

On the Practical Aspects of Devotion and Prayer to the Thunderer

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Introduction

The purpose of this article is to shed some light on how our ancestors paid reverence and prayed to the Teutonic Thunder God. My hope is that this article will help provide a basic overview of some concepts for the newcomer, as well as provide sources for those looking to challenge notions they may have already formulated.

Whether you hail from people that say Thor, Thunor, or Donar, let us spend a moment thinking about what it means to pray and give devotion to this powerful Storm God. I will refer to him as His Norse name Thor in this work, as this is the most well-known name in the current day.

I have made a series of posts on the Sun Riders Telegram channel (@solarcult) documenting a few of the many runic inscriptions that address Thor. In my experience studying these inscriptions, Thor is the most common deity invoked and mentioned directly, highlighting His popularity. He has been referred to as the “everyman’s god”, and I think this characterization holds true considering the material evidence. But let’s dive a little more in depth into the corpus of runic inscriptions and see what we can learn.

Wigi Thonar



Nordendorf Fibula I – Front, showing decorative motifs and patterns, 6-7th century

Thor is mentioned in a number of inscriptions along with some version of the word “Wigi”. Let us first start with the Nordendorf fibulae.



Nordendorf Fibula I – Back, in black and white, highlighting runic inscriptions, from Bavaria

A fibula in archeology is a small, usually ornate object that serves as a brooch for holding together garments.

The Nordendorf fibula was found in the town of Nordendorf, Bavaria, Germany. The object itself is thought to be 6th or 7th century and is of note because it is a rather early and direct reference to multiple Germanic gods, scratched into the back of

the artifact in Elder Futhark runes. Finds such as these are unfortunately exceedingly rare (I speculate that their rarity is due to Christians especially seeking out objects of heathen religious significance, and were much more permissive of more profane runic inscriptions, leaving us with very little in the way of runic inscriptions on the divine). On the object, we find a direct reference to Woden (𐀓𐀆𐀓𐀓𐀓), who is readily identifiable as the Norse God Odin from later sources. Below this we find inscribed another God, which by my eye can either be read as Wigi Thonar (𐀓𐀆𐀓𐀓𐀆𐀓𐀓), or quite possibly Wigu Thonar (𐀓𐀆𐀓𐀓𐀆𐀓𐀓). The identity of “Thonar” can be confirmed by later sources, such as the 9th century *Abrenuntatio Diaboli* (prayer denouncing the Old Gods among the Saxons), “...Thunær ende Wôden ende Saxnôte ende allum thê m unholdum thê hira genôtas sint” which roughly translates to “...Thunar and Woden and Saxnot and all the fiends that are their companions”. We can equate Thonar and Thunar quite readily, and likewise the connection between Thunar and Thor is quite strong on linguistic grounds. Thus, from a comparatively early standpoint (600 years before the Poetic Edda was transcribed), and in the southern most reaches of the modern Germanic sphere, we have a direct reference the Thunder God and the word Wigi.

Scholars contend “wigi/wigu” either means something along the lines of either “fight/battle” (from reconstructed Proto-Germanic *wiganą, attested later as Old English wigan and Gothic wigan) or “hallow/blessed” (from Proto-Germanic *wīhaz, later attested in Old English *wēoh (holy sanctuary; attested in compound words), Old Norse vigjar (hallow) and vé (shrine), and Gothic weihs (holy, sacred)). Either of these could be legitimate; as I will cover later in this document Thor was a brutal Warrior God, and likewise as a God he would be holy. In addition, the 2 words, despite having seemingly different reconstructed roots, seem to be somewhat intertwined in their etymology, perhaps because the linguistics are not clear at this time. But one could easily imagine the “holy” or “consecrating” aspect of war and battle, and so it is also possible this word means both things simultaneously. Even in the modern age, we see example of multilayered words, with both profane and sacred usages. An example could be vision: on the one hand referring to the biological process of sight (“My vision is no longer good, I need glasses”), and on the other, of the imagination and/or spiritual (“This is in line with the grander vision of our organization”/“I had visions of great misfortune”).

