Baal and his 72 master masons. In my Centuries of Revolution, I briefly discuss the proto-Masonic nature of his text. Here, this tradition, and the entire tradition of the Trojan migration to the North, is examined in its full occult context.

Asian Origins

There is a tradition of the descent of Priam, King of Troy, from Erichthonius, a half-serpent god who is also listed among the early Kings of Athens, and who is similar to other half-serpent god-kings, such as Typhon, the rebel against the gods whom the Hellenized Hebrews equated with both Egypt's Seth and their own YHWH. This myth of serpent-descent is common to pre-Mycenaean societies of the Near East, such as Thebes and Athens, and originates in Minoan Crete and its religion of the Great Mother.

Numerous people of the Classical world traced their origins to Troy or Western Asia Minor. Rome is the best known of these, with its myth of the descent from the Trojan refugee Aeneas. The Etrurians, too, traced their origins to the Tyrrherians of Anatolia. Such migration stories are also found in the Nordic world, whether in Saxo Grammaticus' account of King Snö, or Snorri and other's tale of the migration of the Asa gods.

Viktor Rydberg, in his Teutonic Mythology, adequately demonstrates that the Nordic people did not actually migrate to Scandinavia from Asia. In fact, the migrations of the Northern people have generally been the other way, from Northern Europe to both Europe and Central Asia, and then onwards throughout the Eurasian continent. Why the Norse placed their origins in "Tyrkland" or Scythia has always puzzled scholars.

As I note in Tradition of the Mother, the answer is that many religious elements appear to have travelled from the Near East and the Black Sea to the North. The Nordic tradition around Odin, for instance, integrates several elements found in the worship of Egypt's Osiris. The idea of ordstirr, as discussed by Rydberg, is the Egyptian myth of the judgment of Osiris, where the ib (heart) is weighed and the ba (spirit) advocates for the dead. One

path by which these ideas may have entered the North is Euria, the only other nation to call their gods the Aesir. Another is Gaul, where the faith of Orpheus and Pythagoras is said to have brought to Marseilles by Zamolxis, a King of Scythia. This Zamolxis was the teacher of Druidism, which Caesar said kept its Holy books in Greek, and which others identified with Osiris-worship, and his magic may have come North as the seid known to Odin.

Given the number of myth fragments from the Classical world known in the North, the only question is their antiquity. Besides King Snö, there is the story of Hengest and Harsa (or, in some sources, Iwar) in Britain, who claim land in the manner of Queen Dido, and Saxo's accounts of King Frode, which also derive from the Zamolxis myth. The debate is whether Classically-educated scholars, like Jordanes and Paulus Diaconus, fabricated these traditions, or whether they reflect authentic and ancient cognate.

The Migration Myths

The oldest document explicitly linking the Nordic gods with Asia Minor is the Ynglingatal, composed about 890 AD and known through fragments in Snorri's Ynglingsaga, the opening book of the Heimskringla, and Ari's earlier Islendingbok. The older Ynglingatal gives its first four kings differently, as "Yngui Tyrkja konungr, NjörðrSuiakonungr, Freyr, Fiohir," or "Yngui, Turkish king, Njörd, Swedish king, Frey, Fiolnir." This is a genealogy of the Vanir gods, a foreign set of gods who are said to have warred with, then joined, the Aesir. Only later did Snorri substitute Odin for Yngvi and combine Yngvi and Frey, though Ingvifrey appears, at times, to mean "the priest of Freyr," like the Haddingr, or "woman-haired follower." The substitution of Odin for Yngvi suggests that the story of the migration of the Asa was originally the story of the coming of the Vanir gods.

The migration of the Vanir from the East seems more plausible. Frey, whose name means "the Lord," bears more than a superficial resemblance to the Phoenician Adonis, whose name means the same. Frey's worship is suggestive of that of the Great Mother. Both had long-haired effeminate priests- Frey's disgusted the Nordic hero Starked, and Cybele's priests castrated themselves while celebrating Attis' birth. And Frey's depiction with an erect phallus parallels that of Min, consort of the North Anatolian Cybele, Ma. Frey seems identical to the late Classical syncretism Attis-Adonis, as his sister, Freyja, "the Lady," seems to be Classical Aphrodite.

