2018

A READER IN COMPARATIVE INDO-EUROPEAN RELIGION

Ranko Matasović

Zagreb

2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

A) Languages

Alb. = Albanian
Arm. = (Classical) Armenian
Av. = Avestan
Croat. = Croatian
CSl. = Church Slavic
Eng. = English
Gaul. = Gaulish
Goth. = Gothic
Gr. = Greek
Hitt. = Hittite
Hom. = Homeric (Greek)
L- = Late-
Lat. = Latin
Latv. = Latvian
Lith. = Lithuanian
Luv. = (Cuneiform) Luvian
Lyd. = Lydian
Myc. = Mycenaean
O- = Old-
OCS = Old Church Slavic
OHG = Old High German
OIc. = Old Icelandic
OIr. = Old Irish
ON = Old Norse
OPr. = Old Prussian
ORuss. = Old Russian
P- = Proto-
Phryg. = Phrygian
Pol. = Polish
Skr. = Sanskrit
TochA = Tocharian A
TochB = Tocharian B
Umbr. = Umbrian
Ved. = Vedic
W = Welsh

B) Texts

Aen. = The Aeneid (Virgil)
AV = Atharvaveda
CA = Canu Aneurin
Hymn. = Homeric Hymns

Il. = The Iliad (Homer)
Isth. = Isthmian Odes (Pindar)
KBo = Keilschrifttexte aus Boghaz-Köy, Berlin 1916ff.
KUB = Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi, Berlin 1921ff.
LD = Latvju Dainas, ed. Barons, Rīga 1894-1915.
Met. = Metamorphoses (Ovid)
Nem. = Nemean Odes (Pindar)
Od. = The Odyssey (Homer)
Ol. = Olympian Odes (Pindar)
PIT = Prince Igor's Tale (ORuss. *Slovo o polku Igorevě*)
Pyth. = Pythian Odes (Pindar)
RV = Rig-Veda
Theog. = Theogony (Hesiod)
Y = Yasna
Yt = Yašt

FOREWORD

Comparative Indo-European religion is a study of the history of religious ideas. The central idea of this approach is that by comparing the religious ideas of the peoples who speak (or spoke) Indo-European languages we can plausibly reconstruct some of the religious ideas of the speakers of the common Proto-Indo-European language, from which the attested languages are descended. As in the case of the reconstruction of the PIE phonology and morphology, the reconstruction of the PIE religion is not an end in itself. Rather, it is intended to shed some light on the earliest history of religious ideas of the early historical communities of speakers of IE languages.

The approach adopted here is strictly inductive; we do not make any *a priori* assumptions about what the system of belief of Indo-Europeans may have been, nor do we posit any original 'ideology', or mythopoetic 'structure'. We believe we can know about the PIE religion only what the reconstructed fragments of PIE religious texts can teach us. Since 'Proto-Indo-European' is primarily a linguistic entity, our primary data are mythological *texts* attested in different IE traditions, and all conclusions are based on their comparison. The texts selected here are meant not only to illustrate the common features of various IE traditions, but also their differences, and the multi-faceted nature of all religions.

It should be stressed that this booklet is not in the first place about what Indo-Europeans believed, or how they represented their gods. It is about how they expressed their beliefs in words, and how they addressed their gods in their prayers, hymns, and incantations. We hope to reach a picture of this by a careful semantic reconstruction of the religious terminology of PIE, including the poetic formulas, occurring in texts dealing with religious matters. These formulas have been preserved thanks to the stubborn and uninterrupted oral poetic tradition extending from PIE to the daughter languages. Much in that picture is likely to remain fragmentary and unclear, but a fragmentary reconstruction reached by sound methodology is preferable, in our opinion, to aprioristic speculations of any kind, however persuasive and rational they might appear to the uninformed reader.

Zagreb, November 2018

PART I: ELEMENTS OF PROTO-INDO-EUROPEAN RELIGION

1. RECONSTRUCTION OF PIE RELIGIOUS VOCABULARY AND PHRASEOLOGY

Vocabulary belonging to the sphere of the sacred is reconstructable by means of the comparative method just like any other set of words that form a single semantic field. The comparative method allows us to reconstruct not only the form of words in Proto-Indo-European, the language from which all Indo-European languages developed, but also their meaning. For example, on the basis of Lat. *equus,* Gr. *híppos,* Skr. *áśvas,* OE *eoh,* which all mean 'horse', we can safely reconstruct onot only the form *$h_1$ek'wos to PIE, but also attribute to it the meaning 'horse'.

The meaning of words belonging to the same semantic field represents a system in which the exact meaning of each word depends on the meaning of all the others. PIE *$h_1$ek'wos was indeed *the* term for 'horse' in PIE, but there were other words referring to horses, or kinds of horses, e.g. *kabalo- (LLat. *caballus,* OIr. *capall*, OCS *kobyla* 'mare'), which probably specifically denoted work horses that first appeared in Late Antiquity, PIE *polHo- 'foal' (OHG *folo,* Gr. *põlos*, Lat. *pullus* 'young animal (including foal)', dialectal *marko- 'horse' (W *march,* OE *mearh* 'mare'), etc. To fully understand the meaning of one word, one has to understand its relationships with the other words with which it shares some semantic features. This particularly holds for the semantic fields containing abstract lexemes so that, in order to reconstruct the semantic content of any word relating to PIE religion, one has to reconstruct the whole system.

The semantic reconstruction of lexical items relating to religion in PIE has to start with the exact meanings of lexical cognates, and these can best be revealed in their contexts. This means that the comparative reconstruction of the PIE religious vocabulary has to start from the careful philological study of religious *texts* in the early IE languages. It is in these texts that we find the earliest and the most exact meanings of lexical items on which we base our reconstructions. However, just as the forms of words on which we base our lexical reconstructions are attested in already differentiated IE languages with sometimes very diverging phonological systems, so the meanings of these words are often found in very different contexts, i.e. in texts belonging to already differentiated religious and mythological traditions bearing little resemblance to their assumed source. Sometimes these traditions underwent strong influences from religious and mythological spheres belonging to communities speaking non-Indo-European languages (e.g. in the case of Hurrian and Semitic influences on the Hittite religion), and some traditions were significantly affected by cultural and religious "revolutions", that disrupted the organic development of religious ideas and mythological conceptions (e.g. in the case of the influence of Zarathuštra's reforms on Iranian religion, or the influence of Christianization on the religious vocabulary of Germanic, Baltic and Slavic). This means that the evidence for the semantic reconstruction of words belonging to the religious sphere is often muddled and incomplete, and this has to be borne in mind whenever we attempt to say anything meaningful about "the PIE religion".

The semantic relationships of words are not only made apparent by comparing their meanings; sometimes, the derivational patterns of their *forms* are also instructive. For example, something about the way horses were conceptualized in PIE is revealed by the fact that *$h_1$ek'wos 'horse' is derived from the same root as the adjective *$h_1$oh$_1$k'us 'swift' (Skr. *āśú-,* Av. *āsu-,* Gr. *ōkýs,* Lat. comparative *ōcior* 'swifter'). Likewise, as we shall see, the meaning of PIE *deywos 'god' (Lat. *deus,* Skr. *devá-,* Lith. *diẽvas*) can only be appreciated when it is taken into account that it is a derivative of PIE *dyēw- '(bright) sky' (Skr. *dyau-,* Lat. *diū* 'by day', *diēs* 'day'). Apparently, *deywos was not just a generic term for 'god', but rather a designation of 'celestial' gods.

Finally, one has to take into account that texts, just like words, have their prehistory. In traditional, illiterate societies texts are transmitted orally from generation to generation and, while many of their elements may be lost in transmission, some can be preserved remarkably long, including mythological motives, names of mythological beings, and fixed poetic formulas. Sometimes the same poetic formulas are preserved in similar contexts for generations, and the etymological correspondences between such formulas can still be recognized, although neither the original texts, nor indeed the language in which these formulas were originally composed, exist any longer. For example, in several early traditions, we find the fixed expression 'swift horses' going back to PIE *$h_1$ek'wōs *$h_1$oh$_1$k'ewes: Vedic *áśvāḥ āśávaḥ* (RV 10.78.5a), Avestan *āsušca aspō* (Yt. 13.52e) and Gr. *ōkées híppoi* (Il. 5.257, 10.474 etc.) are directly superimposable on each other etymologically and attest to the existence of a PIE *figura etymologica* meaning 'swift horses'. If this is accepted, one may further suppose that this expression has been transformed, during centuries of oral tradition, into poetic phrases meaning 'swift horses' found in several Indo-European languages, e.g. are found in other IE traditions, e.g. in Germanic (OE *swifta mearh,* Beowulf 2264), Old Russian (*brъzyi komoni, PIT* 83) and Welsh (*Rhagorai feirch rhagfuan yn nhrin* 'He ran before swift horses in battle', *CA* 830). All of these are formulas with the same meaning, but expressed with etymologically unrelated words, unlike the pair *áśvāḥ āśávaḥ* and *ōkées híppoi* discussed above. Of course, one cannot exclude the possibility that such semantic correspondences are accidental, but once we have proved that at least some etymologically related formulas are inherited, the accumulation of evidence will increase the likelihood that they are not accidental.

In the next section, we will therefore compare not only individual words belonging to the religious vocabulary of different IE languages, but also syntagms and poetic phrases (formulas) that share the meaning and, often, are etymologically related. Two examples must suffice here: firstly, in several early IE mythological traditions, we find the figure of 'father Sky' at the top of the pantheon. In Greek, *Zeús* is regularly called *patḗr* 'father' (e.g. Od. 4.341, Il. 1.503, etc.), and the Latin name of *Juppiter* is actually a compound meaning 'father Sky'. The Vedic sky-god, *Dyaús,* likewise bears the standing epithet *pitā́* (e.g. RV 1.90.7c, 6.51.5a, etc.), and all of these syntagms go back to the PIE poetic and mythological phrase *dyēws ph$_2$tēr 'father Sky'. The likelihood that the correspondences on which this reconstruction is based are accidental is minimal, so we can conclude that the speakers of the PIE language regularly called the Sky god 'father' in their sacral poetry, and that the reflexes of this formula are preserved in Greek, Latin and Vedic. In some languages, the reflexes of the word *ph$_2$tēr were replaced by a different word for 'father', so in Luvian we find *tātiš* ^{d}*Tiwaz* 'father Sun-god' (KBo IX 143 iii 10) and in Hittite *attaš nepišanza* 'father Sky' (KUB XV 34 iv 32), and one of the chief pagan gods of the Irish pantheon is called *Dagdae oll-athir* lit. 'the good (day-)god, the father of all'. Such non-etymological semantic parallels are

acceptable as evidence for a mythological motive (or a mythopoetical phrase) in PIE only when etymological cognates can be established independently.

It is particularly significant when the reflexes of such PIE poetic formulas occur in similar, or identical mythological contexts. This is the case of the formula *g^{hw}ent h_3eg^{wh}im 'he slew the serpent', the reflexes of which are regularly used in dragon-slaying myths of different IE peoples. In the Rig-Veda, the formula *áhann áhim* 'he slew the serpent' is regularly used of Indra, the Thunderer (e.g. RV 5.29.2c, cf. also *yád áhiṃ hán* 'who slew the serpent', RV 2.15.1d, also of Indra), while Aeschylus (*Eumenides* 181-184) sings of 'a winged flashing snake (*óphin*)...(with) clots of blood (*phónou*)' where Gr. *óphis* 'snake' and *phónos* 'slaying, murder, blood' are etymological cognates of Ved. *áhann áhim*. In the Hittite myth about the slaying of the dragon *Illuyankaš*, we read the reflex of a similar formula, ^{d}IM-*aš* ^{MUŠ}*illuya[nkan] Ù* DUMU-*ŠU kuenta* 'the storm-god killed the serpent Illuyanka and its children' (KBo III 7 iii 31f). It is important to note that, although the myths of dragon-slaying can be found in different IE traditions as a result of pure chance, it is *a priori* unlikely that the reflexes of the roots *g^{wh}en- 'slay' and *h_3eg^{wh}i- 'snake' are consistently found in this context in various myths, and that the snake- or dragon-slayer is usually the god of thunder.

This brief introduction serves to show on which methodological principles our reconstruction of the PIE religious vocabulary and phraseology is based. Needless to say, not all reconstructions are equally well established, and each individual proposal must be judged on its own merit.

2. BASIC RELIGIOUS TERMINOLOGY OF PIE

GOD

Since we have been living in a monotheist society for centuries, the very meaning of 'god' in our modern languages has evolved: 'god' is the all-powerful being who is in charge of, ultimately, everything (or so many of us like to think). In societies unaffected by monotheist way of thinking, this definition will obviously not do. For our purposes, we can consider as gods all beings capable of entering into a religious bond with humans, so that they can be addressed in prayers and expected to assist humans, provided that appropriate rites are performed. It follows that it is not necessary to have a cover term for such a being, and indeed, there is little reason to believe that there was an all-inclusive term for 'god' in PIE. What we have is rather a list of terms covering various aspects of divine beings:

PIE *deywo- 'caelestial god': Lat. *dīvus*, Skr. *devás*, Lith. *diẽvas*, OE *Tīw*, OIr. *dia*; this word denotes the deity as a celestial being, in opposition to the earth-bound humans, the name of which is derived from 'earth' in PIE (cf. Lat. *homo* 'man' < $d^h g'^h$om-on- vs. *humus* 'earth' < *$d^h g'^h$om-o-, OIr. *duine* < *$d^h g'^h$om-yo-). Its meaning probably does not include chthonic deities (Lat. *di inferi*), or deities belonging to the social sphere rather than to the cosmic sphere of existence.

PIE *d^heh$_1$s / *d^hh$_1$sos 'divinely inspired being': Gr. *theós* 'god', Arm. *di-k^c* 'gods', Lat. *fānum* 'consecrated place' < *fasnom <*d^hh$_1$s-no-, *fēriae* 'religious festival' < *d^heh$_1$s-, Skr. *dhiṣā* 'with impetuosity'; this word did not necessarily refer to gods, but rather to any divinely inspired being, or (according to some etymologists), a religious rite or oblation. In Greek, *theós* took on the general meaning of 'god', while another word, *daímōn*, took the original semantic sphere of *d^heh$_1$s-* ('a divine power that may seize an individual'). In origin, *daímōn* is a derivative of *daíomai* 'divide, share' (< PIE *deh$_2$i-, Ved. *dáyate* cf. the similar semantic development of Slavic *bogъ* below). In principle, it would be possible to interpret *d^heh$_1$s- as an s-stem built to the root *d^heh$_1$- 'to do, put, make' (Lat. *facio*, OCS *děti*, etc.) in the sense 'that which is established (by religious observance)', but the semantic connection is weak.

*h$_2$nsu- > Hitt. *haššu-* 'king', OIc. *áss* 'a kind of god', Skr. *ásura-* 'a kind of god', Av. *ahu-* 'lord'; I believe this word originally referred to divine beings in their social aspect. In the Rig-Veda, the Asuras (Bhaga, Mitra, Varuna, Aryaman) are notably the deities belonging to the social sphere of existence (in contradistinction to the 'cosmic' *devas*). In the later layers of the Vedas, they become demons, opposed to caelestial gods, the *devas*. It is possible that the meaning 'god' developed independently in Germanic and Indo-Aryan, and that the original meaning is preserved in Avestan ('lord'). Some linguists derive these words from the root *h$_2$ens- 'to beget' (Hitt. *hāši* 'begets', LIV 239), but this is quite uncertain.

*b^{h}h$_2$eg- (or *b^{h}ag-) > Skr. *bhága-* (one of the Asuras), Av. *baγa-* 'god', OCS *bogъ*. Some linguists think that the Slavic word is an Iranian loanword, but I find that it is more probably inherited. The old derivative OCS *ubogъ* 'poor' testifies that the original meaning in Slavic was 'share, lot', as in Indo-Aryan. A further cognate might lie in Gr. *phágos* 'a glutton', but this is difficult for semantic reasons.

For the Germanic word for 'god' see below.

Gods are often represented as 'bestowers of wealth': Gr. Hom. *dotéres eáōn*, e.g. Od. 8.335, Ved. *dātā́ vásūnām* RV 8. 51. 5 (cf. OCS *daždьbogъ*, Russ. *dažbog*). The PIE expression would have been *deh₃tores h₁weswom.

In many traditions, we hear about 'many-named' gods, PIE *polh₁-h₃nomn-o- > Skr. *puruṇā́man-,* Gr. *polyṓnymos* (RV 8. 93. 17, AV 6. 99. 1, of Indra; *Hymn. Dem.* 18 and 32, of Hades; *Hymn. Ap.* 82, of Apollo). Gods have many names, but the correct name must be used in prayer, otherwise the prayer is void. The god's names may be secret (*devā́nām gúhyā nā́māni,* RV 5. 5. 10) and Rome, according to legends, had a secret name known only to the initiated. A similar conception of many names of god is found in Islam.

