

NORSEMEN AND VIKINGS: THE CULTURE THAT INSPIRED DECADES OF FEAR

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Introduction to Historiography and Method

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When one thinks of Vikings the mind's eye often envisions muscular men covered in furs with large horned helmets. Thoughts of these monstrous men link themselves with words such as bloodlust, raids, and conqueror. Which leaves one to ponder why these men have come to be forever linked with such carnage, surely they must have had some redeeming qualities? Viking studies have increased in popularity during modern times. This has led many historians to pick up the sagas left behind by the Norse people, so that they may better understand the driving forces behind the decades of fear these Viking raiders inspired. What these historians have uncovered sheds new light on the Vikings, showcasing not only men of destruction, but also of enlightenment.

It is widely believed that at the opening of the Viking age, Scandinavia housed a mere two million people.¹ This time also saw an age of rapid population growth, which many historians and geologist alike, attribute to climate change. The warmer climate brought on during the early eighth century allowed for milder winters in the Norsemen's cold climate.² The warmer climate inspired the typical response of lower infant mortality rates, and a more protein rich diet that allowed for overall better health.³ It is thus feasible to believe that the overall population boom supplied the necessary push factor that inspired the Vikings to take to the sea in search of new lands.

Iceland remains one of the lands most linked with the Vikings. The land was first colonized in 874 AD, under Ingolf Arnarson and Leif Hrodmarson.⁴ This country has seen some of the most far-reaching land degradation in northern Europe.⁵ Many historians attributed this erosion as a consequence of Viking occupation, which would supply another push factor for Viking exploration and raiding. However, Rannveig Olafsdottir, launched a study that proved the shift in landscape actually began in 2500 BP.⁶ The study suggest that the Norse settled on land that had already experienced severe degradation, and that their settlement just contributed to an overall downward

¹ Robert Wernick, *The Vikings* (New World City, Inc., 2013), Kindle Edition, Loc. 288.

² *Ibid*, Loc. 301.

³ *Ibid*.

⁴ T.D. Kendrick, *A History of The Vikings* (New York: Fall River Press, 2013), 299.

⁵ Rannveig Olafsdottir, "Simulating Icelandic Vegetation Cover during the Holocene Implications for Long-Term Land Degradation," *Geografiska Annaler Series A, Physical Geography* 83, no.4 (2001): 203, accessed September 17, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/521537>.

⁶ *Ibid*, 205.

spiral.⁷ Given this evidence, one could still argue that the poor land of one of the major Norse territories helped to reinforce the need to explore and conquer.

To understand the warriors that took the world by storm, one must realize that not all Norsemen were Vikings. Viking, as a word, during the period meant raider, or better yet “warfare at sea,” therefore Viking was an occupation within the Norse community.⁸ Vikings as explorers expanded their reach across the globe. They are noted by many historians to be the earliest point that American’s can trace their history.⁹ Thor Heyerdahl, who spent time in Peru studying the Incan culture, discovered light-skinned inhabitants that trace their ancestry to, “Mythical white forbears.”¹⁰ While the possibility exists that Vikings did not father any children in Peru One thing is certain, Viking explorers explored and colonized many lands leaving behind lasting impressions.

What the Vikings left behind remained overshadowed by the terror they inspired. It is hard to overlook descriptions such as the one written by French monk Abbo, “The wild beasts, go through hills and fields, killing babies, children, young men, old men, fathers, sons, and mothers. They overthrow, they destroy, they ravage; sinister cohort, fatal phalanx, cruel host.”¹¹ Robert Wernick pinpoints several positive elements left behind by the “wild beasts” of the north. According to Wernick the Vikings played a crucial role in setting the stage for the feudal lord during the middle ages.¹² Evidence for this assumption lie in the states created by the Vikings, Abbo may have been stunned to learn that the men he referred to as “beats” actually taught the Slavic people the fundamentals for civil government.¹³ They also founded the Duchy of Normandy in France, creating a unified government not seen since the collapse of Rome.¹⁴ These facts provided historians with a look into a culture that was not strictly about violence and war, but also a culture that stood for justice and law.

