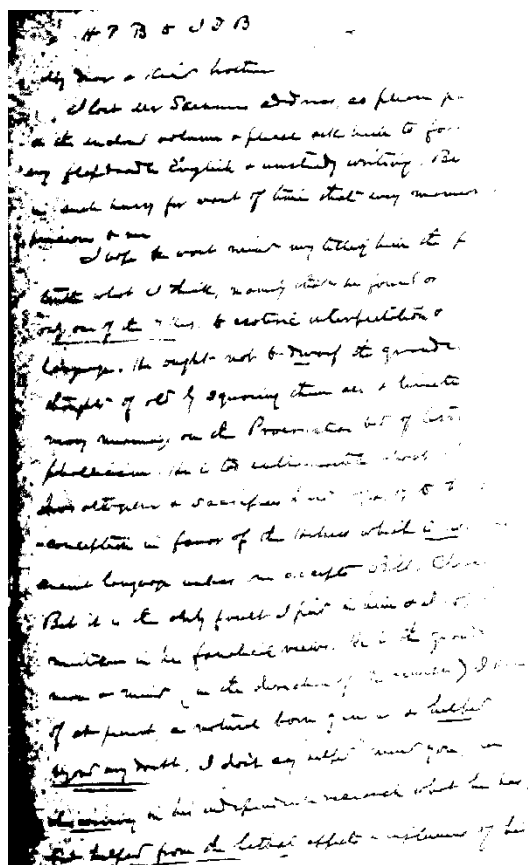


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Coverphoto of letter from H. P. Blavatsky to James Ralston Skinner 3 March 1887
Courtesy Andover-Harvard Library

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The Research Journal for German Antiquity is published on a monthly printing schedule. The journal consists of twelve issues per volume: one volume spanning a period of one year. The journal's purpose is two-fold: 1) to preserve early-modern German religious texts from the 16th to 20th century (especially those pertaining to 'Ariosophy'), and 2) to publish contributions specifically related to Western Esotericism including articles pertaining to Atlantis/Lemuria, Theosophy, Millenary Cults, Mesmerism, Spiritualism, and racial theories of World War II, to name but a few examples.

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Editor's Comments

In This Issue

This month we are introducing two translations from the earlier writings of Guido Karl Anton List (1848 – 1919). In this issue two articles are translated from the nationalist, Austrian newspaper titled *Ostdeutsche Rundschau* which was edited by Karl Hermann Wolf (1862 – 1941). Both of these articles evidence List's belief in cyclical time which he would ultimately connect to the teachings of the Russian mystic H. P. Blavatsky (1831 – 1891). Cyclical time would be an important feature in List's philosophy and he began writing a series in this same publication titled 'German Mythology in the course of a Calendar Year' where he would assimilate German mythology into chronology (in the next issue several of these writings will be introduced and translated).

The first article 'The Twilight of the Gods' presented comes from 1893 and exemplifies that List maintained a proclivity towards Western Esoteric ideologies even before his alleged 'occult notions' in 1902 following his cataract surgery (as identified by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke).¹ Also, List seemed to believe that his own nationalistic conception of the *prisca theologia* or an ancient 'mythology' or 'religion' was the archetypal truth for the 'One, Eternal, Incomprehensible 'god''. This belief was further exhibited in the quote that 'humans created gods in their own liking and not the other way around' revealing that humanity could only anthropomorphize any notions of the divine i. e. finite beings can only understand finite ideas. Furthermore, in this article List's deeply rooted nationalism appears which will remain a constant theme throughout many of his writings.

The second article in translation is 'All Soul's Day and The Pre-Christian Death Cult of the German People' which is an intriguing work in

which List combined Norse mythology with an etiological explanation for the season changes in Austria- an entertaining read to be sure. Also, this article evidenced List's belief in reincarnation; however, this belief is not referenced in relation to H. P. Blavatsky or any other Eastern ideology rather it came straight from a Western text- the *Edda*:

The graves of the dead are not closed forever, they come back to a new life in a new form, just like in the numerous lives they have already lived, the numerous deaths they have died and in just as many lives they will lead after their next death.

