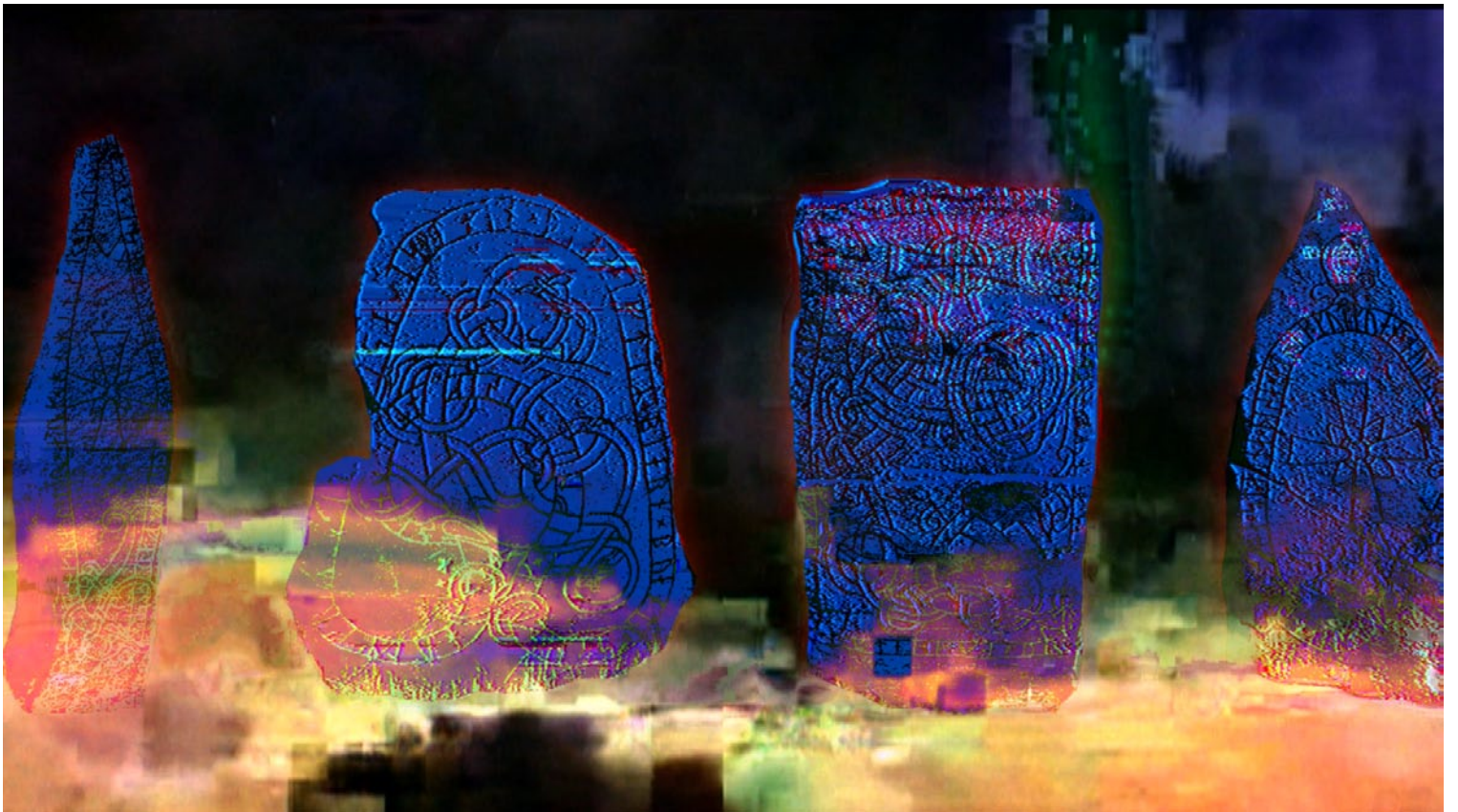


910 - Egill Skallagrímsson ————— 915 - Ásgerður Bjarnadóttir

- 939 - Þorgerður Egilsdóttir
- 960 - Þorbjörg „Digra“ Ólafsdóttir
- 1000 - Ingveldur Vermundardóttir
- 1020 - Þorgerður Yngvildardóttir
- 1060 - Yngveldur Hauksdóttir
- 1100 - Snorri Húnbogason
- 1135 - Narfi Snorrason
- 1175 - Snorri Narfason
- 1210 - Narfi Snorrason
- 1260 - Snorri Narfason
- 1320 - Ormur Snorrason
- 1360 - Guðmundur Ormsson
- 1385 - Þorbjörg Guðmundsdóttir
- 1410 - Kristín Guðnadóttir
- 1445 - Páll Jónsson
- 1485 - Þorleifur Pálsson
- 1510 - Björn Þorleifsson
- 1570 - Guttormur Björnsson
- 1630 - Bergsteinn Guttormsson
- 1675 - Katrín Bergsteinsdóttir
- 1712 - Guðmundur Hallvarðsson
- 1748 - Þorbjörg Guðmundsdóttir
- 1786 - Guðrún Bjarnadóttir
- 1831 - Sveinn Arnoddsson
- 1883 - Elín Júlíana Sveinsdóttir
- 1903 - Haraldur Jóhannesson
- 1938 - Rósa Haraldsdóttir
- 1957 - Jarprúður Jónsdóttir
- 1982 - Arnar Ásgeirsson





A farmer and his dog

Five farmers and a dog are walking along a countryside road in a remote and very mountainous peninsula in the North-West of Iceland. The dog is of the Hungarian Vizsla breed. The Vizsla is a reddish medium-sized short-coated hunting dog, lightly built with defined muscles. The Vizslas' are known for being great companions. One of the farmers had made his life long dream come true and bought the dog for his own 50th birthday a year earlier. The dog was still a puppy, now they had become close friends. He named the dog "Goði" an Old Norse term for a priest or chieftain.

