

Hugin and Munin: Odin's Ravens

*Hugin and Munin
Fly every day
Over all the world;
I worry for Hugin
That he might not return,
But I worry more for Munin*

Eddic Poem, *Grímnismál*, Said by Odin

In Norse Mythology, Odin is the most powerful and the leader of all the Viking gods. He is the god of knowledge, war, and victory. Odin rules from Asgard in a silver tower and has two ravens that fly all over the world. They are called Hugin and Munin and they sit on Odin's shoulders and tell him all that they saw. Hugin represents 'memory' and Munin represents 'thought'.

The ravens were seen as a part of Odin; he needed them to go out to explore the world and return to him to tell him what was going on. Odin feared that someday something might happen to the ravens and they would not return.

Hugin and Munin were given special powers by Odin so that they could fly all over the world very quickly, and could understand and even speak people's language. They were also very observant and would go into battle with Odin to spy on his enemies so he would know how to fight them.

Ravens are seen as very intelligent and smart birds and Odin, as the main god of Viking Mythology, is also seen this way. The Vikings believed that they could also call on Hugin and Munin for guidance and power.



The Vikings who came and settled in Ireland believed in Norse gods including Odin and Thor. They made pendants, sometimes out of amber, and wore them for protection from the gods. These can be seen on display at the *Viking Ireland* Exhibition at the National Museum of Ireland – Archaeology.