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BY
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Serapis

THE MYSTERIES OF ASAR-HAPI (cont.)

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Asar-Hāpi (Sorapis).

Osor-Apis is depicted as a man with the head of a bull, and carrying the ensigns by which we usually recognize Osiris. The god of Alexandria therefore differs in form as widely as in origin from the original patron of Thebes, with whom he has no other affinity than in name, and *that* rests only on the arbitrary interpretation of the Egyptian priests, so successful in persuading the Greeks that the mythology of the whole world was but a plagiarism from their own. –The Gnostics and Their Remains:171-2

–from Budge's 'Gods of the Egyptians'

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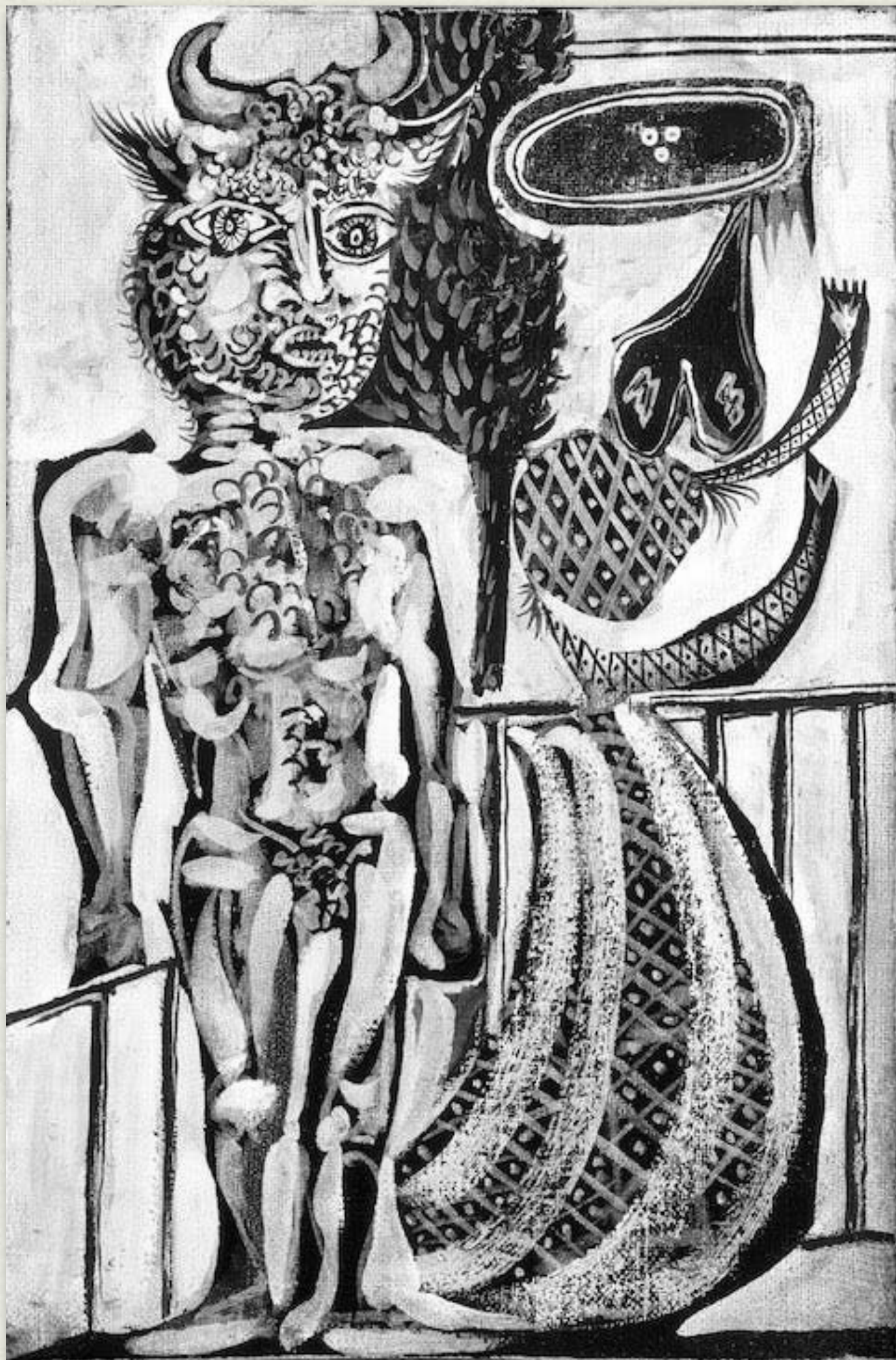
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Minotaur, by Pablo Picasso

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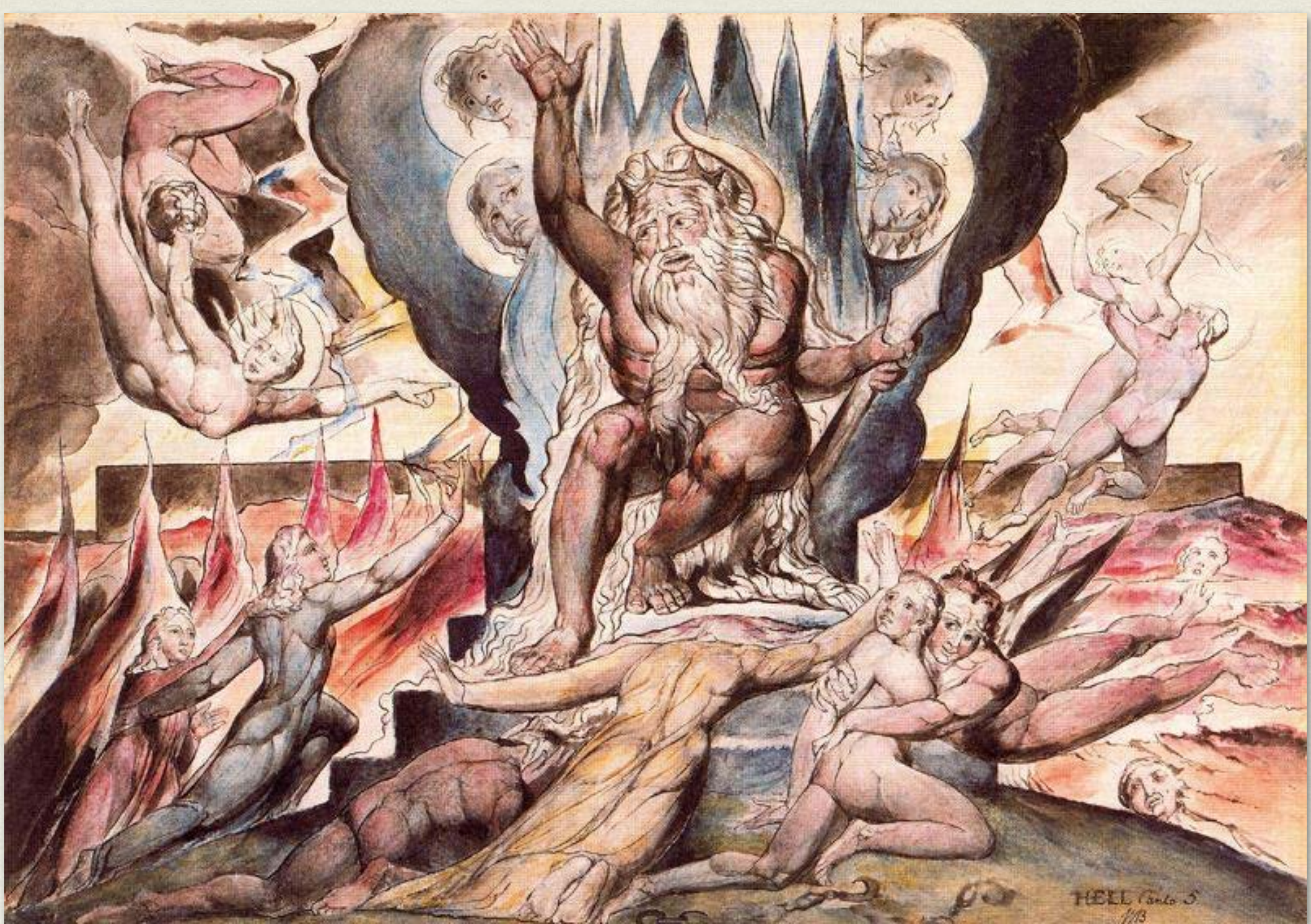
King Minos of Crete



Mannus is the ancestor of the German race; the Hindu *Manu*, the thinking being, from man; the Egyptian *Menes*; and *Minos*, the King of Crete, judge of the infernal regions after his death — all proceed from the same root or word.

—SD2:774





Minos by William Blake (1757-1827, United Kingdom)

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NEW LIGHT FROM THE GREAT PYRAMID

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BY ALBERT ROSS PARSONS

AUTHOR OF "PARSIFAL: THE FINDING OF CHRIST THROUGH ART"

In the ecclesiastical history of Socrates, we read: "In the temple of Serapis, now overthrown and rifled throughout, there were found engraven in the stones certain letters which they call hieroglyphical; the manner of their engraving resembled the form of the cross. The Christians affirmed that the cross was a sign or token of the passion of Christ, and the proper symbol of their profession. The Ethnics avouched that therein was contained something in common belonging as well to Serapis as to Christ."

Sozomenes, a.d, 443, writes: "It is reported that when this temple (that of the god Serapis) was destroyed, there appeared some of those characters called hieroglyphics, surrounding the sign of the cross, in engraven stones; and that, by the skillful in these matters, these hieroglyphics were held to have signified this inscription: 'The Life to Come.'

The Emperor Adrian, in a letter written 134 A.D., in the course of his travels in Egypt states: "The worshippers of Serapis are Christians, and those are devoted to the God Serapis, who (I find) call themselves the bishops of Christ."

The Jews took Serapis (apis, bull) to be identical with Joseph, the son of Sarah. The zodiacal sign of Joseph was Taurus. Thus while Osiris was the personification of the Sun in Sagittarius the horse, Serapis, was the Sun in Taurus, the door. "I am the Door."

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Upon the Fixed Cross...

The Bull becomes the bestower of light, and the darkness of the earlier cycle is lightened by the Bull.

Aries, Taurus, and Capricorn are the great transformers under the great creative plan. They are in the nature of catalysts. Each of them opens a door into one of the three divine centres of expression which are the symbols in the body of the planetary Logos of the three higher centres in man: the head, the heart and the throat.

Aries opens the door into Shamballa, when the experience of Taurus and Capricorn has been undergone.

Taurus opens the door into the Hierarchy when the significance of Gemini and Leo is understood and the first two initiations can therefore be taken. –EA:157

the Christian Era. In A.D. 385, Theodosius, that would-be exterminator of pagan philosophy, issued his memorable edict *De Idolo Serapidis Diruendo*. When the Christian soldiers, in obedience to this order, entered the Serapeum at Alexandria to destroy the image of Serapis which had stood there for centuries, so great was their veneration for the god that they dared not touch the image lest the ground should open at their feet and engulf them. At length, overcoming their fear, they demolished the statue, sacked the building, and finally as a fitting climax to their offense burned the magnificent library which was housed within the lofty apartments of the Serapeum. Several writers have recorded the remarkable fact that Christian symbols were found in the ruined foundations of this pagan temple. Socrates, a church historian of the fifth century, declared that after the pious Christians had razed the Serapeum at Alexandria and scattered the demons who dwelt there under the guise of gods, beneath the foundations was found the monogram of Christ!

Two quotations will further establish the relationship existing between the Mysteries of Serapis and those of other ancient peoples. The first is from Richard Payne Knight's *Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology*: "Hence Varro [in *De Lingua Latina*] says that Coelum and Terra, that is universal mind and productive body, were the Great Gods of the Samothracian Mysteries; and the same as the Serapis and Isis of the later Ægyptians: the Taautos and Astarte of the Phœnicians, and the Saturn and Ops of the Latins." The second quotation is from Albert Pike's *Morals and Dogma*: "'Thee,' says Martianus Capella, in his hymn to the Sun, 'dwellers on the Nile adore as Serapis, and Memphis worships as Osiris: in the sacred rites of Persia thou art Mithras, in Phrygia, Aty, and Libya bows down to thee as Ammon, and Phœnician Byblos as Adonis; thus the whole world adores thee under different names.'"

THE ODINIC MYSTERIES

The date of the founding of the Odinic Mysteries is uncertain, some writers declaring that they were established in the first century before Christ; others, the first century after Christ. Robert Macey, 33^d gives the following description of their origin: "It appears from the most recent chronicles that, in the first century of the Christian Era, Sigge, the chief of the Aser, an Asiatic tribe, emigrated from the Caspian sea and the Caucasus into northern Europe. He directed his course north-westward from the Black sea to Russia, over which, according to tradition, he placed one of his sons as a ruler, as he is said to have done over the Saxons and the Franks. He then advanced through Cimbria to Denmark, which acknowledged his fifth son Skield as its sovereign, and passed over to Sweden, where Gylf, who did homage to the wonderful stranger, and was initiated into his mysteries, then ruled. He soon made himself master here, built Siggeus as the capital of his empire, and promulgated a new code of laws, and established the sacred mysteries. He, himself, assumed the name of Odin, founded the priesthood of the twelve Drottars: (Droittars?) who conducted the secret worship, and the administration of justice, and, as prophets, revealed the future. The secret rites of these mysteries celebrated the death of Balder, the beautiful and lovely, and represented the grief of Gods and men at his death, and his resurrection to life." (*General History of Freemasonry*.)

After his death, the historical Odin was apotheosized, his identity being merged into that of the mythological Odur, god of wisdom, whose cult he had promulgated. Odinism then supplanted the worship of Thor, the thunderer, the supreme deity of the ancient Scandinavian pantheon. The mound where, according to legend, King Odur was buried is still to be seen near the site of his great temple at Upsala.

The twelve Drottars who presided over the Odinic Mysteries evidently personified the twelve holy and ineffable names of Odin. The rituals of the Odinic Mysteries were very similar to those of the Greeks, Persians, and Brahmans after which they were patterned. The Drottars, who symbolized the signs of the zodiac, were the custodians of the arts and sciences, which they revealed to those who passed successfully the ordeals of initiation. Like many other pagan cults, the Odinic Mysteries, as an institution, were destroyed by

Christianity but the underlying cause of their fall was the corruption of the priesthood.

Mythology is nearly always the ritual and the symbolism of a Mystery school. Briefly stated, the sacred drama which formed the basis of the Odinic Mysteries was as follows:

The Supreme, invisible Creator of all things was called All-Father. His agent in Nature was Odin, the one-eyed god. Like Quetzalcoatl, Odin was elevated to the lignity of the Supreme Deity. According to the Drottars, the universe was fashioned from the body of Ymir, the hoarfrost giant. Ymir was formed from the clouds of mist that rose from Gimnangap, the great cleft in chaos into which the primordial frost giants and lame giants had hurled snow and fire. The three gods—Odin, Vâi, and Ve—slew Ymir and from him formed the world. From Ymir's various members the different parts of Nature were fashioned.

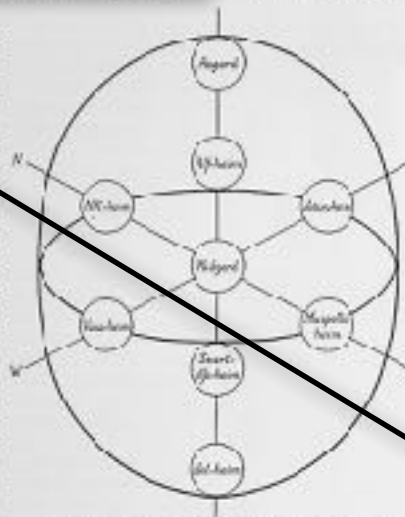
After Odin had established order, he caused a wonderful palace, called Asgard, to be built on the top of a mountain, and here the twelve Æsir (gods) dwelt together, far above the limitations of mortal men. On this mountain also was Valhalla, the palace of the slain, where those who had heroically died fought and feasted day after day. Each night their wounds were healed and the bear whose flesh they ate renewed itself as rapidly as it was consumed.

Balder the Beautiful—the Scandinavian Christ—was the beloved son of Odin. Balder was not warlike; his kindly and beautiful spirit brought peace and joy to the hearts of the gods, and they all loved him save one. As Jesus had a Judas among His twelve disciples, so one of the twelve gods was false—Loki, the personification of evil. Loki caused Hôth, the blind god of fire, to shoot Balder with a mistletoe arrow. With the death of Balder, light and joy vanished from the lives of the other deities. Heartbroken, the gods gathered to find a method whereby they could resurrect this spirit of eternal life and youth. The result was the establishment of the Mysteries.

The Odinic Mysteries were given in underground crypts or caves, the chambers, nine in number, representing the Nine Worlds of the Mysteries. The candidate seeking admission was assigned the task of raising Balder from the dead. Although he did not realize it, he himself played the part of Balder. He called himself a wanderer; the caverns through which he passed were symbolic of the worlds and spheres of Nature. The prison who initiated him were emblematic of the sun, the moon, and the stars. The three supreme initiators—the Sublime, the Equal to the Sublime, and the Highest—were analogous to the Worshipful Master and the Junior and Senior Wardens of a Masonic lodge.

After wandering for hours through the intricate passageways, the candidate was ushered into the presence of a statue of Balder the Beautiful, the prototype of all initiates into the Mysteries. This figure stood in the center of a great apartment roofed with shields. In the midst of the chamber stood a plant with seven blossoms, emblematic of the planets in the zodiac, which symbolized the house of the Æsir, or Wisdom, the neophyte took his oath of secrecy and piety upon the naked blade of a sword. He drank the sanctified mead from a bowl made of a human skull and, having passed successfully through all the ordeals and trials designed to divert him from the course of wisdom, he was finally permitted to unveil the mystery of Odin—the personification of wisdom. He was presented, in the name of Balder, with the sacred ring of the order; he was hailed as a *thunur reborn*, and it was said of him that he had died and had been raised again without passing through the gates of death.

Richard Wagner's immortal composition, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, is based upon the Mystery rituals of the Odinic cult. While the great composer took many liberties with the original story, the Ring Operas, declared to be the grandest tetralogy of music cramas the world possesses, have caught and preserved in a remarkable manner the majesty and power of the original sagas. Beginning with *Das Rheingold*, the action proceeds through *Die Walküre* and *Siegfried* to an awe-inspiring climax in *Götterdämmerung*. "The Twilight of the Gods."



THE NINE WORLDS OF THE ODINIC MYSTERIES. The Odinic Mysteries were given in underground, or caverns, the candidate advancing through them in sequential order. These chambers of initiation represented the nine spheres into which the Drottars divided the universe: (a) Asgard, the Heaven World of the Gods; (1) All from the floor of the ægir and heavenly Æsir, or Æsir; (2) Niflheim, the World of Cold and Darkness, which is located in the North; (3) Jotunheim, the World of the Giants, which is located in the East; (4) Midgard, the Earth World of human beings, which is located in the middle, or middle place; (5) Vanaheim, the World of the Vanes, which is located in the West; (6) Muspelheim, the World of Fire, which is located in the South; (7) Svartalfheim, the World of the dwarfs and treacherous Elves, which is under the earth; and (8) Helheim, the World of cold and the abode of the dead, which is located at the very lowest point of the universe. It is to be understood that all of these worlds are accessible to the souls of men, except Midgard, the home of human creatures, but during the process of initiation from the soul of the candidate—liberated from its earthly shackles by the secret power of the priest—wanderers among the substances of these various spheres. There is undoubtedly a relationship between the nine worlds of the Scandinavians and the nine spheres, or planes, through which initiates of the Theosophical Mysteries pass in their ritual of regeneration.

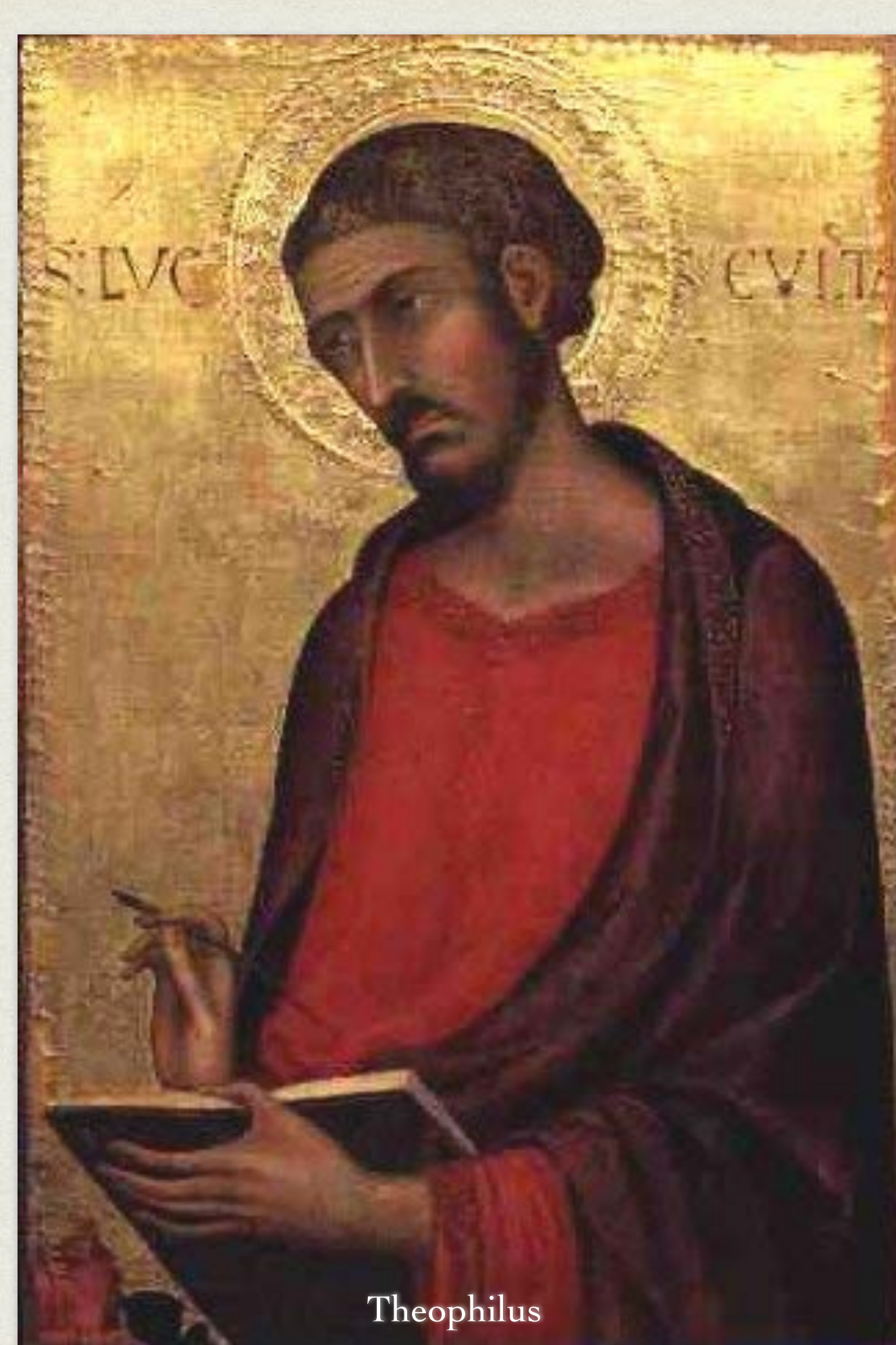
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Theophilus