However, this is admittedly speculation on my part, and as a result, believe it necessary to dig a little deeper into this word in reference to Thor, in order to get a clearer picture.

Thor Wigi...

Throughout the Viking Age, and into the early Medieval period, we find an explosion of runic inscriptions, the majority in the Younger Futhark runic alphabet. Unfortunately, many of these do not shed much light on the pre-Christian religion, with many being simply used as memorial stones, and a significant amount being overtly Christian. However, that does not mean we cannot find useful information in those rarer ones that are authentically heathen.

So let us first visit the Velanda Runestone, estimated to be an early 11th century inscription. The stone is found in the Västergötland region of Sweden, and is a memorial stone commissioned by a wife for her deceased husband, a thane. It ends in the Younger Futhark statement ÞNRNIPPI, which transliterates as “Thor



Velanda Runestone (pictured left), complete stone and inscription, Sweden. Typically dated to between 1000-1100 CE.



A close-up view of the **Velanda Stone** “ÞNR:NIPI”

Vigi”. One must keep in mind that Younger Futhark was somewhat inefficient, where the ʀ rune could represent both “K” or “G”, and the ʀ could represent “O”, “U”, or “V”. However, taking into account the highly consistent sound shifts of Old Norse from its predecessor (W->V), as well as the following inscriptions, it is highly likely this transliteration is a North Germanic equivalent to the inscription found in the Nordendorf fibula 400 years earlier.



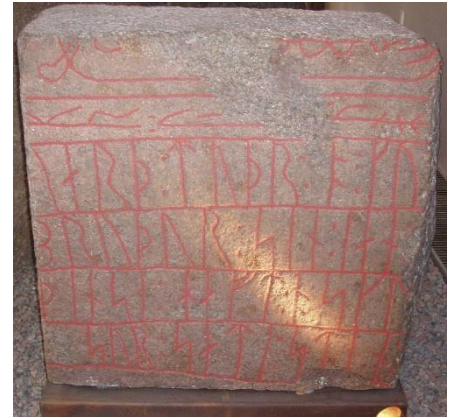
Next, we shall turn to the Glavendrup Runestone, found across the sea in Denmark from about 100 years before the Valenda Runestone inscription. This stone was commissioned by a family and carved by the runemaster Soti for a deceased thane (this was the same runemaster who carved the Tryggevælde Runestone).

The end of the inscription contains a more complete sentence in relation to Thor, stating ÞNRNIPPIÞÞYIRNÞÞÞ,

which is transliterated as “Thor vigi thasi runaR”. “Thasi runaR” is nearly universally read as “these runes”. Thus, if “vigi” in these inscriptions is in fact the same as Wigi Thonar from the Nordendorf fibula, we are left with either “Thor fight/do battle with these runes” or “Thor bless/hallow/consecrate these runes”. The 2nd option seems much more plausible in my opinion.

