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CREATION

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Every spiritual culture has a Creation myth. The reason for the Creation myth is based upon the establishment of one's identity. As Odinists, Creation is central to establishing our Identity and understanding the beliefs and practices which stem from our ancestral lore. Without Creation, our Odinic Identity would not exist. Likewise, without us, Creation as we know it would not exist. Just as life comes from the great cycle of Birth- Arising/Becoming-Death-Rebirth, Creation has been born of the great cycle of our Odinic Ways.

An understanding of the Creation myth and its practical application will truly strengthen the Odinic spirit and will. Odinism, as we know, is based upon the ancestral ways of the Scandinavian Folk who are the progenitors of modern Odinism. To truly understand Odinism, one must seek out and understand his or her ancestry. Quoting from a pamphlet issued by the Odinist Fellowship and Folk-Mother Else, we see the truth in the words of Edmund Burke:

People will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors.
These words, immortal as they are, establish the necessity of one of the core fundamentals of Odinism: Know Who You Are!

The Creation myth is found in several sources. In the Voluspa, we see the beginning when only Ymir lived when there was no sea, land, waves, earth, or heaven, (stanza 3). Buri's sons, Odhinn, Vili, and Ve lift the land aloft and create Midgard where green things began to grow. (Voluspa-4) The Sun and Moon rose in the sky and the Gods gathered for counsel and built their halls. (Voluspa, 5-7) The three brothers, Odhinn, Vili, and Ve found two trees on the seashore and gave them souls, senses, being, and beauty; Askr and Embla. (Voluspa, 17-18) Then comes the great World-Tree, Yggdrasil and the three Norns, Urdh, Verdandi and Skuld.

In the Prose Edda, the text of the Deluding of Gylfi, Snorri Sturlusson laid down the Creation myth in more detail:

Gangleri said: "What was the origin of all things? How did they begin? What existed before?" High One answered: "As it says in the Sibyl's Vision:

"In the beginning not anything existed, there was no sand nor sea nor cooling waves; earth was unknown and heaven above – only Ginnungagap was – there was no grass."

Then Just-as-high said: "It was many aeons before the earth was created that Niflheim was made, and in the midst was a well called Hvergelmir, and thence flows the rivers with these names: Svol, Gunnthra, Fjorm, Fimbulthul, Slidi, Hridh, Sylg, Ylg, Vich, Leipt, and Gjoll which is next to Hel's gate."

Then Third said: "The first world to exist, however, was Muspell in the southern hemisphere; it is light and hot and that region which flames and burns so that those who do not belong to it and whose native land it is not, cannot endure it. The one who sits

there at land's end to guard it is called Surt; he has a flaming sword, and at the end of the world he will come and harry and vanquish all the gods and burn the whole world with fire. As it says in the Sibyl's Vision:

“Surt from the South comes with spoilers of twigs blazing his sword [like] sun of the Mighty Ones: mountains will crash down, troll-women stumble, men tread the road to Hel, heaven's rent asunder.”

Gangleri asked: "How were things arranged before families came into existence or mankind increased?"

High One said: "When those rivers which are called Elivagar came so far from their source that the yeasty venom accompanying them hardened like slag, it turned to ice. Then when that ice formed and was firm, a drizzling rain that arose from the venom poured over it and cooled into rime, and one layer of ice formed on top of the other throughout Ginnungagap."

Then Just-as-high said: "That part of Ginnungagap which turned northwards became full of the ice and hoar frost's weight and heaviness, and within there was drizzling and rain and gusts of wind. But the southern part of Ginnungagap became light by meeting the sparks and glowing embers which flew out of the world of Muspell."

Then Third said: "Just as cold and all harsh things emanated from Niflheim, so everything in the neighbourhood of Muspell was warm and bright. Ginnungagap was as mild as windless air, and where the soft air of the heat met frost so that it thawed and ripped, then, by the might of that which sent the heat, life appeared in the drops of running fluid and grew into the likeness of a man. He was given the name Ymir, but the frost ogres call him Aurgelmir, and that is where the families of frost ogres come from, as said in the Shorter Sibyl's Vision: All the sibyls are from Vidiolf,
all the wizards from Vilmeidi,
but the sorcerers from Svarthofdhi,
all the giants have come from Ymir.

As we look at the Creation, we see two worlds coming together to form Life. The ice from Niflheim represents still life, that which is without mobility. As science has shown, ice is water which expands when frozen, causing an increase in volume. On the opposite end of the great void exists Muspellheim, the world of fire and expansive energy. Fire, in its elemental form, is seething with Life and constantly expanding, that which has mobility. When these two worlds expand and intermingle, Ymir, the "roarer" or "primal vibration" is formed, the first Life.