Viking era law has posed difficult for historians to study, the Norsemen transmitted most traditions orally, and law proved no exception.¹⁵ Wernick describes a culture, in which, laws focused around shame.¹⁶ This holds an odd meaning in today’s world, basically Nordic society not only evaluated a crime based on severity, but also on rather or not the offence committed occurred face to face or when the victim’s back was turned.¹⁷ However for the day Nordic law seems to have been both progressive with an element of mysticism. Wernick provides an excellent look at Viking law in his book, *The Vikings*.

⁷ Ibid, 213.

⁸ I.P. Stephenson, *Viking Warfare* (Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2012), Kindle Edition, loc. 107-25.

⁹ Priscilla Meyer, “Pale Fire As Cultural Astrolabe: The Sagas of the North,” *Russian Review* 47, no.1 (Jan., 1988): 64, accessed September 17, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/130444>.

¹⁰ Thor Heyerdahl, “The Voyage of the Raft Kon-Tiki,” *The Geographical Journal* 115, no.1/3 (Jan.-Mar., 1950): 35, accessed September 17, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1789016>.

¹¹ Robert Wernick, *The Vikings*, Loc. 49.

¹² Ibid, Loc. 66-80.

¹³ Ibid, Loc. 66.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid, Loc. 261.

¹⁶ Ibid, Loc. 136.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Wernick describes “Trial by ordeal,” a somewhat violent tradition that many would easily envision in the fierce Viking culture portrayed by the history books.¹⁸ This custom typically began on a Wednesday, which held significance because of its connection to Odin. On that day the accused would be given a handful of red hot coals to hold in his hands, after holding the coals the accused would be given rest until Saturday when the burns would be examined.¹⁹ If the burns were festering upon examination the Vikings believed that Odin had passed judgment and declared the party guilty. Another Nordic tradition may also have helped to paint the Vikings in an unsavory light, a mode of torture known as the “blood-eagle.”²⁰

Historian Roberta Frank devoted research to the study of the “Odinic right of the blood-eagle,” what she uncovered is a wealth of conflicting information worth examining further.²¹ The blood eagle emerged as a means of torture, usually inflicted against the “slayer of a man’s father.”²² Frank found four well known accounts of the torture that depicted either an evolution of viciousness, or perhaps an evolution in exaggeration. The first account, found in the *Ragnars saga*, tells of someone cutting a deep wound into a person’s back that had the general shape of the eagle.²³ The next account grows ever more gruesome as it describes, “the tearing out of ribs and lungs,” it is also the first time that the rite is said to be an offering to Odin.²⁴ Later accounts would blend these two traditions together, and provided an element of foreplay; in which the victim’s torture actually began before these horrific events.²⁵ Frank’s eventual findings on the matter leave one questioning the validity of the accounts, Frank herself refers to her findings as, “Banishing this bird that never was.”²⁶ The blood- eagle it seems depicted false accounts of Viking brutality and helped to spread the myth. Further examination of Nordic law reveals a civilization of justice.

The “civilized” aspect of law dictated that after a crime, the accused would be brought in front of a tribunal of his peers, an act that still stands as a corner stone in the American judicial system. The accused would then enter a plea of either guilty or innocent, if the defendant proclaimed his innocence he would then be given the chance to plead his case and call witnesses in his defense, once again one can see the ties that still link modern law to this ancient culture.²⁷ Another interesting point lies in the fact that so many of the crimes typically associated with Vikings, such as rape and murder, were punishable offences while at home. The laws insisted that “bone payments” be made to help cover the cost of treatments for wounds inflicted during fights, and there were even fines against those found guilty of toughing a woman in an improper way.²⁸ Historians have proven that the men seen as lawless heathens

¹⁸ Ibid, Loc. 275.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Roberta Frank, “Atrocity and Skaldic Verse: The Rite of the Blood Eagle,” *The English Historical Review* 99 no. 391 (Apr., 1984): 332-43, accessed September 17, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable.568983>.

²¹ Ibid, 332.

²² Ibid, 333.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid, 343.

²⁷ Robert Wernick, *The Vikings*, Loc. 261.

²⁸ Ibid, Loc. 276.

actually held their society to modern day standards of law. It seems almost inconceivable that a culture so rooted in justice would take to the seas and become one of the most feared hordes in history.