The gods have their own language, different from the language of men, a conception found in the Sanskrit *Taittiriya-Saṃhitā* 5.25.5.2, in Homer (Il. 1.403f., Od. 10.305), etc., and the Norse *Alvíssmál* (9-34). A Roman prayer invokes Jupiter Optimus Maximus *sive quo alio nomine te appelari volueris* 'or by whatever other name you wish to be addressed' (Servius, *Aen.* II, 351). The gods are often called 'the greatest', or the highest', cf. e.g. *Zeû kýdiste, mégiste* 'Zeus, most glorious and greatest' (Il. 2.412), 'Indra, the highest one' (*uttamá-*, RV 10.159.4), and Juppiter's standing epithets *optimus maximus* 'the best and the greatest'.

The gods are represented as a breed, or a race (PIE * g'enh₁os > Gr. *genus*, Skr. *jánas*), and the breed of gods (*deywōm g'enh₁os) is often contrasted to the breed of humans, or mortals (*mrtwōm g'enh₁os), e.g. RV 1.70 6b: *devā́nām jánma mártāmś ca* "the breed of gods and of mortals", Pindar, Nem. 6.1 *hén andrõn, hén theõn génos* "One is the race of men, another of gods", cf. also Virgil's opposition between *hominum genus* and *di immortales* in Aeneid 1.542.

Finally, in contrast to us mortals, the gods are, of course, 'immortal', PIE *n-mrtōs deywōs > Skr. *devā́ amŕ̥tās* RV 3. 4. 11, 5. 69. 4; Gr. *athánatoi* (Il. 1.520). In this case it is probable that Gr. *athánatoi* replaced the original epithet *ámbrotoi*, which was etymologically cognate with Skr. *amŕ̥tās*.

The proper seat of the gods is exactly that, PIE *sedos, derived from *sed- 'to sit' (Lat. *sedeo*, OCS *sěsti*, Eng. *sit*, etc.): in Homer's Iliad (5.360, 367) the Olympus is called *athanátōn hédos* 'seat of immortals', and the same expression is used in Hesiod's Theogony (128) of the sky (*ouranós*); in RV 3. 54. 5 we read that the gods abide in 'seats' (*sádāṃsi*), and in 10. 96. 2 a heavenly (or divine) seat is mentioned (*diviyám sádas*). The Old Irish word for the mounds or hills where the ancient pagan gods live is *síd*, from PIE *sēdos- (apparently with the lengthened grade of the root).

It has been argued by George Dumézil and others (see Dumézil 1958a, Littleton 1982) that Indo-European gods were organized in a system of triads, to reflect the 'tripartite ideology' of Indo-Europeans. According to this 'ideology', society is ideally divided into three groups, or social 'functions': the priests, the warriors and the agriculturalists (or craftsmen). In India, these social functions evolved into a rigid caste system, consisting of *kṣatriyas* (warriors), priests (*brahman-*), and free craftsmen (*vaiśyas*), but, in Dumézil's opinion, there are traces of this kind of social organization in other early IE societies as well: in Rome, the three original tribes (according to a legend preserved by Titus Livius) were *Ramnes, Luceres* and *Titienses.* The first of those were Romulus' Latin companions, and they represented the priests (Romulus himself was a *rex-augur*). The second group, the *Luceres*, were warriors brought by

Lucumon, while the *Titienses* were the Sabines brought by Titus Tatius; they represent the agricultural fertility and *opes*, or aboundance (they brought with them to Rome not just their agricultural skills, but also women, abducted by Romans). Dumézil saw a similar tripartite organization of society reflected in the traditional division of Ionians into four tribes representing three social functions, in the three original kin-groups depicted in Nart legends of the Ossetes (an Iranian people living in the Caucasus and having a rich oral heroic tradition), in the three original groups of the Scythians (as related by Herodotus), etc. According to Dumézil, each 'function' had a symbolic system associated with it, including a colour (white as the colour of priests, red as the colour of warriors, and black as the colour of the agriculturalists).

These three social groups (or 'functions') have their different gods assigned to their respective domains. In the Vedic pantheon, Indra (the thunderer) would be a typical god of the warriors, Varuṇa and Mitra would represent the priests, while the agriculturalists would be represented by Aryaman. In Rome, the three functions would correspond to the Capitoline triad of gods: Juppiter would be the god of the priestly function, Mars the warrior-god, and Quirinus the god of the third social group or function (the agriculturalists). This tripartite ideology would, in Dumézil's opinion, be reflected not just in the way the gods were conceived (and in the myths associated with them), but also in the way they were worshipped, in the religious practices of Indo-Europeans. For example, the widespread practice of healing by word (magical charms), surgery and medicine would reflect the ideological division of proper actions for priests (speaking holy words), warriors (acting with instruments, including surgical instruments) and agriculturalists (procuring food and medicine).

It must be noted that the term 'Indo-European ideology' is not meant to reflect the real social organization of the society of speakers of PIE (or any other concrete society), but rather as a set of ideas determining the culture of early IE societies; there is certainly nothing particular about the languages of the Indo-Europeans or their genes that made them accept that particular system of ideas which was transmitted to their descendants by cultural, chiefly oral transmission: "*J'appelle 'idéologie' l'inventaire des idées directrices qui commandent la réflexion et la conduite d'une société et qui, bien entendu, n'impliquent pas je ne sais quelle organisation particulière des cerveaux*" (Dumézil 1985: 312).

Although intelectually bold and ingenuous, Dumézil's ideas about the organization of PIE religion and mythology remain controversial. They are aprioristic, in the sense that almost any type of textual evidence can be made to fit a "tripartite" ideological scheme, hence the very hypothesis of a tripartite ideology of Indo-Europeans is strictly irrefutable. The same applies to Allen's (1987) attempt to introduce a fourth 'function' to Dumézil's system, that of the 'other', and to connect the social functions of early Indo-European societies with organizational schemes of kinship systems. Because of their inherent irrefutability, such theories will not be further mentioned in this book.

SACRED

To conclude from the number of preserved cognates, PIE had a rather rich terminology connected with the sacred sphere:

PIE *seh₂k-/ *sh₂k- > Lat. *sacer, sacerdōs*, *sācer* 'worthy to be sacrificed', TochB *sākre* 'happy, blessed', Lat. *sancio* 'establish a law', *sanctus* 'sanctified', Hitt. *šāklāi* 'rite, custom'.

PIE *k'wento- > Goth. *hunsl* 'sacrifice', Lith. *šveñtas* 'holy', OCS *svętъ*, Av. *spənta-*, perhaps TochB *känts-* 'right, firm'.

?*sewp- > Umbr. *supa* 'viscera of sacrificed animal', Hitt. *šuppa-* 'flesh of sacrificed animal', *šuppi-* 'pure'.

*weh₂ti- > OIr. *fáith* 'prophet', Lat. *vātēs*, Goth. *wōds* 'demon-possessed', Skr. *api-vat-* 'inspire'. The root *weh₂- probably meant something like 'inspiration', and the derivative *weh₂ti- was 'having inspiration, inspired (priest)'.

PIE *(H)ish₂ro- 'provided with supernatural strength' > Gr. *hierós, hiarós* 'holy', Skr. *iṣirás* 'holy, strong'; this set of words could be related to dialectal IE *(H)ish₂r-no- 'iron' > OIr. *íarn*, Germ. *Eisen*, Eng. *iron* (the Germanic words are considered as Celtic loanwords). The semantic motivation is in the properties of iron as the strongest of metals. The verbal root is preserved in Skr. *iṣayati* 'enlivens, fortifies'.

PIE *yag- (or *yeh₂g-) > Gr. *hágios* 'holy', *hagnós* (Hom.); cf. *házomai* 'I am afraid', Skr. *yaj-* 'to sacrifice', *yájña-* 'a sacrifice'.

PIE *h₂yewos- 'divine rule' > Lat. *iūs*, cf. *iūdex* 'judge': Av. *yaož-dātar-*, *yaoždāta-* 'holy'. The root is probably the same as in PIE *h₂oyu- 'life force' (Skr. *āyu-*), although the semantic connection is not obvious.

PIE *noybʰo- ?'holy' > OIr. *noíb* 'holy', OPers. *naiba-* 'good, beautiful', cf. also MW *nwyf* 'passion, joy'. OIr. *níab* 'vital force' (< *neybʰo-) shows that the semantic evolution was similar to the one in *(H)ish₂ro- 'provided with supernatural strength' above.

PIE *k'ubʰro- 'brilliant' or 'holy' (Skr. *śubhrá-* 'brilliant') > Arm. *surb* 'holy'.

In most early IE traditions there is a bipolar opposition between 'holy' as a negative concept – something separated from the profane world (Lat. *sacer*, Gr. *hágios*, Goth. *weihs*, Av. *spənta-*) and 'holy' as a positive concept – something endowed with a divine power (Lat. *sanctus*, Gr. *hierós*, Goth. *heilags*, Av. *yaoždāta-*). In Greek, there is also *hósios* 'holy, pious' (signifying that which is permitted by Gods), but this word does not seem to have a PIE etymology. Gr. *sébomai* 'worship, pay respect to' developed from the earlier meaning 'feel awe' and 'be ashamed' (in Homer); it is related to Skr. *tyajati* 'abandons' (< PIE *tyegʷ-).

The Germanic words such as Eng. *holy*, Germ. *heilig* developed from *hailaga-, which is derived from *haila- (OHG *heil*, OE *hēl*, Goth. *hails*) 'whole, healthy'. The semantic connection lies in the healing power of the sacred object (a sacrificial victim) and sacred practices (religious ceremonies). The same connection can also be observed in W *coel* 'sign, omen', Oscan *kaila* 'temple', which are also derived from PIE *kaylo- (or *kh₂eylo-, cf. also OCS *cělъ* 'whole', OPr. *kailūstikan* 'health'). The appurtenance of Lat. *caerimōnia* 'religious practice' (? < *kaylimōnia) is doubtful, as well as the etymology of Lat. *caelum* 'sky', which is quite plausibly also derived from *kaylo- (the semantic motivation would lie in the divination by watching the flight of birds in a demarcated area of the sky; *caelum* as 'the whole' would be the opposite of *templum* 'temple, the part' in the speech of the *augures*).

The semantic connection of holyness and (ritual) purification can be observed in the etymology of Lat. *pius* 'faithful, pious' (originally an attribute of one who conscientiously

performs religious duties). Like its Italic cognates (e.g. Umbrian *piíhiúí* (Dat. sg.)) it is derivable from the root *peh₂u- (or *pewh₂-, with laryngeal metathesis) 'to purify', from which we also have Lat. *pūrus* 'clean' (< *puh₂-ro-). The development of *pius* from *puh₂-yo- is likewise regular, cf. also the verb *piāre* 'to propitiate, cleanse by expiation' and *piāculum* 'victim, expiatory offering' < *puh₂-yeh₂-tlo-.

PRIESTS

There is no common PIE term for 'priest'; however, here are two terms that are at least reasonably good candidates for PIE status, whatever their exact original meaning:

PIE *kowh₁- > Gr. *koíēs* 'priest of the Samothracian mysteries', Lyd. *kaveś* 'priest', OInd. *kaví-* 'seer'. The root is also found in OCS *čują, čuti* 'to hear', Gr. *koéō* 'hear, notice', Lat. *caueō* 'be careful, heed'. With s-mobile we also have OHG *scouwōn* 'watch', Eng. *show*, and, perhaps, Pol. *chować* 'be careful'.

Lat. *flāmen* 'priest' and Skr. *brahmán-* 'brahmin' might, in principle, be from something like *bʰlagʹsmen, however non-Indo-European that reconstruction looks. Note also that the Lat. word is usually derived from PIE *bʰleh₂-, cf. Goth. *blōtan* 'sacrifice'. Skr. *brahmán-* is also related to OIc. *bragr* 'poetry'. Although this etymology is disputed, it is interesting to note that there are several common taboos affecting the desired behavior of both Roman flamines and Vedic brahmins:

Brahman	*Flamen Dialis*
cannot be killed	cannot have hands laid upon him
cannot be compelled as witness	cannot be compelled to swear an oath
must avoid funeral pyre	must avoid funeral pyre
cannot drink alcohol	must not get drunk
must not touch unsacrified meat	must not touch raw meat
must not oil his body (except head)	must not rub himself with oil outdoors
must stop performing rites at time of war	must not see an army
must not study on horseback	must not touch a horse or ride it
must avoid dogs	must not touch or mention dogs
should never be naked or see his wife naked	must have some priestly sign on his body

In Sanskrit and Avestan there are many terms for 'priest', since there were many specialized kinds of priests. Etymological cognates include Skr. *hótar-* and Av. *zaotar*, which are both from *gʰ’ew- 'to pour (a libation)', Gr. *khéō*. The Germanic word for 'god' (Eng. *god*, Germ. *Gott*, Goth. *guþ*, originally neuter) is often derived from this root (PIE *gʰ’u-tóm 'worthy of libation'), but equally possible is to derive it from the quasi-homophonous root *gʰewH- 'call, invoke' (Skr. *hávate*, OCS *zъvati*). If that is correct, *god* would originally have been 'the invoked one'.

OCS *žrъcь* '(pagan) priest' is derived from the verb *žrъti* 'sacrifice', ORuss. *žereti*, from PIE *gʷerH- 'praise' (Lith. *gìrti* 'praise', OPr. *girtwei* 'praise', Skr. *gr̥nā́ti* 'praise'), cf. also Russ. *górdyj* 'proud' < *gʷrH-dʰh₁o- 'worthy of praise', Gaul. *bardos* 'bard', W *bardd*.

Lat. *pontifex* 'priest' is an old compound meaning 'bridge-maker' or 'path-maker' (from PIE *ponth₂- 'bridge, path' > Lat. *pons,* 'bridge', Gr. *pátos* 'path' and *dʰeh₁- 'do, make' > Lat. *facio*, OCS *děti*). From the point of view of eneolithic technology of Indo-Europeans, bridges

and paths were more or less the same thing, a set of planks making it possible for carts to cross swampy areas. Priests were therefore seen as those who set the paths (for gods and men), and in the Rig-Veda the ancient seers (the Rishis) are called *pathikŕt-* (RV 10.14.15cd, 2.23.6a), from Ved. *panthā-* 'path' and *kṛ-* 'do, make'.

SACRIFICE

The functions of the PIE priest would have included the performance of various rites, including the sacrifice. The most common types of sacrifice are the libation and the slaugthter of animals; of these, the cattle, the sheep and the horse are the most prominent sacrificial animals, and there are several combinations, such as the Roman *Suovetaurilia* (the sacrifice of a sheep, a pig, and a bull, chiefly during the festival of *Ambarvalia* in May, when the sacrificial animals are led around the crops to protect them from blight).

Any self-respecting sacrificer ended the sacrifice with a feast, on which the sacrificed animal was shared with the gods. This feast seems to be denoted by PIE *dapnom 'sacrificial meal' (Lat. *daps,* ON *tafn* 'sacrificial animal', Arm. *tawn* 'feast', Hitt. ^{LU}*tappala-* 'person responsible for court cooking', Gr. *dapánē* 'ostentatious expenditure').

The term for libation is PIE*spend-, hence Lat. *spondeo* 'promise, vow', Gr. *spendō* 'pour a libation', *spondḗ,* Hitt. *išpand-* 'pour a libation', TochAB *spänt-* 'trust'. The development of meaning in Lat. *spondeo* (cf. also *sponsa* 'the promised bride, *fiancée*') is clear if we recall that a libation is the proper time to make a promise to the deity in expectation of a returned favor.

Another root which denoted the libation was *g^{ih}ew- > Gr. *khéō*, Phryg. *zeuman* 'libation', Skr. *hu-* 'pour', *hótar* 'priest', Arm. *jawnem* 'offer, consecrate', TochAB *ku-* 'pour'. The original meaning was perhaps less tightly tied to the religious sphere, but 'the pourer' is a common term for a priest, cf. also Gaul. *gutu-ater,* who was a kind of a priest ('the father of libations'?).

In contrast to PIE *spend-, which denoted the sacrificial pouring of a substantial amount of liquid (milk, or mead, or anything pleasing the gods), PIE*leyb- probably meant 'to pour a few drops', hence Lat. *lībo, lībum* 'sacrificial cake', Gr. *leíbō*; de Vaan derives Lat. *lībō* from *h$_2$leyb^h- 'to anoint' (Gr. *aleíphō, áleiphar* 'unguent'), cf. Lat. *lino.* In that case it would be unrelated to Gr. *leíbō*, which is hard to believe. Gr. *loibḗ* is a sacrifice made by pouring a sacrificial liquid (especially wine), but, unlike *khoḗ* and *spondḗ*, it was used to avert a punishment by the gods, rather than to ensure their help and propitiousness.

PRAYER

Prayer is closely connected with incantation and magic, the chief difference being that, in a prayer, you don't expect the desired outcome to occur as a direct consequence of your prayer (as in a charm, or incantation); the prayer is intended to persuade the supernatural beings, while the charm should coerce them. Moreover, since prayers usually involve a promise to the deity that the supplicant would do certain things, it is clear that the words for 'prayer' will to some extent overlap with the words for 'vow', or 'solemn declaration'. There are several verbal roots in PIE that can be translated as 'to pray'; it is difficult to ascertain which of them were used in the specifically religious sense of 'prayer'.