In comparison to a human conception, we see the intricacies of the Creation myth. The ovum, or unfertile egg cell from a woman, is found in the Ice of Niflheim: it is Life without mobility. Likewise, the spermatozoa correspond to the fiery expansive energy of Muspell: that which has its own mobility. Just as Third stated in the Deluding of Gylfi:

...life appeared in the drops of running fluid and grew into the likeness of a man. He was given the name Ymir. (Prose Edda, Jean L. YOUNG translation p. 33)

In further comparison, the Deluding of Gylfi teaches that from Niflheim flowed many rivers which stemmed from the Wellspring Hvergelmir:

...When those rivers which are called Elivagar came so far from their source that the yeasty venom accompanying them hardened like slag, it turned into ice. (Prose Edda p. 33)

As Creation begins, two worlds exist in a huge gap devoid of life. When the two worlds meet, as with conception. Life is formed. We see the expansion of Ice and Fire come together to make One Life. In continuing the Creation myth, Ymir, as an Androgyne, "sweats" out his kin, Thrudgelmir and Bergelmir. These are the progenitors of the frost giants.

As Ymir grew, he fed upon the nourishment of Audhumla, the Cosmic cow. Audhumla dwelled among the salty blocks of rime ice which had formed when Niflheim and Muspell merged, and licked the salty blocks. As she licked a block, a form began to appear:

Then Gangleri asked: "What did the cow live on?" High One answered: "She licked the ice-blocks which were salty, and by evening of the first day of the block-licking appeared a man's hair, on the second day a man's head, and on the third day the whole man was there. He was called Buri. He was handsome and tall and strong. He had a son called Borr, who married a woman called Bestla, daughter of the giant Bolthorn. They had three sons; the first Odhinn; the second, Vili; and the third, Ve; and it is my belief that Odhinn, in association with his brothers, is the ruler of heaven and earth. (Prose Edda p. 34)

The Creation myth continues by describing the death of Ymir and expansion of the multiverse into the World-Tree, Yggdrasil:

Then Gangleri asked: "How did they get on together? Was one group more powerful than the other?" Then High One answered: "Bor's sons killed the giant Ymir, and when he fell, so much blood poured from his wounds that they drowned the whole tribe of frost ogres with it— except for one who escaped with his household; this one is known to the giants as Bergelmir. (Prose Edda p. 35).

The myth continues:

Then Gangleri said: "What did the sons of Bor do next, since you believe they are gods?" High One said: "There is a great deal to be told about this. They took Ymir and carried him into the middle of Ginnungagap, and made the world from him: from his blood the sea and lakes, from his flesh the earth, from his bones the mountains; rocks and pebbles they made from his teeth and jaws and those bones that were broken." Third added: "They also took his skull and made the sky from it and set it over the earth with four sides, and under each corner they put a dwarf. These are called: East, West, North, and South. Then they took the sparks and burning embers that were flying about after they had blown out of Muspell, and placed them in the midst of Ginnungagap to give light to heaven above and earth beneath. (Prose Edda pp. 35-36).

In this portion of the Creation myth, we see the Gods going to war, slaying Ymir, the first Life, and expanding the worlds into the World-Tree. This portion teaches us that old and useless habits that are foreign to us must be dealt with accordingly. One must slay that portion of chaos within and overcome the simple existence. As one grows on the Odinic Path, he or she needs focus on expansion of the backbone and foundation of the World-Tree itself, the Folk Nation of Odhinn.

From Ymir's flesh the earth was made and from his blood the seas, crags from his bones, trees from his hair, and from his skull the sky. From his eyebrows the blessed gods made Midgardh for the sons of men, and from his brains were created all storm-threatening clouds. (Prose Edda p. 36).

Symbolically, this portion of the myth teaches that everything is made from Ymir, the first Life. Upon conception, the fertile ovum grows through cell-mitosis and forms a miniature World-Tree with the beginning of Creation. As the cell divides, Life expands until a living person is formed. As we grow from birth into Life and adulthood, we learn we must shed the skin of doubt and

symbolically slay the Ymir within and create a new expanded world of existence.

As the journey through the Eddas continues, we find the first man and woman blessed with life and spiritual inspiration. Askr and Embla, alone and weak on the seashore when three mighty Aesir found them:

To the coast they came, kind and mighty, from the gathered gods three great Aesir; on the land they found, of little strength, Ask and Embla, unfated yet. Sense they possessed not, soul they had not, being nor bearing nor blooming hue; soul gave Odhinn, sense gave Hoenir, being, Lodhur, and blooming hue. (Poetic Edda, VOLUSPA 17-18,' Lee Hollander trans.)

