

Noel and Santa Claus

The origin of the word 'Noel' is the French word 'nouvelle', which means 'new'. Noel is erroneously linked to 'natal', meaning 'birth' in Latin, because Christmas day (25th of December) is accepted as being the birth date of Jesus Christ. There is no clear evidence proving this belief, but it became central in the Christian liturgical tradition. As the new-year approaches, it is interesting to ponder on the origin of decorating a pine tree during Christmas. The tradition of decorating a pine tree has its origin in the ancient Asiatic festivity called 'Nardugan'. 'Nar' means "fire" in Persian and 'dugan' means "born" in Turkish. Therefore 'Nardugan' means "the birth of the sun". This is because the sun was considered to be a ball of fire. During the Nardugan feast people danced around pine trees and lit huge pyres. They also decorated a special pine tree with small papers on which they wrote their wishes for the approaching new-year. This feast is still celebrated in some Asiatic countries.

The 12 of December is the day when the days start to lengthen in the Nordic countries. This day is called the 'Jul feast' in Sweden and is celebrated by chanting the Santa Lucia song. On that day children go from door to door, dancing and asking for presents or money from the elder people. The origin of the Swedish Jul feast, which is pronounced as "Youl", is somewhat unclear. It is interesting to notice that "Jul" is very similar to the word "Yil", which means "year" in Turkish. Could it be that this word originates from the Viking language? This is because some people have claimed that Santa Claus is no other than the Viking god Odin. Margaret Baker wrote a book called "Discovering Christmas Customs and Folklore" in which she claims that Santa Claus is in fact the Viking god Odin. It is quite possible that the Vikings, who saw the dancing green lights in the sky, which is called "Aurora Borealis", during this time of the year, envisaged that they represented Odin roaming the sky on his eight-legged horse called "Slepnir". This may be the reason why Santa Claus is believed to travel in the sky on a sledge driven by eight reindeer.

There are several clues linking the origin of Vikings to Asia. The similarity of the Viking runes to the Asiatic Turkish letters is such a clue. See the previous article. Another clue is the belief of the tree called Yggdrasil in the Viking mythology. A similar symbol called "the tree of life" was believed to prevent the sky from falling on the heads of people, was a central symbol in the Turkish mythology. Snorri Sturluson (1178 – 1241) wrote a book called "The Prose EDDA" in the Icelandic language about the Viking mythology in which he mentions the Yggdrasil tree. This manuscript has been translated into English Arthur G. Brodeur (1888 – 1971) in 1916. The manuscript starts with the following paragraph:

"Near the earth's centre was made that goodliest of homes and haunts that ever have been, which is called Troy, even that which we call Turkland."

Troy is probably not the ancient city located on the western coast of Turkey, but could be located in the central regions of Asia. This is because during his time, Turkland was

known and believed to exist at the center of Asia. Troy, on the other hand, can be interpreted as being a concatenation of "Turk-ia".

There is the belief that Santa Claus was Saint Nicholas, who lived in the ancient city of Myrna, whose present name is Demre. Demre is located in southern Turkey on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. But Saint Nicholas cannot be Santa Claus, because there is no snowfall in the southern regions of Turkey and there is no reason to be dressed in furs. The only similarity between the Nordic Santa Claus and Saint Nicholas of southern Turkey is that both enjoyed giving presents to small children. At the center below we see the drawing of Santa Claus on his sledge driven by eight reindeer. On the right is the cover page of the book written by Margaret Baker.

