

ABSTRACT

THE SONS OF MUSPELL: THE ESCHATOLOGICAL IMAGES IN THE ANCIENT ISLANDER'S PERCEPTION

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There is a general opinion in modern literature that the Last Battle in Icelandic mythology is a battle between two forces. The first one — Aesir and Einherjar — is the force of the Center of the World. It is the light and good force. The second one — the giants, monsters and demons of destruction (the sons of Muspell and their chief Surt) — is an evil force of the Outlying districts of the World. This force will destruct the World.

But the analysis of ancient texts allows us to draw a conclusion that ancient Icelanders interpreted the Last Battle by the other way, than the modern investigators.

Giants and monsters fight against Aesir and Einherjar, they are really evil force in the Last Battle. The sons of Muspell fight against Aesir too, but Icelanders interpreted them as a good and sacred force. The sons of Muspell are the fire-force of Icelandic cosmogony and eschatology. Surt and the sons of Muspell will destruct the World, but this destruction is the fire-cleaning of the World, what is necessary to the New World will be better and lighter then the Present World.

Key words: mythology, eschatology, sons of Muspell, Icelanders.

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