The image of the Viking warrior most frequently thought of remains the Berserker. A man so crazed with bloodlust that he emerges on the battle field in a fit of rage and destruction. This image is now thought of by many historians as a “creature from a mythical past,” rather than a battlefield reality.²⁹ These creatures existed in the Viking sagas, but seem to be more of a testament to time and tradition than a truly historical figure. The poem, *Hraldskveaði*, dated to AD 930, provides historians with one of the most accurate account of Berserkirs. However, as I.P. Stephenson, points out the Berserkirs are depicted as “an ordered company armed with spear and shield,” within the myth, hardly the popular image of myth.³⁰ Who was the Viking warrior, if not the half-crazed Berserker that lore spoke of?

The answer can be answered simply; the Viking was a professional soldier. Historians have found that a large amount of the Vikings’ success happened because they possessed better armor.³¹ Helmets among Viking raiders were more common than among their English counterparts, in fact, if a Viking owned little armor chances were that what he did own, was a helmet.³² Body image among the Vikings seemed a small part that played a big role in overall military advantage. Stephenson describes the Viking as, “a combination of state of mind a state of appearance and a set of military equipment.”³³ By looking good and feeling good the Vikings boosted moral among troops, their constant victory on the battlefield shattered that of the English, and helped create the Viking age.³⁴ A Viking ventured into battle clean and well suited in armor, but this would have been of little value if Vikings had lacked the weapons in which they used to deal out so much pain.

Historians have drawn many conclusions about Viking weaponry, not only from artifacts, but also from future generations. A 13th century law, known as the *Upplandslagen*, required infantry to carry: a shield, helmet, body armor, spear, sword, and a total of 36 arrows into battle.³⁵ Historians are able to link this law to the Viking ancestors who founded such practices. The above law also leaves clues to the fact that Viking warriors were trained to use several different forms of weaponry. Perhaps best known was the Viking long sword, which differed from other blades of the day to incorporate a larger blade.³⁶ Inscriptions left of Viking swords shed light on the name of a precise maker, “ULFBERHT,” these particular swords show a mastery in metal work well ahead of the times.³⁷

²⁹I.P. Stephenson, *Viking Warfare*, Loc. 279.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid, Loc. 830.

³²Ibid, Loc. 774-796.

³³Ibid, Loc. 1220.

³⁴Ibid, Loc. 393.

³⁵Ibid, Loc. 1254.

³⁶Ibid, Loc. 983.

³⁷Herbert Maryon, “Pattern-Welding and Damascening of Sword-Blades: Part 1 Pattern-Welding,” *Studies in Conservation* 5, no. 1 (Feb., 1960): 36, accessed September 17, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1505063>.

Vikings not only understood how to deal blows on the battlefield, but also how to protect them from injury by using shields.

Vikings are well known for a tactic known as the “shield wall.”³⁸ If one were to study the Bayeux Tapestry, which depicts several scenes of Viking battles, one would draw the conclusion that the shield wall consisted of exactly that, a wall of shields. Stephenson makes the assertion that this modern assumption is wrong, he concludes that what the tapestry actually depicts should be taken as many troops, not men fighting close together.³⁹ Instead, Stephenson alludes to more of a “spear wall,” in which the Vikings merely stood close together and used spears to fend off their enemies.⁴⁰ This wall became a cornerstone of Viking warfare, and it soon became evident to others that in order to defeat the Vikings one must break the shield wall.⁴¹ Viking culture contained a unique element that tells a great deal of military strategy, Wernick claims, they were unafraid to die.⁴²

Historians gather information about Vikings and death from several sources, including ancient burials and Viking myths. Jüri Peets examined two Viking burial ships found near the town of Salme.⁴³ Piecing together the evidence it became clear that the Vikings buried the vessel with an afterworld in mind; the gravediggers took the time to place missing limbs with their original owners.⁴⁴ When a Viking died in battle, the Vikings believed that Odin bestowed his greatest honor by bringing the soul to Valhalla.⁴⁵ The realm contained a great hall in which the Viking warriors could pass their days in battle and spend their nights at a great feast. Vikings had no fear of death because by sacrificing their life, they would be given every pleasure they desired in life for eternity. New research and archeological evidence have proven that the Vikings operated in a world governed by the thought and glorification of death.