This issue also presents a hand-written letter by H. P. Blavatsky and sent to Edward Buck that was meant to have been passed along to the Kabbalist James Ralston Skinner. This letter was discovered within the Rare Archives Collection at the Andover-Harvard Library in Cambridge, MA by the editor. While the main letter in this collection is currently being published in the next edition of *Theosophical History* several shorter letters from this collection exist and will be printed in this publication over the next few months- these are meant to be read in light of the *Theosophical History* letter. It should further be noted that Blavatsky heavily influenced the German occult movement making this letter an appropriate contribution to this publication.

As always, RJGA is looking for article contributions related to German religions and occultism (Ariosophy especially!), book reviews and any other relevant correspondences- please send articles to jl399@exeter.ac.uk.

-Rev. Jeff Lavoie, Exon.

¹ Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke's work remains the definitive work on Modern German Occultism. See *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and Their Influence on Nazi Ideology* (New York: New York University Press, 1992), p. 41.



Ostdeutsche Rundschau

Twilight of Gods

By Guido von List

Ostdeutsche Rundschau

Vienna (1 October 1893)

Publisher: K.H. Wolf: Year 4, No. 1

The people have already accustomed too much to the viewpoint that the texts generally known as 'German mythology' are nothing more than a kind of poetry, without being aware what kind of poetry they are. Then came scholars and put up their hypothesis and tried to systemize these wonderful twines of poetry and truth, but they also only had a hunch about the true nature of the 'German god teachings', which is why they, no matter how close to the core of things some came, did not understand the hearth of things. Some saw in myths only symbolical poetry, which poetically describes the happenings in nature, others thought the same but in connection with astronomical events, while the third group recognized both explanations blended together. Others discarded all of these viewpoints and saw in myths the ancient history of the German people, its migrations, wars, the subjugation and Germanization of other nations, and knew how to point this out to the readers with mildly sharp logic. But only few thought of this, and no one has clearly grasped and carried through the notion that mythology was religion, our ancestors' belief in god, and because this is what it was, the mythology had to be a big mirror, in which the soul of the people could view its reflection, because the humans created gods in their own liking and not the other way around.

The same has happened with the mythologies of other nations and no less with the Hebrews. This is why there are contact points between mythologies and why a branch of science 'comparative mythology' has attempted to create a

universal mythology true to the modern efforts to denationalize all nations and create a universal people with one language, one philosophical religion, uniform customs and other stereotypical uniformity.

Just as this dream is nothing more than a dream, the sought Ur and universal mythology cannot be found and generally does not exist, because under the influence of geographical and climatic conditions the people have developed their unique ways and became nations, and a universal nation could only come to being, would have to come to being, when the climatic and geographical differences would be lifted.

As the religion is the expression of the national spirit, the god myths of the religion are the reflection of the spiritual life and cultural life of the people, so that the religion and the mythology are necessarily the inheritance and family patrimony of each nation. The connection points, which the 'comparative mythology' located as the connecting bridges between the mythologies of individual nations, refer to that part of god myths, which depict and embody the natural life and astronomical phenomena, which is the main purpose of the religious system. In all religious systems of all times there existed, besides the exoteric teaching for the common people, also the secret esoteric teaching for the inaugurated, the knowing, mythologists and priests.

This secret teaching was or is the mythless theognosis of the national soul, the understanding of god practiced academically by the nation's religious scholars, which in all higher religions, including the beliefs of the pre-Christian Germans, was monotheistic.

The mass of the people everywhere- and logically even our ancestors- knew only little of the One, Eternal, Incomprehensible, and adhered to the symbolical arrangements and embodiments of the individual characteristics of the one god, which were shaped as human and thus were easier to understand by the individual and therefore appeared more pleasant.

This deity, divided into individual appearances in accordance with its characteristics is thus the reflection of the people through perception and poetical personification of their virtues and their faults. But all of the old peoples were natural

nations and because of this they recognized early on the parallels between the human life and nature. This easily explains why the microcosm of the human life was in all phases affiliated with the macrocosm of the life of the whole nature.

Thus the threefold division of the myths was created in their progression as daily, yearly and world yearly myths, whereby every myth has two adjoining myths. Just as ‘Dellinger’ is the young god of day; Freyr is the young year god and Vidar the time god Wotan reborn after the fall of gods during the twilight, after the Fimbulwinter, after the end of the world year.