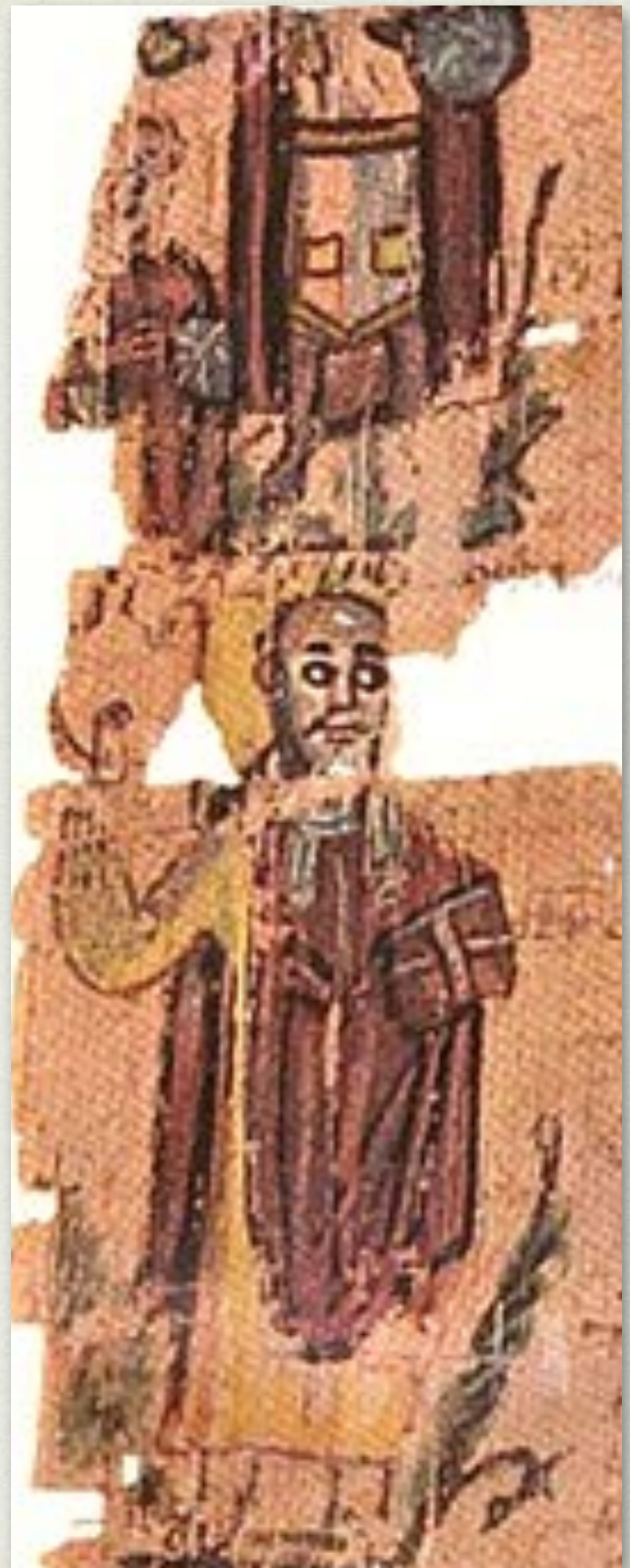
Encouraged by the imperial edict addressed to the prefect of Rome prohibiting pagan worship, Theophilus, the patriarch of Alexandria, took the cult objects that had been found during the conversion of a pagan temple and contemptuously paraded them in the street, holding them up to ridicule. A riot was provoked and Christians killed. Taking refuge in the Serapeum, the pagans of Alexandria fortified it against attack, forcing Christians who had been captured to sacrifice there and torturing them if they refused. Writing in AD 402, Rufinus, who may have been witness to some of the events he describes, says that the Serapeum was elevated on an enormous platform, a hundred or more steps high. "In it there was a statue of Serapis so large that its right hand touched one wall and its left the other. This monster is said to have been made of every kind of metal and wood. On the day that an image of the sun was to be carried into the Serapeum, a small window allowed a ray of sunlight to fall on the lips of the statue in a kiss of renewal, the image itself suspended in the air, as if by magic, by hidden magnets. Clement of Alexandria says that the sculptor of the statue *“employed in its execution a mixture of various materials. For he had filings of gold, and silver, and lead, and in addition, tin; and of Egyptian stones not one was wanting, and there were fragments of sapphire, and hematite, and emerald, and topaz. Having ground down and mixed together all these ingredients, he gave to the composition a blue colour, whence the darkish hue of the image.”*



RUFINUS AQUILEIENSIS

The disturbance was reported to the emperor, who declared the slain Christians to be martyrs. The defenders barricaded within were to be pardoned but the temple, itself, destroyed, so that, says Rufinus, *“the cause of the evils and the roots of the discord which had taken up the defense of the idols should be eliminated, so that once these were done away with the reason for the conflict might disappear”*. As the imperial rescript was read aloud and it became clear that the pagans were being held responsible, the Christians, shouting their joy, assailed the temple. They hesitated, however, to desecrate the figure of Serapis itself, fearful that, *“if a human hand touched the statue, the earth would split open on the spot and crumble into the abyss, while the sky would crash down at once”*

Then, at the instigation of Theophilus, one of the soldiers took an axe and struck the god on the jaw. Everyone cried out but, when the sky did not fall, the head was chopped off. The rest of the huge idol was broken into pieces, the head carried through the town and the god burned in front of the sullen pagans who had worshiped him. Later, when the temple itself was being razed to the ground, Socrates relates that hieroglyphs in the shape of crosses (ankh) were found incised in the stone. Busts of Serapis, which had been placed throughout the city, were destroyed and, boasts Rufinus, *“so cut and filed away that not even a trace or mention of him or any other demon remained anywhere. In their place everyone painted the sign of the Lord's cross on doorposts, entrances, windows, walls, and columns”*. And so the Christians of the city exorcised the gods of the pagans. —uchicago.edu



This fragment of papyrus, which is from “The Alexandrian World Chronicle”, shows the black face of the cult statue as described by Clement of Alexandria, with a modius atop its head. Standing triumphant above is Theophilus, gospel in hand, and what may be the sun-disk of Serapis raised aloft.

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The second quotation is from Albert Ple's *Morals and Logos*: "Thee," says Martiana Capella, in his hymn to the Sun, "dwellst on the Nile adored as Serapis, and Memphis worships as Osiris; in the sacred rites of Persia thou art Mithras, in Phœrgia, Ares, and Libya hasten down to thee as Anaton, and Phœnician Byblus as Adonis; thus the whole world adores thee under different names."

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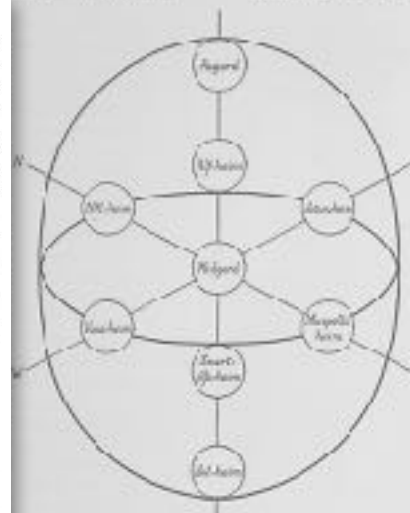
Balder the Beautiful—the Scandinavian Christ—was the beloved son of Odin. Balder was not warlike; his kindly and beautiful spirit brought peace and joy to the hearts of the gods, and they all loved him save one. As Jesus had a Judas among His twelve disciples, so one of the twelve gods was false—Loki, the personification of evil. Loki caused Hlithr, the blind god of fire, to shoot Balder with a mistletoe arrow. With the death of Balder, light and joy vanished from the lives of the other deities. Heartbroken, the gods gathered to find a method whereby they could resurrect the spirit of eternal life and youth. The result was the establishment of the Mysteries.

The Odinic Mysteries were given in underground crypts or caves, the chambers, nine in number, representing the Nine Worlds of the Mysteries. The candidate seeking admission was assigned the task of raising Balder from the dead. Although he did not realize it, he himself played the part of Balder. He called himself a wanderer; the caverns through which he passed were symbolic of the worlds and spheres of Nature. The priests who initiated him were emblematic of the sun, the moon, and the stars. The three supreme initiators—the Sublime, the Equal to the Sublime, and the Highest—were analogous to the Worshipful Master and the Junior and Senior Wardens of a Masonic lodge.

After wandering for hours through the intricate passageways, the candidate was ushered into the presence of a statue of Balder the Beautiful, the prototype of all initiates into the Mysteries. This figure stood in the center of a great apartment roofed with shields. In the midst of the chamber stood a plate with seven blossoms, emblematic of the planets. In this room, which symbolized the house of the Aesir, or Wisdom, the neophyte took his oath of secrecy and piety upon the naked blade of a sword. He drank the sanctified mead from a bowl made of a human skull and, having passed successfully through all the ordeals and trials designed to direct him from the course of wisdom, he was finally permitted to unveil the mystery of Odin—the personification of wisdom. He

was presented, in the name of Balder, with the sacred ring of the orders; he was hailed as a *mastr aldrinn*, and it was said of him that he had died and had been raised again without passing through the gates of death.

Richard Wagner's immortal composition, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, is based upon the Mystery rituals of the Odinic cult. While the great composer took many liberties with the original story, the Ring Operas, declared to be the grandest tetralogy of music dramas the world possesses, have captivated and preserved in a remarkable manner the majesty and power of the original sagas. Beginning with *Das Rheingold*, the action proceeds through *Die Walküre* and *Siegfried* to an awe-inspiring climax in *Götterdämmerung*, "the Twilight of the Gods."



THE NINE WORLDS OF THE ODINIC MYSTERIES.
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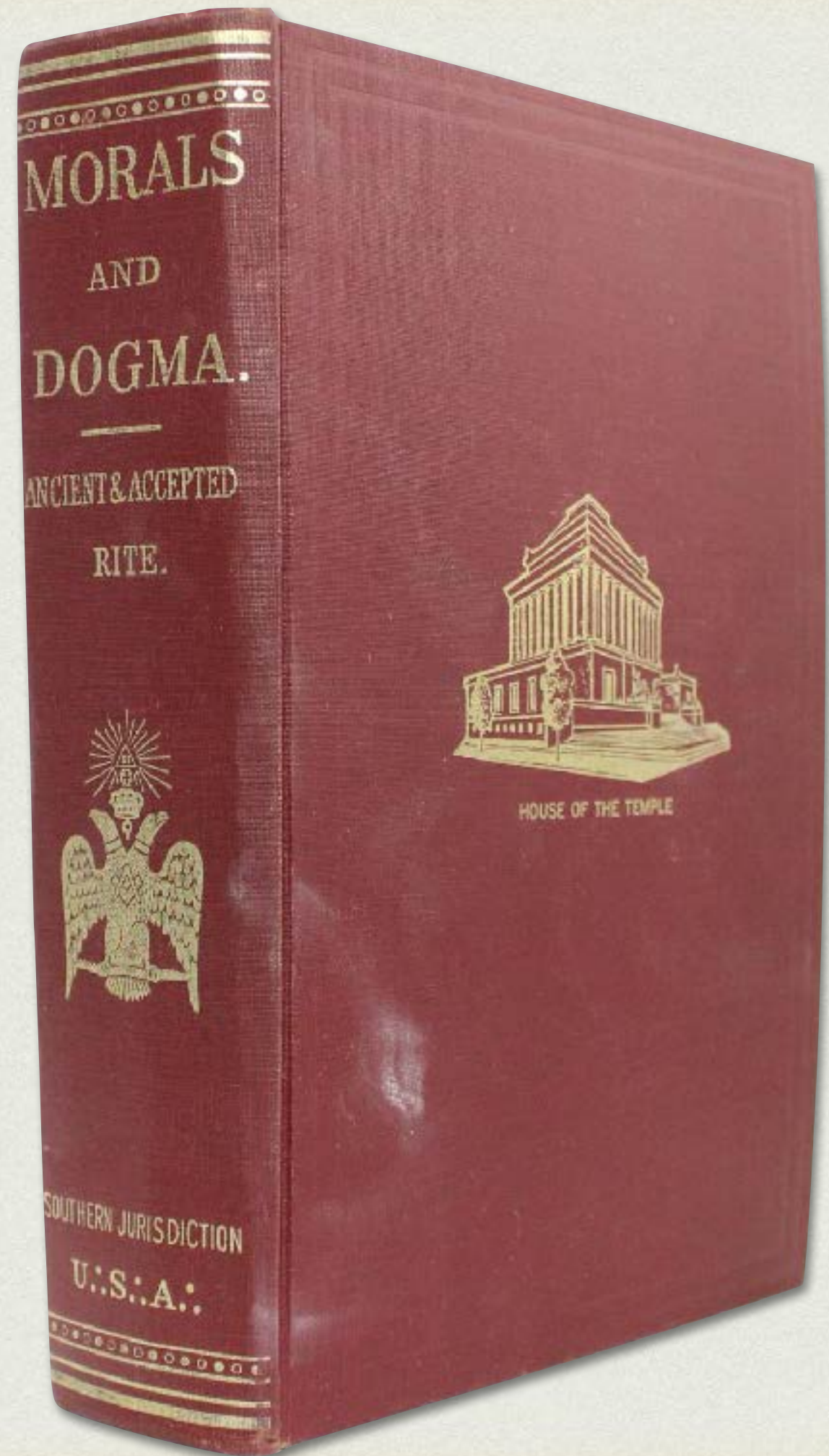
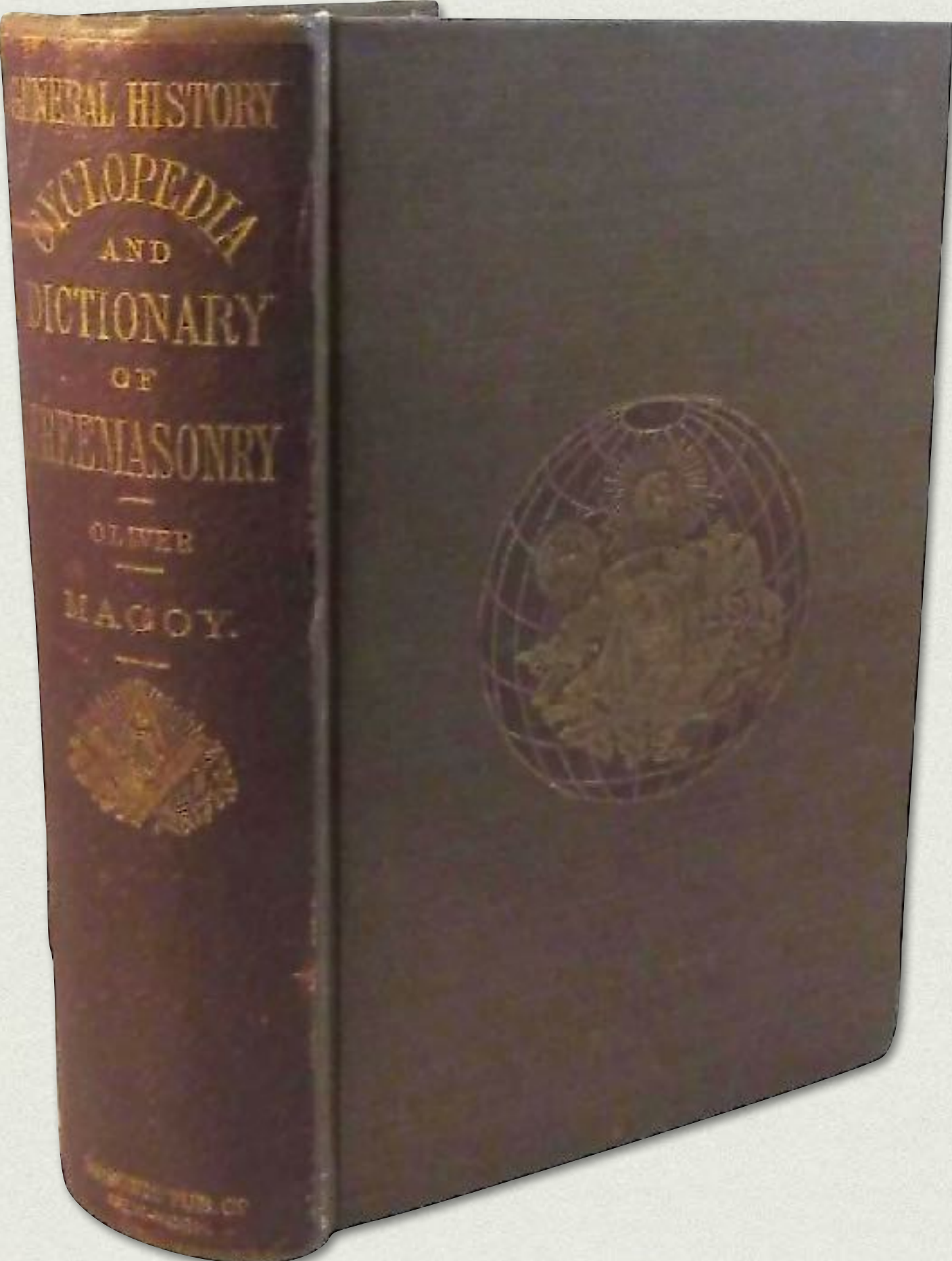
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Bersi Skáldtorfuson, in chains, composing poetry after he was captured by King Óláfr Haraldsson
(illustration by Christian Krohg, 1899)

The northern mythology, in the systematic condition in which we now possess it, is the work of *Scalds* that is, of the ancient minstrels of Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland. Religion and civilization here, as is often the case, sprang from poetry, and were propagated and nourished, and improved by the mysteries. The rites of Odin had an Oriental origin. –General History of Freemasonry:272



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Godfrey Higgins



ANACALYPSIS, AN ATTEMPT
TO DRAW ASIDE THE
VEIL OF THE SAITIC ISIS

Or an Inquiry Into the Origin of
Languages, Nations, and Religions



Vol. I

Forgotten Books

This same country [Ceylon], thus connected with India, appears to also be in relation with the North of Europe. [For] it is here that we find the Asaburgers, “inhabitants of Asgard”, in the country of the As-kenaz, and this is properly Asia. From hence came Odin and his Asa into Scandinavia.

—Anacalypsis 1:600



ODIN, THE SCANDINAVIAN FATHER-GOD

It is difficult to secure any satisfactory information concerning the identity of Odin. If he actually founded the mysteries of Scandinavia, he was undoubtedly an initiate of an Eastern school, possibly the Buddhistic. The etymology of the word Odin shows its various forms as *Woden*, *Wodan*, *Wotan*, *Wuotan*, and *Odinn*. These words are now generally defined as meaning “wood” or “wind.” On this subject, that indefatigable worker, Godfrey Higgins, has made several important discoveries. He writes: *“Thus it appears that Woden, the Northern God, is simply the Tamulic method of pronouncing Buddha. (Sir William Jones also believed that Buddha was Woden.) That Woden came from the North, not the South, of India cannot be doubted.”*

The Tamils (Tamuls) are a branch of the Dravidian race. They are now scattered through Southern India and Ceylon. It is peculiarly significant that Woden should be linked through his name with the ancient source of Aryan culture in Northern India. Higgins further says: *“In the Syriac tongue, Odin is Adonis; but the ‘O’, in Syriac, or Pushto, (which we have found is the same as Tamul) was the emphatic article THE. Then Odin would be the Dn, Dun, or Don; but Don, we have found, meant wisdom or knowledge. Thus, we come again to the tree of knowledge or the garden of knowledge, or garden of Adonis.”* (See Anacalypsis.) As Woden therefore means both “wood” and “wisdom,” it does not require a great stretch of the imagination to see in this symbolic name an allusion to the tree of knowledge growing in O-DON (the -DON, or Eden), the garden of wisdom. –plate facing ST0AA:33



ODIN



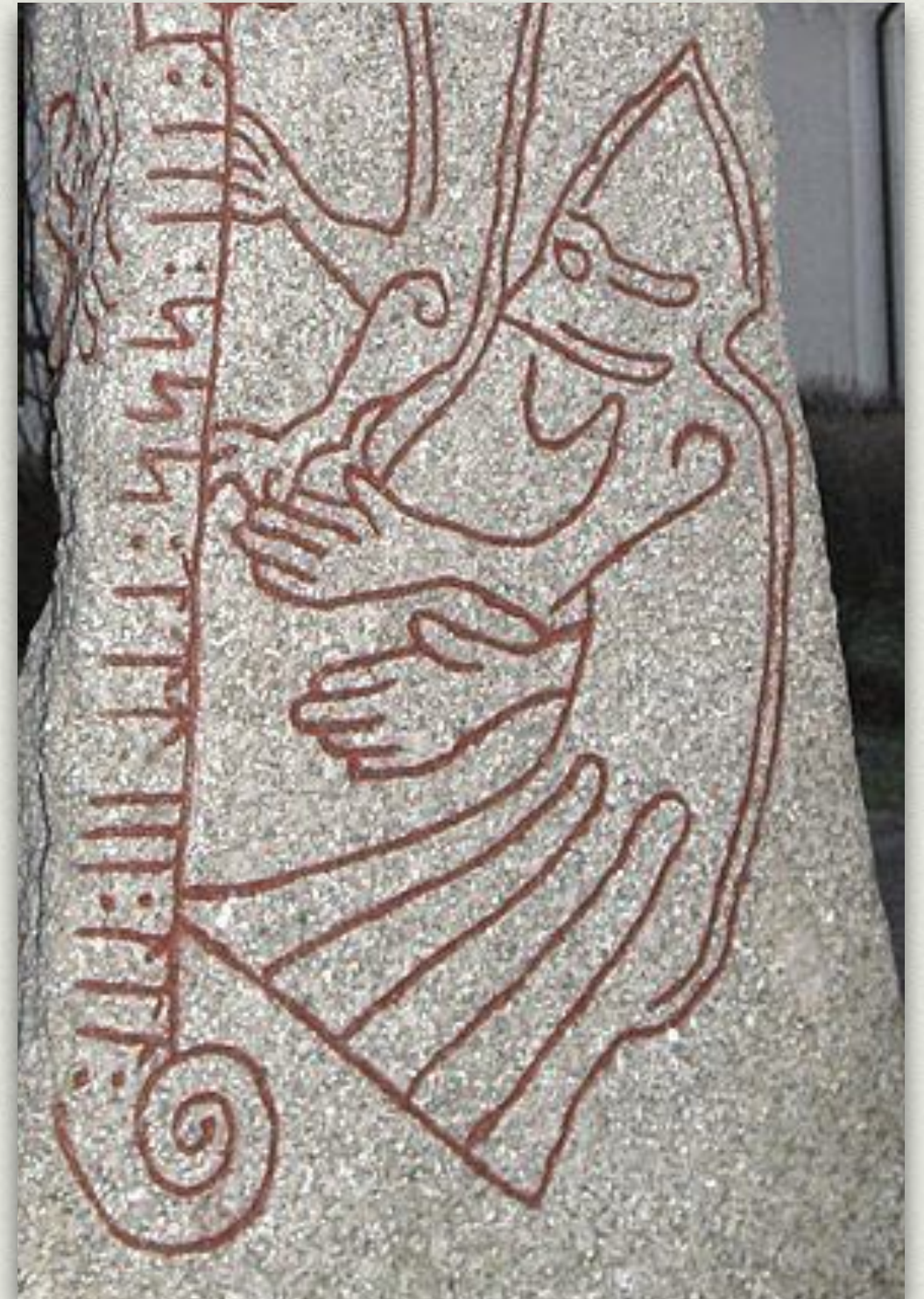






A bracteate [thin beaten disc] featuring a figure, possibly Odin, above a horse flanked by a bird





The Ledberg stone, an 11th century runestone



Ödinn
Hugin

Köngur
Muninn

Deyr in
Gugnar

Þrasnar
Ineir sitia
at Ox lum
þan þey
þa hugin
Munin
þærabo
nu þriok
am alla
þeim

Þakymid
Lontrafej
þargar na
þu þjódir
Adur þyrba
Þing á mey
þem aunu
þu þillu slo
der. þadv
þbued Gop
ept' Okni
þmudad.