The ritual of Blót showcases the violence of Vikings against other humans, and unlike the blood eagle evidence proves its existence. Blót became a welcomed tradition among not only Vikings but also Norse farmers, who would build Blót houses.⁴⁶ The ritual involved the sacrificing of both animals and humans alike, the blood of the victims would then be used for blessings, and the meat of the animals eaten, and seen as the embodiment of a deity.⁴⁷ Historical evidence proves the importance of this ritual and a quick look at etymology further supports these

³⁸ I. P. Stephenson, *Viking Warfare*, Loc. 1348.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 1388.

⁴¹ Ibid, 1456.

⁴² Charles River Editors, *The World's Greatest Civilizations: The Vikings* (2012), Kindle Edition, pg. 217.

⁴³ Andrew Curry, “The First Vikings,” *Archaeology* (July-Aug., 2013): 27.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 29.

⁴⁵ Jesse Harasta and the Charles River Editor, *Odin and Thor: The, History, Origins, and Evolution of the Norse Gods* (2012), Kindle Edition, Pg. 23.

⁴⁶ Jesse Harasta and the Charles River Editor, *Odin and Thor*, pg. 44.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

theories. In Old Norse the month of November was known as “Blótmónad.”⁴⁸ Nordic religion and mythology held roots in both death and violence, which seems to have affected the actions of the Viking.

A society’s creation myth typically showcases the unique outlook that mirrors itself in cultural actions. The creation of Earth, as the Vikings viewed it, came about through the act of murder of Ymir, Odin’s grandfather.⁴⁹ According to the myth Ymir’s blood became the sea, his body the land, his bones formed the mountains, and his skull created the heavens.⁵⁰ The Norsemen had a way of turning death into something beautiful, Priscilla Meyer states, “regicide, murder and revenge are recurring themes in Scandinavian lore; in the Eddas they are shown to be transcended through poetry.”⁵¹ While the creation myth speaks to the credit of the stereotypical Viking, the myth that describes the end of days might actually provide a deeper insight.

By studying the events associated with Ragnarök, or the Viking apocalypse, one can gain a better understanding of the guiding principles in a Vikings life. Historians who study the myth find that an underlining principal governing the Vikings was fate. “While people may not know them ahead of time, their stories are written before they are born, and this was true of the gods as well.”⁵² Ragnarök begins with the death of Balder, the Norse god of beauty, which triggers three years of monsters. During this period Thor slays the Midguard serpent, but sacrifices himself to do so.⁵³ Odin, the all father himself, is killed by Fenris, this sacrifice ushers in the new age that is ruled by Balder.⁵⁴ Norse culture taught that out of death beauty would emerge.

A great separator between Norse religion and others, such as Christianity, is the fact that gods were not all powerful.⁵⁵ Many interpret the gods as being more of an ideal for humans to strive for.⁵⁶ The gods had no hope of an afterlife, their sacrifices, like the humans the Vikings killed were not rewarded.⁵⁷ Gods like mortals were destined by fate, this culture teaches historians that the Vikings believed that every battle already had an ending, perhaps this concept of predestined victory further boosted moral of the Vikings.⁵⁸ Many historians have developed theories that Viking gods emerged from humble human beginnings.

The school of thought known as Euhemerists typically relates to the Greek god pantheon, however, there have been those who wished to apply this concept to the Norse pantheon. This school of thought implies that gods were once

⁴⁸ Ibid, 45.

⁴⁹ Charles River Editors, *The World’s greatest Civilizations*, Loc. 107.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Priscilla Meyer, “Pale Fire as Cultural Astrolabe,” 62.

⁵² Jesse Harasta and the Charles River Editor, *Odin and Thor*, pg. 26.