The major Aesir in the north- Thor, Heimdall, Magni- Halfdan, and Tyr, among others- are clearly Aryan figures who find clear parallels in Indo-Iranian and other Aryan cultures. The stories of Odin's learning of the seid magic, brought to Valhalla by the troll-wife, and Njörd's storming of Valhalla seem to describe the cultural collision, and the myth of Roller's (Ullr's) and Miðodinn's usurpation of Odin's throne appear to be part of this conflict, and part of the Eurian myth cycle of Vedijovis, or young Jove, who, as Dionysius, usurped Zeus' Olympus.

Under the cover of this real occult migration of the Great Mother faith to the North, Snorri consciously integrates One World propaganda, promising the enlightened reader initiation into proto-Masonic mysteries. To understand this, an examination of Snorri's genealogies in his Introduction to the Gylfaginning is in order.

Trojan Descent

In his Introduction Snorri posits an Odin with six sons. Removing Njörd from the genealogy of the Ynglingatal, Snorri gives one line as Ynguífrey followed by Fjölñir. From the Skioldungsaga of the Danish kings, Snorri takes Skiold, Fridleif and Frode, the classical "four patriarchs." From the HALEYGTAL, Snorri gets Saeming and the Hladajarlr. Beldegg and Veggdegg are taken from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Siggí is from the Volsungasaga. Snorri is not original, and, as we go backwards, we can identify the sources of the generations before Odin as well.

The eleven generations immediately before Odin Snorri took from a 12th century compilation found in manuscripts such as the scholarly-named AM1eβlfol. It begins by erroneously reading Old English *se Scef* (*Scef* being Heimdall, bringer of the wheat sheaf) as *Seskef*, and gives us numerous Nordic divinities not usually descended from one another- Annar, a name of Njörd: Skiold (a name of Thor, given as Skialdov):Biar, "the Bear," a name of the Nordic hero Bodvar Biarki, or Eric-Arthur; Finn, a name of Ivaldi: Finn, another name of Njörd, and, so on. Before these eleven, as he builds back towards Priam, Snorri gives five names of Thor and the names of Thor's two sons Modi (Moda) and Magni (Magi). Thor's names are Tror, Loridi, Einriði (Indra, as Rydberg has noted), Vingethar, and Vingenir. Essentially, Snorri has inserted some long and not terribly meaningful lists to show that all of the Germanic nobles are descended from Priam of Troy.

The founders of the German kingdoms which overthrew Rome aspired to Roman respectability, and this notion of Trojan origin may go back to Rome's fall. Fredegar mentions it in the 7th century. Ammianus Marcellinus says that Gaul was settled by Trojans, though this may be Herodotus Tyrrhenian migration myth. Dares Phrygius says that the Franks were Trojan who fought Romulus and fled to Germany. The *Liber Historiae Francorum* says that the Trojans settled Scythia before populating Europe. These stories and others led to the Nordic Trojumanna Saga- a standard account of the Trojan migration to the North.

Had Snorri used the Trojumanna Saga or its sources, we could write his genealogy off as another effort to make the Nordic peoples, the Germans and the Franks the equals of Rome. But, as Anthony Faulkes notes in his "Descent From The Gods" (*Medieval Scandinavia*, Vol. II (1978-1979) p. 92-125), "the account of the origins in Troy in [Snorri]...gives...a curious picture of the Trojan background, which lacks all details about the Trojan War, and mentions none of the well-known Trojan or Greek heroes except Priam. Those names that do appear have

no authority in any of the Traditional accounts of the Trojan war....There is not even any mention of the fall of Troy itself, or the Greek invaders....All the references to the Troy story in Snorri Edda are thus a strange mixture of genuine tradition and fantasy or ignorance.”

Given that Snorri was certainly not ignorant, and that all of his material is derived from other sources, we have to assume that his choice to include this material was a deliberate decision designed to influence his readers, the leaders of the northern world. With this in mind, we can, interpret Snorri’s occult intent.