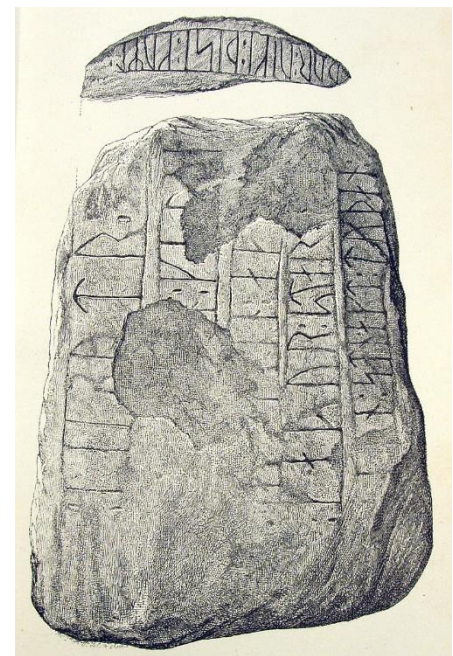
Glavendrup Stone, Denmark, 10th century

The next runestone we will examine is the Sønder Kirkeby stone, from Denmark. Unfortunately, the stone is somewhat damaged as it was scrapped and reshaped when the church integrated it into a wall (demonstrating my previous point that the church tended to pick out heathen stones and reuse them for their buildings to cover them up). The inscription is rather unique in that it contains a line of single stave bindrunes, perhaps as a means of masking the invocation of a heathen God in times when this would be particularly dangerous. The bindrune inscription is thought to say (although this is somewhat extrapolated because of damage) ÞNRNIPIRNþþ, which transliterates as “Thor vigi runar”. This statement strongly corroborates the previous example from the Glavendrup stone, although it is missing an article. We can take an educated guess that this likely is asking the God Thor to bless or consecrate the runes contained with the stone.

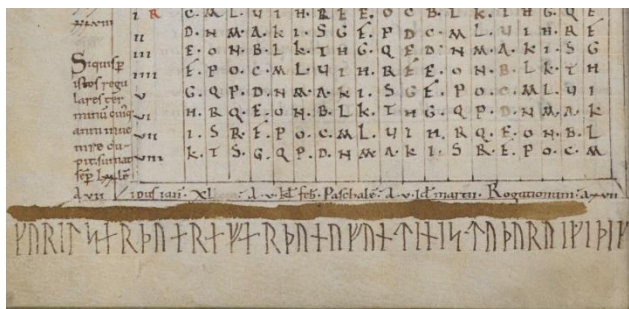


Sønder Kirkeby Stone, Denmark

The Verring runestone is another example of a runestone invoking Thor from Denmark, largely contemporary to the previous Sønder Kirkeby stone. The main body of the runic text is unfortunately not in good shape and not easily read, although along the top ridge of the stone is the well-preserved inscription ÞNRNIPIRNþþ, which transliterates as “Thor vigi thisi kuml”. The meaning of “kuml” is somewhat elusive to me, but scholars suggest it is “kuml” and this means “memorial”. Although I cannot confirm it, we still likely have another inscription asking the god Thor to protect and hallow a ritual object.



Verring Stone, Denmark. “Thor vigi...” can be seen on the top portion of the stone (upside down tin the depiction).



The left hand page of the **Canterbury Charm**, a Norse work from 11th century England.

The final inscription we will cover at this time is the Canterbury Charm. This charm is a runic inscription inserted into the margin of a late Anglo-Saxon manuscript from the year 1073. Given that it is written in Younger Futhark, and the fact the Anglo-Saxons had been Christian for hundreds of years at this point, it was likely written by a Norseman. The inscription is rather long, and seems to be a blessing of sorts directed against an ailment, caused by a thurs or ogre, and invoking the God Thor for protection. The portion of the inscription is ÞNRNIPIRNþþ, which is read as “Thor vigi thek” or “Thor hallow/consecrate/protect you”. A similar type of incantation is utilized in the Kvinneby

Amulet, although this inscription does not utilize the word “Vigi”. Nevertheless, Thor is invoked to offer protection to the wearer of the amulet.

Conclusion on “Thor Vigi”

These runestones highlight a trend amongst our ancestors of invoking the Thunder God Thor to “Vigi” sacred objects, and in the case of the Canterbury inscription, to do so against supernatural forces which cause ailments. While it is easiest to see this as simply “hallow” or “bless”, let us not discount the possibility that this word is rooted in one which means “battle” or “war”. A warrior God invoked to protect an object or person through martial affairs is also not a far-fetched conclusion. Nevertheless, we can see that our ancestors likely invoked this God for the purposes of eliciting both protection and blessing.

But to summarize, we have evidence within the material culture of the Germanic people, a record from as early as the 6th century, to as late as the 11th century, and from as far south as Bavaria to as far north as Sweden, as well as in England, of sacred objects invoking Thor for protection and/or consecration. My personal interpretation here is thus: in instances in which you wish to consecrate a space for ritual purposes, to protect against malign spiritual forces, or in instances in which you seek to honor the fallen through memorial, Thor is a particularly fitting deity to invoke for such purpose. The particulars of such invocation do not appear to be overly formulaic (there is some, but it is not as intricate as, for example, galdrslag), nor complicated, as evidenced by the preceding inscriptions, and quite fitting in his declared role as the “everyman’s god”. As a result, I would not suggest burdening yourself with overly complicated rituals to Thor, simply approach Him with humility and sincerity, and ask for His protection with reverence and respect.