PIE *meld^h- > OE *meldian* 'announce', Lith. *meldžiù* 'pray', OCS *moliti*, Hitt. *maldāi* 'pray'; as Pol. *modlić* 'pray' shows, we have to assume the metathesis in Proto-Slavic (*ld > *dl). I am not sure whether Arm. *malt^{c}em* 'pray' also belongs here, because of the unexpected -*t^c*- (*d would be regular). The semantics of the reflexes in Germanic point to the conclusion that the original meaning was probably 'utter a solemn prayer' or similar;

PIE *g^{wh}ed^h- > OIr. *guidid* 'pray', Gr. *théssasthai* 'ask, pray', Av. *ĵaiδyemi* 'pray', OCS *žeždǫ* 'thirst'.

PIE *h$_1$or- > Lat. *ōro*, Hitt. *ariya-* 'consult an oracle'; the length of the vowel in Latin points to a root-noun *h$_1$ōr-, but the etymology is doubtful (some linguists derive Lat. *ōro* from the noun *ōs, ōris* 'mouth', which is not very convincing from the semantic point of view).

PIE *h$_1$weg$^{'h}$- 'vow' > Lat. *voveo*, Gr. *eúkhomai* 'pray', Skr. *oh-* 'utter solemnly, pride oneself', Av. *aog-* 'utter (with authority)'.

PIE *h$_1$erk- 'sing (solemnly)' (Skr. *arká-* 'light, magic song', TochB *yarke* 'worship', Hitt. *arku-* 'chant') > Arm. *erg* 'song'.

The correspondence between Lat. *lito* 'to obtain or give favourable omens' and Gr. *litḗ* 'request' (usually a request for a compensation when one has been wronged, or when one has wronged the gods) is doubtful; many linguists think that Lat. *lito* is a denominative verb from unattested *lita, which is in turn borrowed from Gr. *litḗ* (cf. the Gr. denominative *líssomai* 'beg'). Lat. *supplicāre* 'to pray, implore, beg humbly' is derived from *supplex* 'begging, humble, submissive', which is in turn from *sub- and *plek- 'bent, twisted' (OCS *pletǫ* 'weave', Gr. *plékō*), since praying was done while kneeling in a submissive, 'bent' position. Another derivative of the same root is *supplicium* 'prayer'. Another common metaphor for 'prayer' is 'a libation (or pouring) of words', cf. Gr. *Od.* 19.521 *khéei phōnḗn* 'she pours the voice', RV. 2.27.1ab *gíraḥ juhomi* 'I pour the songs', where both gr. *khéō* and Skr. *juhómi* are from PIE *g$^{'h}$ew- 'pour', cf. also Virgil, *Aen.* 6.55 *funditque preces* 'he poured the prayers'.

In several IE traditions, prayers begin with a standard invocation to the deity, PIE *k'lud^{h}i moy 'hear me' > Gr. *klythí moi* (e.g. Il. 5.115), Skr. *śrudhí me* 'hear me' (e.g. RV 8.66.12), Av. *srāotā moi* (Y 33.11c, Zarathuštra's invocation of Ahura Mazda) cf. also *klỹthi theá* 'hear o goddess' (Il. 23.770, Odysseus to Athena). Gods are then often called to come to the sacrifice, e.g. in RV 1.1.5 (of Agni): *devó devébhir ā́ gamat* 'the god may come here with the gods', RV 1.21 *Vā́yav ā́ yāhi darśata* 'Vāyu, come, o beutiful one'; Sappho calls on Aphrodite (1. 5) thus: *týid' élth' aí pota katérōta tàs émas aúdas aíoisa pḗloi/ éklyes* 'but come here, if ever at another time you heard my voice far of and hearkened'. Other parts of the prayer may include a reminiscence of the past services done to the deity, or of the past favours the deity has done to the supplicant, and a detailed request, specifying what is desired of the deity. The preciseness of formulation of such requests is particularly developed in Roman prayers, both private and public.

A particular formula associated with IE prayers is 'protect men and livestock', PIE *wiHro- *pek'u- peh$_2$-, reflected as Umbrian *ueiro pequo ... salua seritu*, Lat. *pastores pecuaque salua seruassis*, Av. *θrāyrāi pasvā vīrayā*, Skr. *trāyántām... púruṣam páśum*.

MAGIC

Magic is the method of directly achieving one's goals – without the intercession of a deity that needs to be persuaded – through magical deeds or incantations. In many languages, the magical action is seen as 'binding', PIE *seh$_1$-i- (ON *seiðr* 'band, belt', Lith. *saitas* 'bond, fetter', from which we have W *hud* 'magic', ON *seið* 'magic', perhaps also TochB *nesait* 'magic'. The root *k^{w}er- 'make, do' may have been used in the technical sense of performing magical rites or composing incantations, cf. OIr. *creth,* W *prydydd* 'poet', OCS *čari*, Lith. *kerai* 'magical spells' and the Ved. formula *vācam kr̥-* (e.g. RV 10.71.2: *vācam akrata* 'they (the poets) made the Word'). It has been argued that the visible sign of supernatural action was denoted by PIE *kewdos > Gr. *kŷdos*, OCS *čudo* (Gen. sg. *čudese*) 'miracle'.

In a number of traditions magical incantations have been preserved, e.g. the Gaulish Phraseological correspondences have been discovered in a number of charms used for healing the disjointed leg. The Atharva-Veda (4.12) heals the disjointed leg by putting 'marrow to marrow, skin to skin and flesh to flesh', and the same procedure is applied in the OHG 'Second Merseburg Charm', where various deities cure the leg of Baldur's horse by joining *ben zi bena, bluot zi bluoda, lid zi* geliden 'bone to bone, blood to blood, limb to limb'. Finally, in the OIr. tale *Cath Maige Tuired* (34. 135-6) we read how the Irish physician Míach tried to rejoin the severed arm of the god *Núadu* by chanting *ault fri halt di, & féith fri féith* 'joint to joint of it, and sinew to sinew'. Similar incantations are found in Hittite, Latvian, and Russian, but in the absence of specific etymological correspondences, they may have spread by diffusion, or simply be the result of chance (or similar ways of thinking about healing).

BELIEF

In our modern world-view, 'to believe' is to have a particular attitude towards the truth of a proposition. We 'believe' that there was a thing the physicists call the 'Big Bang', because that belief is consistent with other things the physicists teach us, although this particular belief does not affect our everyday lives and actions at all. This modern sense of 'believe', however, is the result of a long semantic evolution; in pre-modern societies, 'to believe' is to place one's trust into a set of actions, to establish a bond with the supernatural. In PIE, this is the sense of the phrase *k'red-d^{h}eh$_1$- > Lat. *credo*, OIr. *cretid*, Skr. *śrad-dhā-*, Hitt. *karatan-dai*; the first element of this compound is often related to PIE *k'erd- 'heart' (Lat. *cor,* OCS *srъdьce* etc.), but this is doubtful, since this word never occurs with the full grade in the second syllable (*k'red-). The appurtenance and the exact meaning of Hitt. *karatan-* have also been doubted.

Perhaps it is possible to reconstruct another verb, PIE*h$_2$oh$_3$- 'believe' > Hitt. *hā-zi*, Lat. *ōmen* 'omen, augury'; the semantics of the connection would work if the original meaning of *h$_2$eh$_3$- men- > Lat. *ōmen* was 'the credible (sign of the gods)'. Note that an alternative etymology derives Lat. *ōmen* from *h$_3$e^w-s-men ('what is seen', from the root of *oculus* 'eye'). Finally, there is the Avestan term *daēna-* which is usually rendered as 'religion'; it is the etymological equivalent of Skr. *dhena-*. Another possible cognate is Lith. *dainà* 'song', Latv. *daina*.

OATH

Swearing is a religious act in all archaic religions, as the swearer takes gods as his witnesses. A common motive in many IE traditions is swearing by some holy water, e.g. the river Styx in

the Greek mythology, Ganges in India and Leiptr in ancient Scandinavia. These rivers are often connected with the Otherworld (suggesting that one actually swears by one's ancestors who are now deceased), but Ganges was believed to have a source in the heavens (*Mahābhārata* 3.107). In the Iliad (14.271-3) Hypnos (god of dreams) asks Hera to swear to him by using this formula: *ágrei nỹn moi ómosson aáaton Stygòs hýdōr // kheirì dè tẽi hetérēi mèn héle khthóna polybóteiran // tẽi d' hetérēi hála marmaréēn...* 'Come on, and swear to me now by the terrible water of Styx, take by one hand the earth, rich in fodder, and by the other the shining sea'.

There are not many words for 'swearing' and 'oath' in the PIE lexicon:

$*h_1$oyto- 'oath' (OIr. *oeth*, OHG *eid*, Gr. *oĩtos* 'course, fate'), a derivative of the root $*h_1$ey- 'go' (Skr. *émi*, Lat. *eo*, OCS *iti*); the semantic connection between the verb 'to go' and 'oath' is seen in the practice of walking between parts of a sacrificed animal while giving an oath (this custom is recorded in Hittite documents and in the 14th century Lithuania).

*wroto- 'oath' (ORuss. *rota*, Croat. arch. *ròta*, Skr. *vratám* 'command, law'); this term seems to be dialectal in PIE. The semantic connection between 'command, law' and 'oath' is parallel to the connection between Lat. *iūro* 'swear' and *iūs* 'law' < PIE $*h_2$yewos- 'vital force' (Skr. *yóṣ-* 'of life', Av. *yaoš-* 'life').

$*h_2$emh$_3$- 'grasp, swear' (Gr. *ómnymi* 'swear', Skr. *ámīti* 'holds grasps, swears', perhaps Lat. *amo* 'love'); in Latin, the semantic evolution was from 'be bound by an oath' to 'have as friend, love'; the semantic connection between 'hold, grasp' and 'swear' lies in the custom of touching or holding an object (or a person) one swears by. A similar semantic development may be seen in PCelt. *tongo- 'swear' (OIr. *tongaid*, W *tyngu*) from PIE $*teh_2$g- 'touch' (Lat. *tango*, Goth. *tekan*).

In some languages the words for 'oath' have less clear etymologies. PCelt. *lugiyo- 'oath' (OIr. *lugae*) is sometimes derived from PIE $*h_2$lewg- (Hitt. *haluga-* 'message'), but the original meaning of the root is uncertain and the semantic connection is weak. PGerm. *swarja- 'to swear' (Eng. *swear*, Germ. *schwören, Schwur*) is usually connected with OCS *svarъ* 'dispute' (Russ. *svára*, Pol. *swar*), so the semantic evolution would be from 'to have a dispute' to 'swear' (the Slavic forms would need to be from a lengthened grade expected in a root-noun, PIE *swōr-, and the Germanic forms from the o-grade *swor- of the same root). The Balto-Slavic verb for 'swearing' (OCS *klęti*, Latv. *klentēt*, OPr. *klantemmai* 'we beseech') is probably from PIE $*kleh_1$- 'call' (Gr. *kaléō* 'call', OE *hlynn* 'sound').

3. ELEMENTS OF PIE MYTHOLOGY

SKY GOD

There are reasons to believe that PIE *dyēws 'sky, Sky-god' was the supreme deity of the PIE pantheon. He was certeainly most often preserved in the individual pantheons, cf. Ved. *dyaú-*, Lat. *Dius Fidius*, Gr. *Zeús*, Hitt. *šiuš* 'god', ON *Týr*. He is commonly addressed as 'father', PIE *dyēws ph₂tēr 'Sky Father' > Lat. *Iuppiter,* Umbr. *Iupater*, Gr. *Zeùs patḗr*, Skr. *Dyauṣ pitā*, Luv. *tātis tiwaz*, Latv. *Dievs debess tēvs*; cf. also ON *Óðinn Álföðr* 'Odin, father of all' and OIr. *(Echu) Ollathir* '(Echu) father of all'.

The sky god often bears the standard epithet 'All-knowing', or 'All-seeing': Gr. *eurýopa Zeús*, RV 6.70.6 *viśvávedas Dyaúṣ*.

DAWN GODDESS

The Vedas praise the Dawn as a young maiden, and Ved. *Uṣās* is clearly the same etymon as Gr. Hom. *ēṓs*; this deity plays almost no role in Greek mythology, so it seems that several of her attributes were taken by other deities, chiefly *Aphrodítē* and *Helénē* < *welenā, from PIE *welh₁- 'wish, desire, choose' (Lat. *velle*, OCS *volja* 'will'). Similarly in Lat. *aurora* is just an appelative, but the cult of the Dawn was preserved in the rites devoted to *Mater Matuta*. In Lithuanian dainas *Aušrinė* 'dawn' is a young maiden often represented as marrying *Mėnuo* 'the moon'. Lasicius (a Polish writer of the 16th century, on Lith. *Aušra*): *Ausca dea est radiorum solis vel occumbentis vel supra horizontem ascendentis*.

The Dawn was originally the 'daughter of the Sky', PIE *dʰugh₂tēr diwos > Ved. *duhitā́ divás,* Gr. *thygátēr Diós* (especially of Aphrodite, Helen, and the Muses); Alcman (Fr. 43 Edm.) begins his poem with the words: *Mõs' áge Kalliópa thygáter Diós* 'come on Muse Calliope, daughter of Zeus!'. Since Dawn is associated with poetic inspiration in the Vedas, it is not too far-fetched to assume that the phrase *thygátēr Diós* was transferred to the Muse from *Eōs,* who plays an unsignificant role in Greek mythology. In the Latvian and Lithuanian dainas, the phrase *dʰugh₂tēr diwos (deywos) is also found, e.g. Lith. *Dievo dukrytė* (of Saule, the Sun goddess). Uṣās was a patron of the rishis, the Vedic poets, and the Old Irish goddess *Brigit* (*dea poetarum* according to bishop Cormac, who wrote in the tenth century) was born at dawn. Her name comes from PCelt. *brigantī < PIE *bʰr̥g'ntih₂ and from the same proto-form is derived one of the epithets of Ušas, *br̥hatī* 'the exalted one'. The common epithet of the PIE dawn was 'Shiny Dawn', with the adjective 'shiny' derived from PIE *bʰeh₂-, cf. RV 3. 6. 7: *Uṣó vibhātī́,* Gr. Hom. *phaeinḗ* (an epithet of Eos)*,* Pindar Nem. 6.52 *phaennãs Aóos* 'of shiny Dawn'; she was the one who regularly opened the 'doors of heaven' RV 1. 48. 15: *dvā́rau divás,* Latv. *dieva durvis*, cf. RV 7.79.4 *ví dr̥ḷhaśya dúro ádrer aurṇoṣ* 'you (Uṣās) have opened the gates of the closed rock'. As a beautiful young woman, she is often represented as smiling, cf. Ved. *Uṣā́s... smayate* 'Dawn smiles' (RV 3.4.6ab), Gr. (*Aphrodítē*) *meidiáiei* 'Aphrodite is smiling' (*Hom. Hymn.* 10.3); we mentioned above that there are reasons to believe that Aphrodite took over several of her attributes from the dawn goddess Eos, and in early Greek poetry Aphrodite's standing epithet is *philo-mmeidḗs* 'laughter-loving' (e.g. Il. 5.375), where both Ved. *smáyate* and Gr. *-meid-* are from PIE *smey- 'smile'.

MOTHER EARTH

Although it appears that the Earth was represented as 'mother' in most IE traditions, it is not generally represented as the spouse of 'father sky'; the Earth is a deity in Ved., where she is called *Pṛthivī́* (Gr. *plateîa,* Gaul. *Litavi,* OE *folde*) < PIE *pltHwih$_2$ 'The broad one'. Gr. *Gaîa,* does not have a PIE etymology, but she is also called *Khthṓn* (Aesch. *Eumenides* 6, fr. 44. 1), and this is the Greek reflex of the PIE word for 'earth' (*d^{h}eg$^{'h}$ōm). Gr. *Dāmā́tēr* is sometimes believed to be a personification of the same earth-goddess, but there is little evidence that *dā-* actually meant 'earth'. Other deities that belong here are Hitt. *Dagan-zipas annas*, Lith. *Žemynė*, Latv. *Zemes Māte* ('Mother of the Earth'), ON *Iörð* (Odinn's wife), and perhaps Thracian Semele; in Old English we have *Folde, fîra modor* 'Earth, mother of men' (in a charm). Tacitus claims that the Germans worship 'Nerthum, id est Terram matrem' (*Germ.* 40. 2). Finally, OIr. *Anu* is called *mater deorum Hiberniensium* (by Cormac in the 10th century), cf. *Dá chích Anann* (in Killarney) 'two breasts of Anu'. The etymology of the name *Anu* is unknown.