But also in another direction the one god is divided; he resolved first in the holy three: birth, life and death towards rebirth, and then in the holly twelve of the sun year. Each of these individual gods divided himself in a male and female half and these dissipated into numerous sub-deities of mostly local importance.

If the theognosis, the myth-less, esoteric secret teaching is the outlet of the national soul, then the different virtues and faults of the national character are spread out acutely and safely among the almost un-transparent band of gods and goddesses; they are naturally truthful, poetically developed personifications, which in their totality build the clarified character sketch of the nation.

According to this concept the enormous epic poetry of each nation, namely its mythology, becomes very interesting, because it preserves the reflection of the nation in all of its traits better than works of history. How lucky is a nation that owns such a high self-image as the Germans do in their mythology!

Caused by the Christianization of the German people, the old belief in Wotan was scorned as ‘adjoining faith’ or ‘Überglaupe’ from which the term ‘Aberglaube’ (Superstition) was coined by the church, and insistently and cruelly prosecuted as ‘heresy’, and seemingly suppressed. Erroneously, the German gods are believed as disappeared, or to speak in Edda terms- as fallen during the twilight.

These is namely a very important characteristic of the German mythology, that the German gods do not lead a never-ending idle life of luxury as the Olympians, but strive to delay in constant efforts and battles their certain demise, even though they know that after death they will surely be reborn. And this death of gods, their decay

towards a new being, the German mythology calls the twilight of gods. Regarding the time of the twilight of gods two viewpoints rule; the representatives of one viewpoint think that the twilight of gods took place with the Christianization and refer to a verse of the Völuspá, which says:

“There comes on high, all power to hold,
A mighty lord, all lands he rules.
Rule he orders, and rights he fixes,
Laws he ordains that ever shall live”²

The ‘mighty lord’ is presumed in the person of the founder of Christianity, who is foreseen by the seer. The second viewpoint puts- completely correctly- the twilight of gods at the end of the world, but is wrong to say that the belief in Wotan has outrun its end, so that the twilight of gods in the mythical sense did not occur. Both viewpoints are wrong and are based on the misunderstandings of facts.

The German people have the luck that their gods still live today, that they will not find their end for a long time and that this can be claimed without being accused of ‘heresy’ by the church. Yes, the German gods still live; the Germans have built temples for their gods everywhere; and still the enthusiastic priesthood is dedicated to the high cult. And those, who still would shake their heads in disbelief, to them the riddle should be solved with a word, when they come to know that the sacrosanct German gods are nothing more or less than the ‘German ideals’! The wise Völva sings in the Völuspá:

‘Much do I know, and more can see
Of the fate of the gods, the mighty fight.
Brothers shall fight and fell each other,
And sister’s sons shall kinship stain;
The world resounds, the witch is flying,
Hard it is on earth, with mighty whoredom,
Axe-time, sword-time, shields are sundered,
Wind-time, wolf-time, ere the world falls.’³

In these verses lies the fruitful truth in celebratory conformation before the seeing eye that the once fallen gods are the ideals; in these verses the great mystery is revealed that speaks of the guilt of the

²*The Poetic Edda*, trans. Henry Adams Bellows (Princeton, MA: Princeton University Press, 1936), p. 26.

³*The Poetic Edda*, p. 20.

gods, on the consequences of which they will fall; in these verses solace is also offered that the gods through the recognition of their guilt struggle and fight to delay the end, which despite that will not be death, but only Fimbulwinter, a 'winter of nations'. And winters of nations are just as real as springs of nations.

It is not necessary to translate the terrible warning of Völva in modern words and terms, as she speaks clear enough; to the ones who do not understand this language or do not want to understand it, to say to them that inner enemies are also included, would be in vain. But the Edda warns also of other enemies, by singing:

'More serpents there are beneath the ash
Than an unwise ape would think;
Goin and Moin, Grafvitnir's sons,
Grabak and Grafvolluth,
Ofnir and Svafnir shall ever, methinks,
Gnaw at the twigs of the tree.'⁴

This warning of outer enemies, who secretly gnaw at the roots of the nation's family tree and suck out its marrow, is also clearly understandable.

But fighting and struggle are the fate of each individual as well as the whole nation, and as this is depicted in the noble images of the great epochs of the German Wotan myth, as this struggle and fighting is reflected in the prevail of Wotans companions, the solace is also reflected that the ideals of the German people will prevail in the same form until their fall, because Germans will stand and fall in one hour together with their divine ideals.