Now let us move on, and further explore this deity.

Mjölfnir – The Vehicle of Vigi

When we think on the image of Thor, one of the first things that comes to mind is Thor’s trusty hammer, Mjölfnir. The etymology of this word is somewhat contested, and I won’t cover it here. However, in the following passage of *Þrymskviða*, verse 30, we can get a sense of the power of Mjölfnir beyond its function as a weapon:

Old Norse:

30. Þá kvað þat Þrymr, þursa dróttinn:

"Berið inn hamar brúði at **vígja**,

lekkið Mjöllni í meyjar kné,

vígið okkr saman Várar hendi."

Modern English (Bellow's Translation):

30: Then loud spake Thrym, the giants' leader:

"Bring in the hammer to **hallow** the bride;

On the maiden's knees let Mjollnir lie,

That us both the band of Vor may **bless**."

Herein, Thor is disguised as Freyja in a plot to recover his stolen hammer.



Rock carving from the Tanum municipality, Sweden, dated to the Nordic Bronze Age period (1500-500 BCE). The image has been suggested to depict a sacred union between man and woman being consecrated by an imposing figure wielding a hammer.

This Holy Hammer is brought forth to both bless the "bride" and to consecrate the marriage between "Freyja" and the giant Thrymr. However, it's worth noting the story ends not with Mjöllnir being used to consecrate, but instead to crack the skull of a jotunn. Hilda R. Ellis Davidson was first to make the connection between this concept of the hallowed marriage and the motif as observed as far back in time as the Nordic Bronze Age and its enigmatic rock carvings. While such a connection is difficult to state conclusively given the elapsed time between references (at best 500 BCE vs ~1200 CE = ~1800 years), the connection is still certainly worthy of note. This passage from the Poetic Edda indicates to us the hammer has very rich symbology as a means by which Thor passes on his power, the vehicle by which he consecrates a sacred space, monument, or ritual (such as marriage).

However, Mjöllnir also has power over life and death. In Snorri's Prose Edda, we learn that Mjöllnir can be utilized to revive his slain goats: "Thor tarried there overnight; and in the interval before day he rose up and clothed himself, took the hammer Mjöllnir, swung it up, and hallowed the goat-hides; straightway the he-goats rose up..." Thus, Thor's Hammer has considerable powers in resurrection as well as consecration. The Hammer is a holy symbol, one that should be invoked when looking to consecrate a sacred space or event, and in matters concerning the dead.

The Power of Mjöllnir, and the Strength of Thor

In addition to its function as a hallowing or consecrating instrument, Mjöllnir also functions as a powerful weapon. Nothing lives more strongly within the zeitgeist of our people to this day than the image of our own powerful Storm God and His destructive weapon. Much of this is unfortunately Hollywood perversions of our myths, most notably the Marvel Studio's depictions of Thor in their comic universe (and resulting films). Nevertheless, Thor was a powerful protector deity, and no

depiction of His strength is complete without his trusty hammer by which He enforces and maintains the Divine Order of the Gods, and by which He protects man from the forces of chaos.

The Hymiskviða, stanza 37, we find a very descriptive passage (right).

This particular poem is difficult to translate properly, given its apparent fragmentary nature, but clearly demonstrates the idea that Mjöllnir is a powerful weapon, based on the kenning used to describe it (the lover of murder). The portion

“whales of waste” is thought to be a kenning for giants, who Thor is known to be particularly an enemy of throughout the myths. This indicates a perception that this weapon was no stranger to the destruction of the enemies of the Gods.

Modern English (Bellow’s Translation):

He stood and cast | from his back the kettle,
And Mjöllnir, the lover | of murder, he wielded;
.
So all the whales | of the waste he slew.