Opin
þigtit
þydum
þasfle
þebottle
þeeblu
þhafou
þtund
um þe
þyr. þtu
ndu þtag
i þendi
þmad þi
þvan
þalla þoydi
þþ. þeit' þu
þþd þottun



A 16th-century depiction of Norse gods by Olaus Magnus: from left to right, Frigg, Odin, and Thor

Odin sits atop his steed Sleipnir, his ravens Huginn and Munin and wolves Geri and Freki nearby.
(1895) by Lorenz Frølich



Óðinn throws his spear at the Vanir host
in an illustration by Lorenz Frølich (1895)



Wotan takes leave of Brunhild
(1892) by Konrad Diehlitz

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Óðinn throws his spear at the Vanir host
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Wodan and Frea look down from their window in the heavens; illustration by Emil Doepler, 1905



Odin, in his guise as a wanderer
by Georg von Rosen (1886)

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Gylf greets Odin



Sigtuna, Sweden



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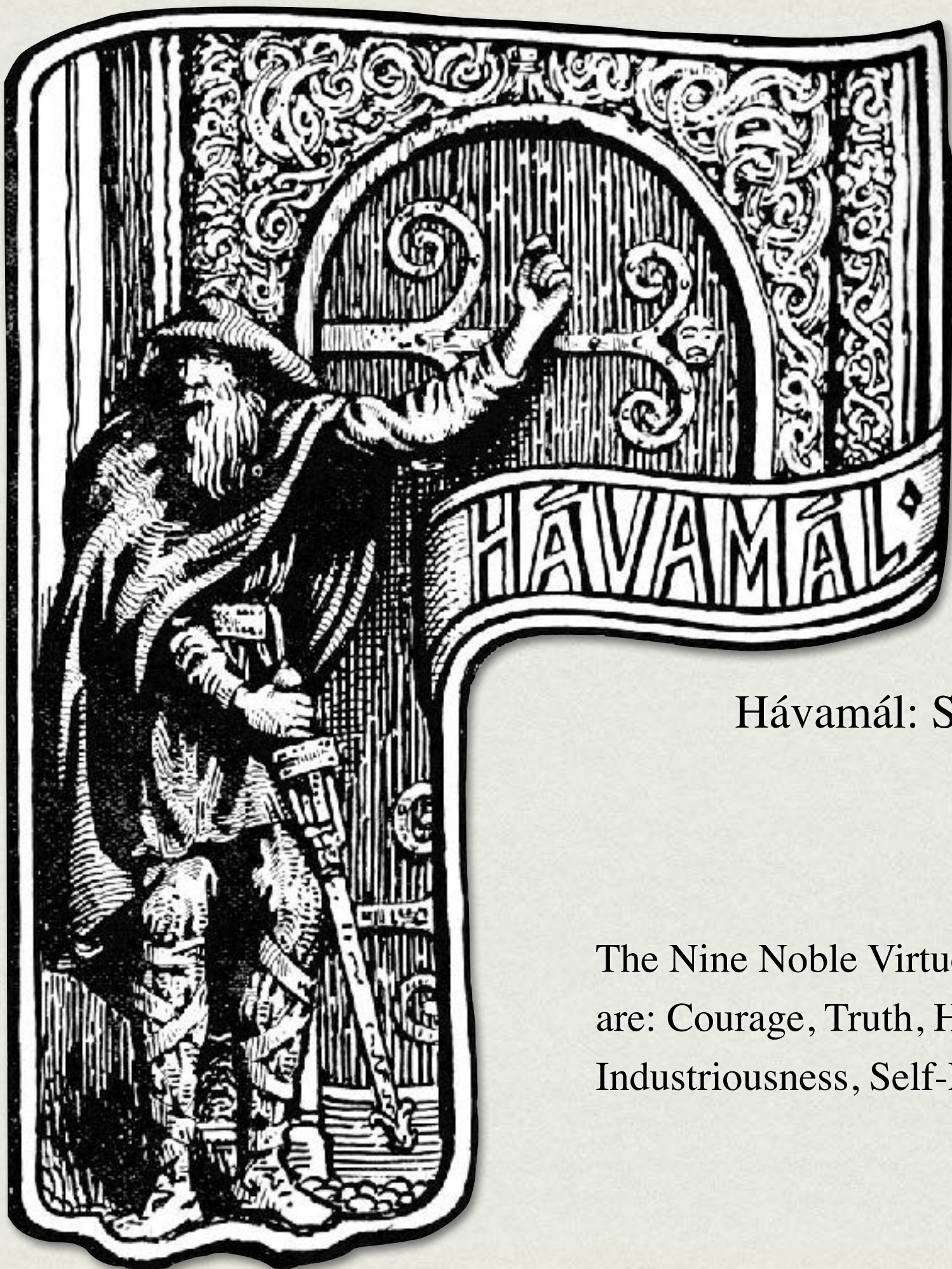
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Hávamál: Song (or Words) of the High One

The Nine Noble Virtues of Odinism, contained in the Poetic Edda are: Courage, Truth, Honor, Fidelity, Discipline, Hospitality, Industriousness, Self-Reliance, and Perseverance.

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The Gothic Mysteries were carried Northward from the East, by Odin; who, being a great warrior, modelled and varied them to suit his purposes and the genius of his people. He placed over their celebration twelve Hierophants, who were alike Priests, Counsellors of State, and Judges from whose decision there was no appeal. –Morals and Dogma:389

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Balder

ODIN, THE SCANDINAVIAN FATHER-GOD

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The Tamils (Tamuls) are a branch of the Dravidian race. They are now scattered through Southern India and Ceylon. It is peculiarly significant that Woden should be linked through his name with the ancient source of Aryan culture in Northern India. Higgins further says: *“In the Syriac tongue, Odin is Adonis; but the ‘O’, in Syriac, or Pushto, (which we have found is the same as Tamul) was the emphatic article THE. Then Odin would be the Dn, Dun, or Don; but Don, we have found, meant wisdom or knowledge. Thus, we come again to the tree of knowledge or the garden of knowledge, or garden of Adonis.”* (See Anacalypsis.) As Woden therefore means both “wood” and “wisdom,” it does not require a great stretch of the imagination to see in this symbolic name an allusion to the tree of knowledge growing in O-DON (the -DON, or Eden), the garden of wisdom. –plate facing ST0AA:33



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Odin

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Serapis



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Gylf greets Odin





All the creative gods, or personal Deities, begin at the secondary stage of Cosmic evolution. Zeus is born in, and out of Kronos—Time. So is Brahmâ the production and emanation of Kala, "eternity and time," Kala being one of the names of Vishnu. Hence we find Odin, the father of the gods and of the Ases, as Brahmâ is the father of the gods and of the Asuras, and hence also the androgyne character of all the chief creative gods, from the second MONAD of the Greeks down to the Sephiroth Adam Kadmon, the Brahmâ or Prajâpati-Vâch of the Vedas, and the androgyne of Plato, which is but another version of the Indian symbol. —SD2:427

Asgard and the Gods:

THE
TALES AND TRADITIONS OF OUR NORTHERN ANCESTORS

FORMING A COMPLETE MANUAL OF NORSE MYTHOLOGY.

ADAPTED FROM THE WORK OF
DR. W. WÄGNER,

BY

M. W. MACDOWALL,

AND EDITED BY

W. S. W. ANSON,

Editor of Dr. Wagner's "Epics and Romances of the Middle Ages."

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

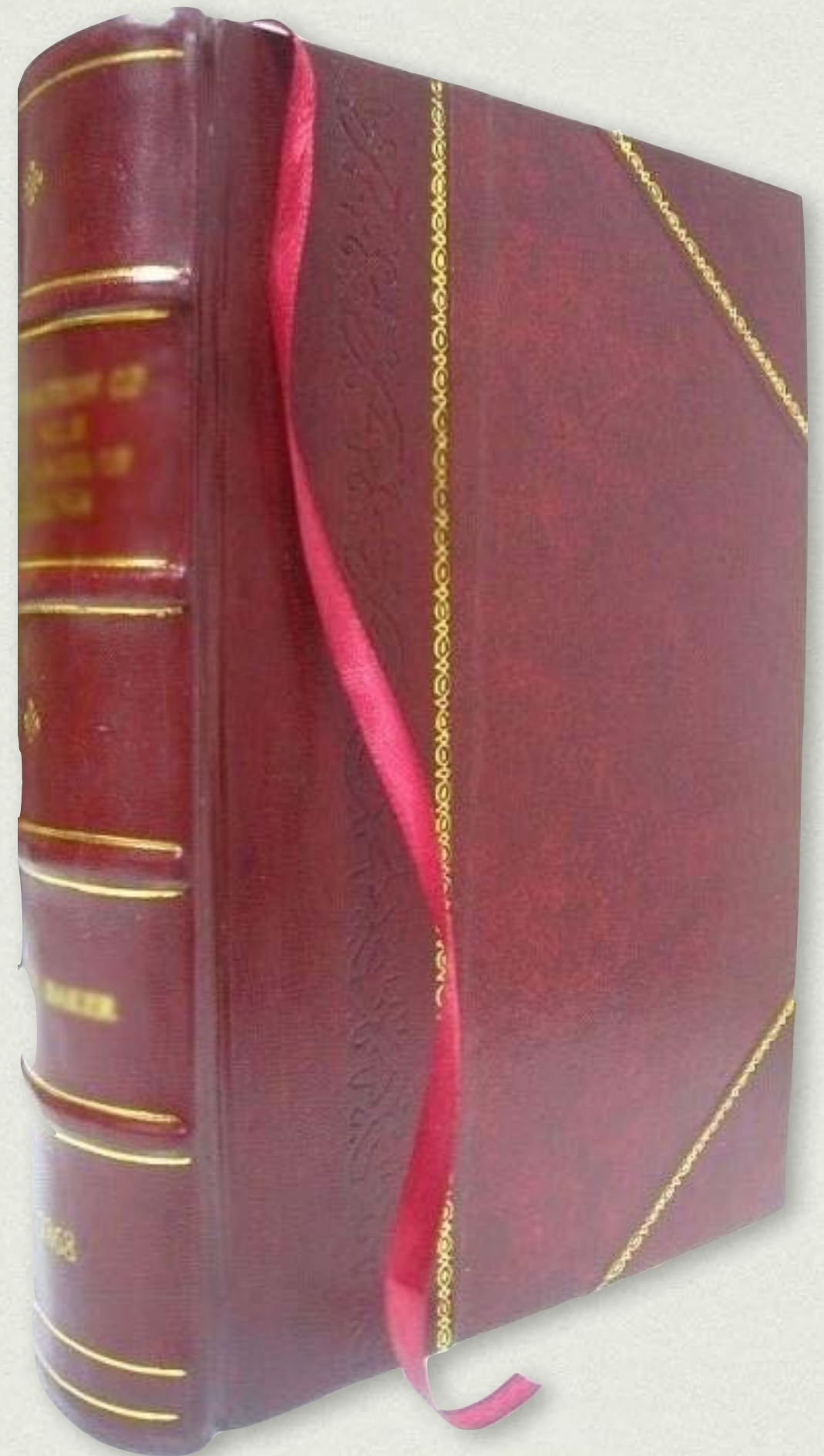
FOURTH



EDITION.

LONDON:
SWAN SONNENSCHN, LE BAS & LOWREY.

1886.





WODAN'S WILD HUNT.

At first Odin was worshipped under the form of a horse or of an eagle, as these were types of strength and swiftness. But when the mastery of the human race over the animal world was better understood, the god was endowed with a human form. He was described in the legends and stories, now as a mighty traveller who studied and tried the dispositions of men, and now as an old man with bald head, or with thick hair and a beard which gained him in the North the name of *Hrossharsgrani* (horse-hair bearded). He had usually only one eye, for the heavens have but one sun, Wodan's eye. He wore a broad-brimmed hat pulled down low over his forehead, which represented the clouds that encircle the sun, and a blue mantle with golden spangles, i.e., the starry heavens. These attributes again prove him to have been the Spirit of Nature. In the completely developed myth regarding him in the Edda, he was described as being of grand heroic form, with a golden helmet on his head, and wearing a shining breast-plate of chain-mail. His golden ring *Draupnir* was on his arm, and his spear *Gungnir* in his right hand. Thus attired, he advanced to attack the Fenris Wolf, when the Twilight of the Gods was beginning to fall; thus attired, he sat on his throne *Hlidskialf*, wrapped in the folds of his mantle, and governed gods and men.

There are many tales and traditions about Wodan in his original form of storm-god. They are to be found in Germany, England, France, and Scandinavia, which shows how wide-spread the worship of him was. Chief amongst the stories referring to the old Teutonic god are those of the Wild Hunt, and of the Raging Host. These myths have their origin in the belief that the supreme One takes the souls of the dead to himself, carries them through the air with him, and makes them his followers on his journeys by night. —Asgard and the Gods:71-2



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WODAN'S WILD HUNT.



It is Odin who endows humankind with life and soul, after Lodur had given him blood and bones, and finally it is Honir who furnishes him with his intellect (*manas*) and with his conscious senses. –SD2:97

ODIN, THE SCANDINAVIAN FATHER-GOD

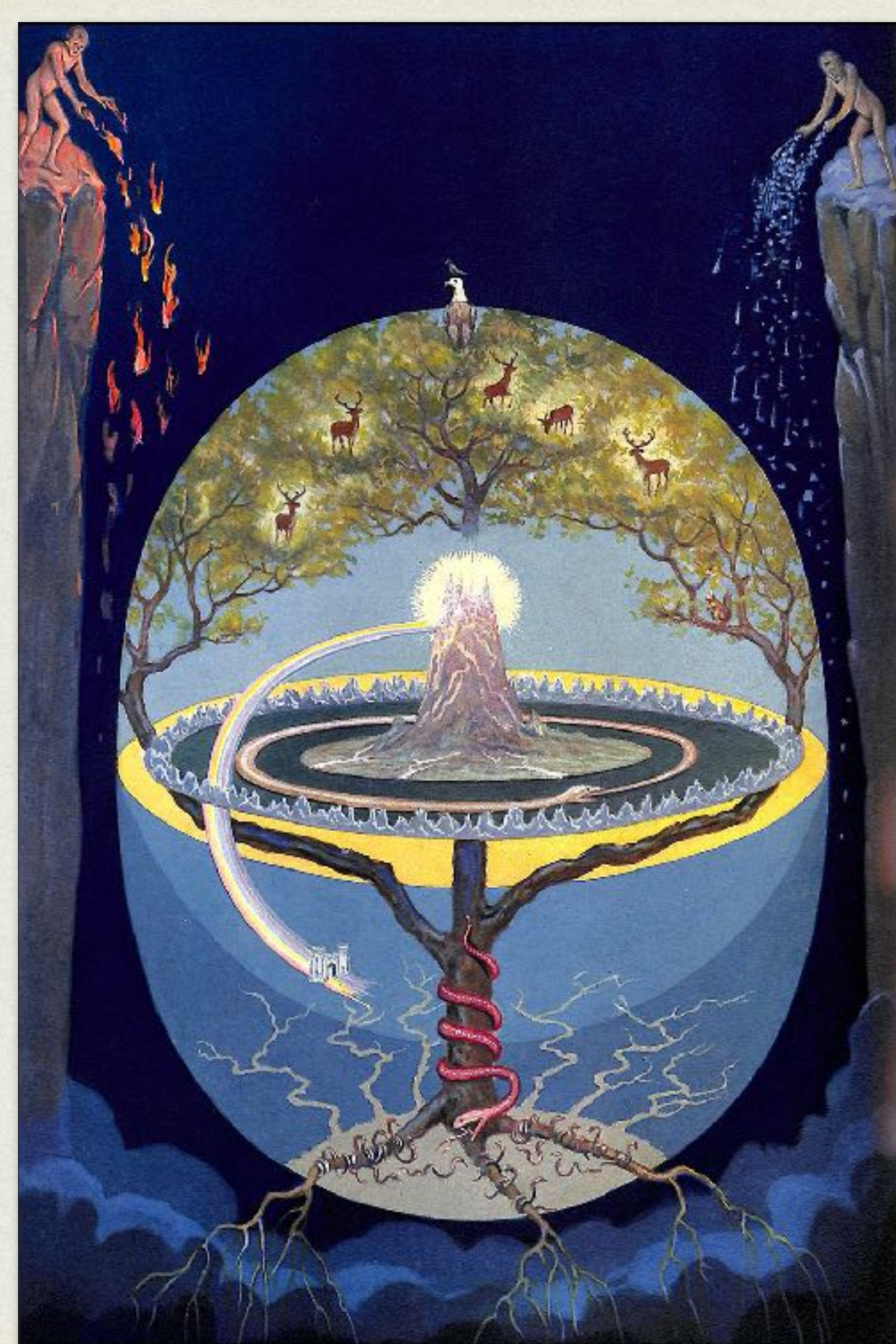
It is difficult to secure any satisfactory information concerning the identity of Odin. If he actually founded the mysteries of Scandinavia, he was undoubtedly an initiate of an Eastern school, possibly the Buddhistic. The etymology of the word Odin shows its various forms as *Woden*, *Wodan*, *Wotan*, *Wuotan*, and *Odinn*. These words are now generally defined as meaning “wood” or “wind.” On this subject that indefatigable worker, Godfrey Higgins, has made several important discoveries. He writes: *“Thus it appears that Woden, the Northern God, is simply the Tamulic method of pronouncing Buddha. (Sir William Jones also believed that Buddha was Woden.) That Woden came from the North, not the South, of India cannot be doubted.”*

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THE YGGDRASIL TREE

In *Ginnungagap*, the great cleft in space, All-Father created the huge world ash tree - *Yggdrasil* - the symbol of Life, Time, and Destiny. The three roots of the tree are called the spiritual, the terrestrial, and the infernal. They signify respectively, spirit, organization and matter, according to Clement Shaw. The spiritual root has its source in *Asgard*, the home of the *Aesir*, or gods, and is watered by the *Urdar* fountain; the terrestrial root has its source in *Midgard*, the abode of men, and is watered by *Mimir's* well. The infernal root has its source in *Nifl-heim*, the abode of the dead, and is watered by the spring of *Hvergelmir*. The three branches of the tree support *Midgard*, or the earth, in the midst of which rises the sacred mountain upon whose summit stands the city of the gods. In the great sea surrounding the earth is *Jormungand*, the *Midgard* snake, with its tail in its mouth. Bounding the sea is the wall of cliffs and ice fashioned from *Ymir's* eyebrows. The home of the gods above is connected by the *Bifrost* bridge to the dwelling place of men and infernal creatures below. On the topmost branch of the tree— which is called *Lerad*, meaning peace-giver— sits a great eagle. Between the eyes of the eagle is the falcon, *Vedfolnir*, whose piercing glance notes all things taking place in the universe. The never-withering green leaves of the divine tree serve as pasturage for Odin's goat, *Heidrun*, who supplies the drink of the gods. The stags— *Dain*, *Dvalin*, *Duneyr*, and *Durathror*— also graze upon the leaves of the tree, and from their horns drops honey dew upon the earth. *Ratatosk*, the squirrel, is the embodiment of the spirit of gossip, and, running back and forth between the eagle above and *Nidhug*, the serpent, below, seeks to stir up discord between them. In the world of darkness below, *Nidhug* continually gnaws at the roots of the divine tree. He is assisted by numerous worms, all realizing that if they can destroy the life of the tree, the rule of the gods will cease. On either side of the tree are the primordial giants casting ice and flames into *Ginnungagap*. —plate facing ST0AA:93