The standard epiteths of earth is 'dark', cf. Hitt. *dankuiš tekan*, Gr. *khthṓn mélaina,* Russ. *Mat' čërnaja zemlja*, Lith. *juodoji Žemaitė, uoda Žemėlė*, perhaps OIr. *domunn donn* (where *domunn* means 'world', but *donn* is 'dark'). Another common expression is 'broad earth': Hom. *eureîa khthṓn,* RV 6.17.7. *kṣām urvīm*. Calin (2017: 75) mentions also Alb. *dhe të zi* 'black earth' in Albanian folk-songs. In the Russian folklore, *zemlja* is commonly called *syraja* 'wet, moist', and the name of the Slavic goddess *Mokošь* (perhaps the consort of the thunderer *Perunъ*) is probably from the root of *mokrъ 'wet' (Croat. *mokar,* Russ. *mokryj*, etc.).

SUN-GOD AND SUN MAIDEN

The Sun is the only heavenly body that was worshipped by Indo-Europeans. In contrast to, e.g., the Semitic religions, the Moon plays a very modest role in Indo-European mythologies. The PIE word for 'sun', on the other hand, is a theonym in sevareal traditions. PIE *seh$_2$wōl 'sun' is preserved as Ved. *Sū́rya-* and *Sū́ryā*, Gr. *Hḗlios,* Latv. *Saule* and *Saules meita*. As a common noun, it is preserved in Lat. *sōl,* as well as in OCS *slъnьce*, etc.

As a mythological creature, the Sun shares a number of epithets across several IE traditions; e. g. it is a 'seer', cf. Ved. *sūryam...spaśam*, RV 4. 13. 3 Gr. *Eḗlion...skopón* 'sun, the seer'; Also in Hymn to Demeter; since the sun is a 'seer', we can easily understand the semantic evolution in OIr., where *súil* means 'eye', cf. also Arm. *aregakn* 'sun' < 'eye of the sun'. As the all-seeing deity, the Sun is the natural choice for the supervisor of oaths, and in several traditions we have records of oaths directed to the Sun (cf. Agamemnon's oath in the Iliad 3.276f.). In RV, it is stated that *díśaḥ sūryo ná mināti* 'Sun does not infringe the directions prescribed', where *díś-* 'direction' is from the same root as Gr. *díkē* 'justice, divine law'. Heraclitus (B 92) states that the Sun does not overstep his measures, which implies that it always obeys the same divine rule.

Moreover, the Sun drives across the sky in a chariot. Hence the expressions Ved. *sūryasya cákram,* Gr. *Hḗliou kýklos* 'the wheel of the sun' Aeschylus, *Persae* 504. Its course is 'fast', cf. Mimnermus fr. 11a. *ōkéos ēelíoio* and AV 13.2.2 *āśúm Sū́ryam* < PIE *h$_1$ōk'u- *seh$_2$wōl 'swift sun'. In several traditions, Sun's horses are also invoked (PIE *suh$_2$los h$_1$ek'wōs), e.g.

RV 1.115.3a *áśvāḥ...súryasya* 'the Sun's horses', Pindar *Isth.* 5.1+5 *Aelíou híppoi* 'the Sun's horses', Ovid *Met.* 2.154 *solis equi*, Latv. (*LD* 33627-10) *Saules zirgu* 'the Sun's horse', etc. Of course, these are the horses drawing the Sun's chariot, cf. Old Norse (*Grímnismál* 37) '(the horses) *Árvakr* and *Alsviðr* shall draw up the sun'.

Finally, there are reasons to believe that heaven, or the Otherworld of the blessed ones, is located at the end of the Sun's path in the PIE cosmology, cf. RV 10.95.18d: '(after death) you shall rejoice in heaven (*svargé*). Skr. *svarga-* 'heaven' and Gr. *ólbos* 'bliss' can probably both be derived from a PIE compound *su(h$_2$)ol-g^{w}h$_2$o- 'that which goes towards the sun' (Janda 2005: 261f.).

STORM-GOD (THUNDERER)

The name of the PIE Storm-God is probably preserved in Hitt. *Tarhunt-*, ON *Þórr*, OIr. *torann* < PIE *torh$_2$-nt- 'thunder'; we find a rather different etymon in Lith. *Perkúnas* and Russ. *Perún* (cf. also Gr. *keraunós* 'thunder', which may have been abstracted from Zeus' epithet *terpsikéraunos* 'delighting in thunderbolt', perhaps from *perk^{w}i-perawnos 'having a smiting bolt'). These names seem to come from PIE *per-k^w-u-no-. In this PIE form, we may have the amalgam of two distinct etymons, a word for 'rock' (cf. Hitt. *peruna-* 'rock', OInd. *parvata-* < *perwn-to-), and the word for 'oak' (PIE *perk^{w}u- > Lat. *quercus,* OHG *fereh-eih*), cf. also the ON theonym *Fjörgyn* 'mother Earth' which appears to be from PGerm. *fergunja- 'mountain' > Goth. *fairguni* 'mountain'). The thunder is believed to be rocky (cf. the Byelorussian expression *kamen Peruna,* Lith. *perkūno akmuo*), and the oak is the tree most often hit by thunder, hence it is dedicated to the Storm-God. On the other hand, these theonyms are probably unrelated to Ved. *Parjánya-*, who is mostly associated with rain in the RV, and whose name is difficult to reconcile with the PIE proto-form *per-k^w-u-no- (which is problematic anyway). PSl. *Perunъ is probably originally 'the Striker', from the root *perti 'to strike' (cf. the *figura etymologica* in Byelorussian charms *pjarun pjarec'* 'the Thunder strikes'). The suffix is probably Slavic *-unъ* used to form *nomina agentis* (as in OCS *běgunъ* 'fugitive' from *běgti 'run').

The standard weapon of the Storm-God is, of course, the thunder, which is often represented as some sort of mace, or hammer. Thus, Indra's mace is called *vájra-*, from PIE *wag'- 'smash' (or *weh$_2$g'-, with vowel-shortening by Lubotsky's rule), cf. Gr. *ágnymi* 'smash', TochA *waśir* 'thunderbolt'. Thor's hammer is called *Mjöllnir* in the Edda, and this is from the same root as Latv. *milna* 'thunder', OCS *mlъnъji* 'thunder', Luv. *maldani* 'hammer' and Lat. *malleus* 'hammer'. In religious poetry and ritual, the Thunderer is often represented as a bull, e.g. Indra is said to be 'the bull of heaven' (*vŕṣā diváḥ*, RV 8.57.3b), while the Hittite storm-god Tarhuntaš is said to have become a bull (GUD.MAH *kīšati*, KBo III 41). In the Greek religion, the bull was one of the sacred animals of Zeus, who became the Thunderer (although he bears the name of the original sky-god), and in Latvian dainas one referes to 'bulls of Dievs' (*Dieva vērši*, LD 2221) who drink up a river.

DIVINE TWINS

The following mythological creatures are divine twins, a mythological conception of probably PIE origin: Gr. *Dióskouroi* (Castor and Polydeuces), Ved. *Aśvínā* (dual), also called *Nāsatyā*, Latv. *dieva dēli* ('the sons of Dievs). In the RV, the Aśvins are called 'Descendents (or sons)

of the Sky': Ved. *divó napātā* RV1. 117. 12, 182. 1; they are often described as 'youthful', *yuvānā* (RV 1. 117. 14), and in Latin, Castor and Pollux (< Polydeucēs) are called *iuvenes* (Cicero, *De natura deorum* 2.6).

They are associated with horses: Pindar (*Ol.* 3. 39) calls them *eúippoi*, 'having good horses', and RV 7.68.1 has *suáśvā* 'with good horses'; Castor is usually called *hippódamos* 'horse-taming' in Homer. They are 'bright': RV 8.5.32 refers to the Aśvins as *púruścandrā* 'very bright'. The name of *Polydeukēs* is probably dissimilated from *polyleukēs 'with many lights' (cf. Gr. *leukós* 'white').

They are brothers of the Dawn (in the RV), and of Helen (in Greek Myth); in both the Greek and in the Vedic traditions they are invoked as the saviours, or helpers, Gr. *sōtéres*. Their Vedic name *Nāsatyā* probably also originally meant 'saviours', cf. Goth. *nasjands* 'Saviour, Christ'.

Some authors have proposed that traces of the Indo-European twin horsemen were preserved in the Anglo-Saxon legend about *Hengest* and *Horsa* (literally 'Stallion' and 'Horse', the brothers who allegedly conquered Roman Britain in the 5th century A.D. The legend is preserved by Bede the Venerable in his *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* and in the later Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

HORSE SACRIFICE

There is no doubt that horses played an important role in the Indo-European society. Consequently, the sacrifice of a horse is the mother of all sacrifices. Ved. *aśvamedha-* was a ritual of royal inauguration; after running around the kingdom freely for an amount of time, the queen was made to symbolically mate with it, and then it was butchered. The Vedic name of the ritual is sometimes compared with the Gaul. name *Epomeduos*, but this does not amount to much; more importantly, the coronation ritual of Ulster kings, as recorded by Giraldus Cambrensis in the 12th century also included the ritual slaughter of a horse, in whose broth the elected king was made to bath. One important character in the Ulster sagas, *Medb*, is often seen as a sovereignty figure (she spends men quite ostentatiously, including several kings), and her name contains the same element (*med[h]wo- 'intoxication') recognized in *aśvamedha-*. Finally, the Roman ritual October Equus (unsurprisingly held in October) involved horse racing followed by the sacrifice of a horse, whose head was put on a stake outside of the *Regia*. The ritual involved the *Rex sacrorum*, so it is quite possible that it had something to do with the consecration of a king in Rome's days of kingship. In the Slavic folklore songs studied by Radoslav Katičić, the hero whose return marks the beginning of spring (*Jarylo*) is slaughtered in the form of a horse at the end of the fertility rite.

Although horses are important in mythologies of several Indo-European peoples, it is by no means clear that the rite of horse sacrifice itself was inherited from PIE, as it could equally have spread at a later date. This depends, in part, on whether the speakers of PIE domesticated horses or not. The date of domestication of horses is debated in archaeology: the first culture to systematically herd horses was probably the Botai culture from Kazakhstan in the 4th millennium B.C, and it is not impossible that this culture was in contact with the speakers of PIE, who could have used horses for riding. However, the horse-drawn chariots that play an important role in Hittite, Indo-Iranian, Greek and Celtic cultures are certainly a post-Indo-European technological development.

THE DRAGON-SLAYING MYTH

It has been claimed that a PIE formula $*g^{wh}ent\ h_3eg^{wh}im$ 'he slew the serpent' can be reconstructed on the basis of the formulaic expressions such as the following: Ved. *áhann áhim* (of Indra, who slew the dragon Vrtra)*,* Av. *ĵanat̲ ažīm* (of Thraetaona, who slew the nasty serpent Aži Dahaka, Hitt. *^{muš}Illuyankan kuenta* (of the Storm God, Hitt. *Tarhunt-*), OIr. *gono míl* 'I slay the beast' (in charm texts). Homer also uses verbs from the same root, e.g. *épephnen*, when describing the slaying of several monsters. For example, in his description of how Bellerophontes slew the Chimaira (Il. 6. 179-186): *prôton mén rha Khímairan amaimakétēn ekéleusen pephnémen... tò tríton aû katépephnen Amazónas anianeíras* 'first he decided to kill the terrible Chimaira... and thirdly he killed the Amazons, who were similar to men'. The same phraseology is used in Pindar's account of the same myth (*Ol.* 6. 179-186): 'So mounted, out of the cold gulfs of the high air forlorn, he smote the archered host of women, the Amazons, and the Chimaira, breathing flame; and the Solymoi, and slew (*épephnen*) them'. Another root often used in dragon-slaying texts is $*b^heyd$- 'split' (*ví... vrtrásya śiro bibheda* 'he (Indra) splitted the head of Vrtra' (RV 8. 6. 6.). It is possible that the root $*b^heyd$- is just a variant of $*b^heyH$- (if $*H = *h_1$) 'to strike', which yielded OCS *biti,* OIr. *benaid*, OLat. *per-fines*. This verb is regularly used in the Slavic dragon-slaying myth preserved in the folk-lore texts (e.g. in Byelorussian *dyk tut Pjarun zabiv zmeja* 'here the Thunder slew the dragon', Katičić 2008: 136). The alternation $*d$ / $*h_1$ would be parallel to the one in PIE $*med$- 'measure' (> Lat. *medeor* 'heal', OIr. *midithir* 'judge') and $*meh_1$- 'measure' (> OCS *měra*, Skr. *māti*).

The original dragon-slayer was probably the Storm-God, PIE $*torh_2nt$-, as in the Slavic myth, where the thunderer *Perunъ* slays the snaky dragon *Velesъ* (*Volosъ* in Russian sources). Note that there is still no consensus about the reconstruction of the PIE word for 'snake', the Storm-God's opponent. While $*h_3eg^{wh}i$- will serve to reconcile Ved. *áhi-,* Av. *ažī-* and Gr. *óphis*, Lat. *anguis* and OCS *ǫžь* point to a nasalized root, perhaps $*h_2eng^{wh}i$-/$*h_2eg^{wh}i$-.

THE DRINK OF IMMORTALITY

Many IE traditions have a story about the drink and/or food of the immortals; this substance is often said to provide the consumer with immortality, cf. Ved. *soma*, Gr. *ambrosía* (the food of the gods, from PIE $*n$-mrto- 'immortal')*,* and *néktar*, the drink of the gods, from PIE $*nek'$-terh_2- 'death-overcoming', with the regular loss of the laryngeal in compounds. Compare AV 4.35 *tarāṇi mṛtyum* 'I will overcome death'. In the Norse tradition, a parallel is perhaps represented by the story of Mímir's well, a drink from which gives supernatural wisdom. The immortal drink of the gods is often represented as mead, PIE $*med^hu$- (> Skr. *mádhu*, Gr. *méthy* 'wine', Lith. *medus*). The Norse tradition also teaches us that it was Odin who changed into an eagle, and then felw and spat the mead into the cauldrons of gods (*Skáldskaparmál* 6; this story has curious parallels in the Hittite rituals (KBo 6472 11ff) where the Storm-god receives the sacred water from eagles Rig-Veda, where it is the falcon (*śyená-*) who brought the mead (*mádhu-*) to the god Indra (RV 4.18.13d).

COSMOGONY

In a number of traditions, the origin of the world – either in its physical or in its social aspect – is connected with the myth of the 'twin' (PIE *(H)yemo- > Skr. *yama-* 'twin', Av. *yima-,* Latv. *jùmis* 'pair (of fruits)', OIr. *emon* 'twin', ON *Ymir,* perhaps also Lat. *Remus* (if from **yemos* on the analogy with *Romulus*) and *geminus* 'twin' (with *g-* on the analogy with *gigno* 'engender'). The root may be identical with the one in *imāgo* 'picture', Hitt. *himma-* 'imitation, substitute'. This primeval twin has, in all appearances, nothing to do with the divine twins, the sons of the sky (see above). In the Norse myth (*Grímnismál* 40-41) the giant *Ymir* is dissected and the mountains are formed from his skull, the trees from his hair, etc: *Ór Ymis holdi vas jörþ of sköpuþ, en ór sveita sær, björg ór beinum, baþmr ór hári en ór hausi himinn.* 'From the flesh of Ymir the world was formed, from his blood the billows of the sea, the hills from his bones, the trees from his hair, the sphere of heaven from his skull'.

In Middle Persian *Bundahišn*, it is told how Ohrmazd created the first human, *Gayōmart* (from Av. *gaya-* 'alive' and *marətan* 'dead') together with an ox; both the ox and *Gayōmart* later died (partly due to the intervention of the evil demon Ahriman), and then the beneficial plants, animals and, ultimately, humans were created from the semen of the ox, while the metals (copper, tin, gold, iron) were created from various parts of Gayōmart's body. According to a different tradition (*Bundahišn* 6.f7), the first human couple *Mašīa* and *Mašiānag* sprang from a rhubarb plant that grew from Gayōmart's sperm.

Tacitus (in *Germania,* 2), tells how the Germans believe that they originate from a primeval *Tuisto* (originally 'twin'?), who had a son called *Mannus* 'man'. This is reminiscent of the Vedic myth, where Yama was the first mortal to die (RV 10.13.4d: 'for the gods's sake, he chose death'), and he was subsequently given the rule of the Otherworld. His brother, *Manu-*, the progenitor of the humankind, sacrificed him. Some comparative mythologists believe that the figure of Yama-/Yima- was replaced by Kronos, the castrated and deposed father of Zeus, in Greek mythology. According to Pindar (*Ol.* 2.68-73) he continued to reign in the Isle of the Blessed, one of the Greek variants of the Otherworlds. In Latvian dainas, there is a mythological figure of *Jumis* who has a sister *Jumala* (e.g. *LD* 28536: 'Jumis took Jumala for a ride'), but there are no indication that they were ever considered the progenitors of humankind. Incidentally, in some Vedic hymns, Yama is given a twin sister *Yamī* (e.g. 10.10.7a: 'I have been consumed by the love for Yama, Yamī'.

The legend of a miraculous birth of twins also lies in the legend of the foundations of *Emain Machae*, the ancient capital of Ulster in the Old Irish Ulster Cycle. In that legend, it is told how the goddess *Macha* raced as a mare with other horses while being pregnant, and gave birth to twins after the race. The tale is used to explain how *Emain Machae* 'the twins of Macha' got its name. The motif of the sacrificed twin may have its roots in the widespread infanticide of one of the twins in early societies, in which it was economically impossible for women to raise twins.