The story overall is about a fishing expedition involving Thor and the giant Hymir, the father of the God Tyr, in which Thor utilizes an ox head as bait to catch the Miðgarð serpent. One must understand this serpent is massive and encircles the entire Earth. Thor, using his incredible strength, pulls the world-encompassing serpent up, and then using his hammer, deals an incredible blow to the sea creature and banishes it back to the depths. This denotes the strength of both Thor, but also his powerful weapon.



Altuna Stone, 11th century, from Sweden. The stone also contains a Younger Futhark runic inscription carved by 2 sons for their father.

Material evidence for this myth is appreciated to confirm its authenticity. Unfortunately, all too often the voracity of the Eddic material is called into question. Fortunately, this myth is founded depicted in numerous stones, including the Altuna stone, from 11th century Sweden (~200 years before the completion of the Eddas).

In Snorri Sturluson’s commentary (known as the Prose Edda), from the 13th century, Snorri expands on the story by informing us: “Then Thor grew angry and, exerting all his divine strength, dug in his heels so hard that both legs went through the boat until he was digging his heels in on the sea bottom.” Here in the Altuna runestone, we have a depiction of a figure in a boat, holding a hammer, with a large tangled serpent below the boat. In addition, we can see the figure’s legs apparently protruding through the boat. As a result, we can rather confidently say this stone is a depiction of Thor and his heroics as per this myth, 200 years before it was written down within the texts that comprise the Poetic Edda.

There exists a lot of material on Thor that has survived to the current day, too much to touch on in this summary piece. Suffice it to say, these myths often revolve around the heroics and strength of this God. My personal favorite involves the giant known as Útgarða-Loki, preserved in the Prose Edda. In this myth, Thor is deceived through magic and illusion into numerous tests of strength, in which He raises the colossal Miðgarð serpent from the sea and into the sky (a second instance of Him exerting His strength against the gargantuan monster). Additionally, He strikes the head of an unbelievably large giant 3 times, or so He thought, only to find out later this was an illusion, and that He had been striking a mountain range. The 3 strikes of Mjölfnir each produced a new valley within the mountain range in its wake. This level of damage is impressive, to say the least. Another account which captures the ferocity of Thor in battle is written by Saxo Grammaticus in the Gesta Danorum, 12 century CE:

However, Thor was swinging his club with marvellous might, and shattered all interposing shields, calling as loudly on his foes to attack him as upon his friends to back him up. No kind of armour withstood his onset, no man could receive his stroke and live. Whatsoever his blow fended off it crushed; neither shield nor helm endured the weight of its dint; no greatness of body or of strength could serve.

As we can see, Thor was an incredibly powerful and strong God, easily the strongest, and his hammer Mjölfnir was a befitting weapon for such a powerful entity. He was brutal to His enemies, unsurpassed in strength, and a vigilant protector of mankind.

Mjölfnir Pendants

For the new Teutonic Heathen, one of the first things we seek out to denote our faith is the Mjölfnir pendant, worn around the neck, much in the same way Christians wear crosses around their necks. These pendants are often (but not always) rather small, short handled hammers, often intricately designed with various motifs, knot-work, or runes, and composed of a variety of metals, including bronze, silver, and gold, and in rare instance, even amber. These pendants are meant to symbolize the power of Thor and his famous weapon.

Now, without speaking too much on personal experience, I have heard some heathens refer to this practice as “LARPy” (referring to “Live-Action Role Play”, in other words, simply role playing or fitting a “basic mold”) and “cringey”, which is baffling to me. So, let us dive a bit into the historical reasons behind this practice and dispel any notions of what I consider to be a basic and authentic means of showing devotion to Thor.