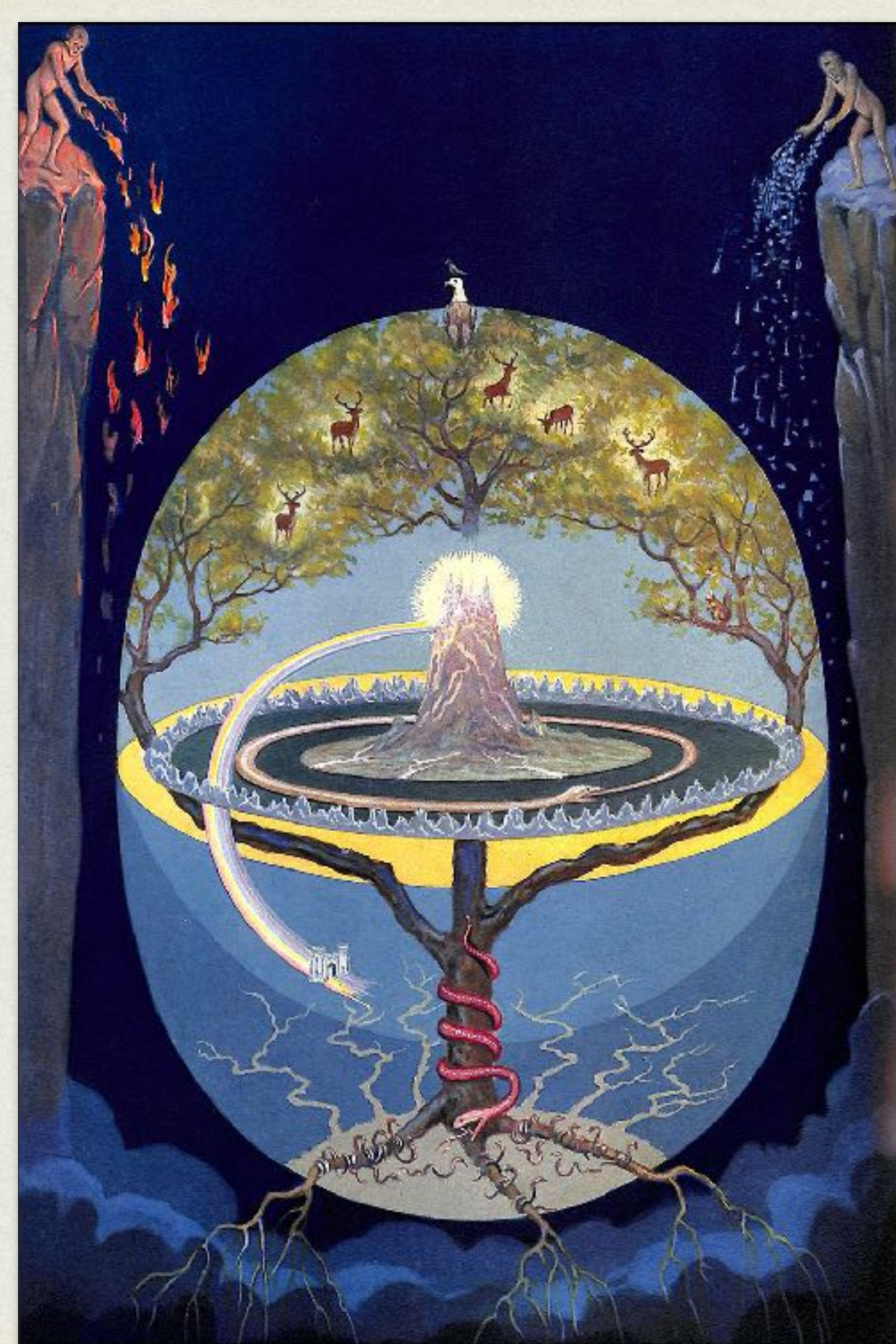


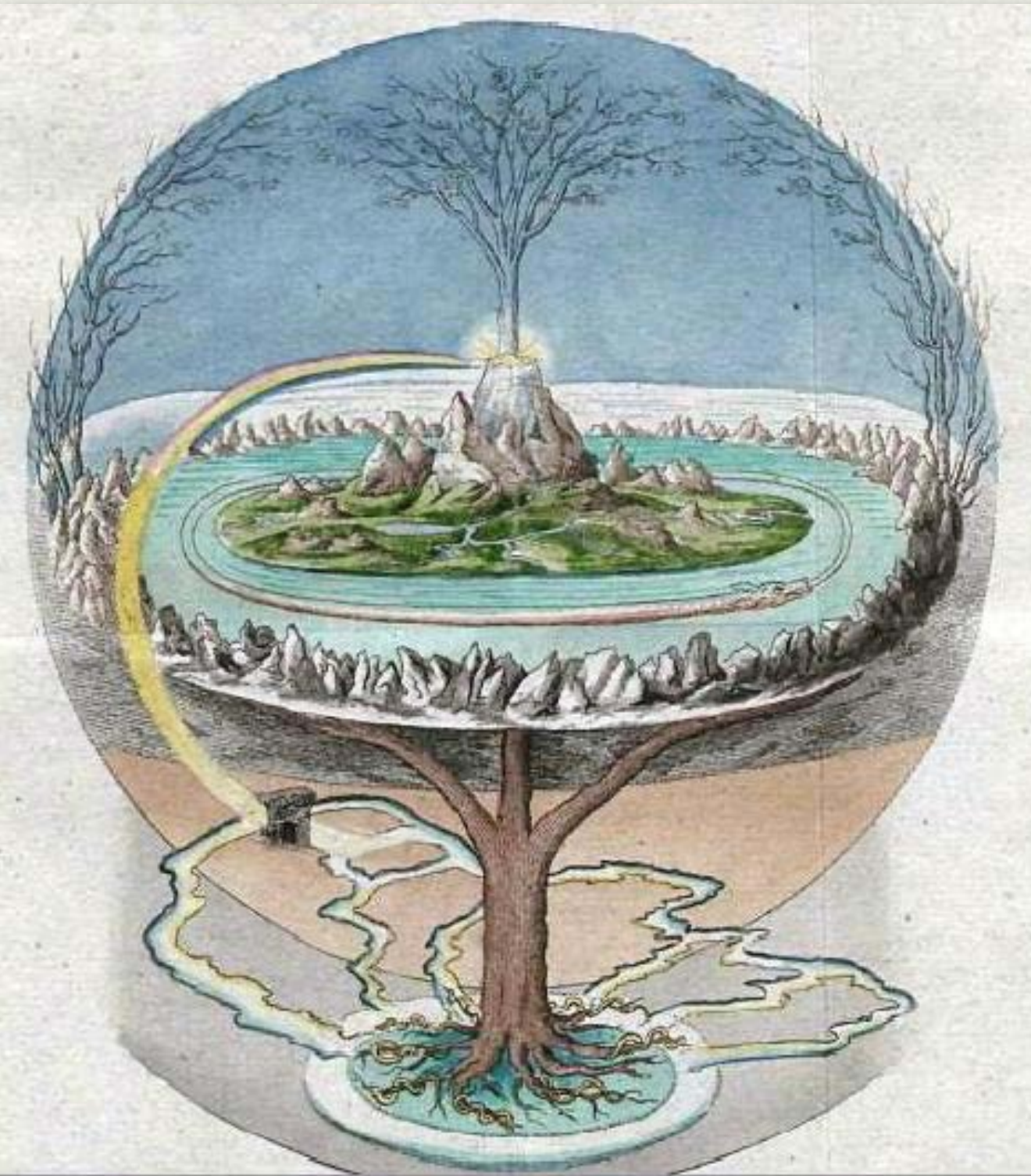


“The Tree of Life” by Gustav Klimt

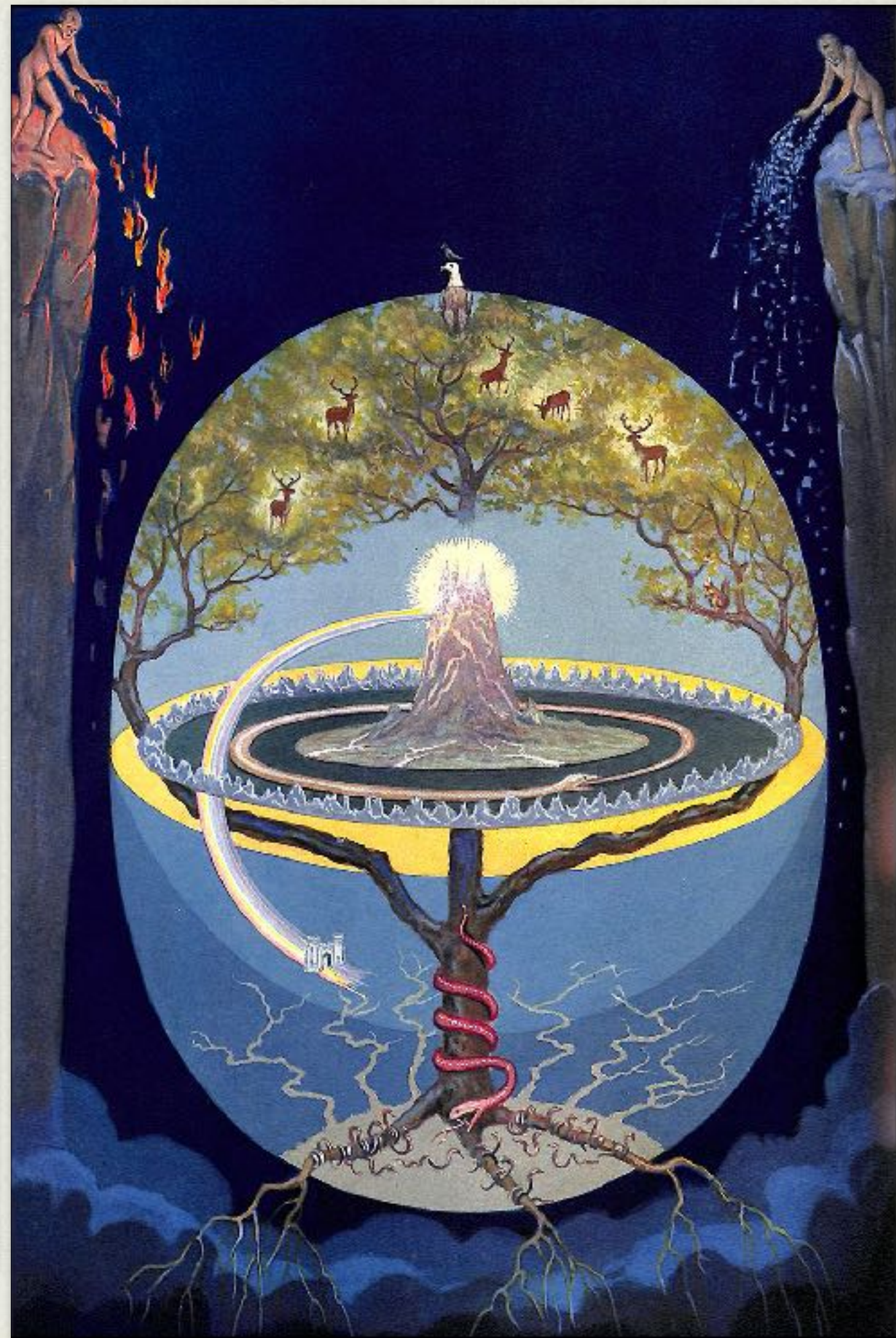
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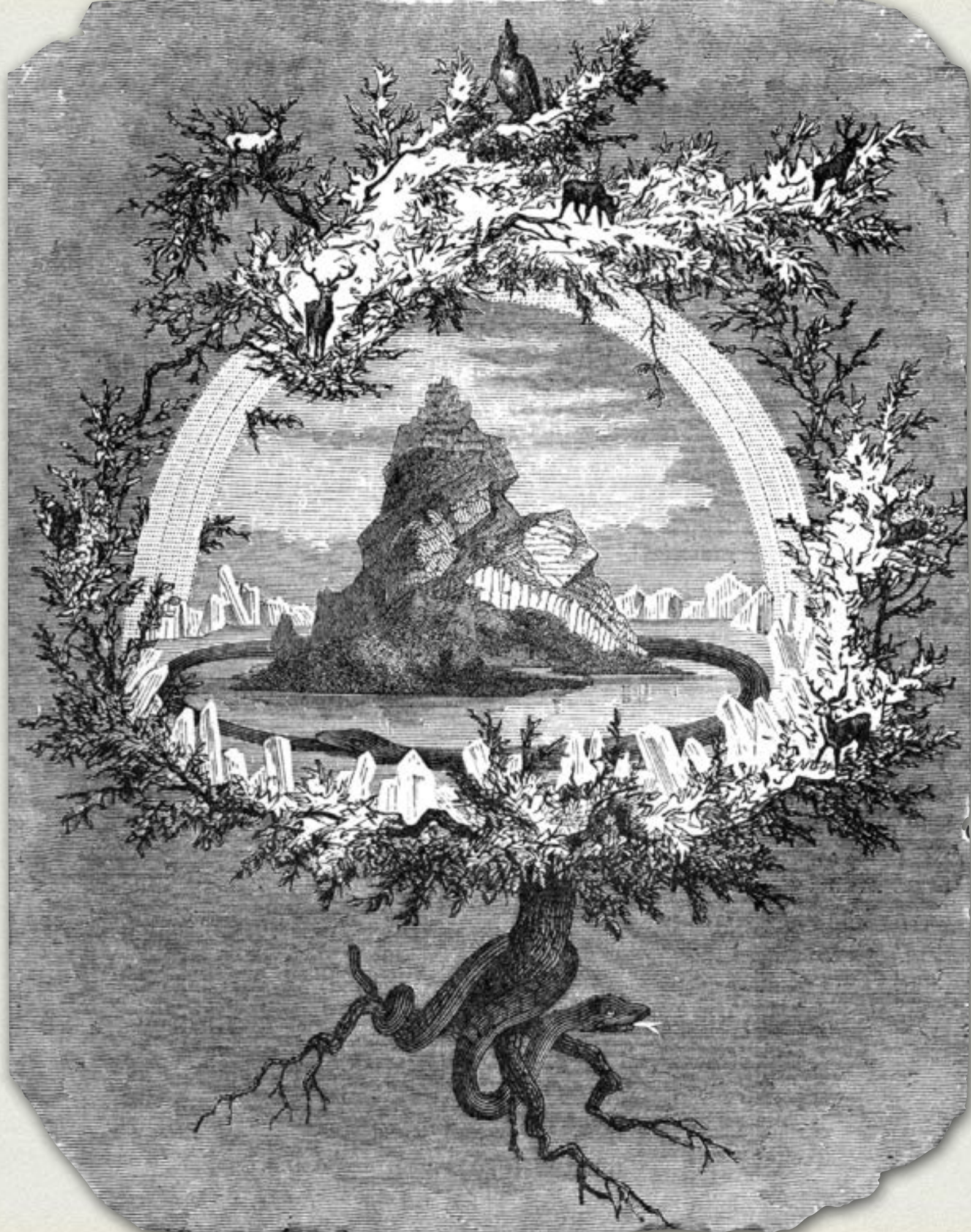


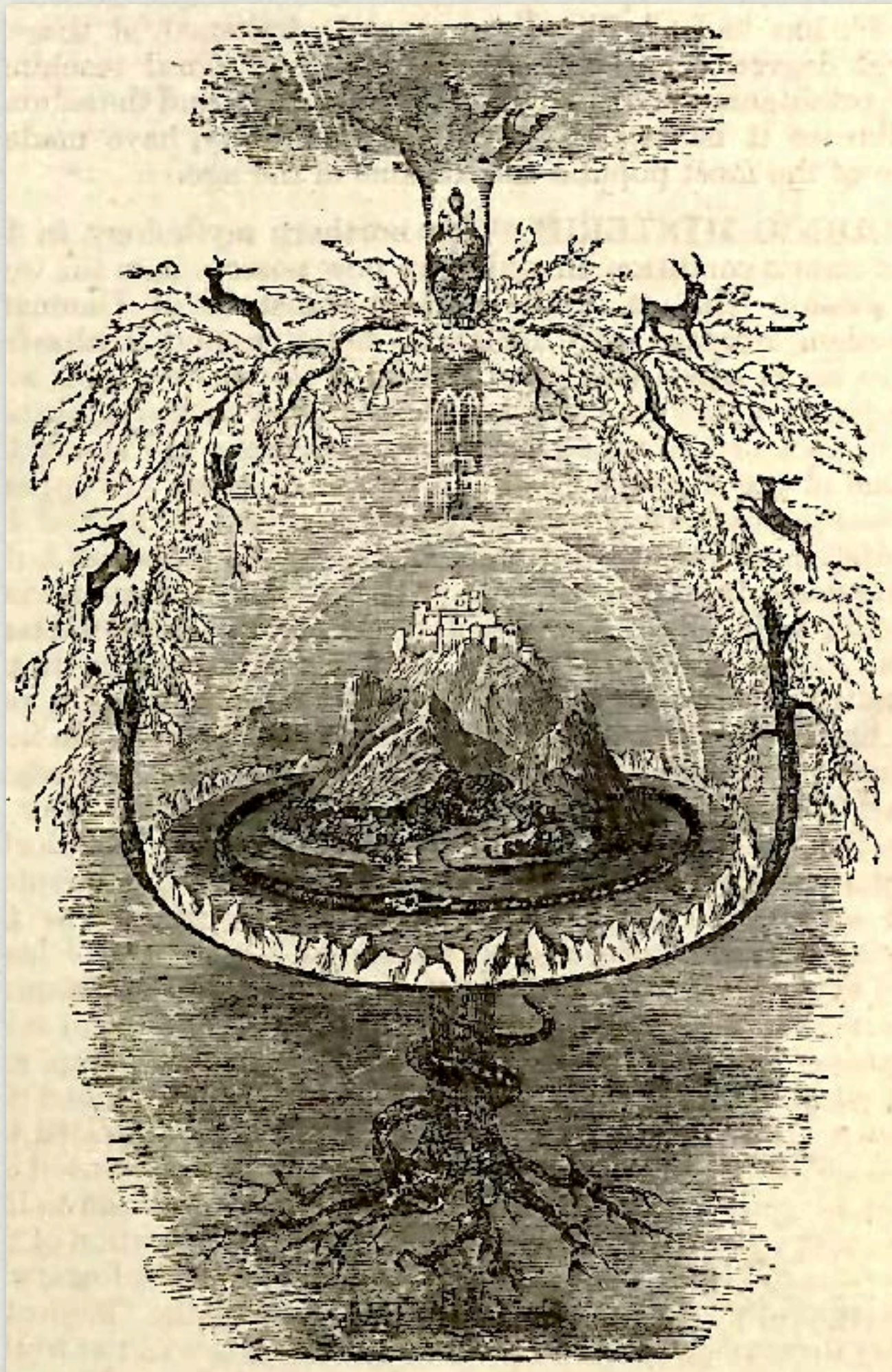
Yggdrasil, by Danish engraver Oluf Olufsen Bagge (1780-1836)

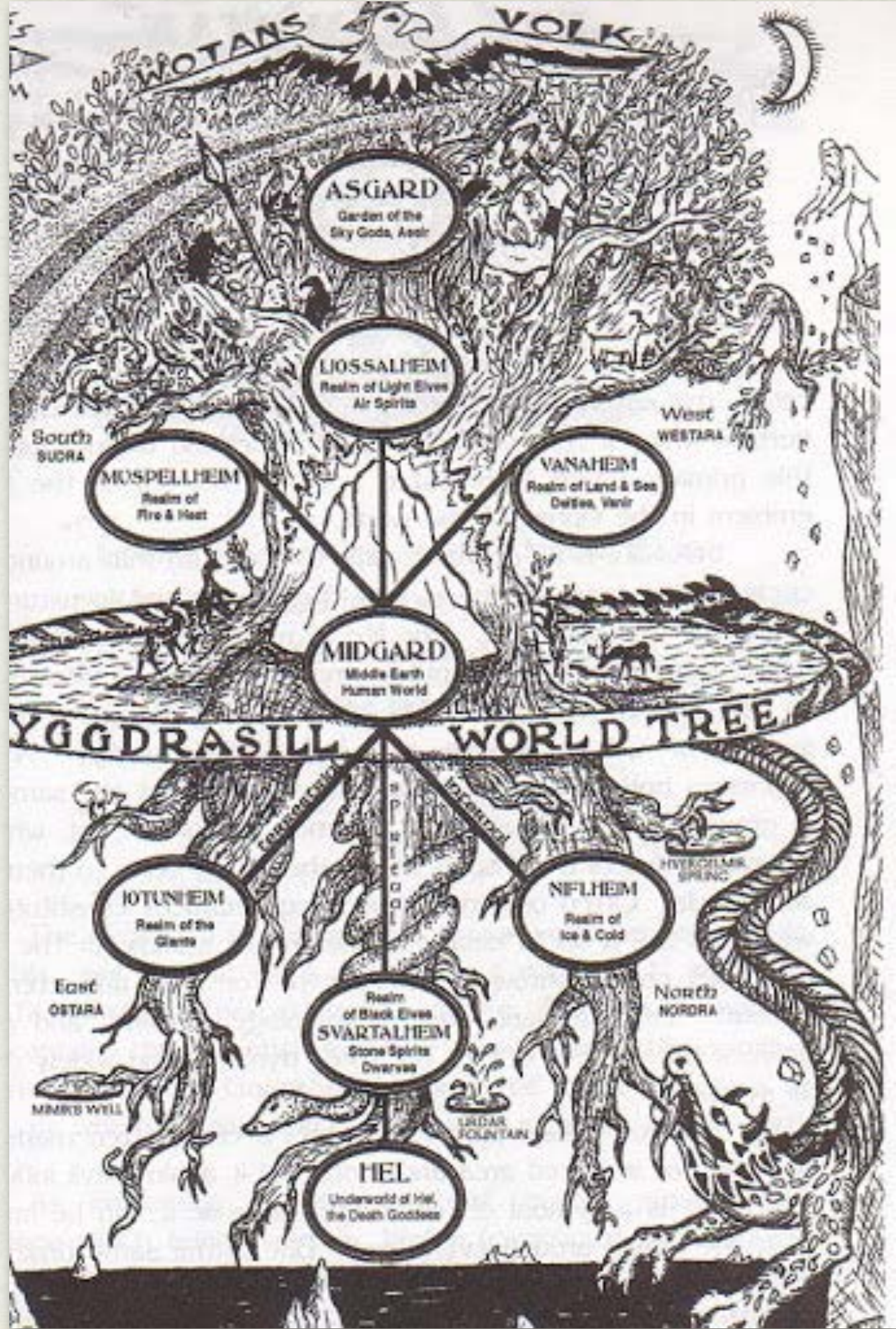


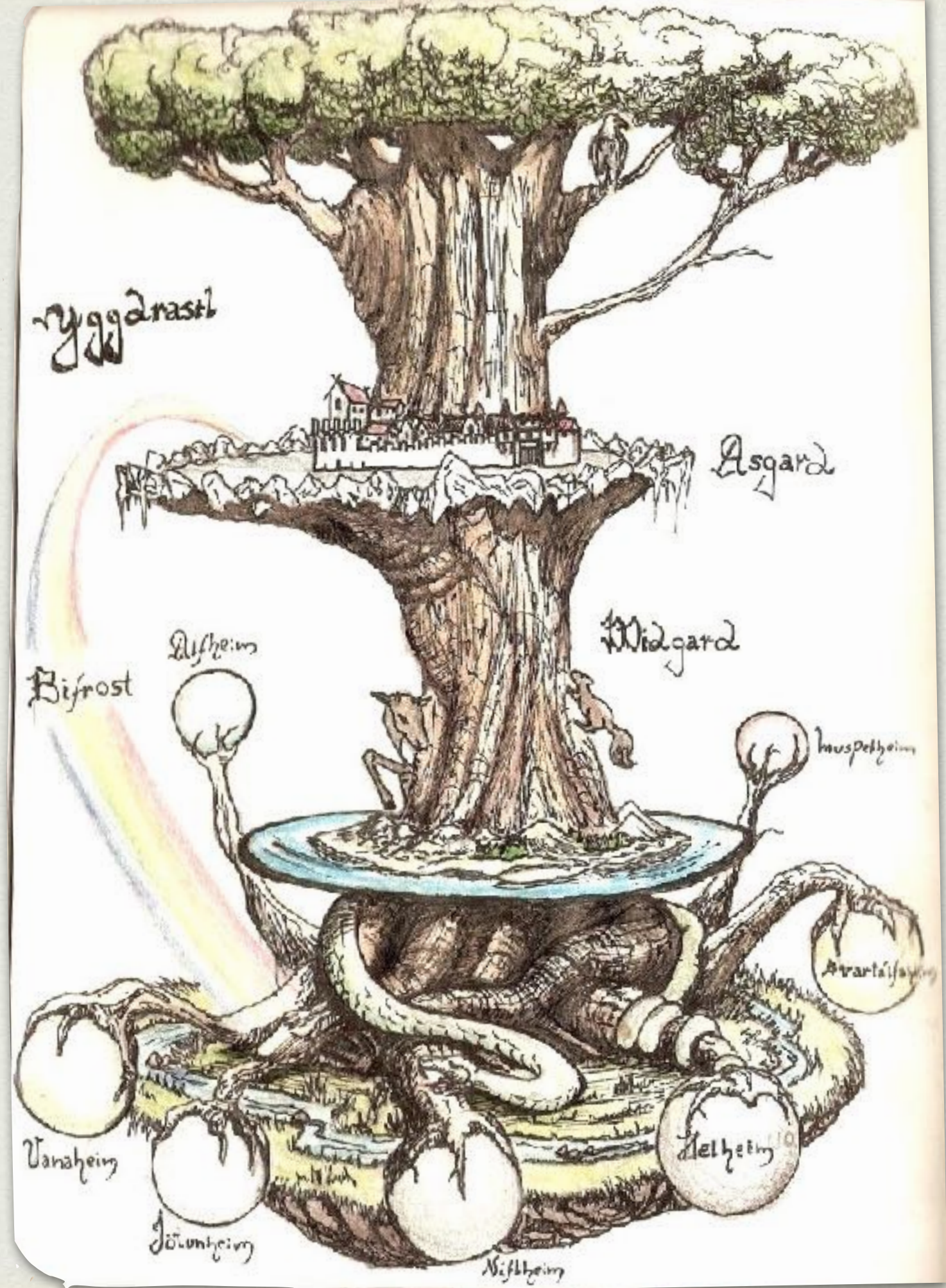


1680 "Edda Oblongata"