OTHERWORLD

There is no evidence for a consistent picture of the PIE otherworld. We do not know where it was, but it appears that the abode of the dead is reachable by boat, cf. OIr. *tír inna mban*, which is an island, as is the *tech Duinn* 'the house of Donn', to which the eponymous deity ("the dark one") invited his descendants, the Irish people to come when they die (OIr. *co tech nDuind frisndálait mairb* 'to the house of Donn where the dead have their tryst'). Likewise, the island of Avalon in the British legend is the resting place of heroes, such as King Arthur

(Welsh *Arthwr*). OCS *navъ* 'the otherworld' is derivable from the word for 'boat', PIE *neh₂u- (Lat. *nāvis*, Skr. *naú-*, etc.), and in the Greek belief, one has to cross the river Styx to reach the otherworld. The idea that one crosses the river is here combined with the other one, namely that the realm of the dead is underground; in the Old Irish sagas, you enter it via the fairy mounds, the *síd* (< PIE *sēdos 'seat'). In a few traditions we find the idea that the dead abide in a wonderful meadow, rich in horses, cf. Hitt. *wēllu-* 'meadow (of the otherworld)', Gr. *(W)ēlýsion pedíon* 'Elysean fields'; in TochA the word *walu* 'dead' may be related, as well as ON *val-höll* 'Valhalla'. Lith. *Vélnias* 'devil' may be from the same root, as well as the name of the Slavic god of the dead and cattle, *Velesъ* (Russian also *Volosъ*), but this is uncertain. If all of these words are indeed related, they point to a PIE root *welH-. The concept of a meadow, or pasture for the dead is also found in Vedic, e.g. RV 10.14.2: 'this cow pasture is not to be taken away', as well as in OIr. *mag mell, mag meld* 'the plain of pleasure', one of the euphemisms for the Otherworld (e.g. *Immram Brain*, 34, 39; the attribute *meld* is probably related to Lat. *mollis* 'soft'). The Elysean fields in the Greek tradition are sometimes confused with the Meadow of Asphodelus (*Asphódelos leimṓn*), where souls of the dead wander to receive the blood sacrifices of the living (e.g. Od. 24.13-14).

In the Rig Veda, we find a belief that the realm of the deceased ('the fathers', *pitaras*) is in the sky, more precisely in the Milky Way (*svarga-*, which is compared to Gr. *ólbios* 'blessed' < *swel-g^w(H)o-).

The otherworld may have been ruled by the original progenitor of mankind, *Yemo- (Skr. *Yama-*, Av. *Yima-*), see above. Caesar (*De bello Gallico*, IV: 18) says that the Gauls considered themselves descendants of Dis Pater, the god he identified with the Roman god of the underworld.

FIRE IN WATER (?)

A mythological fiery protector of waters is reconstructed on the basis of Lat. *Neptūnus*, Skr. *Apā́m Nápāt* (< *h₂epōm nepōt- 'the descendant of water (*ap-*)', identified with Agni, the fire), OIr. *Nechtan* (a mythical spouse of *Boand,* the river Boyne), cf. also ON *saevar niðr* 'descendant of the sea' (a kenning for 'fire'). In the RV (e.g. RV 2.1.ab), it is stated that *Agni* 'fire' is born brom the waters (*adbhyás*), and that his home is in the waters (*apsv àgne sádhiṣ ṭáva,* RV 8.43.9a). Pindar, in his famous first Olympian Ode (1.1) constrasts fire with water: *áriston mèn hýdōr, ho dè khrysòs aithómenon pȳr* 'Water is best, while gold, like blazing fire (shines)'. All of this, however, is on a very shaky soil. *Neptūnus* is plausibly derived from PIE *neb^h-tu- 'moisture' (Av. *napta-* 'moist'), and the name *Nechtan* may be from the root *neyg^w- 'to wash' (OIr. *nigid*).

THE WORLD-TREE

In a number of traditions we find a conception of a world-tree, growing through the three cosmic spheres: the earth, the middle sphere (Ved. *antárikṣa-*) and the sky. The most famous example is the Old Norse ash-tree *yggdrásil*. Here is its description in Grímnismál 32: *Ratatoskr heitir íkorni, / er renna skal /at aski Yggdrasils; /arnar orð /hann skal ofan bera /ok segja /niðhöggvi niðr.* 'Ratatosk is the squirrel who shall run on the ash-tree Yggdrasil; from above it bears the words of the eagle and tells them to Niðhögg (the world serpent) beneath'; the picture is repeated in Gylfaginning 16: 'An eagle (*örn*) sits in the limbs of the Ash and

between his eyes sits the hawk called Veðrföllnir. The squirrel called Ratatosk... bears words between the eagle and the serpent Niðhögg'. Similar motives are found in Slavic folk-lore and in the Celtic mythology (e.g. the wonderful tree on which the god Llew is sitting in the shape of the eagle in the Mabinogi). The first element of the name *Ygg-drasil* contains the root *IHwo- 'yew' which is also found in the name of the mythological world-tree of the Hittite myth (^{GIŠ}*Eya-*, KUB XVII, 10. IV 27-31: 'Before Telipiniu stands an eya-tree, from the eya-tree a sheepskin is hung'). In Hittite, the tree is represented in the myth of the vanishing god Telipinu (who is discovered in his hiding by a bee), and it is said that sheep's wool (*hulana-*) and other valuables are hanging from it. In the Slavic folk-lore texts, the tree is represented as a fir-tree with roots in the water (a stream or a source), and a dragon is often depicted lying beneath it. Bees are found in its branches, and on its top there is a bird of prey (an eagle or a falcon) watching far away. In some East Slavic charms the wool is also found on its branches (in parallel to the Hittite motive mentioned above).

In Greek and Indo-Iranian, the conception of the world-tree seems to be missing, but we do have the idea that the sky is supported by props, or pillars (the pillars of Atlas, sometimes understood as his shoulders, e.g. in Ibycus, or Od. 1.52-4 (*kíones makraí*). In RV 8.41.10 it is said that Varuṇa holds the heaven with a pillar, and in RV 1.24. 7 it is said that 'Varuna is holding the top of the tree erected in the baseless space'. AV 5.4.3ab speaks of the *Áśvattha* tree 'in the third heaven above us... the seat of gods'. Many linguists see in the conception of the world tree an influence of the shamanistic traditions of Northern Eurasia, rather than PIE inheritance.

The heaven itself is considered to be made of stone; indeed, the word for 'heaven' in Avestan is *asman-*, from PIE *$h_2$ek'mōn, the reflexes of which mean 'stone' (Skr. *áśmā*, OCS *kamy*, Lith. *akmuõ*). Note that in Greek we have a shadowy figure of *Ákmōn,* who is said to be the father of *Ouranós* ('the sky') in Alkman, (PMGF 61).

BATTLE OF GODS

In a number of traditions, we find mention of 'former gods', Gr. *theoì próteroi* (Hesiod, *Theog.* 424, 486, Ved. *pū́rve devā́s* (RV 1.164.50), Hitt. *karuilieš šiuneš*. Also, in several traditions, we find the two generations of gods fighting each other for supremacy, like Ved. Asuras and Devas, Av. Daevas and Angra Mainyu versus Ahura Mazda (the supreme deity established by Zarathuštra), the Greek Olympian gods and Titans, OIr. *Túatha Dé Danann,* the *Fir Bolg* and the *Fomoire,* and the Norse *Aesir* and *Vanir*. These stories about the clash of two generations (or simply bands) of gods have actually rather little in common and it is unclear whether a common myth can be posited for PIE.

FATES

Most IE mythologies recognize three female divine figures in charge of the fates of men and, sometimes, also of the gods. In Greece they are known collectively as the *Moĩrai* (from the root *smer- 'receive a share', Gr. *méros*), and their names are *Klōthṓ* (from the verb *klṓthō* 'weave')*, Lákhesis* (from *lagkhánō* 'receive (by lot)' and *Átropos* ('the un-turning' from *a-* 'not' and *trépō* 'turn'), cf. Hesiod, *Theog.* 905; in Rome, they are the Parcae (from *parere* 'to give birth to'), and their names are *Nona* ("the ninth"), *Decuma* ("the tenth") and *Morta* ("the dead one" or rather a derivative of PIE *smer-, like *Moĩrai*); *Nona* and *Decuma* are probably

called thus because children are born in the ninth or tenth month of pregnancy. In Old Norse the Fates are the three *Nornir*: *Urð, Verðandi* and *Skuld* (literally 'the one which was, the present one and the one who shall be', e.g. *Völuspá* 20, *Gylfaginning* 15). In Lithuanian Dainas, the goddess of fate is called *Laimė,* but sometimes she is represented in triple form, as the three fates, *Laima, Dalia* and *Giltinė*. In the Hittite mythology, there are the *Gulšeš* (from the verbal root *gulš-* 'to write', since they write down the man's fate), but we do not know their individual names (in other contexts, when they are represented as spinners of destiny, fate goddesses are called *Ištuštaya* and *Papaya*). While it is curious that there are usually three female goddesses of fate, it is quite possible that we are dealing with a single mythological motive spreading from Anatolia and/or the Eastern Mediterranean, since we cannot exclude the possibility that the three Greek Moiras are the source of all the other goddesses of Fate. The motive of spinning the thread of a man's life or destiny (e.g. Od. 7.195-198, Ovid, *Met.* 2.653-4, 8.451-457) can also have been ultimately borrowed from the Middle East via the Greeks.

A FEW OTHER MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES

Gr. *Pãn* and Ved. *Pūṣán-* < *pewh$_2$sōn (or *peh$_2$us-h$_3$on-, from the root *peh$_2$- 'to herd', cf. Lat. *pāstor* 'shepherd'); both deities are protectors of cattle and are associated with wilderness and traveling. Pan is not attested in Homer, and his chief sanctuary was in Arcadia. Elsewhere in Greece his functions seem to have been taken over by Hermes. *Pūṣán-* is the mediator between gods and men, usually accompanied by goats (like Pan). Like Hermes in his function of the *psychopompos*, Pūṣan guides the dead on the ancestors' path.

Skr. *r̥bhu-* and Gr. *Orpheús*; the Rbhus are divine craftsmen in the Veda, and their art resembles the musical artistry of Orpheus; together with *Tvaṣtar,* their boss, they made the weapon of Indra, his *vájra*. The *r̥bhus* have also been related to Norse *Alfs* (dwarves), but that is even less convincing.

Skr. *Aryamán-* (Av. *airyaman-* 'friendship') and OIr. *Éremón* (son of Míl), OIc. *Iormönr* (a name of Óðinn); all three names could be derived from the alleged PIE ethnonym *h$_2$eryo- 'the Aryan'.

'The fire-thief' Gr. *Promētheús* bears a name similar to Skr. *Māthava-*, a mythical king who had fire in his eyes. The root would have been PIE *meth$_2$- 'to steal' (Ved. *mathnā́ti*).

Gr. *ōkeanós* (a mythical river encompassing the world) has been compared to the Vedic epithet *ā-śáyāna-*, predicated of the dragon *Vr̥trá-* (e.g. RV 4.17.7), who captured the cows/rivers (for the mythical equivalence of cows and rivers compare also OIr. *Bóand* 'the river Boyne < PCelt. *bow-windā 'white cow'). And indeed, the Okeanos is represented with a dragon-tail on some early Greek vases.

The hell-hound, or the dog guarding the entrance to the underworld, is sometimes posited on the basis of the correspondence between Gr. *Kérberos* and Ved. *śábala-* (later also *śárvara-* 'speckled', but the epithet is applied to the two hounds guarding the otherworld). However, a proto-form *k'erbero- looks distinctly non-Indo-European, so it is probable that both *Kérberos* and *śábala-* are loanwords from some unknown source.

PART II. A SELECTION OF TEXTS

HITTITE

The sources of our knowledge about Hittite religion are quite diverse. Firstly, there is a large number of archaeological findings, scattered throughout the Hittite Empire, including the spectacular temple at Yazilikaya and religious complexes within the Hittite capital at Hattuša (Boğaz-Köy, see Appendix). More importantly for our purposes, we have extensive written documents found in the royal archives of Hattuša (texts found in other excavations are much less numerous). These include many precise descriptions of Hittite rituals, including mythological texts and prayers recited during their performance, but also historiographic texts (the annals of Hittite kings) which often include references to rituals and prayers (e.g. the famous Prayers of Muršili II against the plague). They were written down roughly between 1700 and 1180 B.C.. The standard reference to Hittite texts are the abbreviations KUB (*Keilschrift-Urkunden aus Boghazköy*, 60 volumes) and (*Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköy*, 45 volumes). All of these texts are written in cuneiform script on clay tablets, and methods of modern palaeography have allowed linguists to distinguish between Old Hittite texts (roughly from 1700 until 1550), Middle Hittite (1550-1300) and Neo-Hittite (1300-1150), though many Old Hittite texts exist only in rather late transcriptions.

'One thousand gods of the land of Hatti' included many borrowed deities, and a handful of them that bear inherited names. For example, the Hittite god of Thunder was called *Tarhunt* in Hittite, and this name has a clear Indo-European etymology (see below); however, in Hattic he was called *Taru*, and the similarity of the two names is probably accidental. Likewise, original Sumerian Inanna was first identified with the Akkadian goddess Ištar, and then she became Hurrian Šawoška. None of these names are originally Hittite or Indo-European.

There is some evidence for a structured pantheon, especially in the Hattic stratum of the Hittite religion. The divine family is represented by Wurukatte (the Hattic head of the pantheon) and his wife Wurušemmu, probably identical to the Sun-goddess of Arinna. Their children are Telipinu (a fertility god who cyclically disappears and causes the general infertility of the alnd) and Mezzula, whose function is not entirely clear. These gods seem to have been particularly worshipped at the court, and are in a sense protectors of the king and the royal family.

Many Hittite gods are local, in the sense that the center of their power is concentrated in particular places of worship. Thus, the Hattic Sun-goddess (probably) Wurušemmu, had her cult center in Arinna, and the Storm-god was worshipped in Nerik and in Zippalanda. At Šarišša and Karakhna, there was a cult center of a god often depicted on a stag, with a hare and a falcon in his hand. His name was probably Kurunta. *Kubaba,* a minor goddess in Hittite religion, was worshipped at Karchemish, but later she became the Cybebe-Cybele, the great Mother-goddess of the Phrygians, whose cult was imported to Rome. Carchemish was a city in northern Syria, but only a few of other ancient places of worship can be localized archaeologically.

Since the Hittite Empire lasted for more than half a millennium (roughly from 1750 to 1150), divinities and their names went in and out of fashion. It is curious that one of the earliest Hittite theonyms, that of 'Our God' (Hitt. *Šiu-šummiš*), which is attested in our very first Hittite text ('The Proclamation of Anitta') does not occur in later texts. In the last centuries of the existence of the Hittite state, it seems that the Hurrian divine names gain ground at the

expense of Hittite, Hattic and Semitic ones, and this can be connected to the fact that the ruling dynasty of the Empire was Hurrian at that time.

Hittite gods were anthropomorphic; there were, however, a few theriomorphic divine creatures, like the bulls of the Storm-God, Šerri and Hurri. Indeed, the Storm-God himself, Tarhunt, is occasionally represented as a bull (e.g. in the depictions found in Alaca-Hüyük). One recalls immediately the epithets of Indra (*vṛṣabha-* and *ṛṣabha-,* both meaning 'bull') and the fact that the Greek master of the thunderbolt, Zeus, also has a strong connection with bulls (in the shape of a bull he impregnated his mistress Europa). But, on the whole, it appears that Hittites, as well as Indo-Europeans, worshipped their gods in the human shape, but that, being very powerful, the gods could, if they wished, change their shape into particular animals.

As in many other religions of the Ancient Near East, the proper attitude of humans towards gods is the one of slaves, or servants to their masters. The structure of the divine society is modelled according to the structure of the human society, so that, for instance, the king is seen as the chief servant of the gods. If they are not served properly, the gods are likely to take offence, and to punish the negligent servant and his property (including his family and his land, i.e. the land of the Hittites). Only regular sacrifices can supress the wrath of the gods, who usually do not forget the sins of the humans. When king Šuppilulliuma ('He of the pure sources') forgot to perform the sacrifice to the river Māla (Euphrates), the plague ravished his land for twenty years. Failure to perform the proper sacrifices is a sin, just like breaking one of many taboos that affected the life of ordinary people as well as of kings. The most awful of all taboos are called *hurkil*, e.g. having sex with cows, dogs, or pigs, but, interestingly, having sex with horses is not a *hurkil* according to Hittite laws.

In the last decades of the existence of the Hittite empire, it seems that a new conception gained ground: the last Hittite kings had their own personal protectors, with whom they established a more personal relationship; as Hattušili III tells us in his autobiography, he was the favourite of Ištar of Šamukha since he was born, and it was this goddess that helped his way to the throne. It is important to note that many Hittites bore theophoric names, but some of these names were never recorded outside of the royal family. This might mean that several deities – including, probably, most of the Hattic gods and goddesses – were only worshipped at the court, as part of the official cult, whereas they were practically unknown among the ordinary people.