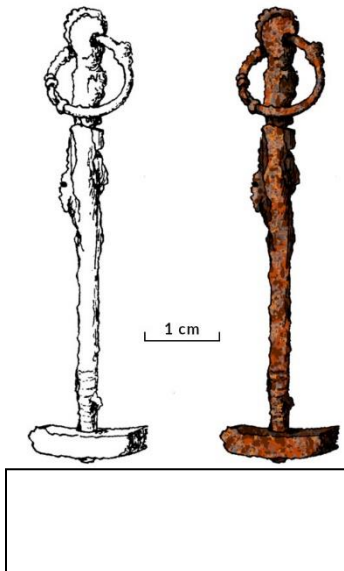
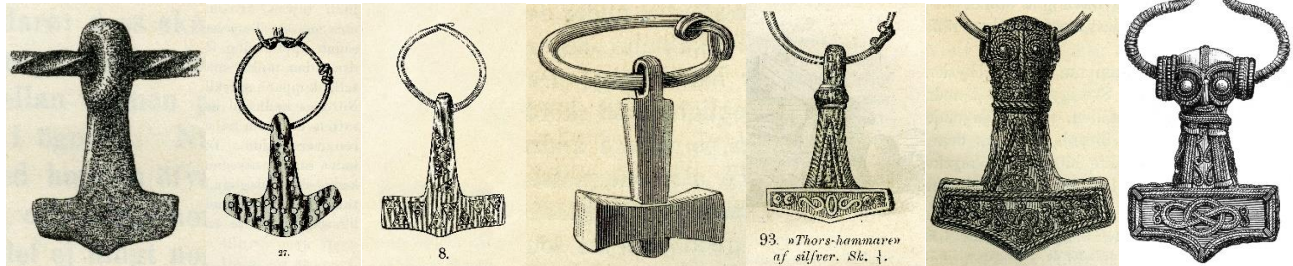
Possible **Hammer of the Thunder God**, from Yorkshire and Humber, England, 400-600 CE.

An excellent resource for studying Mjölfnir pendants is the Eitri database (eitridb.com). This user-friendly site is not necessarily exhaustive but has a massive number of finds listed (326 as of August 2020). The archeological record of these pendants extends from possibly as early as 400 CE until the final Christianization of the Germanic peoples, and extends from a number found in Anglo-Saxon England (pre-Norse invasion), throughout the low and highlands of the Continental Germanic world, the Scandinavian countries, and as far east as Russia.

One of the earliest finds is a simple copper-alloy, axe-type pendant found in Yorkshire and the Humber, England, from between 400-600 CE, denoting a likely pan-Germanic practice (with regional differences in aesthetics). However, it is difficult

to say conclusively this is in fact a Thor's hammer pendant. There are other finds similar in nature to this from England, but once again these finds are difficult to say for certain.

Many later finds seem to be mostly concentrated around Scandinavia, largely Denmark and Sweden, although a number have also been found in Germany as well. The Scandinavian Thor's hammers generally are meant to hang upside down (handle up) and feature a hole at the pommel for stringing it to the neck. There is quite a range in their designs, from quite simple to highly intricate.



In addition to the short-handled version of these pendants, we also occasionally find variants of these hammers with longer handles. They are similar in almost every way to the shorter version (which are far more numerous), however, with the exception that the handle is much longer. Snorri, in his Prose Edda, suggests Mjölfnir's handle was short because of an error in its production, instigated by Loki and his tricks. However, the presence of longer versions of the hammer may suggest this portion of the myth was not universal to the Germanic peoples.

One of the most significant finds in relation to this pendants is one found in Denmark, on the island of Lolland. This pendant is rare in that it contains a runic text which transliterates to "Hmar x is", which is taken to mean "This is a hammer", confirming in fact that these pendants are representations of hammers.



The Svenkvista Runestone, from Sweden, with a depiction of Mjöltnir

There is a theory that these pendants are purely a reaction to Christianization, however, I do not think this is the case. Throughout the archeological record we find similar such pendants, going back very far in time, although perhaps experiencing stylistic changes over the years. The topic itself is worthy of an entire article, and is simply too much to cover here alone. Regardless, this was a widespread practice by authentic pagan peoples and should be considered in modern times as a sign of respect to this Holy God, and the consecrating power of Mjöltnir.

Sacrifice and Ritual for Devotion to Thor

Earlier, I had mentioned that prayer to Thor for protection and consecration does not necessarily need to be excessively elaborate nor ritualistic. However, this does not preclude the fact that such rituals did exist, it simply denotes that they were not always entirely necessary. Unfortunately, much regarding pre-Christian ritual and devotion of the Teutonic people has not survived the sands of time, and what does survive requires very serious study, as it was recorded quite often by forces either hostile to or ignorant of our ancestral faith.