Yggdrastl

Asgard

Bifrost

Alfheim

Midgard

Muspelheim

Avalaifangur

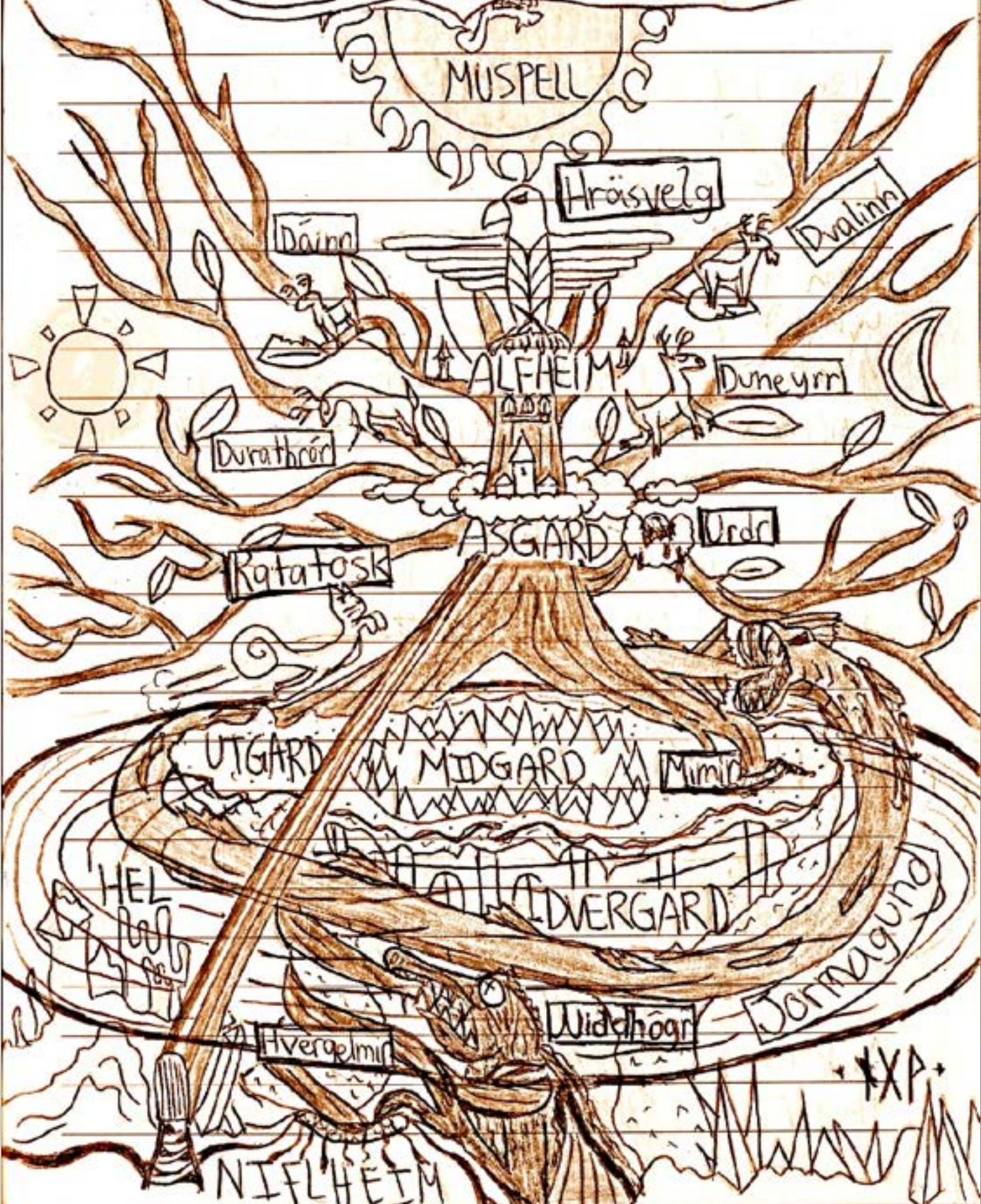
Vanahheim

Jotunheim

Niflheim

Niflheim

YGGDRASIL THE WORLD TREE













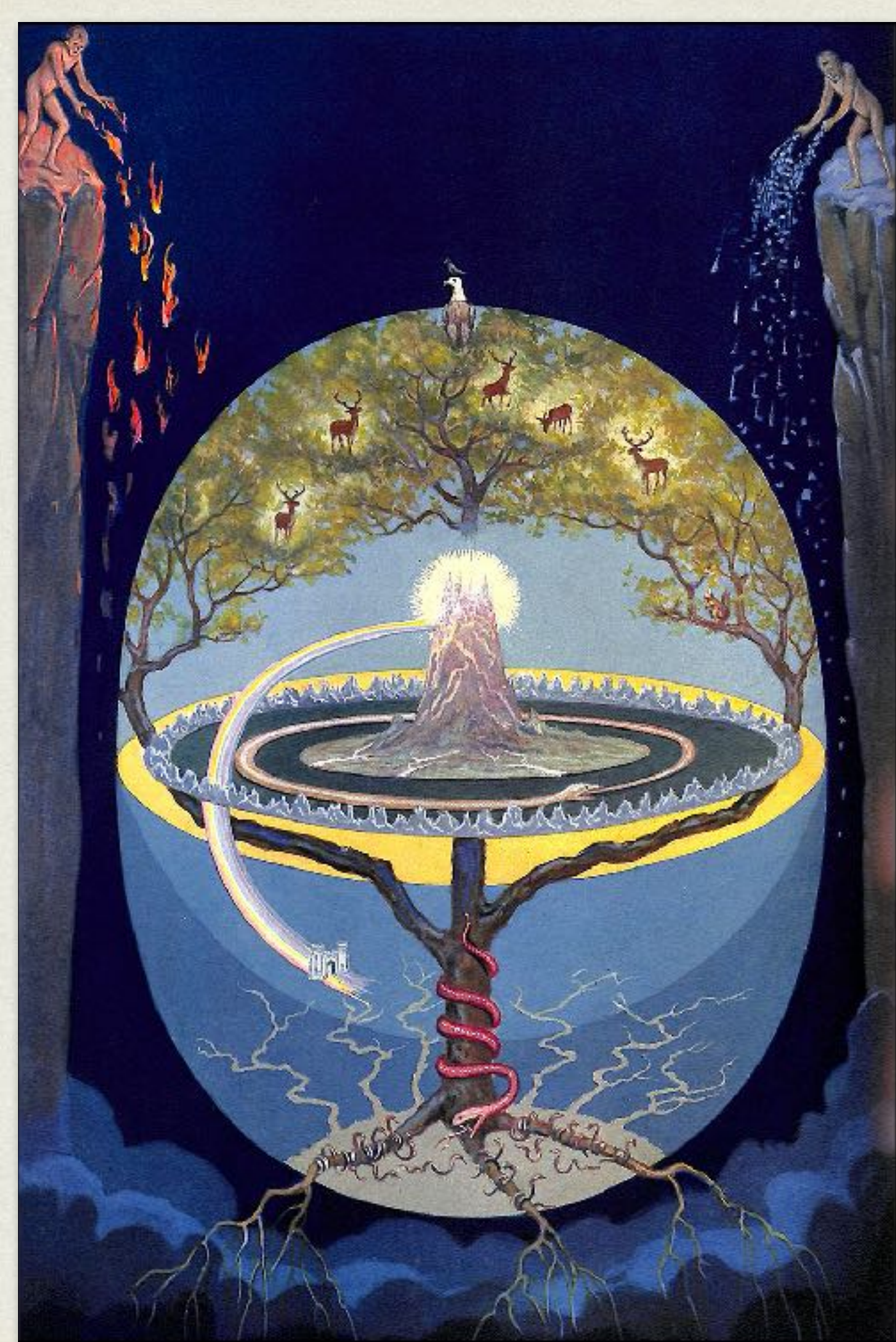
YGGDRASIL

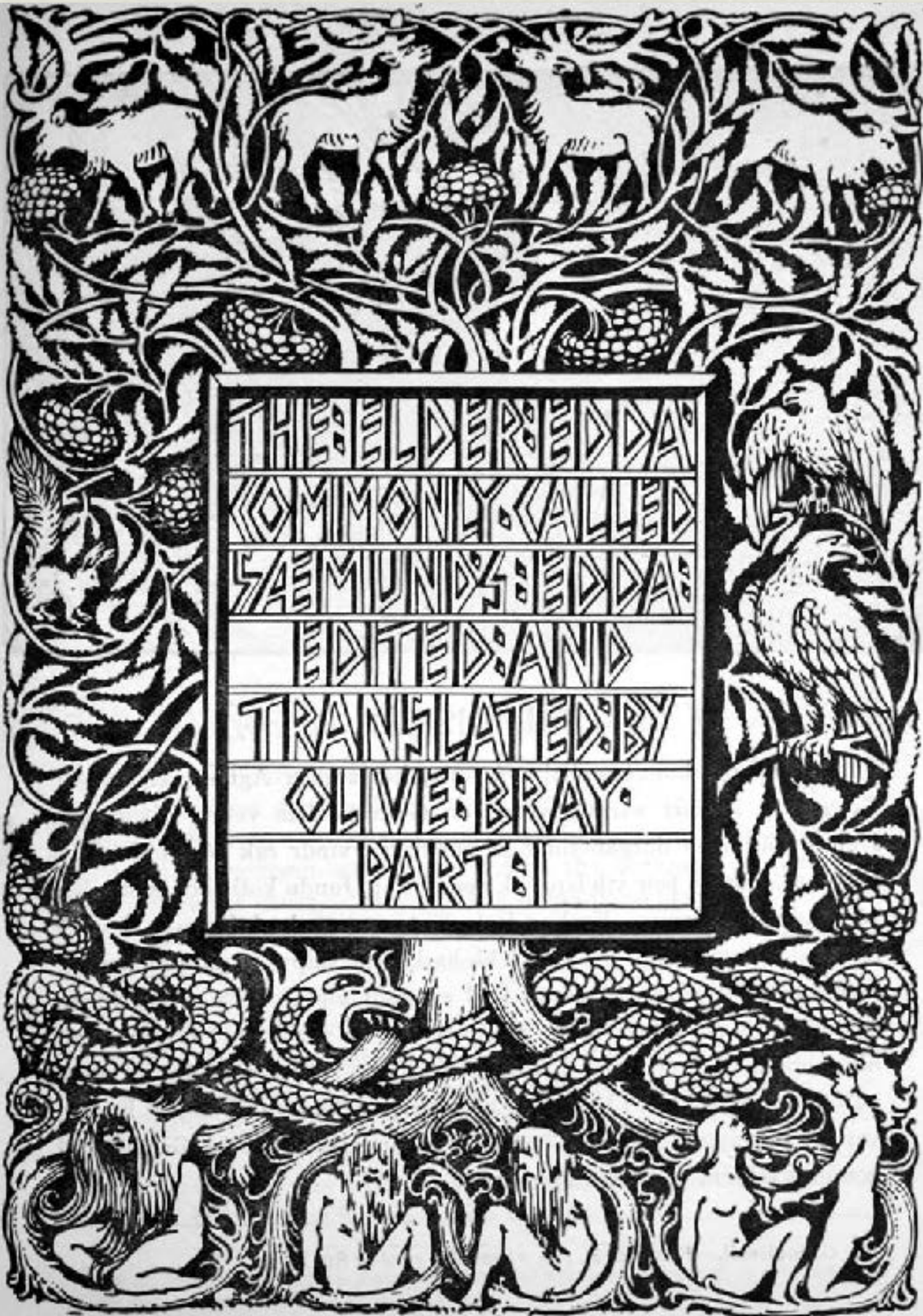
ASGARD



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THE ELDER EDDA
COMMONLY CALLED
SAEMUND'S EDDA
EDITED AND
TRANSLATED BY
OLIVE BRAY
PART I

That was the age when nothing was;
There was no sand, nor sea, nor cool waves,
No earth nor sky nor grass there,
Only Ginnungagap. –Völuspá, Stanza 3

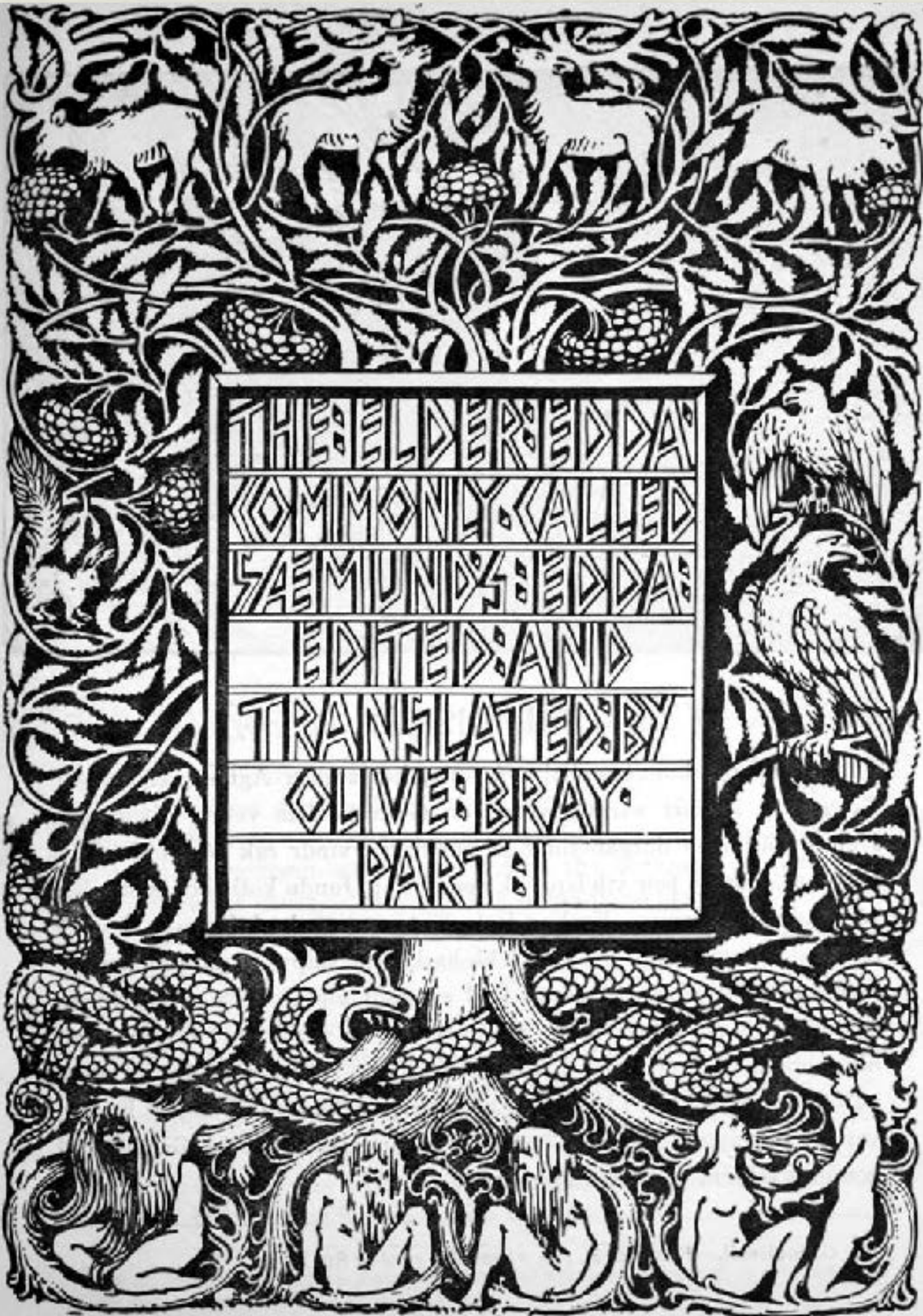
The title page of Olive Bray's English translation of Codex Regius, entitled 'Poetic Edda' depicting the tree Yggdrasil and a number of its inhabitants (1908) by W. G. Collingwood.



Ginnungagap

"In the beginning was a great abyss (Chaos), neither day nor night existed; the abyss was *Ginnungagap*, the yawning gulf, without beginning, without end. ALL FATHER, the Uncreated, the Unseen, dwelt in the depth of the 'Abyss' (SPACE) and willed, and what was willed came into being." –SD1:427

In the Scandinavian Cosmogony—placed by Professor Max Müller, in point of time, as "far anterior to the Vedas" in the poem of Voluspa (the song of the prophetess), the Mundane egg is again discovered in the phantom-germ of the Universe, which is represented as lying in the *Ginnungagap*—the cup of illusion (*Maya*) the boundless and void abyss. In this world's matrix, formerly a region of night and desolation, *Nebelheim* (the mist-place, the *nebular* as it is called now, in the astral light) dropped a *ray of cold light* which overflowed this cup and froze in it. Then the *Invisible* blew a scorching wind which dissolved the frozen waters and cleared the mist. These waters (chaos), called the streams of *Elivagar*, distilling in vivifying drops, fell down and created the earth and the giant *Ymir*, who only had "the semblance of man" (the Heavenly man), and the cow, *Audhumla* (the "mother" or astral light, Cosmic Soul) from whose udder flowed *four* streams of milk (the four cardinal points: the four heads of the four rivers of Eden, etc.) and which "four" allegorically are symbolized by the *cube* in all its various and mystical meanings. –SD1:367



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**Bókenn
Edda**
 Þóroia Þam Selt
 Þe þur.
SNORRI
 Sturluson Log
 Madur.
 A. X. M. CCXV
 Prentud i Kaupenb.
 33 Slendskiu Þonðu u
 Latinu.
 Anno Domini 1666.

steðnar hirt sin þ e t laugm; e þig þ
 þn e ad laga sokn = dæmist þu hibi þ
 eid nea sa e sobte fuer þ enuf eidi at þ
 dist ept yettu mali sekia
 Uo e melt at slytu in þbu þig eiga
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 min þ e talad u a ox at þigi e emþ
 huad a hyst a þya mal þrell e ou þ
 þu þ slytu m e þ þ hysa at alkigi þall
 maz upe na at þets m þa þ e þ hysa
 þu e taba þa m þ bygd t sin e hlaupa
 ede austa norda e sunan nea þy unta
 at þy seu skla m þ at þib m eu þ unta
 na nacku þikt uet e tuo e þa e þ
 a suo u m. Sida sekast þy e þet ut en
 t hirt stela þv þe m e hlaupa þit m

Snorri Sturluson's Edda, 1666



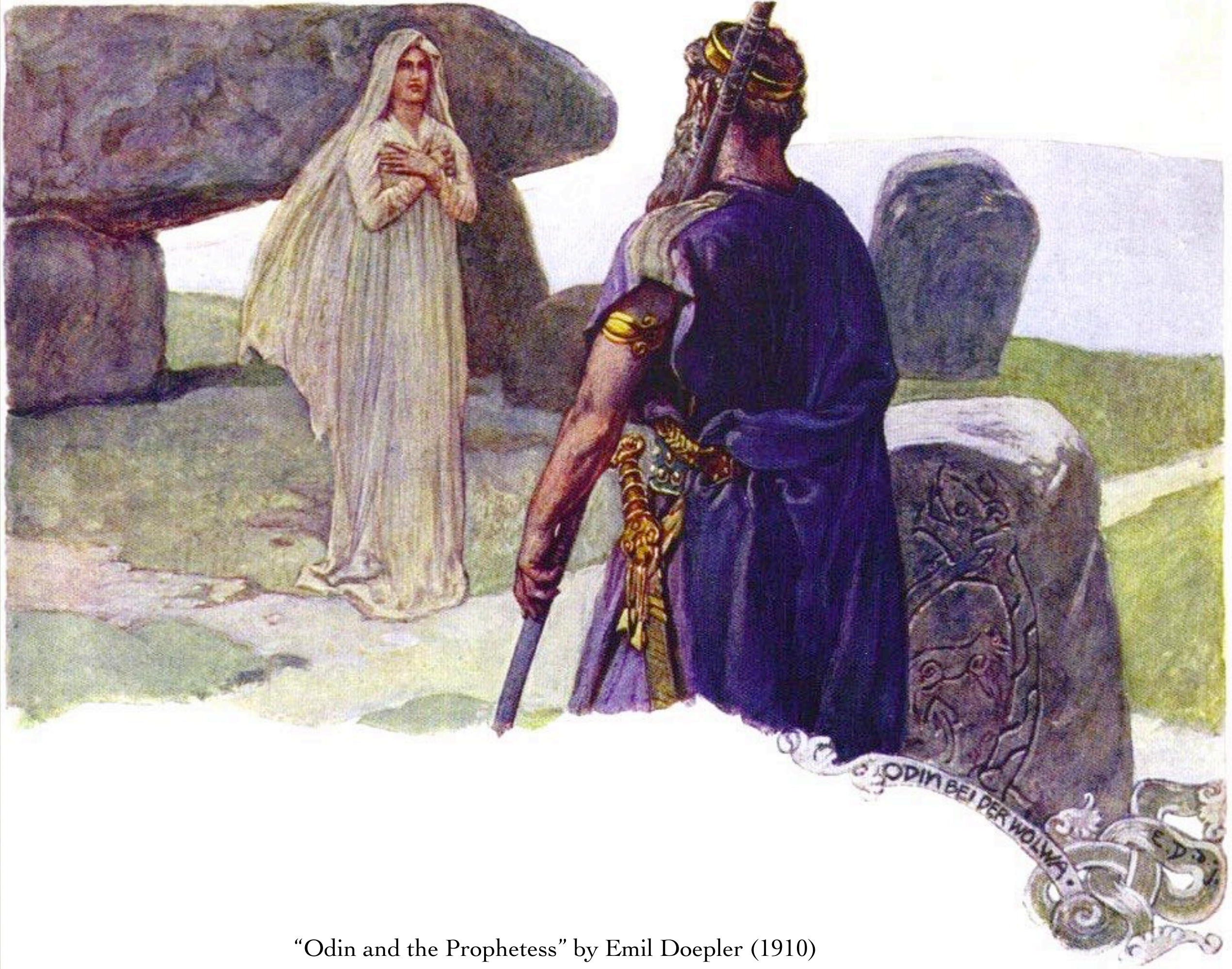
Introduction to the Voluspa

As introductory to the Voluspa, the following description of a wandering Vala or prophetess may be thought both desirable and interesting: "We find them present at the birth of children, when they seem to represent the Norns. They acquired their knowledge either by means of *seid* [Norse magic], during the night, which all others in the house were sleeping, and uttered their oracles in the morning; or they received sudden inspirations during the singing of certain songs appropriated to the purpose, without which the sorcery could not perfectly succeed. These *seid-women* were common over all of the North. When invited by the master of a family, they appeared in a peculiar costume, sometimes with a considerable number of followers, e.g., with fifteen young men and fifteen girls. For their soothsaying they received money, gold rings, and other precious things. Sometimes it was necessary to compel them to prophesy. An old description of such a Vala, who went from guild to guild telling fortunes, will give the best idea of these women and their proceedings:



Thorbjorg, nicknamed the little Vala, during the winter attended the guilds, at the invitation of those who desired to know their fate, or the quality of the coming year. Everything was prepared in the most sumptuous manner for her reception. There was an elevated seat, on which lay a cushion stuffed with feathers. A man was sent to meet her. She came in the evening dressed in a blue mantle fastened with thongs and set with stones down to the lap; round her neck she had a necklace of glass beads, on her head a hood of black lambskin lined with white catskin; in her hand a staff, the head of which was mounted with brass and ornamented with stones; round her body she wore a girdle of agaric (knoske), from which hung a bag containing her conjuring apparatus; on her feet were rough calfskin shoes with long ties and tin buttons, on her hands catskin gloves, white and hairy within. All bade her welcome with a reverent salutation; the master himself conducted her by the hand to her seat. She undertook no prophecy on the first day, but would first pass a night there. In the evening of the following day she ascended her elevated seat, caused the women to place themselves round her, and desired them to sing certain songs, which they did in a strong, clear voice. She then prophesied of the coming year, and afterwards, all that would advanced and asked her such questions as they thought proper, to which they received plain answers.

In the following grand and ancient lay [the Voluspa], dating most probably from the time of heathenism, are set forth, as the utterances of Vala, or wandering prophetess, as above described, the story of the creation of the world from chaos, of the origin of the giants, the gods, the dwarfs, and the human race, together with other events relating to the mythology of the North, and ending with the destruction of the gods and the world, and their renewal. –The Poetic Edda, by Benjamin Thorpe, p. 1



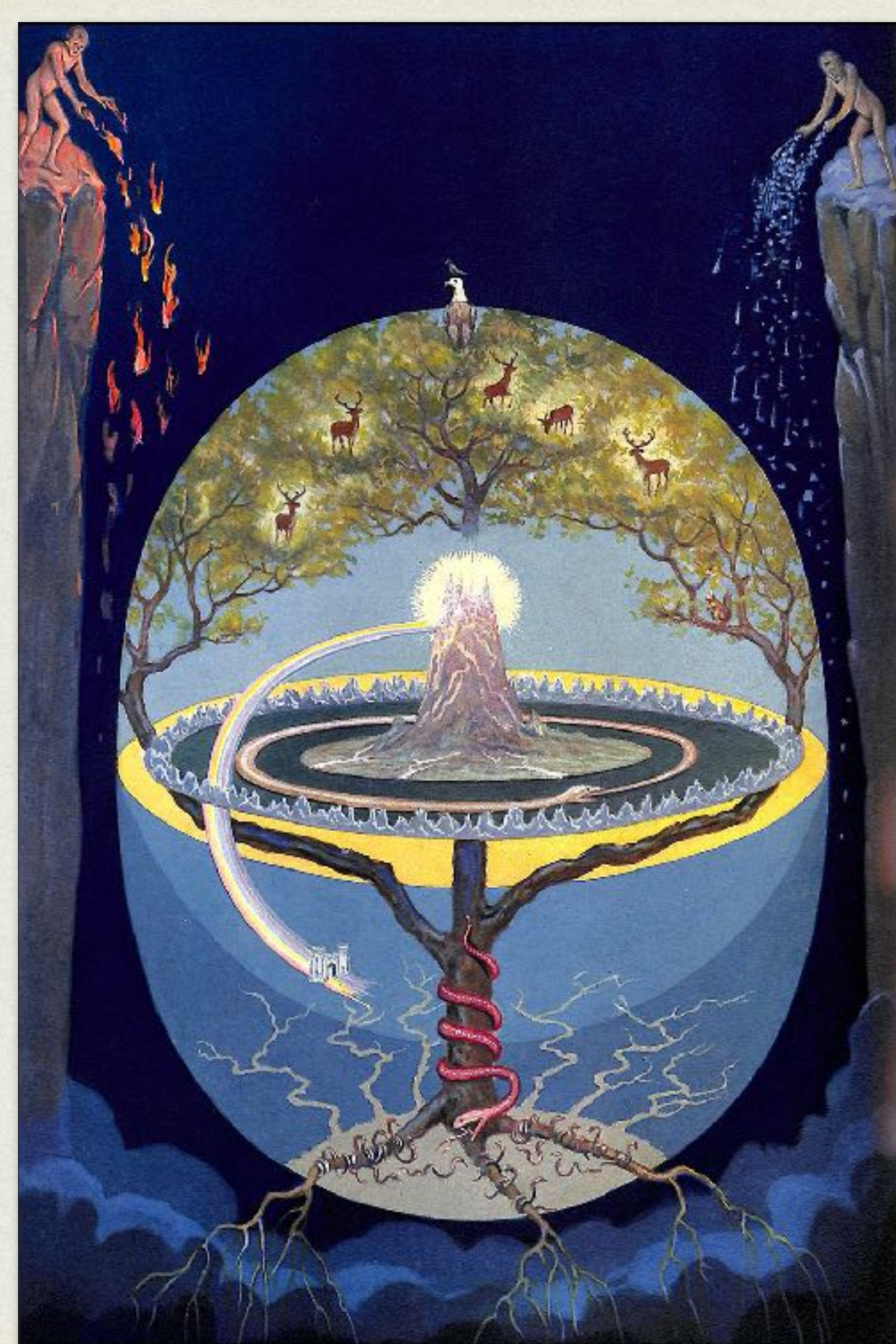
"Odin and the Prophetess" by Emil Doepler (1910)