Eschatological conceptions of the Hittites are not altogether clear; broken vessels in tombs, together with remains of food and drinks, clearly indicate that some sort of afterlife was envisaged, and in the case of the king, it was generally thought that he would be deified after his death; in fact, the common expression for 'he died', when applied to kings, is 'he became god'. Note that in Egypt, the Pharaohs were thought to be gods already during their lifetime, and the Hittite habit of deifying their kings is similar to Roman solemn declarations by the Senate that people like Caesar, Augustus, and other emperors became gods after dying. There is, moreover, the conception of the 'meadow of the otherworld' (Hitt. *wellu-*), where the king is supposed to pasture his flocks in the afterlife. This has clear parallels in Greek (the Elysian fields) and, perhaps, Celtic (OIr. *mag mell*). It is quite unclear where the meadow of the otherworld is supposed to be located.

The priests were a numerous and very privileged caste in the Hittite society. Their duty was to take care of the temple, seen as the house of gods. The gods were thought to be actually living in the temple, and they were represented by their statues, many of which were excavated at Hittite sites. Temples contained paved courts and many small rooms surrounding them, as in Babylonia and Minoan Crete, and one of the rooms adjacent to the court housed the statue of

the god worshipped in the temple, usually on a pedestal, or the so-called *huwaši* stone. Taking away a statue of a god was considered as an ill-omen. The priests were also responsible for various rites and sacrifices, and these had to be performed according to rigidly prescribed instructions, in conditions of ritual purity – pollution or impurity (Hitt. *pāpratar*) can spoil any ceremony, and had to be avoided, or remedied, by magical incantations. The large majority of Hittite texts, especially from the late periods (13-12 centuries B.C.) are instructions for the correct performance of seemingly endless rituals. The rites, although rigidly prescribed, were not necessarily ascetic: most of the instructions end with the phrase 'and then the priests eat and drink', and there is one particular ritual in which the royal prince must sleep with twelve women (servants in a temple).

Divination was also part of the priests' duties, and there were several techniques thereof: interpreting dreams, looking into a sacrificed animal's liver, or examining how one of the temple's animals had waned. All of these techniques are attested in other Near Easter religions of the IInd Millennium B.C..

It appears that there were also priestesses (they are usually called 'wise women') but they were in charge of less important rituals, especially magic.

Principal Hittite gods all have non-IE names: *Wurušemmu, Wurukatte, Lelwanni* (the death goddess)*, Taru, Telepinu, Eštan* (the sun god), *Hapantalli* (sun god's shepherd)*, Halmašuitt* (the personified throne), *Kašku* (the Moon), *Kait* (the grain goddess) and the divine smith *Hašammili* are all from Hattic. On the other hand, Hurrian names include the two bulls *Šerri* and *Hurri*, the Hurrian equivalent of Ištar, the winged seductress *Šawoška* standing on a lion*,* her two female attendants *Ninatta* and *Kulitta,* the Hurrian storm-god *Teššub* and his consort *Hebat,* their son *Šarruma* as well as *Kumarbi,* the ruler of gods before Tarhunt's revolution overthrew him. Theonyms with decent PIE etymologies include *Šiuš* (< *dyēws 'sky'), *Tarhunt-* (the Storm-God, from PIE *torh$_2$nt- 'thunder'), *Dagan-zipa* (from PIE *d^{h}eg'^{h}om- 'earth', with the Hattic suffix *-zipa*) and, possibly, *Ullikummi,* if from PIE *wlik^w-mo- 'the wet (or bathed) one', since this name denotes the giant, slain by the Thunder-God, who is standing in the Ocean (cf. OIr. *fliuch* 'wet', Lat. *liquor* 'liquid')*. Arma*, the Hittite name of the Moon god (Sumerian [d]EN.ZU, Akkadian [d]*SÎN*), may be derivable from PIE *h$_1$ormo- 'the measurer' (TochB *yarm* 'measure').

1. The dragon Illuyankaš and the Storm-God

1 UM-MA ᵐKi-il-l[a ˡúIM.ME] dU ¹ ᵘʳᵘNe-ri-ik
2 ne-pí-ša-aš dIM[-x-x-]x-[n]a ²
3 pu-ru-ul-li-ya-aš ut-tar nu   ma-a-an ³
4 ki-iš-ša-an   ta-ra-an-zi

5 ud-ni-wa ⁴ ma-a-ú še-eš-du nu-wa ud-ni-e
6 pa-aḫ-ša-nu-wa-an e-eš-du nu ma-a-an
7 ma-a-i še-eš-zi nu EZEN pu-ru-ul-li-ya-aš
8 i-ya-an-zi

9 ma-a-an dIM-aš ᵐᵘšil-lu-ya-an-ka-aš-ša
10 I-NA ⁵ ᵘʳᵘKi-iš-ki-lu-uš-ša ar-ga-ti-[i]-e-er
11 nu-za ᵐᵘšil-lu-ya-an-ka-aš ⁶ dIM-an tar-aḫ-ta

12 dIM-aš-ta-aš-ša Dᵐᵉš-na-aš ḫu-u-ma-a[n-du]-uš
13 mu-ú-ga-it ⁷ an-da-ma 'PA'-ti-i-ya[x-x-]x-te-en
14 nu-za dI-na-ra-aš EZEN-an   i-e-et ⁸

15 nu ḫu-u-ma-an me-ek-ki ḫa-an-da-it
16 GEŠTIN-aš DUG pal-ḫi mar-nu-wa-an-da-aš DUG pal-ḫi
17 [wa-]al-ḫi-ya-aš DUG pal-ḫi [nu DU]G pal-ḫa-aš
18 an-[da]-an i-ya-a-da   i-[e-et]

19 nu d[I-na-ra-aš I-NA ᵘʳᵘZ]i?-ig-ga-ra-at-ta pa-it
20 nu ᵐḪu-u-pa-ši-ya-an LÚ.ULÙ.LU ú-e-mi-it

21 UM-MA dI-na-ar ᵐḪu-u-pa-ši-ya ka-a-ša-wa
22 ki-i-ya ki-i-ya ut-tar i-ya-mi
23 nu-wa-mu-uš-ša-an zi-iq-qa ḫar-ap-ḫu-ut

24 UM-MA ᵐḪu-u-pa-ši-ya A-NA ᵈI-na-ar
25 ma-a-wa kat-ti-ti še-eš-m[i n]u-wa ú-wa-mi
26 kar-di-aš-ta-aš i-ya-mi [n]a?-[aš] ka[t-t]i-ši še-eš-ta
_____

27 nu ᵈI-na-ra-aš ᵐḪu-u-p[a-ši-ya-an p]é-e-ḫu-te-et
 4 na-an mu-ú-un-na-a-it⁹ ᵈI-na-ra-aš-ša-az
 5 ú-nu-ut-ta-at na-aš-ta ᵐᵘˢil-lu-ya-an-ka-[an]
 6 ḫa-an-te-eš-na-az¹⁰ ša-ra-a kal-li-iš-ta
 7 ka-a-ša-wa¹¹ EZEN-an i-ya-mi
 8 nu-wa a-da-an-na a-ku-wa-an-na e-ḫu
_____

 9 na-aš-ta ᵐᵘˢil-lu-ya-an-ka-aš¹² QA-DU [DUMUᵐᵉˢ-ŠU]
10 ša-ra-a ú-e-er nu-za e-te-er e-ku-e[r]
11 na-aš-ta DUG pal-ḫa-an¹³ ḫu-u-ma-an-da-an e-k[u-er]
12 ne-za ni-in-ke-e-er
_____

13 ne nam-ma ḫa-at-te-eš-na-aš kat-ta-an-t[a]
14 nu-u-ma-a-an¹⁴ pa-a-an-zi ᵐḪu-u-pa-ši-ya-aš-ša ú-it
15 nu ᵐᵘˢil-lu-ya-an-ka-an¹² iš-ḫi-ma-an-ta
16 ka-le-e-le-e-et
_____

17 ᵈIM-aš ú-it nu-kán ᵐᵘˢil-lu-y[a-an-ka-an]¹²
18 ku-en-ta Dᵐᵉˢ-ša kat-ti-iš-ši e-še-er
_____

"Thus speaks the priest Kilas of the city of Nerik
on the feast-day of the Tarhunt, the Caelestial One:
When the feast of Purulliya is held, they speak thus:
There should be peace in the land of Hatti
and the earth should be steadfast,
and when the earth is steadfast
Purulliya is held.
When Tarhunt, the Storm God escaped from Illuyanka
in the land of Kiškilu
Illuyanka overcame him.
Then Tarhunt became sad
and he was with all the gods.
Inara made a feast:
she prepared many things,
a barrel of wine, a barrel of beer
and a barrel of another drink.
There was plenty of drink there.
Inara then went to Zigarat
and found Hupašiya.
Inara said:
'Hupašiya, look, behold!
I will say something to you:
come here and join me!'
Hupašiya said to Inara:
'I will do your heart's desire
if I may sleep with you.'

And she lay with him.
Inara took Hupašiya to a temple,
and locked him there.
She called Illuyanka from its hole:
'Behold, I will make a feast,
come eat and drink!'
Then Illuyanka came with its offspring,
they ate and they drank,
they drank a barrel of each drink
and became very drunk.
Thus, they could not return to their hole,
and Hupašiya tied Illuyanka with a rope.
Then Tarhunt came,
and slew Illuyanka,
and all the gods were with him."

2. The myth of Telipinu, the vanishing God

$^{GI\check{S}}$lu-ut-ta-a-us kam-ma-ra-a-as IŞ-BAT
É-er tuh-hu-is IŞ-BAT
I-NA GUNNI-ma kal-mi-i-sa-ni-is ú-i-su-u-ri-ya-an-ta-ti
is-ta-na-na-as an-da DINGIR$^{ME\check{S}}$ ú-i-su-u-ri-ya-an-ta-ti
I-NA TÙR an-da UDU$^{HI.A}$ KI.MIN
I-NA É.GU$_4$ an-da-an GU$_4$$^{HI.A}$ ú-i-su-u-ri-ya-an-ta-ti
UDU-us-za SILA$_4$-ZU mi-im-ma-as
GU$_4$-ma AMAR-ŠU mi-im-ma-as
^{D}Te-le-pe-nu-sa ar-ha i-ya-an-ni-is
hal-ki-in ^{D}Im-mar-ni-in sa-al-hi-an-ti-en ma-an-ni-it-ti-en is-pi-ya-tar-ra pe-e-da-as
gi-im-ri ú-e-el-lu-i mar-mar-as an-da-an ^{D}Te-le-pe-nu-sa pa-it
mar-mar-ri an-da-an ú-li-is-ta
se-e-ra-as-se-is-sa-an ha-le-en-zu hu-wa-i-is
nu nam-ma hal-ki-is ZÍZ-tar Ú-UL ma-a-i
nu-za nam-ma GU$_4$$^{HI.A}$ UDU$^{HI.A}$ DUMU.LÚ.U$_{19}$.LU$^{ME\check{S}}$ Ú-UL ar-ma-ah-ha-an-zi ar-ma-u-wa-an-te-sa ku-i-es nu-za a-pi-ya Ú-UL ha-as-sa-an-zi
HUR.SAG$^{DIDLI.HI.A}$ ha-a-te-er
GIŠ$^{\check{s}HI.A}$-ru ha-a-az-ta
na-as-ta par-as-du-us Ú-UL ú-e-ez-zi
ú-e-sa-es ha-a-te-er
TÚL$^{HI.A}$ ha-a-az-ta
nu KUR-ya an-da-an ka-a-as-za ki-i-sa-ti
DUMU.LÚ.U$_{19}$.LU$^{ME\check{S}}$ DINGIR$^{ME\check{S}}$-sa ki-is-ta-an-ti-it har-ki-ya-an-zi
GAL-is-za ^{D}UTU-us EZEN$_4$-an i-e-et
nu-za 1 LI-IM DINGIR$^{ME\check{S}}$-sa hal-za-i-is
e-te-er ne Ú-UL is-pi-i-e-er
e-ku-i-e-er-ma ne-za Ú-UL ha-as-si-ik-ke-er

"The fog kept (filled) the windows; the smoke kept (filled) the
house;

the woods in the oven were smothered;

At the altars the god were smothered, the sheep in the fold were smothered, in the stable

The cattle were smothered, the sheep refused her lamb, the cow refused her calf.

Telipinu too went away;

the fertility of animals and seeds, their productivity and (also) their abundance to desert and

meadow he took away. Telipinu too went into the field and in the filed

he disappeared (mixed in). Over him, *halenzu* plant grew. So the barley and the wheat haven't grown anymore. Cattle, sheep and human beings

didn't become pregnant anymore and the pregnant ones didn't give birth.

In order to sprout not, mountains and trees got dry.

In order to be hunger in the country, pastures and springs got dry.

The human beings and the gods are dying of hunger.

The Great Sun God arranged a banquet and he invited thousand gods. They ate.

But they weren't full up; they drank, but they didn't quench their thirst."

VEDIC

Almost everything we know of the original Vedic religion has been transmitted orally from around the middle of the 2nd century B.C. until the present day in the form of *śrúti-* or 'what has been heard'. This oral tradition has been collected in the form of the Vedas (cf. Skr. *véda-* 'knowledge'), or four collections of hymns and ritual texts devoted to Vedic deities. These are composed in an early form of Sanskrit, the learned language of India, which is commonly referred to simply as Vedic, or Vedic Sanskrit. Since there are no manuscript from that period (the oldest inscriptions in India are Buddhist incriptions of king Aśoka from the 3rd century B.C.), the datation of the core of the Vedic texts is estimated on the basis of philological arguments and the assumed rate of language change from the Vedic period until our earliest historical documents in India (chiefly related to the life of Buddha in the 5th century B.C.).

The oldest parts of the Vedas could have been roughly contemporary with the 'Mitanni Contracts', documents preserved in Hittite archives, in which the ruler of the Kingdom of Mitanni in Northern Mesopotamia swears by invoking Vedic deities Mitra, Indra, Varuna and the Nasatyas. We know, then, that the ruling caste of the State of Mitanni in the 14th century B.C. worshipped the same gods to whom hymns are devoted in the Vedic texts, and many of them, as we shall see below, have exact counterparts in the Iranian religion (note, however, that the names mentioned in the "Mitanni Contracts" are specifically Indo-Aryan, not Iranian or Indo-Iranian).

The four collections of Vedic texts (also called *saṃhitās*, from PIE *som- 'together' and *dʰeh₁- 'put, make') are Rig-Veda, Sama-Veda, Yajur-Veda, and Atharva-Veda. The Rig Veda is certainly the oldest of them; the Sama-Veda and the Yajur-Veda contain mostly material taken over from the Rig-Veda, and the Atharva-Veda is a collection of magical chants and rituals, and it is generally believed to be the latest of all four samhitas. All of the samhitas have their own commentaries and texts based on them, especially the Brāhmaṇas and the later Upaniṣads. The texts of the samhitas were preserved within different priestly schools, or *śākhās* (litterally 'branches'). The Rig-Veda, which is of particular interest for comparative Indo-European religion, has been preserved in only one, but very conservative, school, that of Śākalya, which was active in Eastern India probably in the early 1ˢᵗ millennium B.C.

The Rig-Veda got its name from the Sanskrit word *r̥c-* 'praise, verse'. It is divided into ten books, or *máṇḍalas* (from Skr. *máṇḍala-* 'circular, circle', of uncertain etymology). Each of the books contains several dozens of hymns, or *sūktas* (from *su-ukta-* 'well recited, eulogy'), the total number of suktas in the Rig-Veda being 1028, which is the amount of text corresponding, roughly, to the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" put together. The hymns are believed to have been "heard" by the mythical "seers" or rishis (Skr. *r̥ṣi-* < PIE *h₂er-s-, cf. Lith. *aršùs* 'violent', MHG *rasen* 'rage', Arm. *her̃* 'rage'), and they were chanted by the Vedic priests, the purohitas (Skr. *puróhita-,* from *purá-* 'in front of, before' and *-hita-* 'put, placed') during religious rituals. The so-called "family books", attributed to various families of priests, are generally believed to contain the oldest material in the Rig-Veda. These are the books 2-7. The books 1 and 10 are, on the other hand, younger than the rest and contain traces of post-Vedic philosophical speculations and religious views. The book 9 contains only hymns dedicated to Soma, the divine intoxicating drink. The text of the Rig-Veda has been preserved in several versions. It is usually reproduced either as *padapatha*, with words isolated by pauses for better memorizing, or as the *saṃhitapatha,* in which words are generally joined by sandhi for easier reciting. The oldest surviving manuscript of the Rig-Veda, written in devanagari script, dates only from 1464.

The Vedic hymns are composed in a variety of isosyllabic metres, and the most common ones are the eight-syllable (composing the stanza called *gāyatrī* with three eight-syllable lines), the twelve-syllable (composing the *jagatī,* with four lines), and the eleven-syllable (composing the four line *triṣṭubh* stanza).