A tractor comes driving down the road, the men move aside. One of them says, "Give the tractor some space and move out of the way". While they move to the left side of the road, the dog stays in the middle of the road disobeying it's owner's commands and the tractor drives relentlessly over the dog, breaking it's spine. The 8-ton tractor drives on like nothing had happened. The weather conditions were perfect, a bright day, no icing on the roads. The men rush to the injured dog and decide to get him under healing hands. During the three-hour car ride the owner sits with the dog in his lap in the back seat. The dog never takes it's eyes of it's owner. When they finally get to a veterinarian and the extent of the injuries are clear, a decision is made to put the dog down. Goði was 6 months old and weighted 35 kg.

(21. December, 2006 on the Icelandic television news).

"I have raised a pole of shame (Níðstöng) against the despicable [REDACTED], who ran over my dear Goði on purpose on November 25th last year with the result that his spine was broken and he had to be put to sleep. I curse the scoundrel and I call upon the Guardian Spirits of Iceland to drive him from the country or leave him dead. May he rot in Hell."

[REDACTED],
a farmer in the West fjords, Iceland.

A pole of shame or nothing pole consisted according to the Old Icelandic sagas, of a long wooden pole with a recently cut horse head at the end, and at times with the skin of the horse laid over the pole. The pole of shame is raised directed towards the enemies dwelling place and target of the curse. The curse could be carved in runes on the pole.

It is rare in these modern times that poles of shame are raised, although there are some examples. This pole can be seen from the highway. The maker of the pole was sure that the killing of his dog had been no accident and the driver had not made an attempt to avoid it. A whole year of disputes magnifying between the two men passed. The farmer slaughtered two calves, carved out the head of one of them, and attached it to one end of the pole and then it was raised with the head facing the dwellings of the "enemy."

A short ceremony followed with the reading of the insult:

"Here I raise an insult pole, and direct this insult towards [REDACTED].
I curse the scoundrel and I call upon the Guardian Spirits of Iceland to drive [REDACTED] from the country or leave him dead.

May he rot in Hell."

After the reading the insult it was attached to the pole and the curse was in effect. The case quickly reached the desk of the local police office, and the pole's message was interpreted as a death threat.

A later statement from the pole raiser read:

"The message has been received by it's target. The Guardian Spirits of Iceland have been roused from their slumber and Iceland is now experiencing the worst storm in several decades... My purpose with this was to find a legal way to vent my anger and draw attention to this

man's actions. He should know that his actions have consequences. As the days grow longer it is time to move on. I will remove the Pole of Shame on Winter Solstice, December 22nd. As of that date, this case is closed, although the curse remains in effect.”

I found his e-mail and contacted him. I told him I found his story and the reactions of people interesting. I wanted to know how serious he was about it. Why deal with it in such an ancient way? His reactions were positive, he invited me to come visit him, to see the pole and see the forest he has been growing since he came back. Suddenly he stopped replying to my e-mails for a while.

One day I got an e-mail saying:

Dear Arnar,

I'm at the hospital in Reykjavik due to heart failure. I now have a pacemaker of the most perfect kind implanted in my chest and they will release me tomorrow. I have an apartment in Reykjavik, where I will lick my wounds the next days. I'm not sure I want to talk about the events of the pole; I want them to be forgotten. But you are always welcome to visit me at my farm, if you are in the area.

All the best,

I have heard that people characters sometimes change when they have a heart attack. I'm not sure, I don't know many who have suffered from heart attacks well enough to say, but he wanted these events to be forgotten. I remember before the heart attack he justified his actions of the pole with the claim that he is a descendent of the infamous 10th century Viking Egill Skallagrímsson. He exhibited berserk behavior; at the age of seven he was cheated in a game with local boys. Enraged, he went home and to get an axe and split the skull of the boy who cheated him, to the teeth. The descrip-

tion of his large and unattractive head, has led to the theory that he might have suffered from some a disease, a disorder of enlarged and misshapen bones.

Egill raised a pole against the king and queen of Norway after receiving shameful treatment from them while trying to recover his wife's inheritance. Egill placed a horse's head on a hazel pole driven into the rocks near shore. He invoked a curse against the king and queen, demanding no rest for the land spirits until they had driven the king and queen from the land. Turning the horse's head towards the mainland where the king and queen were located, Egill carved the curse in runes on the pole. So in fact the tradition of the pole dates back to the first inhabitants of Iceland, before Christianity.

Like the pole raising farmer, I'm myself descendant of the infamous Viking Egill Skallagrímsson. According to the database “Íslendingabók” Which every Icelandic citizen and legal resident who have been issued an Icelandic ID number have access to. It contains genealogical information about the inhabitants of Iceland, dating more than 1200 years back. Does that mean I should embrace his berserk behavior, I seem to have some right through inheritance to it.