To delve into this topic, however, one must first understand the concepts of *interpretatio romana* and *interpretatio germanica*. The former refers to the perception of the Romans, the authors of many of our earliest sources, as to the identity of the Gods of their subjects in question as compared to the Roman Gods. This occurred either to provide relativity to a Roman audience (who would not have familiarity with the Gods of foreign people) or because of the influence of the Catholic Church on later Christian officials writing in Latin (which would reference their writings on their understanding of the pre-Christian traditions of Rome). *Interpretatio germanica* refers to the opposite, the interpretations of the Germanic people of the Roman gods concerning their own, a much less common occurrence for which we have records.

The first thing to make note of, in reference to Thor, *interpretatio romano* generally interprets him as Jupiter, likely because of his ability to control storms and lightning. However, in some sources, namely *Germania* by Tacitus, he is referenced as Hercules. This is likely based on both their strength and the use of a blunt weapon by both deities. These cannot always be 100% certain, so this must be kept in mind, but there is good evidence to suggest the comparisons are accurate. The interpretations likely varied depending on the interpreter in question, and the situation/myth being discussed, which attributes were being highlighted and thus which deity the German one was being compared to.

The most common and simple example of *interpretatio germanica* is the days of the week, which have survived even in modern English. The concept of naming the days of the week after Gods started with

the Romans and was later adopted by the Germanic people after contact with their southerly neighbors. In modern English “Thursday” is universally accepted to be equivalent to “Thor’s Day”, either from Old Norse “þórsdagr” or Old English “þunresdæg”, both from reconstructed Proto-Germanic “*Þunras dagaz”. This survives in many other Germanic languages. Thursday is equivalent to the Latin “Iovis diēs” or “Jovis diēs”, which essentially translates to “Jupiter’s Day”, and survives in modern Spanish “Jueves”, Romanian “Joi”, French “Jeudi”, Italian “giovedì”, and many others. But here we have a clear-cut example of the Thor→Jupiter “equivalence”.

These equivalences are sometimes downplayed; however, it really should be of note, in my opinion. One must ask themselves why our ancestors, when adopting the practice, chose these exact Gods to act as equivalences to their Roman counterparts. The preceding is directly expounded upon by Saxo Grammaticus in his work *Gesta Danorum*, from over 900 years ago:

Hence it has come about that the holy days, in their regular course, are called among us by the names of these men; for the ancient Latins are known to have named these days severally, either after the titles of their own gods, or after the planets, seven in number. But it can be plainly inferred from the mere names of the holy days that the objects worshipped by our countrymen were not the same as those whom the most ancient of the Romans called Jove and Mercury, nor those to whom Greece and Latium paid idolatrous homage. For the days, called among our countrymen **Thors**-day or Odins-day, the ancients termed severally the holy day of Jove or of Mercury. If, therefore, according to the distinction implied in the interpretation I have quoted, we take it that **Thor** is Jove and Odin Mercury, it follows that Jove was the son of Mercury; that is, if the assertion of our countrymen holds, among whom it is told as a matter of common belief, that **Thor** was Odin's son. Therefore, when the Latins, believing to the contrary effect, declare that Mercury was sprung from Jove, then, if their declaration is to stand, we are driven to consider that **Thor** was not the same as Jove, and that Odin was also different from Mercury.

Throughout the later sources we have, there are very common references to the worship of Gods in triads. The earliest description of this in reference to the Germans is from the aforementioned *Germania* by Tacitus.

Above all other gods they worship Mercury, and count it no sin, on certain feast-days, to include human victims in the sacrifices offered to him. Hercules and Mars they appease by offerings of animals, in accordance with ordinary civilized custom.

Here, Mercury is near universal understood to be equivalent to the later Norse Odin, while Mars is generally understood to be Tyr (although not without its controversy). Hercules, on the other hand, is generally thought to be Thor, although the argument can easily be made that the evidence is tenuous at best. Taking the scholars’ word at face value animal sacrifices were regularly conducted to the God Thor, giving us a small glimpse into ritual involving this God, and further suggesting there was “civilized custom” regarding these sacrifices. The exact nature of this custom isn’t clear.

