

# From Asgard to Valhalla: The Remarkable History of the Norse Myths

By Heather O'Donoghue



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Whether it be Thor's powerful hammer, the mysterious valkyries, the palatial home of the gods - Asgard - or ravenous wolves and fierce elemental giants, the Norse myths are packed with vivid incident. This is the first book to show how the Norse myths have resonated from era to era: from Viking-age stories of ice and fire to the epic poetry of *Beowulf*; and from Wagner's *Ring* to Marvel Comics' *Mighty Thor*. Heather O'Donoghue considers the wider contexts of Norse mythology, including its origins, medieval expression and reception in post-medieval societies right up to the present. *From Asgard to Valhalla* is a book that will intrigue and delight anyone with an interest in how the Norse myths have so profoundly shaped the western cultural heritage.

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#### **Editorial Review**

#### Review

"The fascination of the myths is brought to life in the charting of some surprising trajectories: from eddic poems to the imagined sublime, from the runic futhark to rune-yodelling and Paul Muldoon, and from Snorri to Matthew Arnold and fantasy comics. Heather O'Donoghue offers a fresh treatment of it all and offers a welcome compendium of the literary (and political) reception of Old Norse mythology down to the present day."--Judy Quinn, University of Cambridge

"O'Donoghue writes fascinatingly about the perpetuity of the myths" - Peter Conrad, Observer

#### About the Author

**Heather O'Donoghue** is Reader in Old Norse in the University of Oxford and a Professorial Fellow of Linacre College. Her books include *The Genesis of a Saga Narrative* (1991), *Old Norse Icelandic Literature: A Short Introduction* (2004) and *Skaldic Verse and the Poetics of a Saga Narrative* (2005). An expert on Old Norse literature and myth, she has broadcast on the subject on national radio.

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