In these two stanzas, we again see two forms brought together and given life and divine inspiration. The mighty Aesir looked kindly upon the man and woman and gave them the divine gifts: Odin gave them their souls; Hoenir gave them motion and senses; and Lodhur gave them their blood and beauty. Through these divine gifts and the will of the Gods, the Odinic inspiration in man had begun, and Odinism was created in its first instance. Thereafter, man and woman conceived children and worked to expand the Holy Nation of Odin. In the Voluspa, stanza 19-20, the Seeress describes the expansion of the multiverse as Yggdrasil, the mighty tree moist with white dew that floods below to the Norns who decree law and life for the children of mankind:

An ash I know, hight Yggdrasil, the mighty tree moist with white dews; thence come the floods that fall adown; evergreen o'ertops Urdh's well this tree.
Thence wise maidens three betake them— under spreading boughs their bower stands—
[Urdh one is hight, the other, Verdhandi, Skuld the third: they scores did cut,] they laws did make, they lives did choose: for the children of men they marked their fates.
(Poetic Edda, Hollander trans.)

As we delve into the mystery of the Norns, we see that further expansion brought to mankind as the Norns decree laws made for mankind and life given to mankind establishing the "fate" of our ancestors, our modern day Folk, and those Folk yet to come. Past, Present, and Future; Urdh, Verdhandi, and Skuld. Each day the Norns water the World-Tree and keep it alive with life-giving water and clay from the wells beneath its roots. The Norns spend their time weaving the web of fate for mankind, Orlog and Wyrð as mankind wends through birth, life, death, and rebirth. As the Norns weave our fate, our right actions spurn expansion and a solid foundation for Odinism. Law and Life become us as the Nation of Odhinn expands. Creation continues, beginning with two, adding inspiration, and a Nation is born of life and law by divine decree.

As man and woman conceived our ancestors and began our Holy Nation, true inspiration followed from Odhinn as He descended to Midhgardh and wandered the earth as Rig, the father of Inspiration.

In the Rigsthula, we see the beginning of the three classes of mankind and the birth of the Nation. As Rig strides along middle ways, he maintains his balance. He comes to a small cabin with a closed door and an uninspired couple inside. The couple had little food and meagre possessions. Rig fathered a son, Thrall, with the woman, and then journeyed on his way. Thrall thereafter remained uninspired and fathered a class of mankind who were servants, or Providers.

Walked unwearied (in middle ways); to a dwelling He came, was the door bolted.
In gan he go, on the ground was a fire, at the hearth, hoary, sate husband and wife —A i
and Edda, in old headgear.
Well knew Rig, wisely to counsel; on middle seat he sate him down, betwixt the twain
of the toft benched him.
Then took Edda a thick loaf heavy of bread hard-baked and full of bran; a bowl then
bore on the board Edda, filled with broth of boiled calf meat.
Well knew Rig wisely to counsel; he rose up thence, ready for sleep; on middle bedstead

his berth he made, betwixt the twain of the toft laid him.
And there stayed he three days together; then walked unwearied in middle ways. Moons full nine went meanwhile by.
Gave Edda birth to a boy child then, (in clouts she swathed) the swarthy-skinned one.
Thrall they called him, and cast on him water (dark was his hair and dull his eyes).
On his hand the skin was scraggly and wrinkled, (nasty his nails), his knuckles gnarled,
his fingers thick, his face ugly, his back hulky, his heels were long.
(Rigsthula stanzas 2-8, Poetic Edda.)

In looking to this Lay, we see Inspiration once again given to mankind. Rig recognizes that even the uninspired have a place in the Folk and are a necessity to our expansion and survival. The "bolted" dwelling and meagre food and possessions symbolize the uninspired. With Rig's contribution of Odinic inspiration, the uninspired become the basis of the ancestral line, the workers who undertook common duties such as farming and animal husbandry. It is important that all Odinists understand that life is like a ladder, and each person -has a rung. Some are at the bottom, while others climb higher, and while others reach the top. The importance of this concept reiterates that no matter how small or insignificant one's contribution may be, each of us has a place on the ladder.

As we read further on, the Rigsthula teaches that Rig journeyed on and fathered a second son, Karl, who became the progenitor of the Protector class of mankind. Those who are inspired to seek and maintain the Odinic Folk-Consciousness.

At his staff Rig strode, and straight forth faired; to a dwelling he came, was the door ajar. In gan he go, on the ground was a fire, sate husband and wife there with their work busy. A weaver's beam out of wood he shaped— his beard was brushed, and banged, his hair— in kirtle tight-fitting; were planks on the floor.

(Then took Amma..... .. a full trencher on the table she put with boiled calf meat the best she had*) (Well knew Rig wisely to counsel), he rose up thence, ready for sleep; on middle bedstead his berth he made, betwixt the twain of the toft laid him.

Then gan he grow and gain in strength, tamed the oxen and tempered ploughshares, timbered houses, and barns for hay, fashioned carts, and followed the plough.

(Rigsthula stanzas 14-22, Poetic Edda).

