Thor

Thor is a larger than life Aesir, who is Odin & Jord's son and is married to Sif- famous for her Golden hair.

Thor takes part in many adventures, often with Loki at his side, and it's easy to see him as a bit of a "good time lad". Working with Thor I have connected to a much deeper energy, hard to spot with a character that is somewhat larger than life. So rather than taking up a lot of time retelling his numerous myths- I'm focusing here more on my experience of working with him, and perhaps some of the deeper nuances that can get overlooked.

Lightening

His hammer (beloved as a protection symbol by many) represents lightening, and a regenerative force so powerful that the myths suggest even Thor needs his gauntlets to be able to wield his hammer.

Lightening is electrical energy, and I have found Thor to be deeply representative of energy. Physics (at the moment) tells us that energy can neither be created, nor destroyed- and there is a sense that Thor represents our electrical energy. The impulses that flash in our brain, and through our nervous system, communicating between the cells and allowing our brain to create thoughts.

His belt is called "meginjord" where megin is energy/chi/prana, and jord is the earth.

So there is a sense that this energy is both of the sky, and of the earth. This strange duality is a constant thread in all of my thoughts on Thor.

Lightning itself comes from the sky (and Thor is a sky God) and often hits the earth- it can bring destruction, clearing. But it can also fertilise the earth. The electric charge splits oxygen and nitrogen, allowing nitrates to fall in the rain. Again this duality- lightening can destroy, yet also increase fertility.

Jörmungandr

If you want to understand the deity- look to their role in Ragnarök, it says a lot about them!

I feel at Ragnorok each deity is confronted with their shadow side, and that Ragnorok is the natural turning of the wheel, and inevitable change.

Death is hidden from life now, our mortality is something that is shaded, pushed away. Often people don't really appreciate how palpable death is until later in adult life when they lose a parent or have a health scare. Implicit in the Norse myths is the concept that death is a part of life. The Aesir, like many who have power and stability, try and keep the status quo. It is the role of Loki, and his brood, to ensure the natural order is kept and the wheel keeps turning.

Jormungand, the world serpent (one of Loki's "brood" along with Hel and Fenrir) mirrors the belt of strength that Thor wears.

The symbol of a snake eating its own tail is considered to be one of the oldest symbols known- and can have so many meanings:

· The wheel of life, reminding us of the many cycles we live within- day, moon, seasonal, year, Metonic, astrological, life etc.

· The unity of male and female- the mouth of the snake being female, the tale male.

· The womb, or Edenic state.

· A symbol of perfection, unity, and perhaps divinity itself. All things come from one, and return to one in time.

Thor's role of protecting the Gods from the frost giants was trying to preserve the status quo. A valid job, but one that would always end in failure as all things change state in time, the wheel turns.

I was curious about why Thor seems so against Jormungand, when there doesn't seem a genuine reason. Reading around the topic of snakes and mythology I came across several writers who seemed to think that venomous snakes were early man's most dangerous predator. And the fight to survive snakes may have been a key part in our evolution/development. Perhaps this has deep rooted links with the devil appearing as a serpent in the Garden of Eden and maybe references here. That we have a primal memory of snakes being our main predator.

Menstrual blood

In one of the myths Thor is seen wading across a river of fluid that emanates from a female giant. Different sources will call this urine or blood, I see this as very specifically menstrual blood, or blood that flows from the womb.

Perhaps the rowan berries (Thor reached out to grasp a Rowan tree to pull himself out) are red because they were splashed by this blood, also the Robin has associations with Thor for the same reason. And we see menstruation connected with Thor in his rune poem.

So again this strange duality where Thor is very masculine, but also has strong links to the feminine.