But all of those, who loyally and unfailingly persist on the ideals of the Germans, be they man or woman, artist or scholar, citizen or soldier, judge or priest or what ever class, each one of them can proudly call themselves priests of the German Wotan belief, completely in accordance with the dignified German order of the skalds and bards, which has not fallen, just as still young gods of the Germans, the never aging ideals, did not fall.

⁴*The Poetic Edda*, p. 98.



The
All Soul's Day
and the
Pre-Christian
Death Cult of the
German People

By Guido von List

Ostdeutsche Rundschau
Vienna (31 October 1893)

Publisher: K.H. Wolf: Year 5, No. 80

With swooshing beating of the wings the eagle flies over the lands, impetuously the storm shakes the leaves scorched by the summer heat down of the trees, and drunk from the ale of the god it tumbles down to the earth from which it sprouts.

Idun, the joyful spring consort of Bragi the poet, has dipped from the world ash; sadness comes over gods and humans.

It's Idun, the unborn goddess of immortality, daughter of Ivaldi, the king of dwarfs, and the consort of that Aesir, who gives the gift of immortality to the humans that serve the gods. In the sky city Asgard she was responsible for the continuation of youth of the gods by guarding the eleven gold apples for the rejuvenating meal against the threatening aging. But now the divine one has dipped in sleep from the world tree, the gods are threatened by old age and they anticipate shivering the coming of their fall, the proximity of the world winter, the Fimbulwinter.

'Unhappy she seemed over this misfortune, Lying captive under the lofty tree. She liked it not with the daughter of Night, Accustomed to having worlds for her dwelling.'

The gods are helpless:

'Hidden deep in Mimer's well
Lies all wisdom. Know you as yet or what?'

And in vain Wotan sends his ravens to find council. Nowhere can they find instructions and tidings about the beginning, functioning and end of life. Even Idun

'...Naught would she say, not a word would she utter

In response to the askers, nor discourse with them;
Her tears fell fast from her brain's shields;
Her power was numbed, exhausted, and dead.
Filled with sorrow Jorun appeared
Before the gods, unable to speak;
The more they asked, the less she said;
All their words flowed in vain.'¹

Then the messengers of Wotan end their search for answers, Heimdal and Loki return home to Asgard to report, only Bragi stays as guard by Idun- and good for us that he guards her! Without the poets [to] watch the whole rich image of the Germanic world of the gods would be lost to us.

If Idun is depicted as the autumn falling leaves in this myth, a second myth in longer form shows the end of summer as the kidnapping of the goddess.

The evil Loki had once delivered Idun to the frost giant Thiazi- it was winter once again- and the Aesir suffered greatly under this betrayal, they became wrinkled, gray-haired and old. They found out it was Loki that played a dirty trick with them. The wrongdoer was led before the council and threatened with [a] painful death if he did not help. Loki now got scared and he promised to return Idun from the frost giants himself, if Freya would lend him her falcon shape. How Loki freed Idun is a part of the spring myth and should be told another time.

With Idun's return the gods got their youth back. And Idun's consort, the poet-singer Bragi got the charge to lead the fallen heroes into the Halls of the Undying in Walhalla as reward for the loyal watch beside the trunk of the world tree. It is the

¹*The Masks of Odin* by Elsa-Brita Titchenell at <http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/odin/odin-27.htm> It should be noted that Idun is named Jorun in this translation. (Translator's note)

poet that secures the posthumous fame of immortal deeds in his heroic poems.

If in these dark autumn myths the end of all being is shown as counter-play of the spring myths, which celebrate the great song of creation, they do not go without comfort; because they all mythically suggest that death is followed by reawakening to a new life, and the final rebirth appears as hope dawning in great distance. And such [a] mythological vision corresponds (feature for feature) with the imagery that nature presents us with today, on the day of the feast for the dead.