In this second portion of the Lay, we see Rig again contribute Odinic inspiration and father a son, Karl, who attains a higher level of inspiration. The dwelling with the "door ajar" and the fruits of Afi and Amma's labours (suitable clothing, a weaver's beam, distaff, good food, etc.) represent the inspired mankind: those who strive to build up and expand the Odinic Folk-Consciousness. These are the Protector class who offer their own inspiration to those who lack true inspiration.

As we read further on in the Rigsthula we learn that Rig continued his journey and fathered a third son, Earl, who received full inspiration from Rig's contribution to mankind.

Thence went Rig, his road was straight, A hall he saw, the doors faced south; The portal stood wide, on the posts was a ring, Then in he fared; the floor was strewn.

Within two gazed in each other's eyes, Fathir and Mothir, and played with their fingers; there sat the house-lord, wound strings for the bow, Shafts he fashioned, and bows he shaped.

The lady sat, at her arms she looked, She smoothed the cloth, and fitted the sleeves; Gay was her cap, on her breast were clasps, Broad was her train, of blue was her gown, Her brows were bright, her breast was shining, Whiter her neck than new-fallen snow.

Rig knew well wise words to speak, Soon in the midst of the room he sat, And on either side the others were. Then Mothir brought a broidered cloth, Of linen bright, and the board she covered;

And then she took the loaves so thin, And laid them, white from the wheat, on the cloth.

Then forth she brought the vessels full, With silver covered, and set before them, Meat all browned, and well-cooked birds; In the pitcher was wine, of plate were the cups, So drank they and talked till the day was gone.

Rig knew well wise words to speak, Soon did he rise, made ready to sleep; So in the bed himself did he lay, And on either side the others were.

Thus was he there for three nights long, Then forward he went on the midmost way, And so nine months were soon passed by.

A son had Mothir, in silk they wrapped him, With water they sprinkled him, Jarl he was; Blond was his hair, and bright his cheeks, Grim as a snake's were his glowing eyes.

To grow in the house did Jarl begin, Shields he brandished, and bow-strings wound, Bows he shot, and shafts he fashioned, Arrows he loosened, and lances wielded, Horses he rode, and hounds unleashed, Swords he handled, and sounds he swam.

Straight from the grove came striding Rig, Rig came striding, and runes he taught him; By his name he called him, as son he claimed him, And bade him hold his heritage wide, His heritage wide, the ancient homes.

Forward he rode through the forest dark, O'er the frosty crags, till a hall he found. His spear he shook, his shield he brandished, His horse he spurred, with his sword he hewed; Wars he raised, and reddened the field, Warriors slew he, and land he won.

(Rigsthula stanzas 26-38, Poetic Edda).

In the third portion of the Lay of Rig, we see Rig's contribution of inspiration in Earl as the highest consciousness mankind can receive. Mother and Father have established a proper home and possession by using their intellect and labour. The home is a large hall with a south facing door to allow sunlight in. This represents the enlightened inspiration mankind should strive to become. This enlightenment is founded upon using the mind, body, and spirit to promote and further the Odinic Folk-Consciousness. Their son, Earl, benefited from Mother and father's labour by growing up in a proper home, well fed (physically, emotionally, and spiritually), and being taught to handle all of life's toils in providing for, protecting, and spiritually guiding his people. Earl became the progenitor of the Priest class.

As we follow the Lay, we see again the Creation myth on a different level, and the expansion creation brings. Rig fathers Thrall who ultimately fathers the Provider class of mankind. Next, Rig fathers Karl who ultimately fathers the Protector class of mankind. Lastly, Rig fathers Earl, who in turn fathers the Priest class of mankind and the highest levels of Folk-Consciousness. Notably, Earl is sought out by Rig after he has grown into a young man and Rig in turn teaches Earl the "mysteries" we know as the runes, and taught him to be a leader of men and ruler of Udal lands, the

ancestral lands Odinism stems from. Earl, as the truly inspired man seeks out knowledge and wisdom and righteously rewards his people by sharing his wealth (stanza 39, Rigsthula), understanding that his duties as a ruler of his people was based upon his people as his supporters. While the Providers worked the land, and the Protectors guarded against insurrection, rebellion, and invasion, the Priests, or Kings, decreed the law and order of the Nation. Through all of this, with each member of the Folk contributing labour, protection, and inspiration, a great Nation was created and expanded across Scandinavia where mankind existed in harmony with Nature and each other until foreign invasion occurred in the seventh and eight centuries.

Today, we know that great Nation as Odinism, and we are all charged with the duty of contributing our labours, our protection, and our intellect and inspiration to restoring, maintaining, and uplifting the Folk in any way we can. We are a proud and noble people. As Odinists, we are charged with the duty and creed to:

STRIVE FOR THE GOOD IN ALL THINGS

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