⁵³ Ibid,41.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 28.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 50.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 42.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 49.

mortal, but due to heroic acts they became deities to the following generations.⁵⁹ Snorri Sturluson, author of the *Prose Edda*, was one of the first to apply the thought to Norse gods.⁶⁰ Snorri theorized that the gods were once human, and their tombs became place of worship after their death. Furthermore he believed that the Aesir were a group of people from a city in Asia called Asgard, which was the name of the realm of Gods. Odin led these people to the Germanic lands that they now lived in.⁶¹ Another man, Saxo, went further spinning a theory of a mad king named Odin who forced his followers to worship him as a god, modern historians find this theory to be under supported by evidence.⁶² The Anglo Saxon's traced their roots to a man named Wodin, which could have easily been translated to Odin over time.⁶³ Another contender for the Norse god may have been Othin, whom the kings of Norway traced their lineage to, according to Snorri.⁶⁴ Odin may have started as a man, but the Vikings created a god that stood for wisdom and life.

Odin, according to myth helped to slay Ymir, and thus played a hand in creating Earth. Next he created the first man and women, known as Ask and Embla.⁶⁵ The Vikings worshiped Odin the most among the Norsemen, he stood for wisdom and perfected everything the Vikings stood for. The myths tell of a god who sacrificed himself to learn the secrets of the nine worlds, and to gain knowledge of the 18 magical songs.⁶⁶ Odin conducted himself in such a way that it proved to be in direct contrast to his son Thor. Thor came to be the principle god among the Norse peasantry.⁶⁷ Brute force and courage were the chief traits contained in Thor. These two gods were so different that they have inspired debate among historians as to their deeper cultural meaning.

Albert Morey Sturtevant critically analyzed the *Hárbarðsljóð*, to bring to light a deeper meaning hidden in the clash of Thor and Odin. Sturtevant believed that the Vikings were closely represented by Odin, because they were the elite class who would have naturally been seen as wiser and better educated. Peasants, on the other hand, chose to pledge allegiance to Thor because he represented the fun aspects of their society.⁶⁸ Sturtevant asserted that the *Hárbarðsljóð*, which relayed a conversation between the two gods who struggled to see who has performed the more not worthy acts, was really a depiction of class struggle in Norse society.⁶⁹

⁵⁹ Ibid, 9.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid, 10.

⁶³ I. P. Stephenson, *Viking Warfare*, Loc. 125.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Priscilla Meyer, "Pale Fire as Cultural Astrolabe," 67.

⁶⁶ Jesse Harasta and the Charles River Editor, *Odin and Thor*, pg. 24.

⁶⁷ Albert Morey Sturtevant, "A Note on the *Hárbarðsljóð*," *Publications of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study* 1, no.4 (Nov., 1913): 157, accessed September 17, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40914911>.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 157.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

Thor rose to popularity and easily dominated the minds and hearts of the Norse Peasants. He is known to have fought many battles, with the help of his hammer, Mjöllnir.⁷⁰ Oscar Montelius links the similarities between Thor and other thunder and sun gods throughout the ancient world.⁷¹ Many Norsemen refrained from giving up worship of Thor when Christianity spread throughout the Germanic world in the 11th century.⁷² In fact, the Norse world saw a revival in the pagan beliefs; pagans began naming their children in honor of Thor and wearing pendants of Mjöllnir.⁷³ Montelius further proves his point by giving the example of St. Olaf, as a figure who allowed pagans to openly worship a Thor like figure.⁷⁴ Both figures were represented with an axe and red beards.⁷⁵ The last known town to pay homage to Thor was the Swedish settlement, Thorshälla, who used Olaf to symbolize Thor on the town seal.⁷⁶ As Montelius states, “Thor has survived the fall of both heathenism and of the Roman Catholic church in Sweden.”⁷⁷ Thor stood the test of times in the hearts and minds of the Norse people, however, other gods managed to stand out in literary and military tradition.

Alby Stone argues that Odin stood the test of time, and found his way into the Grail Legends of medieval Britain.⁷⁸ Stone’s idea is supported by evidence found not only in the legend itself, but also in the ancestry of its composers. Medieval Britain was a land dominated by people of Norse decent, and as Stone recalls it was a German who first recorded the Grail genre.⁷⁹ Stone notes several similarities between the Fisher King and Odin, as he is described in the *Gylfaginning*.⁸⁰ Odin’s many nicknames, such as “Spear-thruster,” directly relate to attributes of the Fisher King. Another of Odin’s nicknames, “Hrafnaguð,” which translates to “Raven-god,” provides one of the most compelling arguments for a link.⁸¹ It is here that Stone claims: “Old Norse *hraefn* is not far removed from ‘Bran’ (Welsh *fran* or *vran*; Irish *Bran*.)”⁸² Stone successfully shows that through translation Odin could have become a part of British myth; allowing pagans to keep their myths alive in a changing culture that held little value for the religion of their forefathers. There is, however, another Norse god who played a more modern role, in one of the most turbulent times of the 20th century.