All fields are empty. The forest is losing its leaves; storks, swallows and other migratory birds move away; the people search their winter dwellings; the whole nature lies silently in winter sleep. Only the sounds of nature, the howling of the wind, the croaking of ravens, the crunching sound of snow haul through the still green pine forest, where still in places, where snow is scattered by the wind, high grass stands. Under the protecting cover of the cool pine forest shadow the grass was secure from the all-scorching summer sunburns and so it grows still on the feast for the dead, and often long into December:

‘Filled with growing trees and high-standing grass
Is Vithi, Vithar's land’⁵

Vidar, the god of rebirth is no other than in the pine forest accumulating Tannhäuser. But more about this later.

When in misty and moist late autumn we walk in the evergreen pine forest- Vidar's land- the matt shining sun disc seems to be hanging powerless in the branches. But in the Rune song Wotan sings:

‘I ween that I hung on the windy tree,
Hung there for nights full nine;
With the spear I was wounded, and offered I was
To Othin, myself to myself,
On the tree that none may ever know
What root beneath it runs.’⁶

Wotan's Rune song sounds in storm laments accompanied by the harp music of the world, he comes down from the tree as a young hunter to hunt

the sun stag through ‘Vidar's land’. But in the moment Wotan as wild hunter sees the sun shine between the horns of the white stag he collapses and the hunt ends.

And once again it is not a coincidence that the roman church celebrates All Hollow's on November 1st, All Soul's on November 2nd, Saint Hubert on the 3rd and Saint Martin on the 11th.

Is not- according to legend- Saint Hubert the huntsman trying to catch the ‘white’ stag just like the wild hunter, and does not the hunt end when he sees the shining cross between the horns of the stag? Adoringly he falls to his knees and leads from this moment on a life dedicated to god. Wotan as wild hunter, in reality as winter god (‘Ullr’) also changes in this moment into the sun god; he converts to good. He, who during the dog days causes rabies in dogs, is the healer of the same, and because of this Saint Hubert became the patron saint of dogs, whose intercession provides protection against the horrible consequences of the bite of a rabid dog.

In the ‘wild hunter’, the huntsman, who also has to be the ‘Sagittarius’, meaningful prospects of the zodiac and the calendar sign of November appear.

Evidently, Saint Martin, the warrior, stands opposite of Saint Hubert, the huntsman, just like Rodensteiner stands opposite of the wild hunter, to protect himself, or rather to merge within the winter Wotan and to return as such to ‘Vidar's land’ and well as to Vidar himself, who is distinctly called the ‘silent Aesir’.

‘Vidar’ as name means return, ‘Vidar’ as god is the ‘Tannhäuser’ dwelling in the pine forest. Seven years Tannhäuser stayed by Lady Venus in Venusberg until he left her. In no element is the roman Venus to be found in ‘Venussin’, but rather the good German Lady Fene, who is no other than Freya herself. Freya's castle is called ‘Folkvangr’ and her hall ‘Sessrumir’ or ‘Fensalir’, because of which she is called Fenin (Fannh) or Fene. ‘Fen’ means something like ‘create, beget’ and the name of the Goddess can thus be recognized as the creator, begetter, and ‘Fensalir’ is explained with ‘Hall of creation’. Only in passing ‘Feen’ (fairy) should be mentioned, who as the entourage of the fairy queen or Freya (Frana) herself can be fitted into the frame without problems.

Noteworthy is that Freya, the owner of the hall ‘Fensalir’ and the castle ‘Folkvangr’, thus the

⁵The Poetic Edda, p. 91.

⁶The Poetic Edda, p. 60.

representative of the birth giving life principle, shares with Wotan the fallen heroes, the dead, whereby she gets the soulless bodies and he the bodiless souls. She collects her part in Folkvangr, namely the commentary or field of the dead, while Wotan leads his part into Walhalla.

In these mythical presentations one can clearly recognize that Freya-Frana should not be seen only as the goddess of genesis, being and decay, as the noble, who gives birth to children and produces fruits in abundance, and because of this has the right to take the life she has given, but also as the master of the everlasting life, the winner over death; she leads the dead across Folkvangr, through Fensalir and then to rebirth. The graves of the dead are not closed forever, they come back to a new life in a new form, just like in the numerous lives they have already lived, the numerous deaths they have died and in just as many lives they will lead after their next death.

This high mysticism influenced all law conceptions; it caused not only the forming of families and their right of succession, emblems and so on to secure their own wealth as they believed they will be reborn in their descendants, but as a further consequence it also led to the brilliant development of power in the German people, which had its peak in their state building might.