Many Rig-Vedic hymns mention various forms of sacrifice, the most prominent being the sacrifice of the holy drink, the *soma-* (from *suH- 'to press', since the drink was prepared from some plant that had to be pressed). There are also fire rituals, chiefly devoted to the fire deity (the *Agnihotra-*, or simple offering of milk to the fire twice daily, and the more elaborate *Agnicayana-,* the piling of the fire altar), the horse-sacrifice (*Aśvamedha*), the human sacrifice (*Puruṣamedha-*, which did not include the actual killing of a man), the seasonal sacrifices such as *Caturmasya-* and the royal consecration (*Rājasūya-*). Apparently, all rituals (including sacrifices) were performed in the open: there is no indication that there were any temples in the Vedic period. Likewise, there were no idols or images representing gods. All depictions of Hinduistic gods are of a much later date.

Vedic sacrifices are, as a rule, organized by *yajamāna-* or 'sacrificer', who orders the sacrifice actually performed by a priest, or a group of priests on his behalf. For this service, he pays the 'priestly gift', a *dakṣinā*. Many hymns end with a *dānastuti-,* praise of the gift expected by the priests as a reward for the sacrifice. Priests are of different kinds and specializations, the most important being the *hotar* (the chief priest who recites the Rig-Veda), the *udgātar* (who sings the verses of the Sāma-Veda), and the *adhvaryu* (responsible for reciting the formulas of the Yajur-Veda). The *ṛtvij-* seems to have been the chief operating priest.

In the later books of the Rig-Veda we also find accounts of Vedic cosmogony and eschatology. The famous Purusha-Sukta (RV 10.90) tells how the world was created from the body of the primeval Man, *Puruṣa-*, who had been sacrificed. The priest (*brāhmán-*) originated from his head, the warrior (*rājanyá-*) from his hands, the freeman (*vaíśya-*) from his hips, and the slave (*śūdrá-*) from his feet. Moreover, his spirit is the source of the Moon, the Sun was created from his eye, the Wind from his breath, and the Fire from his mouth. Thus both the social and the cosmic order originated from the same source. Hymns such as RV 10.18, recited during funeral ceremonies, give an account of the fate of the soul after death and cremation; the urn with the cremated remains was buried, and the family of the deceased was ritually purified, while the soul was thought to follow the celestial 'path of the Fathers' (*pitṛyāna*).

Besides the Vedas themselves, we also have a number of commentaries on the Vedas stemming from the Vedic period (roughly, before the 5th century B.C.). These are the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas, and the Upanishads. Some of these texts comment on the Vedas and interpret the Vedic religious beliefs and practices, but there is ample evidence that the original function of the Rig-Vedic deities was significantly altered and ill-understood during the later Vedic period. This can also be seen in the later Sanskrit commentaries of the Vedas (e.g. inYāska's etymological compendium "Nirukta", or in Sāyaṇa's "Vedartha Prakasha"). Although they preserved some ancient lore, they are not completely reliable. After the Vedic period, the Aryan religion evolved slowly towards Hinduism, which is divided into a number of sects and schools of religious thought. However, all Hindu sects still share the belief in the sacred nature of the Vedas, which are considered to be holy texts by all the Hindus.

In contrast to the abundance of archaic Vedic texts, archaeology yields very little information about the earliest form of Indian religion. Archeological sites in Northern India attributable to the Indo-Aryans in the 2nd and early 1st millennium B.C. are few and contain very scarce

remains attributable to cultic practices or rituals. The remains of the "Painted Grey Ware" culture, which stretched from East Punjab to the Middle Ganges in the 1300- 400 contain very little excavations of inhabited sites; houses were built from primitive wickerwork and mud, and simple red decorations on ceramic pots do not tell us anything about deities worshipped by Indo-Arians during that period. Depictions of later Hindu gods (see APPENDIX) certainly bear little resemblance to the Vedic originals. Earlier archaeological cultures possibly attributable to Indo-Aryans, such as the "Gandhara Grave Culture" in the Swat valley in Pakistan (in the early 2nd Millennium B.C.) have left us equally scarce remains.

Principal Vedic gods are the following: *Indra*- (of unknown origin, no relation whatsoever to OCS *jędrъ* 'strong, quick', Russ. *jadró* 'kernel, core') is celebrated in as many as 250 hymns, by far the largest number dedicated to any deity. He is the slayer of the dragon *Vṛtrá*-, and many linguists see in this a reflex of the Indo-European dragon-slaying myth. In Avesta, there is a minor daevic figure of *Indara*, about whom very little is known, but the form of his name, as well as the corresponding form *In-da-ra* in the Mitanni contracts, show that the Proto-Indo-Iranian form of the theonym was *Indara-. Indra is also praised for having killed the demon Vala and set free the cows which he had hidden in a cave (RV 2.12.3, 2.158), a myth that has been compared to Heracles' taking the cattle of the giant Geryon.

If Indra is a typical warrior god, *Mitra* is a much more peaceful figure. The name *Mitra*- comes from the abstract noun *mitrám* 'contract', from the PIE root *mey- 'exchange', OCS *minǫti* 'pass', Latv. *miju* 'exchange', Ved. *mi*- 'exchange'. He is a deity with chiefly social function, closely parallel to Avestan *Miθra*. He is often associated with *Varuṇa*-, and only one hymn is dedicated exclusively to him (RV 3.59). On the other hand, *Varuṇa*- is a very important deity. He is the god who binds the souls of the dead, but he is also a healer and a watcher over the social order. He is the protector of the cosmic truth, the *ṛta*-, and a guarantor of oaths (RV 7.86-88). Since oaths are sworn near waters, Varuṇa is also a deity reigning over waters. His name probably comes from the root *wel- 'to close, cover, ensnare', Gr. *élytron* 'covering, case', Skr. *vṛṇóti* 'close, ensnare'; contrary to the opinion of many famous linguists, it bears no relation whatsoever to Slav. *Velesъ*. The *Aśvinā(u)* are the divine twins, comparable to Greek *Dioskoúroi* Castor and Polydeuces. The adduced form of their name is the dual, literally meaning 'horsemen', from *h₁ek'wo- 'horse', Skr. *áśva*-. They are called *nā́satyā* 'true' (perhaps originally 'saviours), as they are the physicians of the gods and, more generally, the deliverers from all kinds of distress (for example, it is said that they rescued Cyavāna from old age and rescued Atri from darkness in RV 7.71.5). *Uṣās*- is the dawn-goddess and, apparently, the sister of the Aśvins, and her name is the word for 'dawn', PIE *h₂ewsōs, Gr. *ēós*, etc. She is one of rather few goddesses in a very macho Pantheon of Vedic India. Like her Greek relative Eos, she is called *potnih₂ 'lady' (e.g. RV 3.61.4b, *uṣā́ḥ... pátnī*, cf. Gr. *Hom. Hymn.* 5.223, 230 *pótnia ēós*).

Rudrá- is the god of the disease (which, like Apollo, he disperses with his arrows, cf. RV 7.46.3ab), and of healing. His name may be derived from PIE *(H)rewd- 'be coarse' (Lat. *rudis*), and he has been also connected with ORuss. pagan theonym *Rъglъ* (which may be from *Rudlo-). In later Hinduism, he became one of the most important gods, *Śiva*- (originally an euphemistic attribute of Rudra, meaning 'the auspicious one'). Rudra's sons are the *Maruts* (RV 2.33), who often accompany Indra; their exact number is unknown, as they always form a troop (*śárdhas*) and they are armed with lightning spears (*ṛṣtí-vidyut*). Their name is still unexplained. Some linguists connect it with Lat. *Mārs* (though this is actualy from older *Mavors*), while others connect it with the name of the young warriors, the *marya-*, or with the PIE word for 'sea' (*mori- > Lat. *mare*); since the Maruts are connected with the wind, the form *mar-ut* could have originally meant something like '(the wind) from the sea-

side', but I don't find this very convincing. Otherwise, the god of the wind is *Vāyú-* (also the Sanskrit word for 'wind', PIE *weh_1-yu-, cf. Lith. *vėjas*, Lat. *vēntus*). In some hymns (e.g. RV 10.168) he is also called *vắta-* (< *weh_1-to-). The name of *Parjánya-* has unclear etymology; he is often connected to Lith. *Perkū́nas* etc., but this may be just a chance correspondence; as a comon noun, *parjánya-* means 'rain cloud', and the god Parjánya is most properly defined as a god of rain storm, 'roaring like a lion... and filling the sky with rain clouds' (RV 5.83). On the other hand, *Dyau-* is clearly the sky-god, and his name is also the word for 'sky', PIE *$dyēws$, cf. Gr. *Zeús*. *Agni-* is the deified fire (= *agni-* 'fire' < *ng^wni-, Lat. *ignis*), while *Rā́trī-* 'Night' probably derives her name from the root *rā-* 'to bestow', *rātí-* 'gift' < PIE *(H)reh_1-, (cf. Lat. *rēs* 'thing, wealth'). There is an alternative etymology relating *Rā́trī-* to Gr. *Lētố*, the mother of Apollo, but the semantic connection is too weak to support this. The name of the divine drink *Sóma-* litterally means 'what is being pressed, from *sew- 'to press', Ved. *su-*. *Víṣṇu-*, who latter became one of the chief Hindu deities, bears a name of unclear etymology, despite attempts to derive it from *viś-* 'village', (Lat. *vīcus,* OCS *vьsь,* etc.); he is said to have measured the world in three steps (RV 1.154.1), corresponding to the three spheres in the Vedic cosmology: the sky, the earth, and the space in between (*antárikṣa-*). The name of *Savitár-* has been rather plausibly interpreted as 'the impeller', from the root *sewH- 'to impel, drive' (Hitt. *šuwezzi* 'drive (to exile), Skr. *sauti*). All creatures are said to rest in his lap, which consists of two heavens (RV 1.35.5-6). The sun-god, *Sū́rya-,* bears the name identical to the Vedic word for 'sun', from PIE *$seh_2wōl$- 'sun' (Lat. *sōl*, Lith. *saulė̃*, etc.); like his Greek counterpart, *Hélios*, he is often depicted as driving a golden chariot accross the sky. The divine twins, *Yama-* and *Yamī-* derive their names from the PIE word for 'twin' (*yemo- > OIr. *emain,* perhaps Lat. *geminus*). Their mother is *Saraṇyū́-* 'the swift one' (RV 10.17.1-2), and their father is *Tváṣṭar-,* the divine carpenter (his name is derived from *twerk'- 'cut', cf. Gr. *sárks* 'meat'). Like Yama and Yamī, several deities in the Rig-Veda are usually mentioned as couples, e.g. *Mitrā-Varuṇā-* (or simply *Varuṇā,* in the dual) 'Mitra and Varuna', *Dyavā-Pṛthivī* 'heaven and earth', etc.

There are also abstract deities, such as *Vāk-* 'the Word' (cf. Lat. *vōx* 'voice, sound'), *Bṛhas-pati-* 'lord of the prayer' (praised together with *Vāk-* in RV 10.71), *Aditi-* 'liberty', literally 'un-binding', whose sons are generally called *āditya-* 'descendants of Aditi' (Varuna, Bhaga, Aryaman, and others). *Aryaman-,* who is interpreted as the personified Friendship, has been compared to OIr. *Éremón,* one of the heroes in the mythical account of the peopling of Ireland. The root of these names may be *h_2er-yo- 'friendly, trusty' (Skr. *aryá-* 'honourable, Aryan', OIr. *aire* 'noble', cf. also Av. *airyaman-* 'tribal network, alliance'). Finally, *Pūṣan-,* like Gr. *Pân,* is a protector of cattle, and his name may go back to PIE *$pewh_2sōn$, but the root of this formation is unclear (the connection with PIE *pews- 'thrive, succeed' > Skr. *púṣyati* is improbable because this root does not contain a laryngeal; the connection with *pewH- 'to stink, rot' > Skr. *pū́yati,* Lith. *púti* is more promising; a compound *peh_2us-h_3on-, from the root *peh_2- 'to herd', is also possible).

1. The Praise of Agni, RV I.1

agnim īḷe purohitaṃ yajñasya devaṃ ṛtvījam |
hotāraṃ ratnadhātamam ||
agniḥ pūrvebhir ṛṣibhir īḍyo nūtanair uta |
sa devāneha vakṣati ||
agninā rayimaśnavat poṣameva dive-dive |
yaśasaṃ vīravattamam ||

agne yaṃ yajñamadhvaraṃ viśvataḥ paribhūr asi |
sa id deveṣu gachati ||
agnir hotā kavikratuḥ satyaścitraśravastamaḥ |
devo devebhir ā gamat ||
yadaṅga dāśuṣe tvam agne bhadraṃ kariṣyasi |
tavet tat satyamaṅgiraḥ ||
upa tvāgne dive-dive doṣāvastardhiyā vayam |
namo bharanta emasi ||
rājantam adhvarāṇāṃ gopāṃ ṛtasya dīdivim |
vardhamānaṃ sve dame ||
sa naḥ piteva sūnave agne sūpāyano bhava |
sacasvā naḥ svastaye ||

"1 I Laud Agni, the chosen Priest, God, minister of sacrifice,
The hotar, lavishest of wealth.
2 Worthy is Agni to be praised by living as by ancient seers.
He shall bring. hitherward the Gods.
3 Through Agni man obtaineth wealth, yea, plenty waxing day by day,
Most rich in heroes, glorious.
4 Agni, the perfect sacrifice which thou encompassest about
Verily goeth to the Gods.
5 May Agni, sapient-minded Priest, truthful, most gloriously great,
The God, come hither with the Gods.
6 Whatever blessing, Agni, thou wilt grant unto thy worshipper,
That, Angiras, is indeed thy truth.
7 To thee, dispeller of the night, O Agni, day by day with prayer
Bringing thee reverence, we come
8 Ruler of sacrifices, guard of Law eternal, radiant One,
Increasing in thine own abode.
9 Be to us easy of approach, even as a father to his son:
Agni, be with us for our weal."

2. The myth of Indra and the dragon Vrtra, RV I.32 1-5

indrasya nu vīryāṇi pra vocaṃ yāni cakāra prathamāni vajrī |
ahann ahim anv apastatarda pra vakṣaṇā abhinat parvatānām ||
ahannahiṃ parvate śiśriyāṇaṃ tvaṣṭāsmai vajraṃ svaryaṃ tatakṣa |
vāśrā iva dhenavaḥ syandamānā añjaḥ samudramava jagmur āpaḥ ||
vṛṣāyamāṇo avṛṇīta somaṃ trikadrukeṣvapibat sutasya |
āsāyakaṃ maghavādatta vajram ahann enaṃ prathamajām ahīnām ||
yadindrāhan prathamajām ahīnāmān māyināmamināḥ prota māyāḥ |
āt sūryaṃ janayan dyāmuṣāsaṃ tādītnāśatruṃ na kilā vivitse ||
ahan vṛtraṃ vṛtrataraṃ vyaṃsam indro vajreṇa mahatā vadhena |
skandhāṃsīva kuliśenā vivṛkṇāhiḥ śayata upapṛk pṛthivyāḥ ||

"1 I WILL declare the manly deeds of Indra, the first that he achieved, the Thunder-wielder.
He slew the Dragon, then disclosed the waters, and cleft the channels of the mountain torrents.

2 He slew the Dragon lying on the mountain: his heavenly bolt of thunder Tvastar fashioned.
Like lowing kine in rapid flow descending the waters glided downward to the ocean.
3 Impetuous as a bull, he chose the Soma and in three sacred beakers drank the juices.
Maghavan grasped the thunder for his weapon, and smote to death this firstborn of the dragons.
4 When, Indra, thou hadst slain the dragon's firstborn, and overcome the charms of the enchanters,
Then, giving life to Sun and Dawn and Heaven, thou foundest not one foe to stand against thee.
5 Indra with his own great and deadly thunder smote into pieces Vrtra, worst of Vrtras.
As trunks of trees, what time the axe hath felled them, low on the earth so lies the prostrate Dragon."

