



HRAFNAGUÐ THE RAVEN GOD

.HRAFNYTAXNY YM RAFPMT XMN:

There is much debate, speculation and controversy over the role Óðinn plays within the Dark Germanic Tradition. To many within the current, Óðinn is seen as the "demiurge" and the bearer of false light. Given his role in the Asatru movements as the chief deity concerned with the order of the universe, as well as one of the more accessible gods to mankind, this logical jump would not be far off. Furthermore, his family connections including deities like Thor (being the commoner's god of the fields and war) certainly point to a more basic, order-oriented nature. My personal views, however, see him as a teacher and a being who is much more complex than given credit for. It can be argued that on closer inspection of lore, Óðinn has more characteristics of a dark god who deals with the other side more primarily than is accepted in both white light heathenry as well as the main voices of Dark Germanic Heathenry. This is particularly easy to see when one further delves into the worship of this god in more ancient texts than Wagner's romantic operas...

To begin, his bloodline gives credence to a darker origin. As stated in the beginning of this manuscript, Óðinn is the son of Bestla, who is the daughter of Bölþorn, a hrímþurs. Given his parentage, it is impossible to ignore his þursian ancestry. His maternal grandfather, mother and uncle are hrímþursar. As well as through his family Óðinn also made a bloodpact with Loki. Given the aforementioned role Loki plays in the Norse and Germanic pantheons, it is needless to say that this is a direct act of bonding with the dark.

Lokasenna 9:

"Remember, Othin,
in olden days
That we both our blood have mixed;
Then didst thou promise
no ale to pour,
Unless it were brought for us both."

It is baseless to assume that Loki and Óðinn are indeed brothers by blood, but more reasonable to gather that they ritually mixed blood to be connected to one another. In doing so, this further strengthens the þursian blood that already flows within his veins.

Not only by means of blood, but by Óðinn's actions do his darker characteristics come to light. The most important action to draw attention to is his sacrifice, of himself to himself, to obtain the hidden wisdom of the runes. As he pierced himself with his spear and hung from a windy tree (which I believe to be Yggdrasill) his spirit ventured into the absolute darkness. As he hung for nine days and nine nights, he wandered into the depths of Ginnungagap to learn the power of the runes. Some notable events in this theory are:

- The sacrifice of his eye to gain the wisdom of nine power songs given to him by Mímir, son of Bölþorn, is yet another example of his eagerness to ascend into true power.
- His journey into Helheimr upon the horse Sleipnir (birthed by Loke) to consort with a völva giantess (believed to be Gullveig) to learn of creation and of his death by Fenrisúlfr signifies his desire for wisdom.
- Through his exploits, his desire for primordial knowledge, and his self directed (and often unorthodox) methods of attaining this knowledge is made evident. Often, they require sacrifices of his form that would daunt all but the most dedicated of seekers. This path of self-destruction as an initiatory measure to gain

knowledge and wisdom for oneself is very resonant of the goals of the Left-Hand Path. As an archetype, Óðinn could be considered an example to the adept in their journey towards gnosis. His godhood was only attained after his ritual suicide, and only then was he granted the secrets of the nine worlds in the form of the runes when he crossed into the void.

- Óðinn's companions also give insight into his þursian nature. As mentioned, the raven is synonymous with death and symbolizes Hel. His two ravens, Huginn and Muninn fly around Miðgarðr and bring the report of the day. He also has two wolves, Geri and Freki (both meaning the ravenous/greedy one) who accompany him through his exploits. The image of the wolf in this tradition being already explained above, this further lends credence to his leanings when one has a trained eye.

Óðinn is known by more than two hundred names in the Eddas. A few of these names in particular shadow his true self and the nature of his dark being:

- Óðinn // Furious One
- Bölverkr // Evil Worker
- Farmr Galga // Gallows' Burden
- Fjölnir // Wise One/Concealer
- Gangari // Wanderer
- Ginnarr // Deceiver
- Glapsviðr // Swift in Deceit
- Goði hrafnbólts // God of the Raven-offering
- Grimnir // Masked One
- Hangaguð // God of the Hanged
- Helblindi // Hel Blinder
- Hildolfr // Battle Wolf
- Hrafnaguð // Raven God
- Skollvaldr // Ruler of Treachery
- Sonr Bestlu // Son of Bestla
- Svipall // Shape-shifter
- Yggr // Terrible One
- Hangatyr// Hanged God



Georg von Rosen - Oden som vandringsman, 1886 (Odin, the Wanderer)

- Wodanaz// Proto Germanic name for a wrathful storm god believed to have later evolved into Wotan (Germanic spelling of Óðinn).

Óðinn is by no means an "evil" god, compared to a modern evangelical's dualistic worldview, but to compare him to a monotheistic "white light" deity would be grossly inaccurate. The very notion of evil being a dualistic one, the word wouldn't even entirely apply to this worldview. His character is shaded by his actions. Numerous times has he consorted and tricked giantesses into carnal pleasures for his own gain, he has broken sworn oaths on his ring (considered at the time to be one of the worst actions a person could commit), lied to his fellow Æsir as well as kings and beings of great power, and stolen from giants.

One attribute that interests me in particular is Óðinn's knowledge of seiðr¹, whom he learned from a Vanic goddess and Freyja. Gullveig, as Aurboða, tricked Freyja into learning dark seiðr, who in turn taught it to Óðinn. Loki has even ridiculed Óðinn for this in one of his many Flytings (challenges and insults during feasting).

Lokasenna 29:

"They say that with spells
in Samsey once
Like witches with charms didst thou work;
And in witch's guise
among men didst thou go;
Unmanly thy soul must seem."

¹ A form of pre-Christian Norse magic and shamanism concerned with discerning and altering the course of destiny by re-weaving part of destiny's web.

According to Óðinn's bloodline, words, actions and characteristics, I have found in my workings that the comparison to the demiurge in some currents of Þursatru is fallacious and overly simplified. Given the oral nature of the lore, it leaves little writing to find definite answers, and any follower of this current would best find their answer to this (and all) questions through personal practice and draw their own conclusions. Seeing as this is one of many traditions under the umbrella off the Left-Hand Path, the emphasis on personal discovery is of no less import.

According to my own interpretation, Óðinn is a guide that grants knowledge to those who are courageous enough to step outside of what is accepted to truly enlighten oneself. To me, the death of Óðinn at the world's ending was his final sacrifice and the fulfillment of his true destiny: to bathe in the flames of Múspellsheimr as he meets his end by Fenrisúlfr, achieving liberation. I have concluded that he accepted his true fate, and gave himself to the dark blood coursing within his veins in order to complete his journey in seeking the true wisdom of Ginnungagap. By no means do I suggest that Óðinn is a herald of destruction and the bringer of the world's demise by taking on the role of an antagonist. Instead, Óðinn began a path of darkness, treachery and deceit within the confines of this existence to obtain the liberating black light, borne of the primordial black fire.



Kampf der untergehenden Götter, by F. W. Heine