Thor the Serpent

Snorri provides the following Trojan descent: from Priam of Troy to his daughter Troan, who weds Munon or Memnon to father Tror, who is Thor. The spelling Tror is our first clue, as it is not a standard name of Thor, but a Nordic transliteration of Tros, eponym nous founder of Troy and son of the half-serpent Erichthonious who, in Homer and Dictys Cretensis, is great-grandfather of Priam. Snorri, by calling Thor Tror, is linking the Germanic kings to the serpent-god in a way similar to that by which the Hebrews traced their origins to the half-serpent god Seth. The names around Tror confirm this. Troan is a name given for Classical Cassandra or Polixena (literally “mother of many nations”) in the Trojumanna Saga, and Memnon is the name of a Greek-Ethiopian king at Troy who saga is lost. Sif, Thor’s wife in Nordic myth, is equated with the Sibyl, whose mystic wisdom brought Cybele to Rome. Tros-Sibyl seems to mirror Attis-Cybele, and incorporated Nordic origins into the faith of the serpent god.

Snorri alleges Priam’s descent from Saturn of Crete, whom he equates with Njörd. This Saturn is the Dionysius of the Mother faith, integrated, as the Greeks did, with the Sumerian Enlil, who castrated his father Ea. Gregory of Tours tells us that Nordic Saturn, who was worshipped at Satanicum, modern Stenay, “ran away from his own son to avoid being exiled from his own kingdom,” and this is the Greco-Sumerian story of Uranus’ castration by Saturn with the names transposed. Thus, Priam’s descent is from the emasculated god, Attis, the lover of Cybele, who finds echoes in Osiris loss of his phallus in the Nile.

The idea of Priam’s descent from Saturn is not unique to Snorri. Honorius Augustodunensis was one of the first to record it, and Saturn, in turn, was identified as a descent of Caelus or Celius¹, a fact likely taken from Servius Sulpicius’ commentaries on the Aeneid . From here, Snorri inserts Biblical genealogies to link Saturn to Baal, completing his linkage of the Norse men to the occult-magical tradition he unveils to Gylfi in the book which follows. As Godfrey of Viterbo tells us, Saturn’s father Celius is said to be a son of Cres, son of Nembrot or Nimrod.

Snorri tells us that this Nimrod is Baal, and follows writers like Peter Comestor in identifying Baal as the origin of sorcery and magic, “de morte Beliet mortu idolarum.” This Baal builds the Tower of Babel with the assistance of 72 master masons, which, as I note in *Centuries*, parallels both the Egyptian myth of the 72 demons which accompany Seth in the Underworld, and the notion of the 72 languages and peoples which emerged from Babel’s collapse.

No surprise, then, that Snorri says Priam was the ruler of 12 kings, each of which spoke their own language. As Faulkes notes, “the one really specific piece of information about Troy given in [Snorri], that there were twelve kingdoms and twelve languages also has no authority [in the Classical Trojan myth known to the North.]” In saying each king was hofuðtunga, “language-chief,” Snorri is saying that Troy’s 12 kings were a sixth of Baal’s masons.

Snorri then goes further in communicating his occult symbolism. He calls Europe Enea, meaning land of Aeneas, and says that the world is löltr, or “disk-shaped.” This is the view that developed in occult factions within the Catholic Church, though, instead of the Judaeo-Catholic Jerusalem at the world’s center, Snorri places Troy. Snorri then says that when the Franks migrated from Troy, they built a new Troy near the Rhine. This may be Paris- but is more likely Charlesmagne’s capital of Aix, or some other location in medieval Lorraine or the Ardennes, which came to have significance in the occult struggles of the Middle Ages. What Snorri is indicating is a transmission of the power of the occult center, whether Solomon’s Temple or Babel’s Tower, to the northern lands near the Rhine, many of whose rulers had, in Snorri’s time, founded the Knights Templar, seized the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and laid the formal foundation for what became Masonry.

In passing, one then must wonder about a link between the myth of the “three unworthy craftsmen”- Jubela, Jubelum and Jubelo- and the “son of Ivaldi,” from Nordic myth, the three smiths who lost the contest to craft items for the gods and went on to craft the weapon that destroys the gods at Ragnarok.

Conclusions

While many scholars have said the material inserted into Codex Wormianus of Snorri’s Introduction to *Gylfaginning* is random, ignorant or erroneous, it is no such thing. This linkage of the Nordic nobility to the descent from the serpent-god and from Baal is deliberate and proto-Masonic in nature. In it, we see an early stage in the transition from Dark Age Dionysianism to modern initiatic religion