Odin consulting a dead seeress to learn about fate (Franz Stassen, 1920)

THE YGGDRASIL TREE

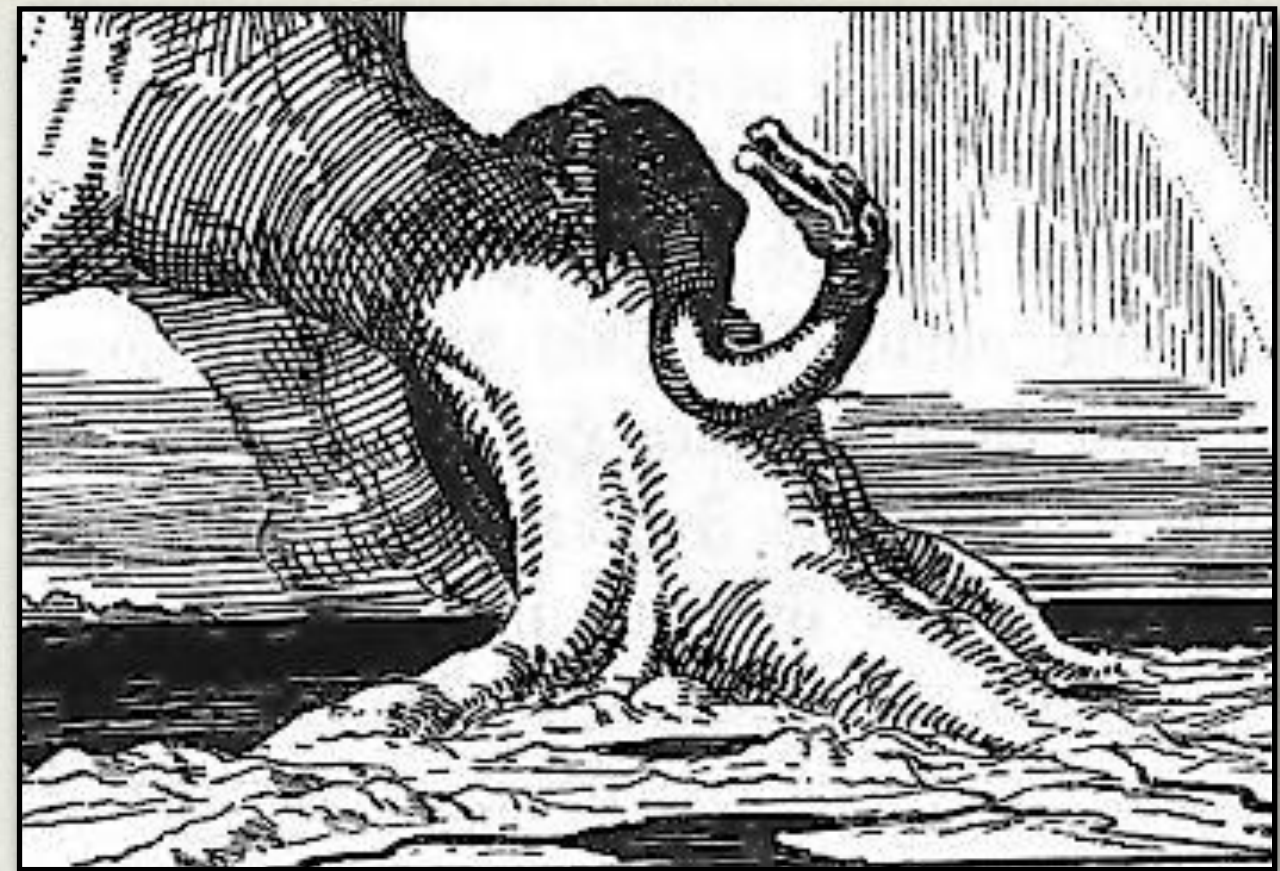
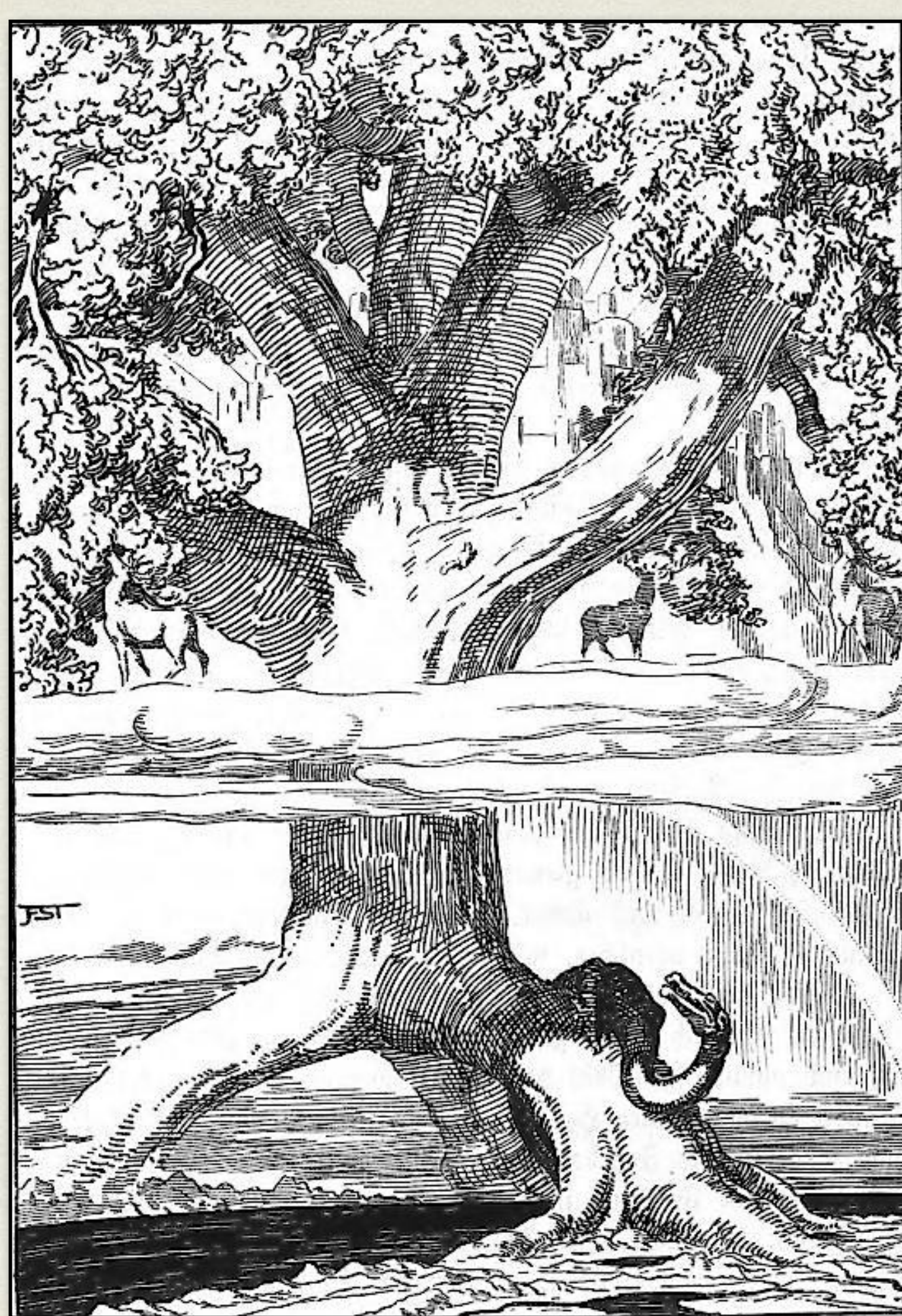
In *Ginnungagap*, the great cleft in space, All-Father created the huge world ash tree - *Yggdrasil* - the symbol of **Life, Time, and Destiny**. The three roots of the tree are called the spiritual, the terrestrial, and the infernal. They signify respectively, spirit, organization and matter, according to Clement Shaw. The spiritual root has its source in *Asgard*, the home of the *Aesir*, or gods, and is watered by the *Urdar* fountain; the terrestrial root has its source in *Midgard*, the abode of men, and is watered by *Mimir's* well. The infernal root has its source in *Nifl-heim*, the abode of the dead, and is watered by the spring of *Hvergelmir*. The three branches of the tree support *Midgard*, or the earth, in the midst of which rises the sacred mountain upon whose summit stands the city of the gods. In the great sea surrounding the earth is *Jormungand*, the *Midgard* snake, with its tail in its mouth. Bounding the sea is the wall of cliffs and ice fashioned from *Ymir's* eyebrows. The home of the gods above is connected by the *Bifrost* bridge to the dwelling place of men and infernal creatures below. On the topmost branch of the tree— which is called *Lerad*, meaning peace-giver— sits a great eagle. Between the eyes of the eagle is the falcon, *Vedfolnir*, whose piercing glance notes all things taking place in the universe. The never-withering green leaves of the divine tree serve as pasturage for Odin's goat, *Heidrun*, who supplies the drink of the gods. The stags— *Dain*, *Dvalin*, *Duneyr*, and *Durathror*— also graze upon the leaves of the tree, and from their horns drops honey dew upon the earth. *Ratatosk*, the squirrel, is the embodiment of the spirit of gossip, and, running back and forth between the eagle above and *Nidhug*, the serpent, below, seeks to stir up discord between them. In the world of darkness below, *Nidhug* continually gnaws at the roots of the divine tree. He is assisted by numerous worms, all realizing that if they can destroy the life of the tree, the rule of the gods will cease. On either side of the tree are the primordial giants casting ice and flames into *Ginnungagap*. —plate facing ST0AA:93





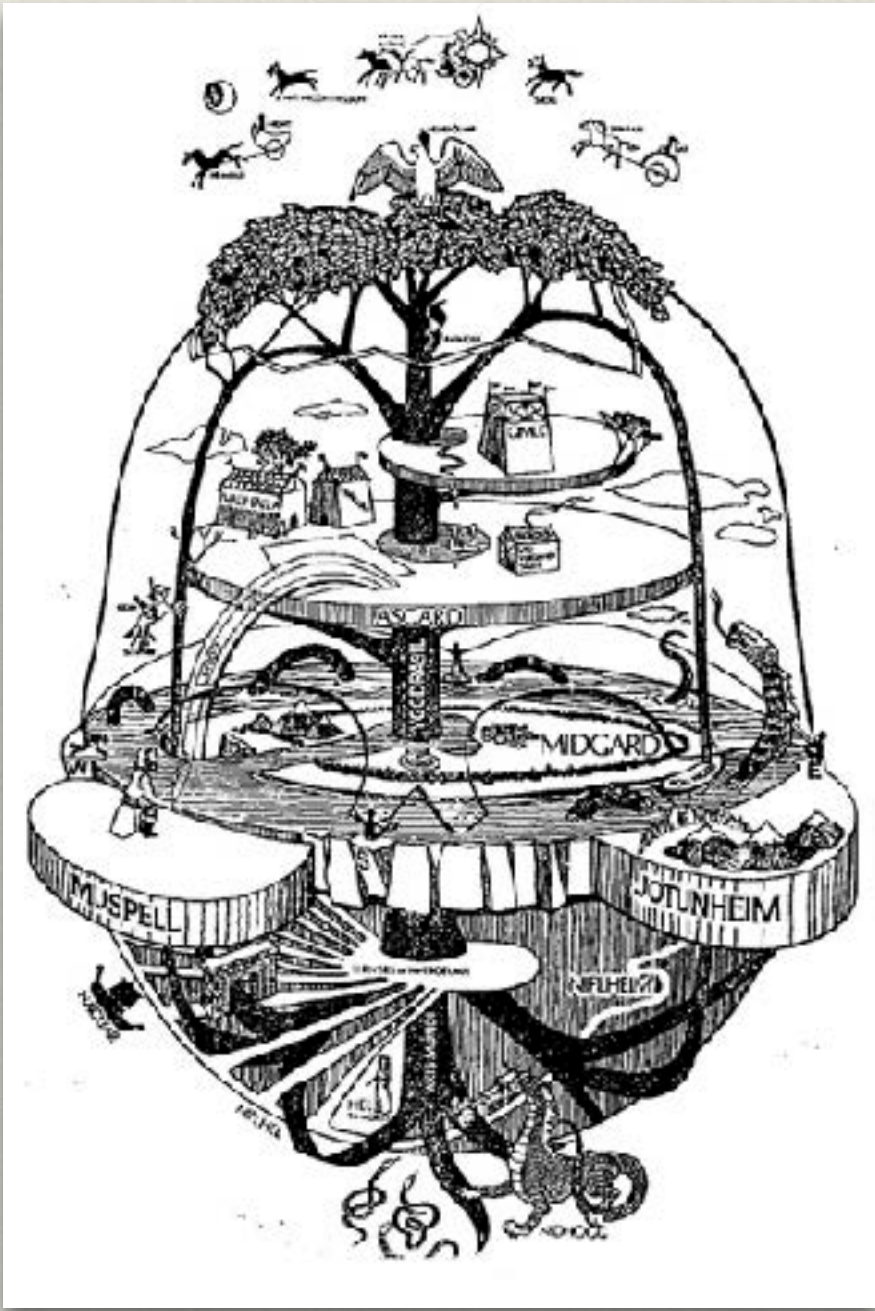
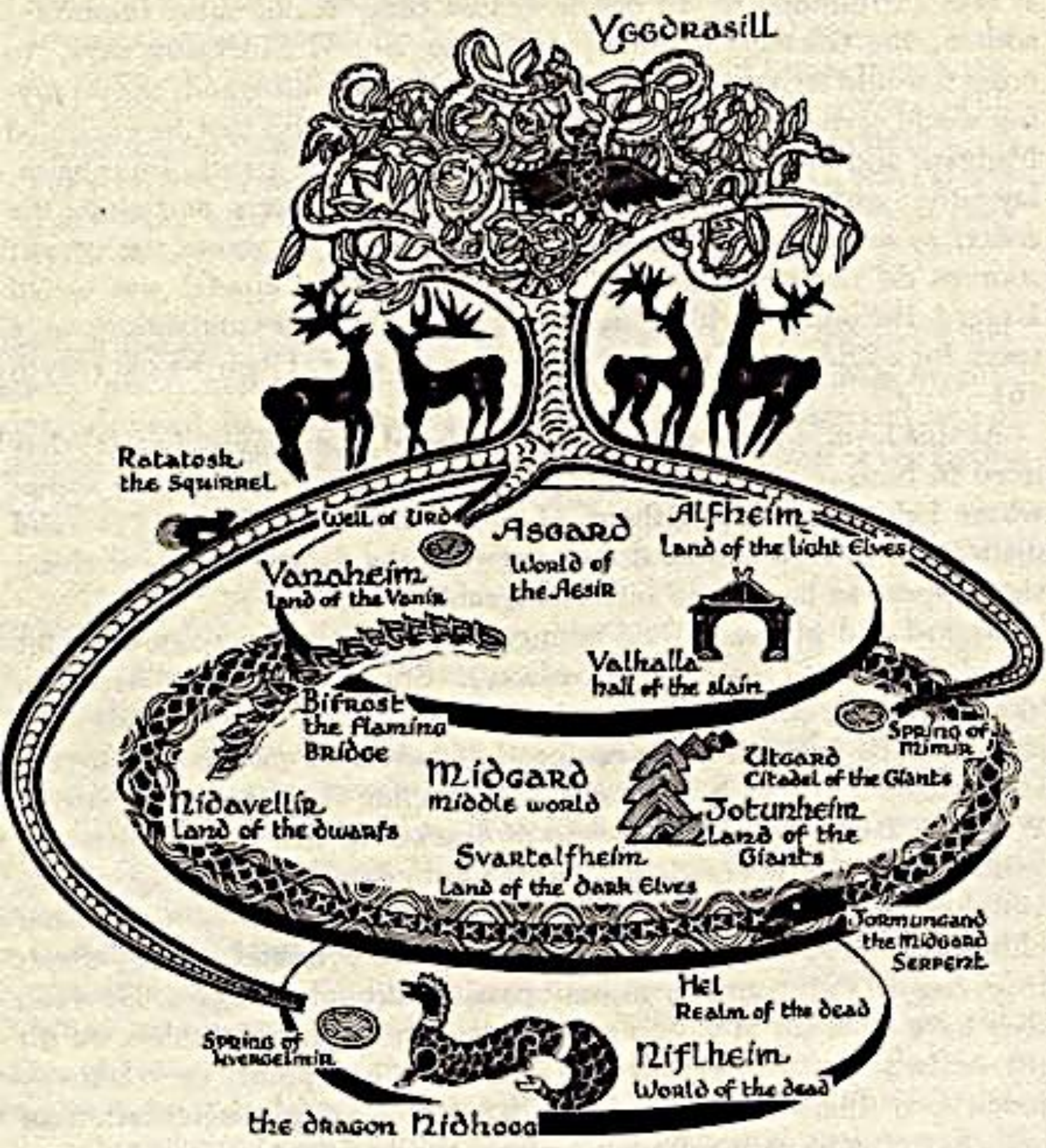
“If thou wouldest believe in the Power which acts within the root of a plant, or imagine the root concealed under the soil, thou hast to think of its stalk or trunk and of its leaves and flowers. Thou canst not imagine that Power independently of these objects. *Life* can be known only by the Tree of Life. . . .” (Precepts for Yoga). –SD:59

Yggdrasil, 1845, by Ortega

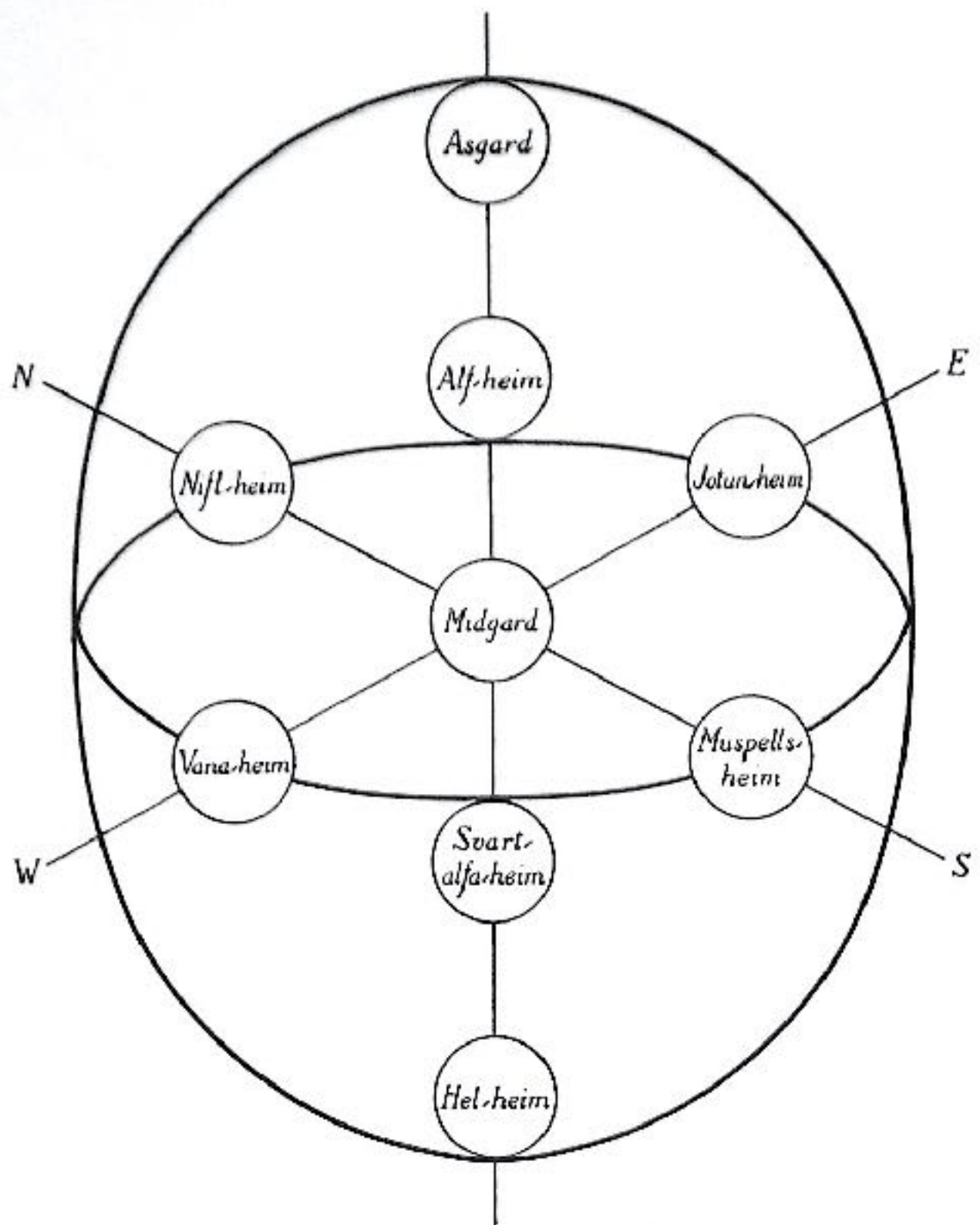


Its physical frame alone was of time and of life, as it drew its intelligence direct from above. It was the living tree of divine wisdom; and may therefore be likened to the Mundane Tree of the Norse Legend, which cannot wither and die until the last battle of life shall be fought, while its roots are gnawed all the time by the dragon Nidhogg; for even so, the first and holy Son of *Kriyasakti* had his body gnawed by the tooth of time, but the roots of his inner being remained for ever undecaying and strong, because they grew and expanded in heaven not on earth. -SD1:211

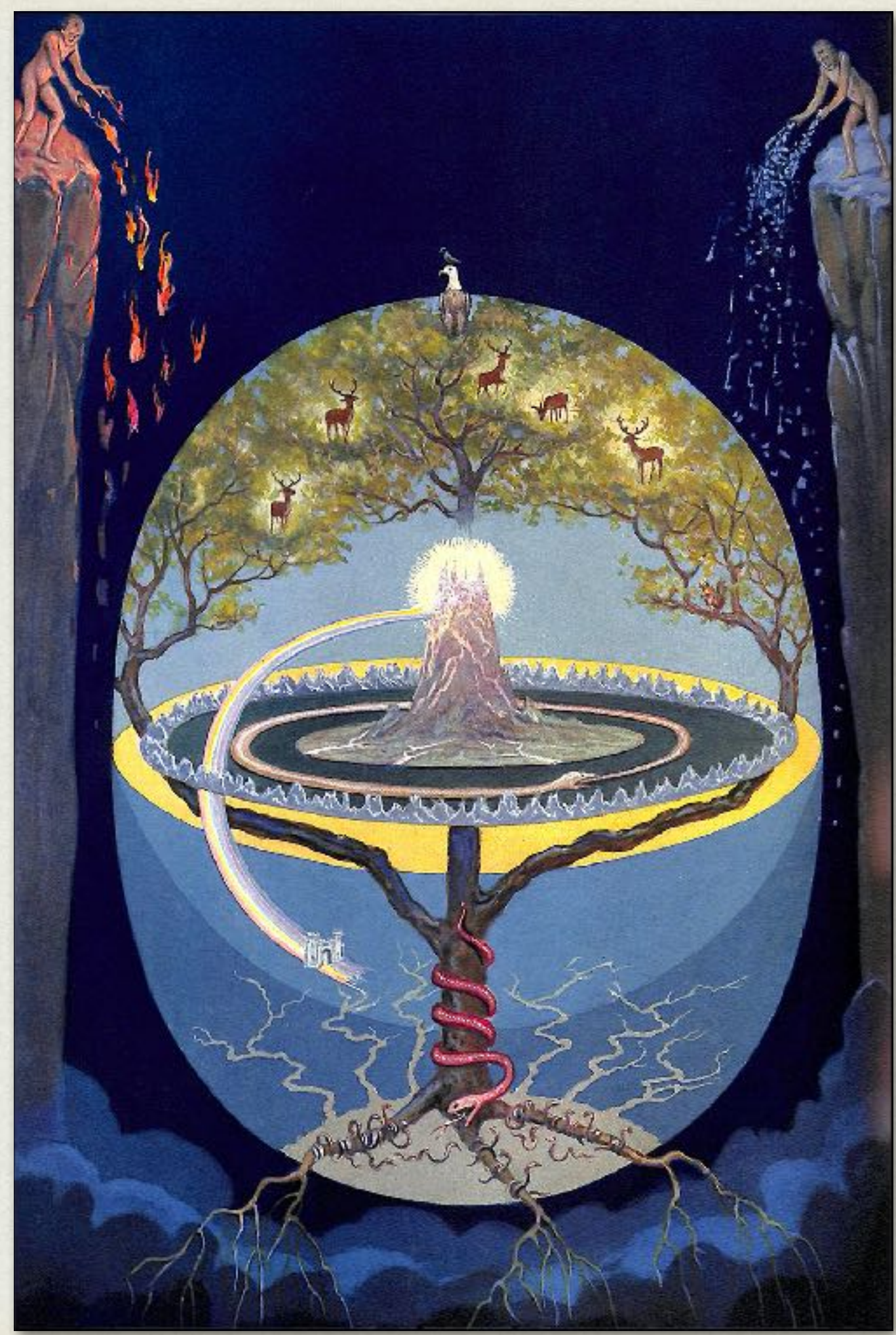
Yggdrasil (Franz Stassen, 1920)



Yggdrasil
Kevin Crossley-Holland, 1988



THE NINE WORLDS OF THE ODINIC MYSTERIES.



the Christian Era. In A.D. 385, Theodosius, that would be exterminator of pagan philosophy, issued his memorable edict *De Joolo Serapidis Dimando*. When the Christian soldiers, in obedience to this order, entered the Serapeum at Alexandria to destroy the image of Serapis which had stood there for centuries, so great was their veneration for the god that they dared not touch the image lest the ground should open at their feet and engulf them. At length, overcoming their fear, they demitted the statue, sacked the building, and finally as a fitting climax to their offense burned the magnificent library which was housed within the lofty apartments of the Serapeum. Several writers have recorded the remarkable fact that Christian symbols were found in the ruined foundations of this pagan temple. Socrates, a church historian of the fifth century, declared that after the pious Christians had razed the Serapeum at Alexandria and scattered the demons who dwelt there under the guise of gods, beneath the foundations was found the monogram of Christ!