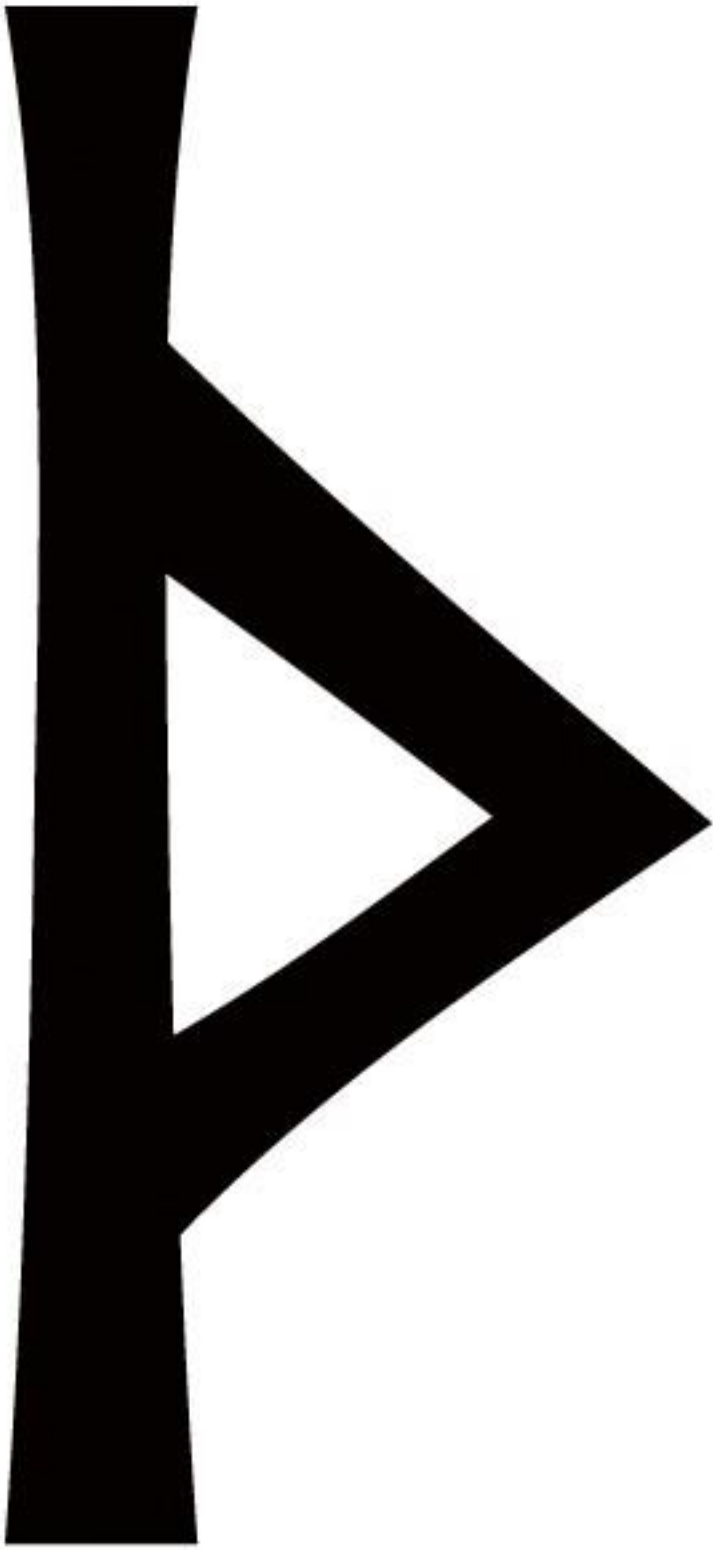
What are we to make of this link? I'm not completely sure as yet. Certainly links to fertility, and the circle of life as children are born of the womb, the continuation of our impulse as born from mother to daughter, to mother, to daughter, and the continuation through the ages. With an acknowledgment that fertility needs both the masculine and the feminine.

It is curious to think that all embryo's are female at first, and here in the most masculine of God's we feel the deep feminine connections. Perhaps the myths are suggesting that our gender is more fluid, more interdependent than first thought- linking us back to the world serpent, with the male/female duality.

Regeneration

One of the myths I love most about Thor is the goats that pull his chariot. They can be killed and eaten at night, and then he uses the power of his hammer to regenerate them again in the morning.

I use that word very carefully- as they are not reborn as kids, they regenerate into full adult goats.

Thor wears his belt of strength, and the energy meridian connected with this belt is the liver meridian- the liver being the only organ in the human body that regenerates.

Now I work in a very seidr way. I know things, then have to trace back to understand why. So it was only during a teaching session that the link between the waist, liver, and regeneration was connected. It's always fascinating how many connections can be made!