

= Veðrfölnir and eagle =

In Norse mythology , Veðrfölnir (Old Norse " storm pale , " " wind bleached " , or " wind @-@ wither ") is a hawk sitting between the eyes of an unnamed eagle that is perched on top of the world tree Yggdrasil . Veðrfölnir is sometimes modernly anglicized as Vedrfolnir or Vethrfolnir .

The unnamed eagle is attested in both the Poetic Edda , compiled in the 13th century from earlier traditional sources , and the Prose Edda , written in the 13th century by Snorri Sturluson , while Veðrfölnir is solely attested in the Prose Edda . In both the Poetic Edda and the Prose Edda , the squirrel Ratatoskr carries messages between the unnamed eagle and Nidhögg , the wyrm that resides below the world tree . Scholars have proposed theories about the implications of the birds .

= = Attestations = =

In the Poetic Edda poem Grímnismál , the god Odin (disguised as Grímnir) says that :

The eagle is again attested in chapter 16 of the Prose Edda book Gylfaginning , yet here with the company of Veðrfölnir . In the chapter , Gangleri (described as king Gylfi in disguise) asks the enthroned figure of High what other notable facts there are to know about Yggdrasil . High responds (Veðrfölnir is here anglicized as Vedrfolnir) :

'There is much to be told . An eagle sits at the top of the ash , and it has knowledge of many things . Between its eyes sits the hawk called Vedrfolnir [...] . The squirrel called Ratatoskr runs up and down the ash . He tells slanderous gossip , provoking the eagle and Nidhogg.'

= = Theories = =

John Lindow points out that Snorri does not say why a hawk should be sitting between the eyes of an eagle or what role it may play . Lindow theorizes that " presumably the hawk is associated with the wisdom of the eagle " and that " perhaps , like Odin 's ravens , it flies off acquiring and bringing back knowledge " .

Hilda Ellis Davidson says that the notion of an eagle atop a tree and the World Serpent coiled around the roots of the tree has parallels in other cosmologies from Asia , and that Norse cosmology may have been influenced by these Asiatic cosmologies from a northern route . On the other hand , Davidson adds , the Germanic peoples are attested as worshipping their deities in open forest clearings , and that a sky god was particularly connected with the oak tree , and therefore " a central tree was a natural symbol for them also " .