Two quotations will further establish the relationship existing between the Mysteries of Serapis and those of other ancient peoples. The first is from Richard Payne Knight's *Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology*: "Fence Varro [in *De Lingua Latina*] says that Cadum and Tera, that is universa mind and product ve body, were the Great Gods of the Samothracian Mysteries; and the same as the Serapis and his of the later Egyptians; the Taurus and Anates of the Phoenicians, and the Saturn and Ops of the Latins." The second quotation is from Albert Pike's *Morals and Dogma*: "'Thee,' says Manianus Capella, in his hymn to the Sun, 'dwells on the Nile adored as Serapis, and Memphis worships as Osiris; in the sacred rites of Persia thou art Mithras, in Phrygia, Arys, and Libya bows down to thee as Ammon, and Phoenician Byblos as Adonis; thus the whole world adores thee under different names.'"

THE ODINIC MYSTERIES

The date of the founding of the Odinic Mysteries is uncertain, some writers declaring that they were established in the first century before Christ; others, the first century after Christ. Robert Masoy, 33^d, gives the following description of their origin: "It appears from the northern chronicles that in the first century of the Christian Era, Siggy, the chief of the Aser, an Asiatic tribe, emigrated from the Caspian sea and the Caucasus into northern Europe. He directed his course northwesterly from the Black sea to Russia, over which, according to tradition, he placed one of his sons as a ruler, so he it could to have done over the Saxons and the Franks. He then advanced through Cimbria to Denmark, which acknowledged his fifth son Skjold as its sovereign, and passed over to Sweden, where Gylf, who did homage to the wonderful stranger, and was initiated into his mysteries, then ruled. He soon made himself master here, built Siggrava as the capital of his empire, and promulgated a new code of laws, and established the sacred mysteries. He, himself, assumed the name of Odinn, founded cities, and ordered of the twelve Drottars (Druids?) who considered the secret worship, and the administration of justice, and, as prophets, revealed the future. The secret rites of these mysteries celebrated the death of Balder, the beautiful and lovely, and represented the grief of Gods and men at his death, and his restoration to life." (*General History of Freemasonry*)

After his death, the historical Odinn was apotheosized, his identity being merged into that of the mythological Odinn, god of wisdom, whose cult he had promulgated. Odinnism then supplanted the worship of Thor, the thunderer, the supreme deity of the ancient Scandinavian pantheon. The mound where, according to legend, King Odinn was buried is still to be seen near the site of his great temple at Upsala.

The twelve Drottars who presided over the Odinic Mysteries evidently personified the twelve holy and ineffable names of Odinn. The rituals of the Odinic Mysteries were very similar to those of the Greeks, Persians, and Brahmins, after which they were patterned. The Drottars, who symbolized the signs of the zodiac, were the custodians of the arts and sciences, which they revealed to those who passed successfully the ordeals of initiation. Like many other pagan cults, the Odinic Mysteries, as an institution, were destroyed by

Christianity, but the underlying cause of their fall was the corruption of the priesthood.

Mythology is nearly always the ritual and the symbolism of a Mystery school. Briefly stated, the secret drama which formed the basis of the Odinic Mysteries was as follows:

The Supreme, invisible Creator of all things was called All-father. His regent in Nature was Odinn, the one-eyed god. Like Quetzalcoatl, Odinn was elevated to the dignity of the Supreme Deity. According to the Drottars, the universe was fashioned from the body of Ymir, the hairfoot giant. Ymir was formed from the clouds of mist that rose from Ginnungagap, the great cleft in chaos into which the primordial frost giants and flame giants had hurled snow and fire. The three gods—Odinn, Vili, and Ve—slew Ymir and from him formed the world. From Ymir's various members the different parts of Nature were fashioned.

After Odinn had established order, he caused a wonderful palace, called Asgard, to be built on the top of a mountain, and here the twelve Aesir (gods) dwelt together, far above the limitations of mortal men. On this mountain also was Valhalla, the palace of the slain, where those who had heroically died fought and feasted day after day. Each night their wounds were healed and the host whose flesh they ate renewed itself as rapidly as it was consumed.

Balder the Beautiful—the Scandinavian Christ—was the beloved son of Odinn. Balder was noticeable; his kindly and beautiful spirit brought peace and joy to the hearts of the gods, and they all loved him save one. As Jesus had a Judas among His twelve disciples, so one of the twelve gods was false—Loki, the personification of evil. Loki caused Høther, the blind god of fate, to shoot Balder with a mistletoe arrow. With the death of Balder, light and joy vanished from the lives of the other deities. Heartbroken, the gods gathered to find a method whereby they could resurrect this spirit of eternal life and youth.

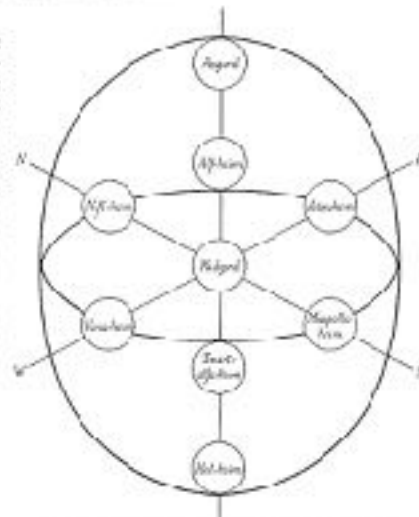
The result was the establishment of the Mysteries.

The Odinic Mysteries were given in underground crypts or caves, the chambers, nine in number, representing the Nine Worlds of the Mysteries. The candidate seeking admission was assigned the task of raising Balder from the dead. Although he did not realize it, he himself played the part of Balder. He called himself a wanderer; the caverns through which he passed were symbolic of the worlds and spheres of Nature. The priests who initiated him were emblematic of the sun, the moon, and the stars. The three supreme initiators—the Sublime, the Equal to the Sublime, and the Highest—were analogous to the Worshipful Master and the Junior and Senior Wardens of a Masonic lodge.

After wandering for hours through the intricate passageways, the candidate was ushered into the presence of a statue of Balder the Beautiful, the prototype of all initiates into the Mysteries. This figure stood in the center of a great apartment roofed with shields. In the midst of the chamber stood a plant with seven blossoms, emblematic of the planets. In this room, which symbolized the house of the Aesir, or Wisdom, the neophyte took his oath of secrecy and piety upon the naked blade of a sword. He drank the sanctified mead from a bowl made of a tuman skull and, having passed successfully through all the tortures and trials designed to liver him from the course of wisdom, he was finally permitted to unveil the mystery of Odinn—the personification of wisdom. He

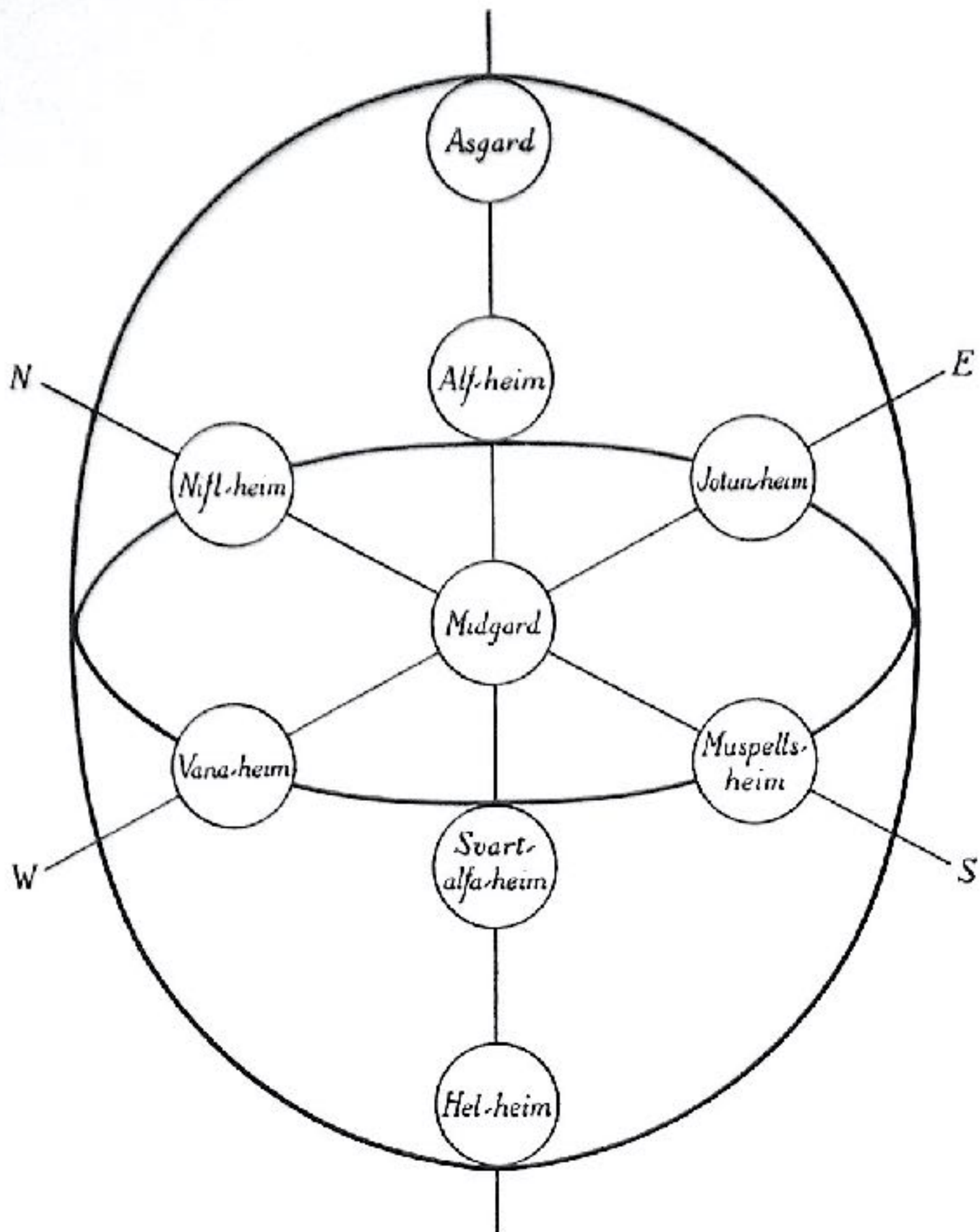
was presented, in the name of Balder, with the sacred ring of the order; he was hailed as a man reborn; and it was said of him that he had died and had been raised again without passing through the gates of death.

Richard Wagner's immortal composition, *Der Ring der Nibelungen*, is based upon the Mystery rituals of the Odinic cult. While the great composer took many liberties with the original story, the Ring Operas, declared to be the grandest tetralogy of music dramas the world possesses, have caught and preserved in a remarkable manner the majesty and power of the original sagas. Beginning with *Das Rheingold*, the action proceeds through *Die Walküre* and *Siegfried* to an ever-inspiring climax in *Götterdämmerung*, "The Twilight of the Gods."



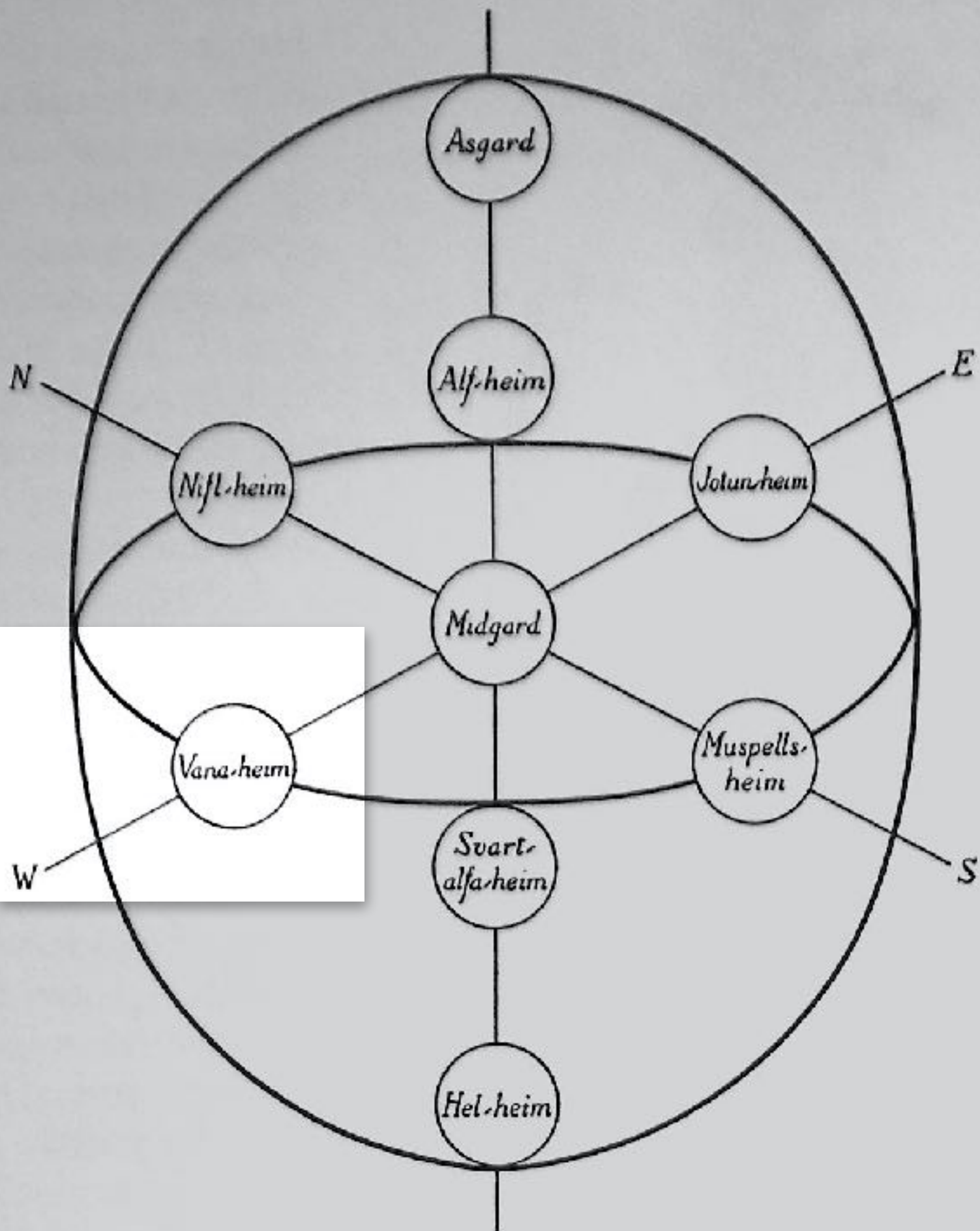
THE NINE WORLDS OF THE ODINIC MYSTERIES.

The Nordic Mysteries were given in nine chambers, because the candidate advancing through them in sequential order. These chambers of initiation represented the nine spheres into which the Drottars divided the universe: (1) Asgard, the Heaven World of the Gods; (2) Alfheim, the World of the Light and beautiful Elves, or Spirits; (3) Niflheim, the World of Cold and Darkness, which is located in the North; (4) Svart-alfheim, the World of the Grimms, which is located in the East; (5) Midgard, the Earth World of human beings, which is located in the middle, or middle place; (6) Vanaheim, the World of the Vanes, which is located in the West; (7) Muspellheim, the World of Fire, which is located in the South; (8) Helheim, the World of the dead and treacherous Elves, which is under the earth; and (9) Helheim, the World of cold and the abode of the dead, which is located at the very center point of the universe. It is to be understood that all of the worlds are available to the vision of man, except Helheim, the home of human mortals, but during the process of initiation the soul of the candidate—liberated from its earthly shell by the secret power of the priests—wanders outside the limitations of these nine spheres. These wanderings, which are symbolically known as the worlds of the Scandinavian, and its nine spheres, or planes, through which initiates of the Esoteric Mysteries passed in their ritual of regeneration.