In Tacitus’ *Annals*, there is mention of a forest which is dedicated to Hercules, which may related to the following fact. A rather significant account of the life of the Christian saint Boniface tells of his feat in felling a massive oak tree dedicated to the God Jove (Jupiter), which most scholars refer to as Donar’s

Oak. While it should be noted that the translation here is somewhat controversial, we have another account (besides many made by Tacitus) of the Germanic people's worship of Gods and trees. Correspondingly, it is quite fair to say proper worship of Thor can and likely should involve the use of oak trees.

An additional account of the worship of Thor comes to us from another Christian, this time, Adam of Bremen in his work *Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum*:

In this temple, entirely decked out in gold, the people worship the statues of three gods in such wise that the mightiest of them, **Thor**, occupies a throne in the middle of the chamber; Wotan and Frikko have places on either side. The significance of these gods is as follows: **Thor**, they say, presides over the air, which governs the thunder and lightning, the winds and rains, fair weather and crops... Thor with his scepter apparently resembles Jove.

Here, Thor is referred to as "mightiest" and holds the central position within the Triad. This should not be misinterpreted to mean he was considered Chief, but simply a reflection of his martial prowess and power, and likely the particular dedication of this temple to Thor primarily. We also get some interesting tidbits about his function in relation to *what* people prayed to him for, which seem to be in relation to the weather, and for fertility of their agriculture. This makes sense, given the linguistic connection between Thor and its variants, with the word "thunder", a component of storms. To a people who were intimately connected to weather for their survival and for their fields, Thor would be an important God indeed. Likewise, we receive further confirmation of the Thor->Jupiter connection.

Later on in this work, Adam of Bremen states:

For all their gods there are appointed priests to offer sacrifices for the people. **If plague and famine threaten, a libation is poured to the idol Thor**; if war, to Wotan; if marriages are to be celebrated, to Frikko.

This concept seems to be connection to the previously mentioned inscriptions involving Thor, most notably, the Canterbury Charm and the Kvinneby Amulet, both of which invoke Thor for protection against disease-causing thurs or dark spiritual forces. Correspondingly, it absolutely makes sense to offer up prayers of protection to Thor specifically, as he is no doubt a protector God. While it is difficult to say what exactly these complicated rites looked like, what we can say is libation and animal sacrifice is a fitting means of invoking Thor, and that temples and oak groves are fitting places to carry out these pleas for help. Sacrifice for protein, including from famine and plague, as well as for good weather and crops, are fitting reasons to carry out these sacrifices.

Final Conclusions:

Thor is an incredibly powerful God, no doubt the strongest and most powerful physically. He can smash mountains, creating valleys, and undergo near-impossible tasks such as lifting the Jormungandr.

His Hammer is the weapon he uses to complete these tasks, although it is also partly magical, allowing him to resurrect the dead and hallow sacred events, spaces, and ritual objects.

Thor controls the weather in the mortal sphere and protects us from malign spiritual forces. In times of pestilence, he is prayed to for health. In times of drought, he is prayed to for rains. And in times of death, he is prayed to for the safety of the dearly departed. Sacrifice to Thor for any of these reasons seems both appropriate and historically attested.

Hopefully, this work served as a decent dive into what we know about Thor, without relying too much on conventional wisdom, and instead, touched on our surviving source material. Worship of this deity is very old, so much so that He can easily be reconstructed into a proto-Indo-European (Aryan) religion spanning a massive portion of the globe. While in the modern world, Thor may seem like somewhat of a “gimmicky” deity to pray to, given his prevalence in modern mass media, there certainly is a very good reason He was so popular with our ancestors. Despite his divinity, he is relatable to us all. Let us look to his strength, cunning, and his love of our people, let us improve ourselves in His image, seek strength, and protect those we care about from malign forces bent on our destruction. Hailō Þek, mīnaz wardauz!