Through the disappearance of this belief the contemporaries have forgotten to feel as progenies, pure egoism attained ever more power, everyone wants to see themselves as epigones, and the gruesome saying of the fifteenth Ludwig 'after us, the Deluge' could become the magic word.--- Now, presently, while the leaves fall, the gods dwell in the underworld- Emperor Barbarossa sleeps in Kyffhäuser- and the 'silent Aesir' sleeps in his dwelling, in the evergreen pine forest by Lady Freya in Folkvangr.

Even our loved ones that passed away dwell as soulless bodies in the underworld castle in Folkvangr, but they also dwell by Lady Freya in Fensalir, which means they await the rebirth to the life after death. They will return, when silent Tannhäuser rises, they will also wake to a new life. And are we not celebrating All Soul's Day today? Are we not going out, where 'Filled with growing trees and high-standing grass is Vithi, Vithar's land', to visit the graves of our loved ones?

Even Christianity, although in a different sense, cultivates the belief in 'rising from the dead' by what, of course, the conception of the German belief was pushed back, darkened and distorted.

The high meaning of the German death myth was forgotten, it's mysticism fallen and under the corrupting influence of the roman myth of Venus Vulgiva it degenerated into the saga of the knight Tannhäuser. The noble radiant Freya-Frana was degraded to the courting Venussin; the high silent god of return was turned to a love-struck knight. The sacrosanct mystery of nature has disappeared in the new generation, in all of these myths from the sentimental sphere; the myths faded away into fairytales of Sleeping Beauty's magical sleep or shrank to the saga of the devilish Venus.--- But when he returns, the 'silent Aesir' will be called the 'strong Aesir', the strongest after Donar.

'But there did the son from his steed leap down,
When his father he fain would avenge.'⁷

In the last battle Wotan is devoured by the Fenris wolf, but Vidar is his avenger, and in Vidar is Wotan reborn, just like in Freyr. What Freyr is in the year myth and Dellinger in the day myth that is Vidar in the world year myth: the reborn, rejuvenated sunlight, the reborn, rejuvenated life of the world.

But Wotan is still not dead; good he knows his craft, good he knows that he will die, and because of this he ponders how to save the world and himself through rebirth in a descendant, and this is the meaning of the eighteenth Rune song:

An eighteenth I know, that ne'er will I tell
To maiden or wife of man,--
The best is what none but one's self doth know,
So comes the end of the songs,--
Save only to her in whose arms I lie,
Or who else my sister is.⁸

Because of this he ponders on finding a wife; he wants to marry, but the aging god does not manage to do this; since the solstice all creation is inhibited.

⁷*The Poetic Edda*, p. 92.

⁸*The Poetic Edda*, p. 67.

Thus is the courting useless, the love for 'Billing's daughter', for the winter fruitless earth, hopeless. In Hovamol⁹ (94-104) Wotan sings:

'The head alone knows what dwells near the heart,
A man knows his mind alone;
No sickness is worse to one who is wise
Than to lack the longed-for joy.
This found I myself, when I sat in the reeds,
And long my love awaited;
As my life the maiden wise I loved,
Yet her I never had.
Billing's daughter I found on her bed,
In slumber bright as the sun;
Empty appeared an earl's estate
Without that form so fair.'

As answer to this Billing's daughter sings:

'Othin, again at evening come,
If a woman thou wouldst win;
Evil it were if others than we
Should know of such a sin.'

And Wotan laments:

'Away I hastened, hoping for joy,
And careless of counsel wise;
Well I believed that soon I should win
Measureless joy with the maid.

So came I next when night it was,
The warriors all were awake;
With burning lights and waving brands
I learned my luckless way.
At morning then, when once more I came,
And all were sleeping still,
A dog found in the fair one's place,
Bound there upon her bed.
Many fair maids, if a man but tries them,
False to a lover are found;
That did I learn when I longed to gain
With wiles the maiden wise;

But the name of 'Billing's daughter' is not mentioned, even though it is beyond doubt that she is no other than the famous 'Rindr in the west', by which Wotan finally gets to the goal, because it is her who gives birth to the one-night son at the winter solstice, namely the young sun god.