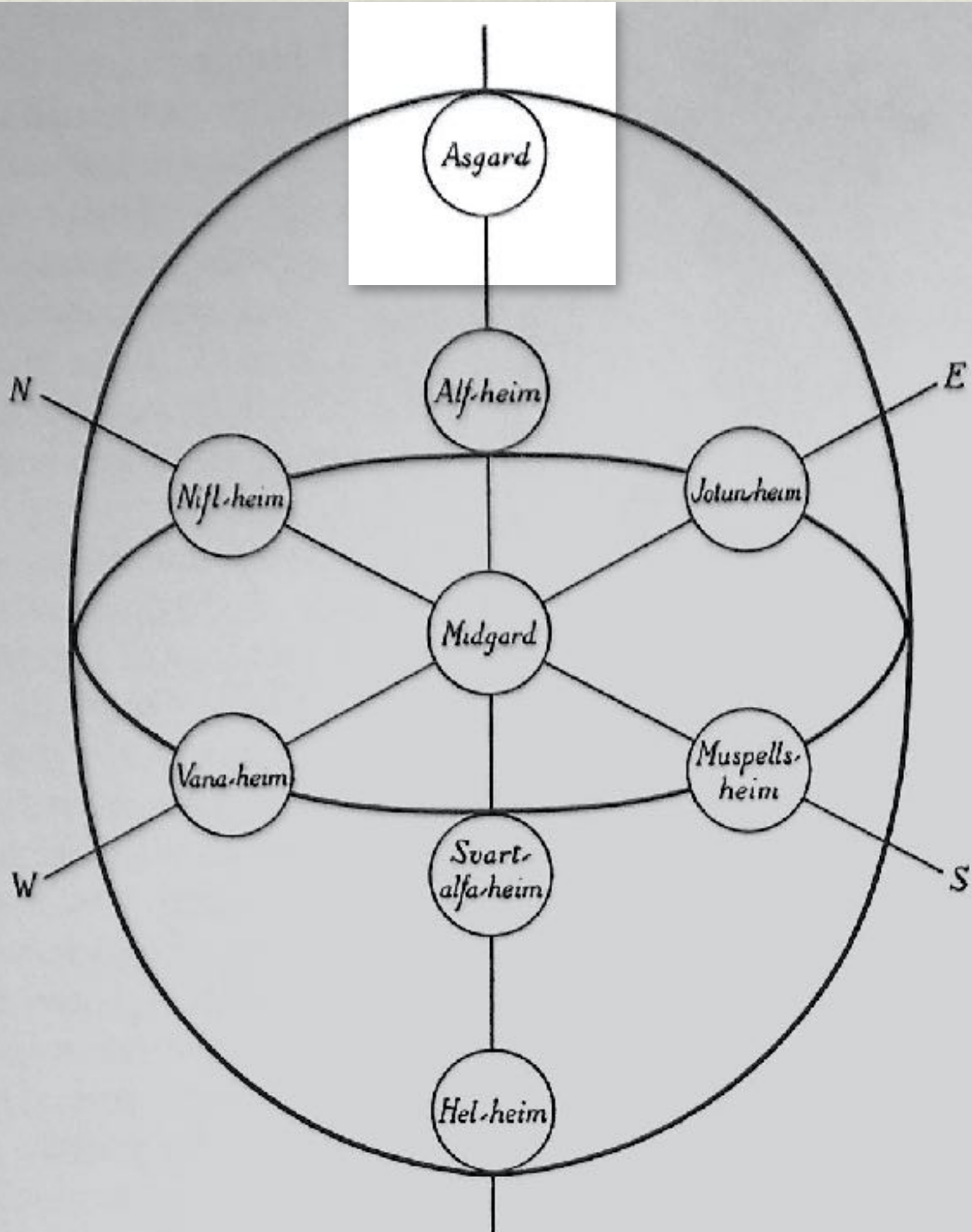
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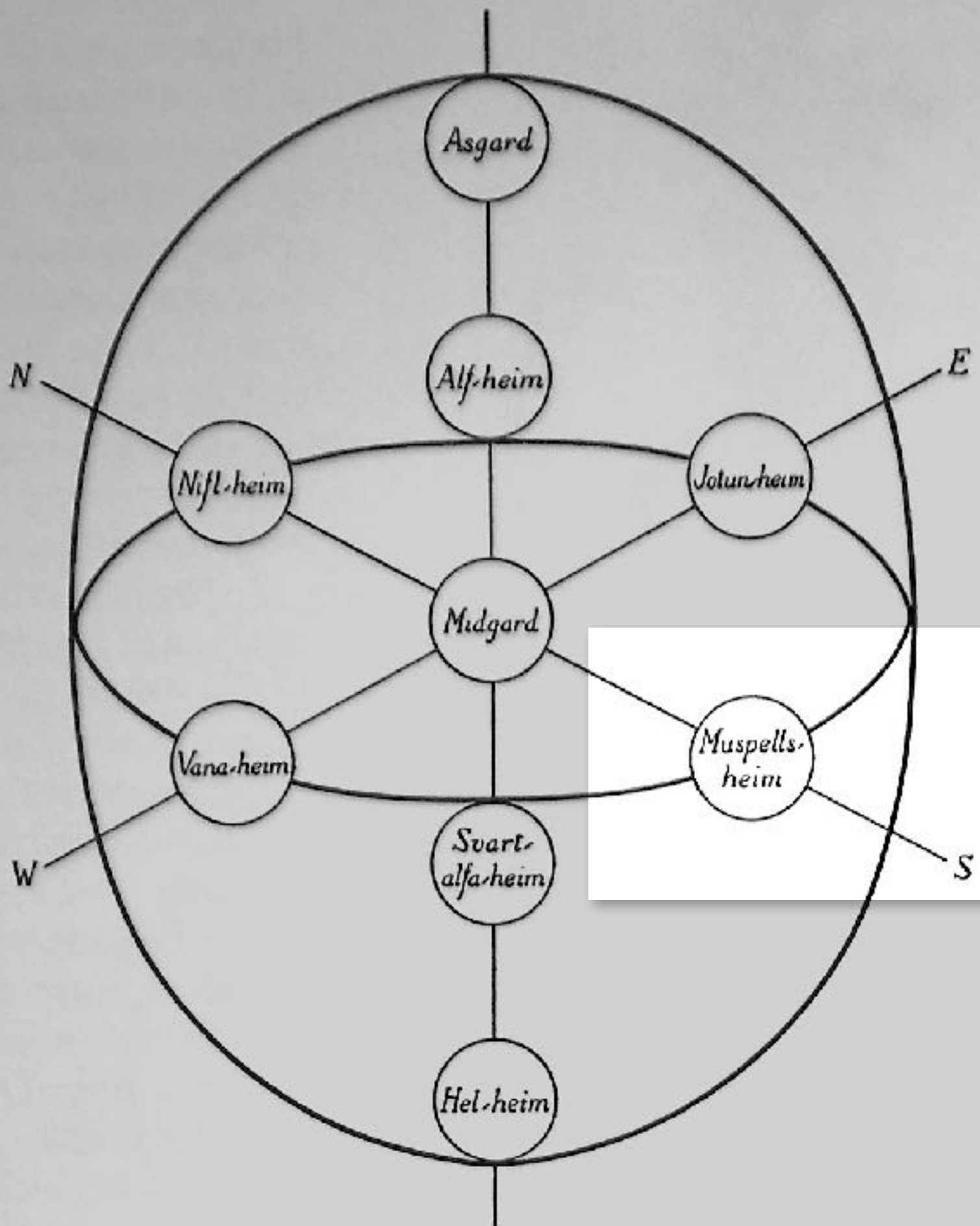
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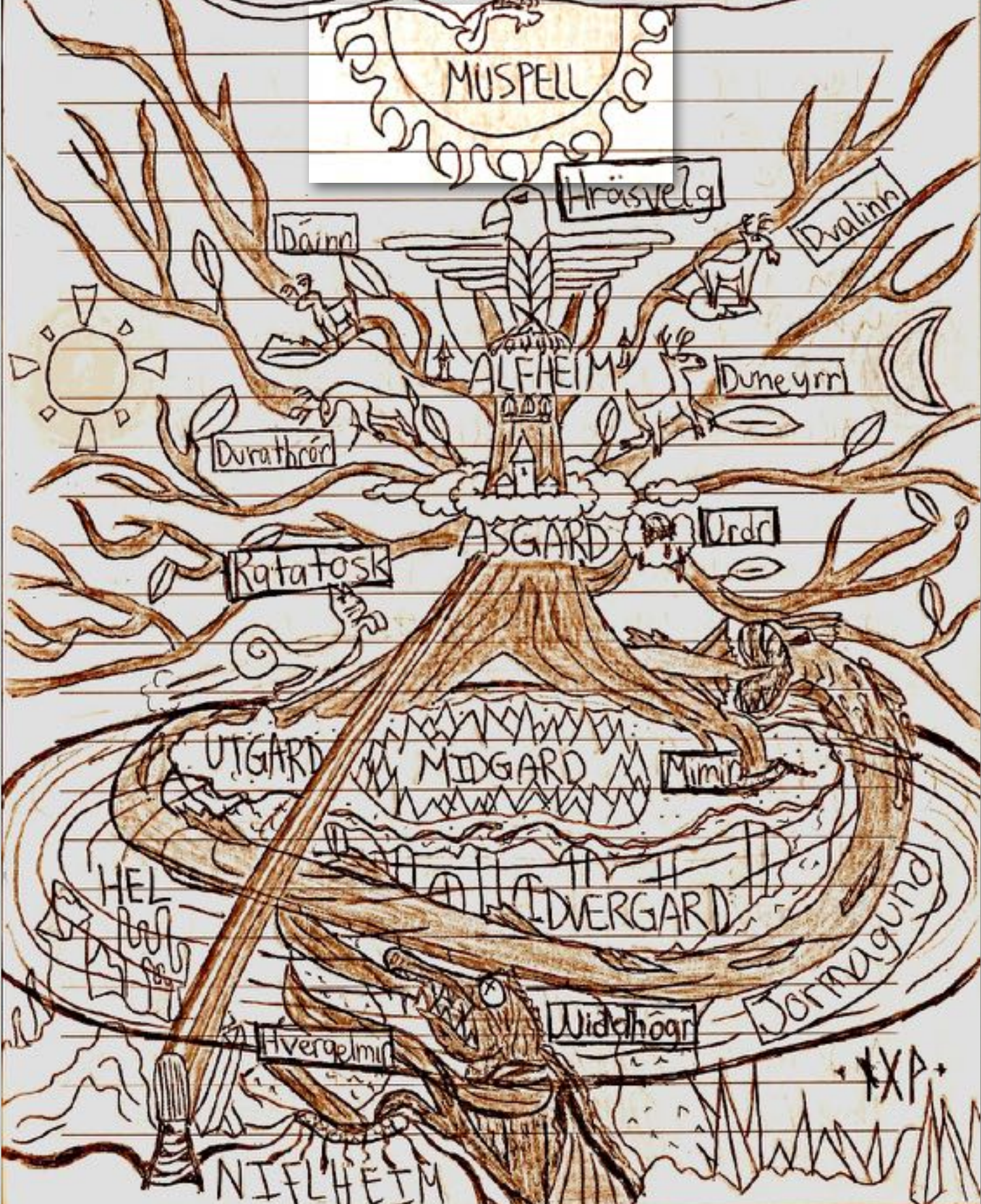
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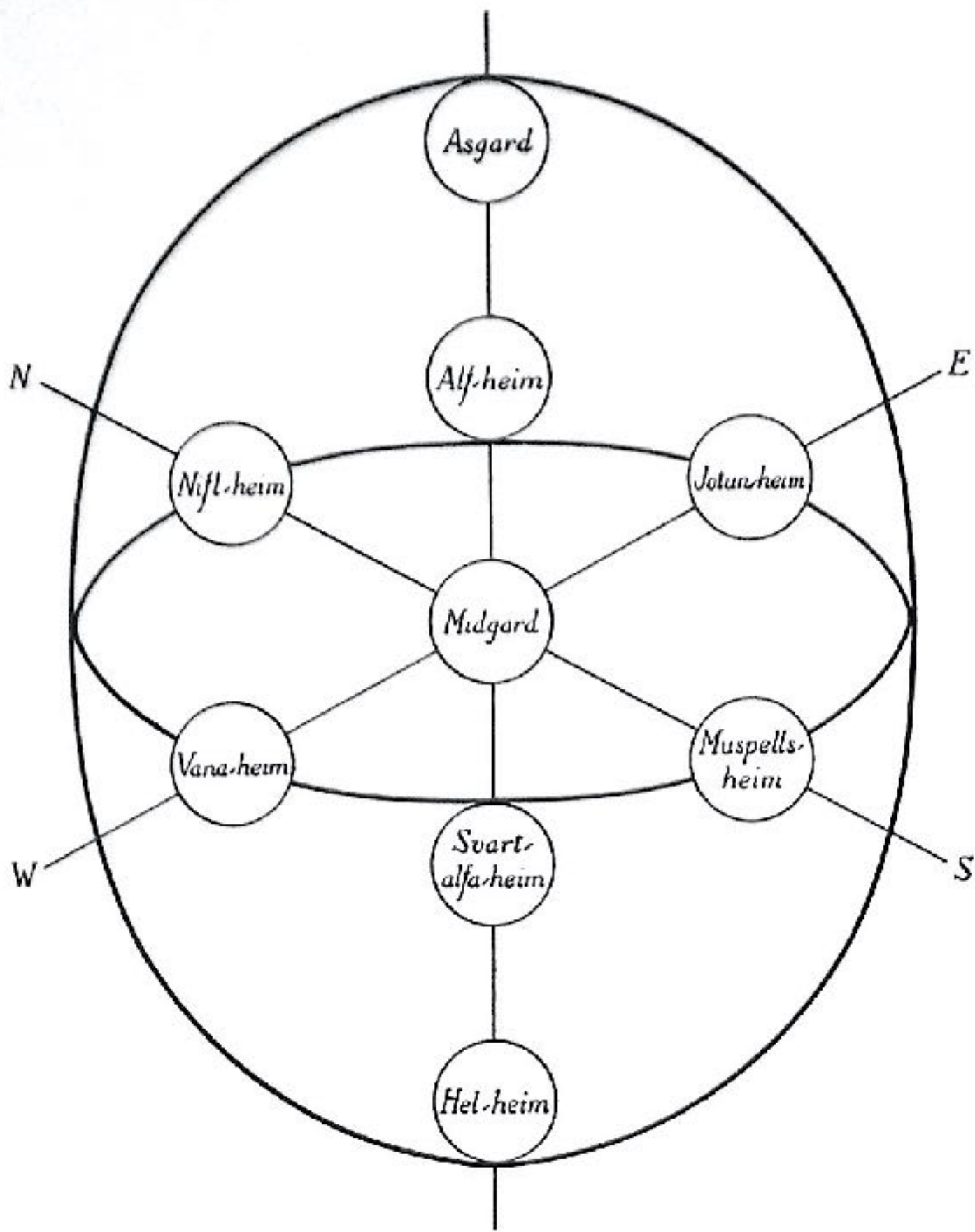


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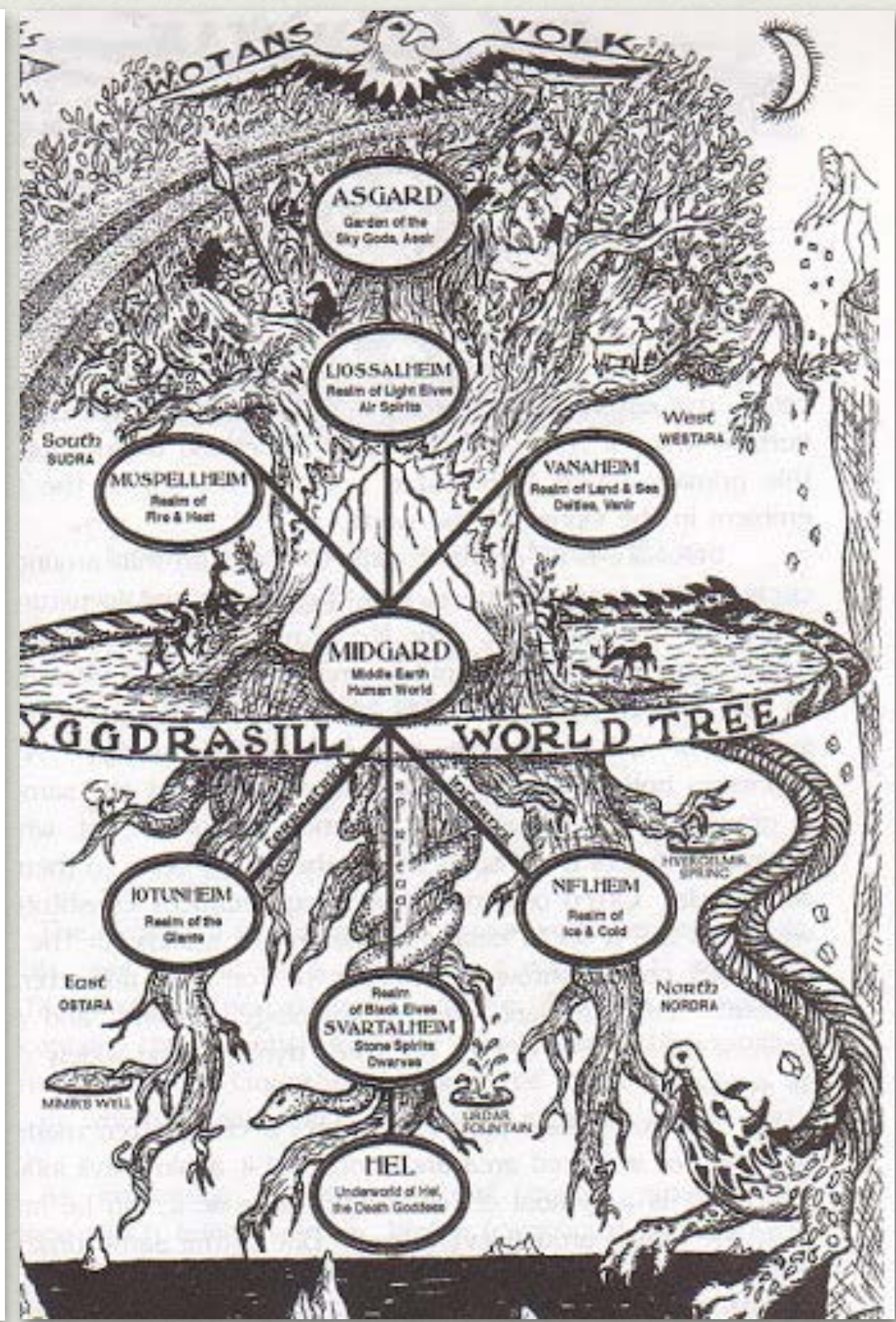
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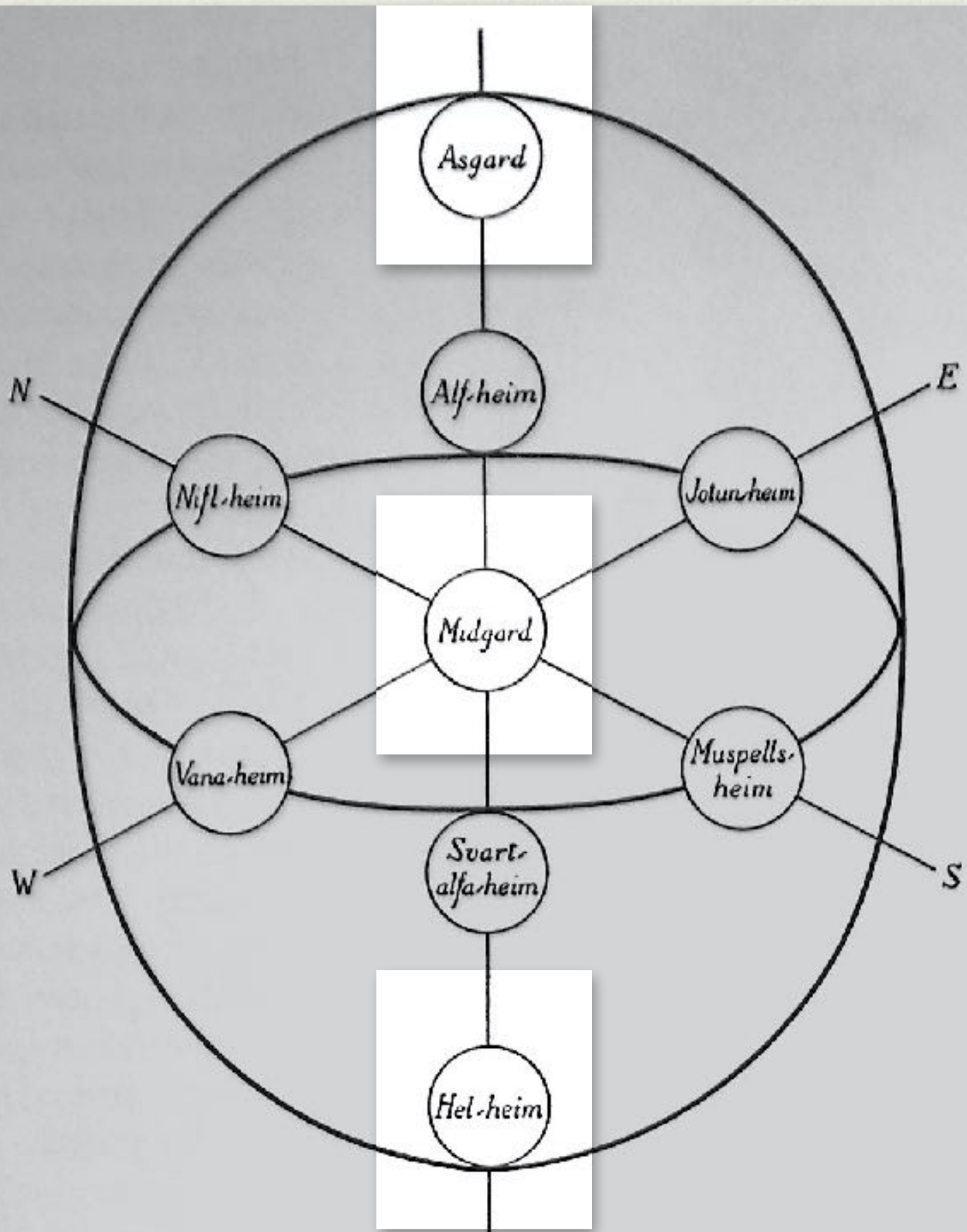
YGGDRASIL THE WORLD TREE



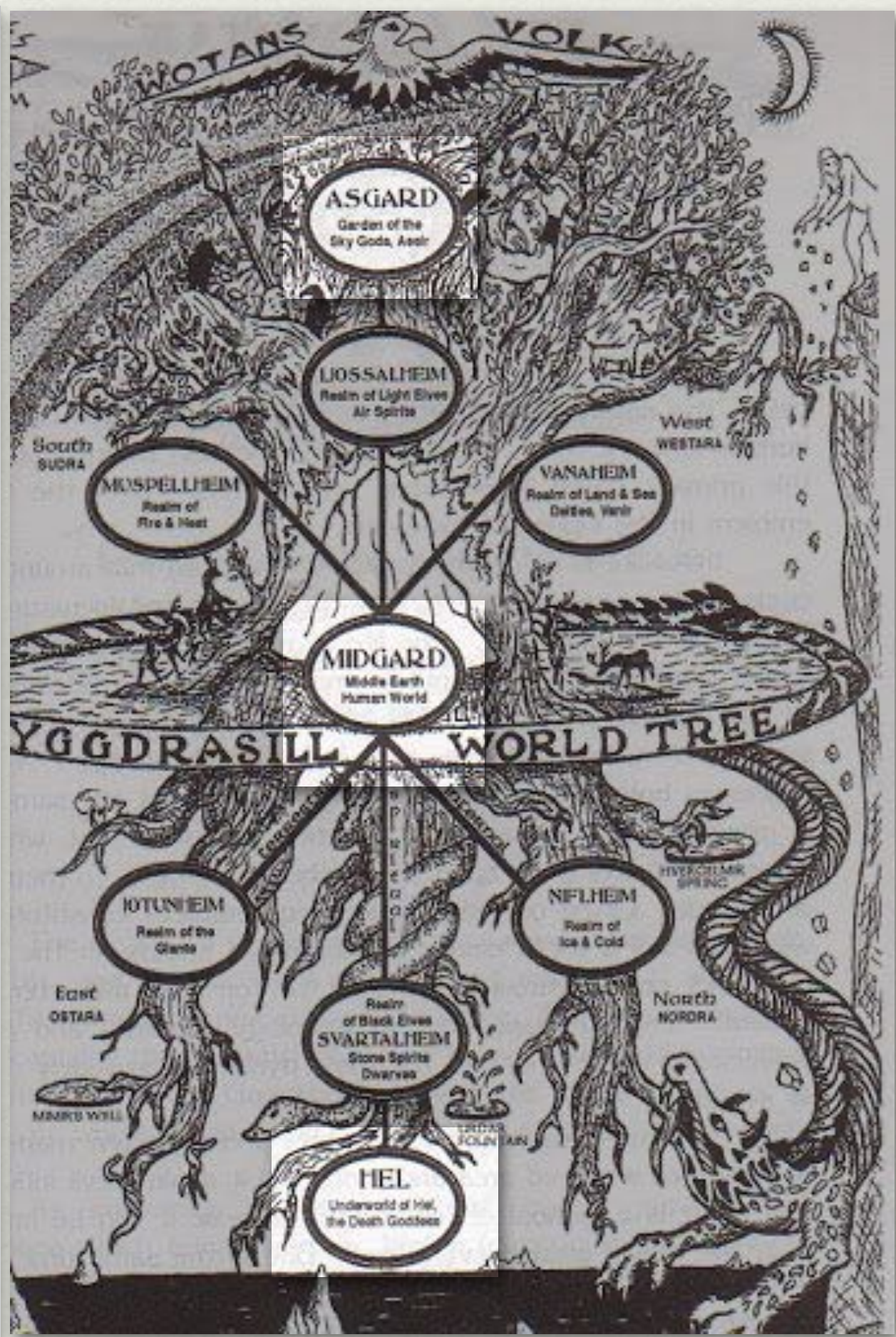


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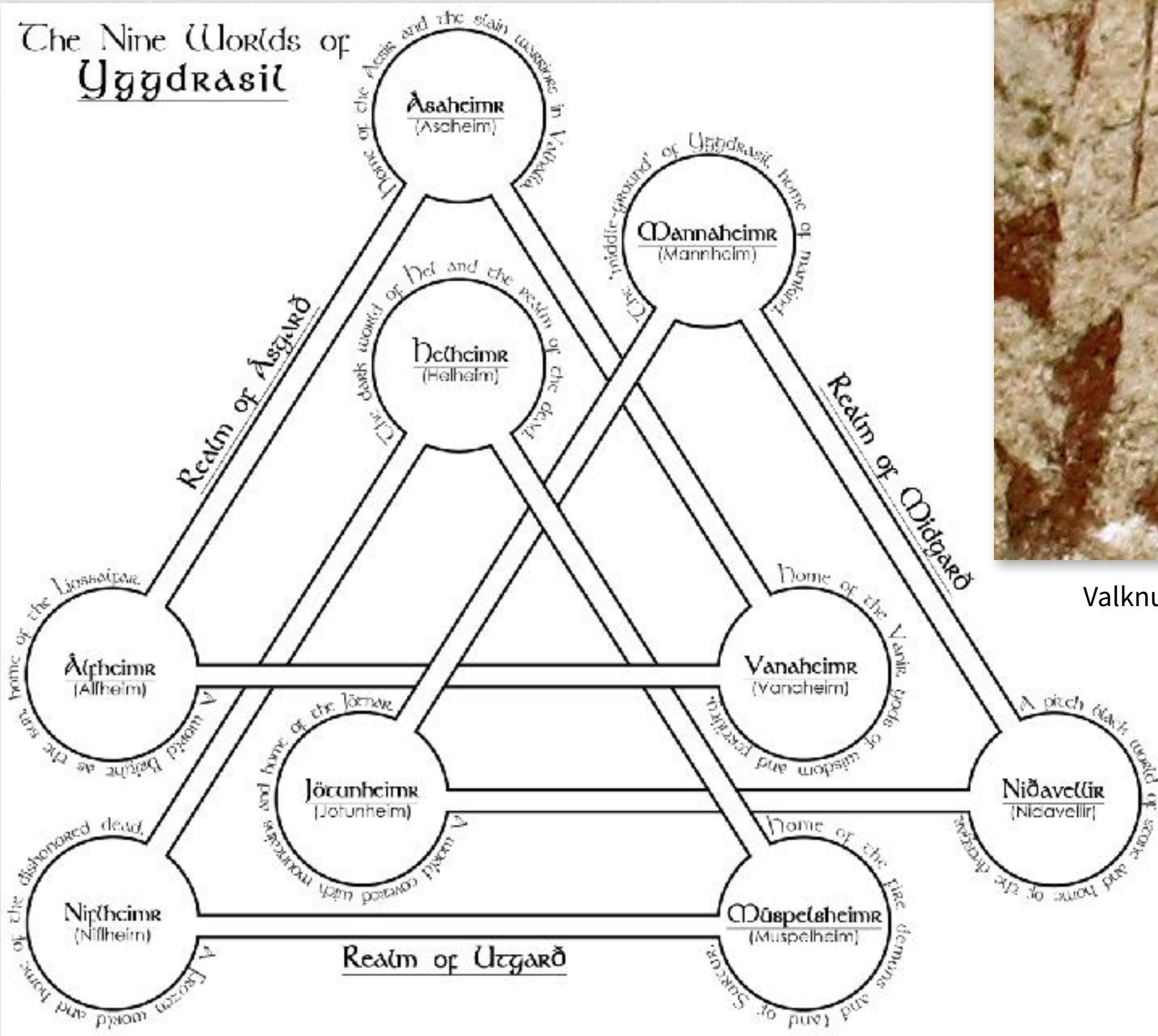




THE NINE WORLDS OF THE ODINIC MYSTERIES.



The Nine Worlds of Yggdrasil



Valknut on the Stora Hammars stone