⁷⁰ Oscar Montelius, “The Sun-God’s Axe and Thor’s Hammer,” *Folklore* 21, no.1 (Mar., 1910): 69, accessed September 17, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1253798>.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁷² Jesse Harasta and the Charles River Editor, *Odin and Thor*, pg. 52.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁷⁴ Oscar Montelius, “The Sun-God’s Axe and Thor’s Hammer,” 74.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 75-6.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Alby Stone, “Bran, Odin, and the Fisher King: Norse Tradition and the Grail Legends,” *Folklore* 100, no.1 (1989): 25, accessed September 17, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1259998>.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁸² *Ibid.*

Odin may have been the god whom Vikings chose to pledge allegiance to, but strangely he was not the god of war, that role fell to Tyr.⁸³ During World War II Germany saw a revival in the study of Norse mythology. One of the front men of the revival was Georges Dumézil, who gave a marked interpretation of Tyr in his work *Mitra-Varuna*.⁸⁴ Bruce Lincoln studied Dumézil's work, which generated new ideas about the Viking sagas and class struggles. Dumézil sought an understanding to what he called the "three functions;" these included sovereignty, physical force, and function.⁸⁵ What Lincoln interpreted from Dumézil's research is that each of his so called "functions" originated in the Viking myths as a loss of limb.⁸⁶ Class status and personal character seemed to be reflected in myth through violence, for instance if one lost an eye the person was generally wise, a loss of hand represented a middle man, and lastly to lose a foot was a representation of a corrupt and lowly person.⁸⁷ These theories not only show us that Norse culture remained an important area of study throughout the years, but also highlights the thought behind mythology. How it is that such a strong culture came to be assimilated and changed so greatly?

The answer to the question lies in the shifting sands of religion. Vikings resisted accepting Christianity, which is evident from studying the role the above gods played long after their time was over. Vikings often converted half-heartedly or for brief periods of time.⁸⁸ Wernick describes the acts of Rollo, a Viking king who chose to be baptized and worked towards rebuilding the Christian monasteries that his brethren had destroyed.⁸⁹ For all his seemingly Christian qualities, Rollo still called for pagan sacrifices upon his death; it seems that many Norsemen were reluctant to let go of the culture they held so dear.⁹⁰ However, a change in religion could not quiet the longing for adventure, Stephenson states, "the beginning of the age saw them as looters of Christian property while the end of it saw them as holy crusaders, spreading the word of God."⁹¹ It was in this way that the Vikings continued their long tradition of travel and continued to spread their ways, adding little pieces of Norse culture across Europe.

Historians now know that Vikings were more than just "wild beast." Changing times and new knowledge have helped to uncover several positive and lasting impressions that the Vikings left over the centuries. These men possessed a knowledge of law and justice that helped to establish several governments still in operation today. To the English of the Viking age, the Norse were recorded as, "Gods judgment and vengeance upon England for their many sins," however, we now know that for every bad the Vikings imposed they left behind a token of good.⁹² With today's curiosity about the old Viking gods and traditions, one can only speculate that historical research will continue to grow and generate new knowledge for future generations.

⁸³ Bruce Lincoln, "Rewriting the German War God: Georges Dumézil, Politics and Scholarship in the Late 1930s," *History of Religions* 37, no.3 (Feb., 1998): 195-6, accessed September 17, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3176605>.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 195.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 189.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 198.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Vikings, 57.

⁸⁹ Robert Wernick, *The Vikings*, Loc. 759.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ I.P. Stephenson, *Viking Warfare*, Loc. 1697.

⁹² As quoted in "Sermon of the Wolf," found in Ibid, Loc. 531.

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