In naturalistic terms 'Billing's daughter', 'Rindr', even 'Gerda' is of course the earth resting under the snow cover. The sun (Wotan) is powerless in the courting, she is even scared away

by the billow flames (which also played around Brunhildas castle) and as wolfs personified winter storms. But when winter has advanced, then Wotan's will be fulfilled, then Baldr's avenger will be born, just as Völva had predicted.

Mythically speaking Wotan corresponds in this myth with the silent Aesir, Billing's daughter with Freya (Frana). Hidden in 'Hutberg' sleeps Wotan, just like Vidar in Folkvangr, like Tannhäuser in Venusberg, like our dead in the graves- awaiting the rebirth to the life after death.

Murky the world lamp hangs in the heavily flowing cold tree that hides its roots from everyone. The storm races across the chilly land, ever harsher is the air, the fields are emptied of their fruits and from trees fall the last leaves- winter moves in.

The last reminder of flowers is bundled together and in a hopeless struggle the earth is seemingly brought to life, on the graves the lights flicker murkily to support the powerless weak sun, but it is a hopeless courting of Billing's daughter. Soon the requiem lights diminish, the last flowers wither to dry foliage: fate must be fulfilled; even the gods will one day fall. But when early March comes along, then flowers will blossom anew from the small cemetery mounds and from the depths the ghosts of our loved ones will greet us and send a comforting 'forget-me-not'.

Tannhäuser rises from the Venusberg to new life. But in us, who walk among the living on earth, is there not a wild hunter in each of us?

⁹*The Poetic Edda*, p. 49.

H. P. Blavatsky

Letter to

Edward J. Buck

3 March 1887

Introduced and Transcribed
by
Jeffrey D. Lavoie

H. P. Blavatsky (1831 – 1891) was extremely influential on German occultism and especially the Ariosophists of the 20th century. Her teachings were cited over and over again most especially in the writings of the subject of this volume- Guido von List. It is appropriate then to include this never before published letter in this volume in her correspondence with Edward J. Buck in order to pass this letter along to the Kabbalist and author of the *Key to the Hebrew-Egyptian Mystery in the Sources of Measure-* (1875) James Ralston Skinner. While I have published a much more in depth biography of ‘Ralston’ in the pages of *Theosophical History* (including a longer letter from Blavatsky) in this preface it will suffice to merely comment upon this letter. This letter evidences Blavatsky’s high esteem for Skinner and she explained that even with this profound knowledge he could not fully understand all seven keys to esoteric interpretation but at least he got one. It seemed the only issue that Blavatsky held against Skinner was his acceptance of the Bible chronology.

HPB to EJB

My dear & kind brother,

I lost Mr. Skinner’s address so please pass him on its enclosed volume & please ask him to forgive me my flappedoodle English & unsteady writing. But I am in such hurry for want of time that every moment is precious to me.

I bet (?) he won’t mind my telling him the plain truth what I think, namely that he

found or discovered *only one of the 7 keys* to esoteric interpretation & universal language. He ought not to *dwarf* the grandiose thoughts of old by squaring them all & limiting their many measurings on the Procreation bid (?) of terrestrial phallicism. He is too enthusiastic about the Jews altogether & sacrifices [the] history of facts to his preconception in favor of the Hebrew which *is not* an ancient language unless one accepts Bible Chronology. But it is his only fault I find in him & I hope I am mistaken in his fanatical views. He is the grandest man & mind (in the distinction of the occult) I know of at present; a natural born genius & *helpful beyond any doubt*. I don’t say ‘helpful’ mind you, in *discovering* in his indifferent (?) research what he has, *but helped from the literal* affects & influences of his discoveries. He would have become, uninitiated as he is, insane long ago, or dead or straight or brought under the finders of an apostasy (?) - had it now been for the helping & watching hand above him; not of one of our masters but of a Dhyana Chohan, a Plantary- the rarest thing possible, & whom verily fear he mistake for God instead of a god – faith & conditioned on his plane. This I know from masters who spoke of him when I was yet at Adyar, referring to him as its Philo-Kabbalist & - & that I had never known his name even. Funny I should have never heard of him or his work when in America. His intuitional powers are as marvelous as his mathematical knowledge, indeed. Many thanks for his previous M.S.S.- etc. etc.

Signed H. P. Blavatsky

Written at Ostende

& Recvd. Mch 3rd, 1887