3. The hymn to the Dawn, RV 1.48

saha vāmena na uṣo vyuchā duhitardivaḥ |
saha dyumnena bṛhatā vibhāvari rāyā devi dāsvatī ||
aśvāvatīrghomatīrviśvasuvido bhūri cyavanta vastave |
udīraya prati mā sūnṛtā uṣaścoda rādho maghonām ||
uvāsoṣā uchācca nu devī jīrā rathānām |
ye asyā ācaraṇeṣu dadhrire samudre na śravasyavaḥ ||
uṣo ye te pra yāmeṣu yuñjate mano dānāya sūrayaḥ |
atrāha tat kaṇva eṣāṃ kaṇvatamo nāma ghṛṇāti nṛṇām ||
ā ghā yoṣeva sūnaryuṣā yāti prabhuñjatī |
jarayantī vṛjanaṃ padvadīyata ut pātayati pakṣiṇaḥ ||
vi yā sṛjati samanaṃ vyarthinaḥ padāṃ na vetyodatī |
vayo nakiṣ ṭe paptivāṃsa āsate vyuṣṭau vājinīvati ||
eṣāyukta parāvataḥ sūryasyodayanādadhi |
śataṃ rathebhiḥ subhaghoṣā iyaṃ vi yātyabhi mānuṣān ||
viśvamasyā nānāma cakṣase jaghajjyotiṣ kṛṇoti sūnarī |
apa dveṣo maghonī duhitā diva uṣā uchadapa sridhaḥ ||
uṣa ā bhāhi bhānunā candreṇa duhitardivaḥ |
āvahantī bhūryasmabhyaṃ saubhaghaṃ vyuchantī diviṣṭiṣu ||
viśvasya hi prāṇanaṃ jīvanaṃ tve vi yaduchasi sūnari |
sā no rathena bṛhatā vibhāvari śrudhi citrāmaghe havam ||
uṣo vājaṃ hi vaṃsva yaścitro mānuṣe jane |
tenā vaha sukṛto adhvarānupa ye tvā ghṛṇanti vahnayaḥ ||
viśvān devānā vaha somapītaye.antarikṣāduṣastvam |
sāsmāsu dhā ghomadaśvāvadukthyamuṣo vājaṃ suvīryam ||
yasyā ruśanto arcayaḥ prati bhadrā adṛkṣata |
sā no rayiṃ viśvavāraṃ supeśasamuṣā dadātu sughmyam ||
ye cid dhi tvāṃ ṛṣayaḥ pūrva ūtaye juhūre.avase mahi |
sā na stomānabhi ghṛṇīhi rādhasoṣaḥ śukreṇa śociṣā ||
uṣo yadadya bhānunā vi dvārāv ṛṇavo divaḥ |
pra no yachatādavṛkaṃ pṛthu chardiḥ pra devi ghomatīriṣaḥ ||
saṃ no rāyā bṛhatā viśvapeśasā mimikṣvā samiḷābhirā |
saṃ dyumnena viśvaturoṣo mahi saṃ vājairvājinīvati ||

"Dawn on us with prosperity, O Ushas, Daughter of the Sky,
Dawn with great glory, Goddess, Lady of the Light, dawn thou with riches, Bounteous One.
2 They, bringing steeds and kine, boon-givers of all wealth, have oft sped forth to lighten us.
O Ushas, waken up for me the sounds of joy: send us the riches of the great.
3 Ushas hath dawned, and now shall dawn, the Goddess, driver forth of cars
Which, as she cometh nigh, have fixed their thought on her, like glory-seekers on the flood.
4 Here Kanva, chief of Kanva's race, sings forth aloud the glories of the heroes' names,-
The. princes who, O Ushas, as thou comest near, direct their thoughts to liberal gifts.
5 Like a good matron Ushas comes carefully tending everything:
Rousing all life she stirs all creatures that have feet, and makes the birds of air fly up.
6 She sends the busy forth, each man to his pursuit: delay she knows not as she springs.
O rich in opulence, after thy dawning birds that have flown forth no longer rest.
7 This Dawn hath yoked her steeds afar, beyond the rising of the Sun:
Borne on a hundred chariots she, auspicious Dawn, advances on her way to Men.
8 To meet her glance all living creatures bend them down: Excellent One, she makes the light.
Ushas, the Daughter of the Sky, the opulent, shines foes and enmities away.
9 Shine on us with thy radiant light, O Ushas, Daughter of the Sky,
Bringing to us great store of high felicity, and bearning on our solemn rites.
10 For in thee is each living creature's breath and life, when, Excellent! thou dawnest forth.
Borne on thy lofty car, O Lady of the Light, hear, thou of wondrous wealth, our call.
11 O Ushas, win thyself the strength which among men is wonderful.
Bring thou thereby the pious unto holy rites, those who as priests sing praise to thee.
12 Bring from the firmament, O Ushas, all the Gods, that they may drink our Soma juice,
And, being what thou art, vouchsafe us kine and steeds, strength meet for praist and hero might.
13 May Ushas whose auspicious rays are seen resplendent round about,
Grant us great riches, fair in form, of all good things, wealth which light labour may attain.
14 Mighty One, whom the Rsis of old time invoked for their protection and their help,
O Ushas, graciously answer our songs of praise with bounty and with brilliant light.
15 Ushas, as thou with light to day hast opened the twin doors of heaven,
So grant thou us a dwelling wide and free from foes. O Goddess, give us food with kine.
16 Bring us to wealth abundant, sent in every shape, to plentiful refreshing food,
To all-subduing splendour, Ushas, Mighty One, to strength, thou rich in spoil and wealth."

4. The primeval sacrifice of Puruša (RV X 90)

sahasraśīrṣā puruṣaḥ sahasrākṣaḥ sahasrapāt |
sabhūmiṃ viśvato vṛtvātyatiṣṭhad daśāṅghulam ||
puruṣa evedaṃ sarvaṃ yad bhūtaṃ yacca bhavyam |
utāmṛtatvasyeśāno yadannenātirohati ||
etāvānasya mahimāto jyāyāṃśca pūruṣaḥ |
pādo.asyaviśvā bhūtāni tripādasyāmṛtaṃ divi ||
tripādūrdhva udait puruṣaḥ pādo.asyehābhavat punaḥ |
tato viṣvaṃ vyakrāmat sāśanānaśane abhi ||
tasmād virāḷ ajāyata virājo adhi pūruṣaḥ |
sa jātoatyaricyata paścād bhūmimatho puraḥ ||
yat puruṣeṇa haviṣā devā yajñamatanvata |

vasantoasyāsīdājyaṃ ghrīṣma idhmaḥ śarad dhaviḥ ||

A thousand heads hath Purusha, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet.
On every side pervading earth he fills a space ten fingers wide.
This Purusha is all that hath been and all that is to be
The Lord of Immortality that waxes greater still by food.
So mighty is his greatness, yea, greater than this is Purusha,
All creatures are one-fourth of him, three-fourths eternal life in heaven.
With three fourths Purusha went up: one fourth of him again was here.
Thence he strode out to every side over what cats not and what cats.
From him Viraj was born; again Purusha from Viraj was born.
As soon as he was born he spread eastward and westward o'er the earth.
When gods prepared sacrifice with Purusha as their offering,
its oil was spring, the holy gift was autumn, summer was the wood.

IRANIAN

The Avestan religion, or Mazdaism, is the result of the first great reform in the mankind's religious history, due to the prophet Zarathuštra. The collection of religious texts stemming from his reform is known as the Avesta. The oldest part of the Avesta are the *Gāthās*, composed, at least in part, by the prophet Zarathuštra himself. The word derives from PIE *geh$_2$- 'to sing' (Ved. *gāyati, gāti*). It is only fair to say that we do not know the dates of Zarathuštra's life. According to some experts, he lived not too long before the founding of the Achaemenid Empire in the 7th century B.C., and it has even been claimed that the Kavi Vištāspa, the princely patron mentioned by Zarathuštra, was none other than Histaspes, the father of Cyrus the Great. However, another theory posits the period around 1000 B.C. as the more likely time of Zarathuštra's life,[1] and no consensus about this is in sight.

The Gāthās consist of seventeen hymns, but they are only a part of the great Zarathuštra's liturgy, the Yasna, which is the core of the Mazdaism's sacred canon. They are written in Old Avestan language, which must be significantly earlier than the language of other Avestan books, known as the Young Avestan.[2] The Yasna is a text with clear function in the Avestan ritual: it is recited during a ceremony performed in the fire-temple, which also includes the drinking of the sacrificial drink *haoma* (Ved. *sóma-*).

Zarathuštra was a prophet who undertook a thorough reform of the inherited Indo-Iranian religion with its dozens of gods, whose names were mostly preserved in the Rig-Veda. His religious message was summarized pregnantly by Helmut Humbach (1992: 3): 'A basic feature of Zarathustra's religion is the interdependence between material and bodily welfare, on the one hand, and mental or spiritual welfare, onthe other. The prophet concerned himself equally with both, and taught maxims which also governed the social life of the Iranian tribes. Young Avestan texts suggest that he introduced new methods of cattle-breeding, and comelled his followers to accept new hygienic and ecological standards, and setablished rules for avoiding infection in the human body and pollution of fire, water, air, and earth. Further, he integrated all of these material postulates into a great universal religious concept, and in this respect he is unique among the great founders of religions in history'.

The (Younger) Avestan term for 'god' is *yazata-* (cf. Ved. *yajatá-* 'worthy of sacrifice') rather than the inherited Iranian term *baga-*, which occurs only rarely in Young Avestan, where it is attributed to the Moon (OPers. *baga* is used of Ahura Mazdā in the Achaemenid inscriptions). Zarathuštra himself does not use either of these terms in the Gāthās: he seems to have been quite obsessed with the divinity of the 'Wise Lord', the Ahura Mazdā, and there was no place for other divinities in his system.

The *daēvas* of the old Indo-Iranian religion have been reduced to demons, hence the unusual etymological equation of Av. *daēva-* 'demon' and Skr. *devá-* 'god'. The followers of the *daēvas* simbolize all that is bad and deceitful (*drəguuaṇt*), while Zarathuštra's followers are elated as 'the truthful ones' (*aṣauuan-*). The world is seen through eternal struggle between the good principle, represented by Ahura Mazdā and the 'Divine Immortals', but the struggle

---

[1] This view is more or less consistent with the dates transmitted by Greek and Roman authors, who relied on ancient Iranian sources, cf., e.g. Pliny, Natural History 30, 2, 3-4: "*Eudoxus, qui inter apientiae sectas clarissimam utilissimamque eam intellegi voluit, Zoroastrem huc sex milibus annorum ante Platonis mortem fuisse prodidit, sic et Aristoteles. Most authors think that *sex millibus annorum* here is corrupted for 600 years.

[2] Besides the Gāthās, there are a few other short texts written in Old Avestan, such as the prose text of *Yasna Haptnhāiti*; Old Avestan is not the direct ancestor of Young Avestan, but rather a closely related and more archaic Iranian dialect.

is predetermined, as the Ahura Mazdā and the other Ahuras (later 'Divine Immortals'), supported by the truthful ones, are certain to triumph in the end. Note that the original Zarathuštra's conception seems to have been more monotheistic than dualistic: the arch-enemy of Ahura Mazdā, the 'Evil Spirit' (*Aŋgra Mainyu*, later *Ahriman*) is not even mentioned in the Gāthās.

The Younger Avestan texts include the Yašts, 21 hymns to Iranian deities that were included in the orthodox Mazdaism after Zarathuštra's period, the Vendidad (a text used in ritual purification) and the Visprat (or Visperad), a collection of supplements to the Yasna.

Like the Vedas, the Avesta was initially transmitted orally, and there are reasons to believe that it was only written down during the Sassanid period (4th - 7th century A.D.). Large parts of the Avestan corpus - including commentaries on the original holy scriptures - exist only in Pehlevi, the Middle Iranian language spoken in the Sasanid Empire. These are the *Dēnkard*, the *Bundahišn* (a mythological history of the world), *Arda Viraf Namak* (a book containing elements of Mazdaist eschatology), and others. The Pehlevi parts of the Avesta are generally known as the Zend, or Zend-Avesta. To this day, the Mazdaist religion has been preserved in parts of Iran, where its followers are tolerated (but discriminated), while the largest numbers of them migrated to Bombay during Middle Ages. It is there that the extant manuscripts of the Avesta were preserved.

The chief divine being of Mazdaizm, *Ahura,* bears a name (or title) related to Skr. *ásura-* 'god' and derived from Av. *ahu-* 'life, existence', which is from PIE *$h_2$ensu- 'god' (see above); *Mazdā* 'lord' is from the PIE compound *mens-d^heh$_1$- (cf. Skr. *medhā-* 'wisdom'; the name of the Muses (Gr. *Moúsai*) is also usually derived from a similar compound (*mons-$d^h h_1$yo-). *Aməša Spənta* 'Holy Immortal' is the Young Avestan term referring to the six companions of Ahurā Mazda; they are abstract deities introduced by Zarathuštra (he called them collectively Ahuras, the lords). *Aməša* is the negated participle of the verb *mer- 'to die' (Ved. *amṛta-* 'immortal'), and *Spənta* is from PIE *k'wento- 'holy' (OCS *svętъ*, etc.). The six Holy Immortals are *Amərətatāt* 'Immortality', *Aša Vahišta* 'the Best Truth' (cf. Skr. *ṛta-* 'divine order'), *Hauruuatāt* 'Integrity' (from PIE *solwo-, cf. Gr. *hólos* 'whole', Lat. *salvus*), *Spənta Ārmaiti* 'Holy Devotion' (the second part of the name is parallel to Skr. *aramati-* 'obedience', from Skr. *aram* 'enough'), *Xšaθra Vairiia* 'Desirable Rule' (from the Indo-Iranian word for 'rule', cf. Skr. *kṣay-* 'to rule', perhaps Gr. *ktáomai* 'gain'; the second part of the name is from PIE *welh$_1$- 'desire', Lat. *volo*, OCS *volja*, etc.), and *Vohu Manah* 'Good Spirit' (the first part of the name is from PIE *$h_1$wesu- > Gr. *eũ*, OIr. *fó-*, etc.).

Aŋra Mainiiu 'the Evil Spirit' is the chief enemy of Ahura Mazdā in the Zarathustrian conception; *Aŋra* means simply 'bad, evil', and the etymology of this word is uncertain; some relate it to the PIE word for 'blood' (*$h_1$esh$_2$r > Hitt. *ešhar*, Latv. *asins*, Gr. *éar*). *Mainiiu* is of course the same word as Ved. *manyu-* 'spirit'.

Of the Old Iranian deities that slowly infiltrated Mazdaism after Zarathuštra's reforms, *Haoma* is of course the Avestan equivalent of the Vedic *Sóma-*, from the PIE verb *sew- 'press' (Ved. *sunóti*, Av. *hunaoiti*), and *Vāyu-* 'Wind' is the Vedic *Vāyu-* (see above). *Apąm Napat* is a divinity connected with the waters (his name means literally 'descendant of waters' and is parallel to Ved. *Apām Napāt ,* which is usually an epithet of Savitar or Agni, e.g. in RV II 35); *Ātar-* is the fire deified, derived from the root *$h_2$eh$_1$- 'to burn' (cf. Hitt. *hašša-* 'hearth'), and *Arəduuī Sūra Anāhita* is one of the very few goddesses in the Avestan corpus; her name means 'strong (*Sūra*) and immaculate (*Anāhita*) *Arəduuī*'; since she is associated with the rivers, *Arəduuī* is usually related to Ved. *ardati* 'moves, goes'. *Miθra* is an old Indo-Iranian

divinity, and his name is the same as that of Ved. *Mitra-* (see above). *Rašnu* is the divine judge presiding over the dead souls; his name is connected with Av. *rāzaiieiti,* Ved. *rājati* 'rules', from PIE *h₃reg'- 'to stretch, direct, rule'. *Vərəθraγna* 'Victory' is a compound name parallel to Ved. *Vṛtra-hán-* 'the slayer of Vrtra', which is an epithet of Indra. *Sraoša* 'obedience' is derived from PIE *k'lew- 'to hear' (Ved. *śru-*, Gr. *klýō*, OCS *slyšati*, etc.). *Tištriia* refers to the star Sirius, which is associated with rain in the Avesta; its name is related to Ved. *tiṣya-* 'divine archer, Sirius'. Finally, *Yima* is the original Man, the ancestor of all the humans; his name is, of course, the same as Ved. *Yáma-* (see above).

Another important, although late, source for the study of Iranian religion are the legends of the Narts, preserved among the Iranian Ossetians on the Caucasus. These legends were collected by Russian and Soviet ethnographers only in the 20th century, but they show traces of a long history of oral transmission, and it has been claimed (especially by Georges Dumézil, the first western scholar who studied them) that they preserve many Indo-European motives. However, the names of all the leading Nart (e.g. the divine smith *Kurdalaegon,* the iron-bodied hero *Soslan,* the brave *Wazirmaeg,* and the lady *Satana*) are probably not Iranian. Since Nart heroes are also attested in Circassian folk-lore, as well as in the traditions of other Caucasian peoples, it is difficult to disentangle the various influences that shape them, both Indo-European and non-Indo-European.

1. Zarathuštra's metaphysical lament, Yasna 29 1-2

xšmaibiiā gə:uš uruuā gərəždā kahmāi mā θβarōdūm kə: mā tašaṯ
ā mā aēšəmō hazascā rəmō [ā]hišāiiā dərəšcā təuuišcā
nōiṯ mōi vāstā xšmaṯ aniiō aθā mōi sąstā vohū vāstriiā

adā tašā gə:uš pərəsaṯ aṣəm kaθā tōi gauuōi ratuš
hiiaṯ hīm dātā xšaiiaṇtō hadā vāstrā gaodāiiō θβaxšō
kə:m hōi uštā ahurəm yə: drəguuō dəbīš aēšəməm vādāiiōiṯ

The soul of the cow complains to You: For whom did You shape me? Who fashioned me?
Wrath and oppresion, fury, spite and violence, hold me fettered.
I have no other shepherd other thanYou. So appear to me with good pastoral work.

Thereupon the fashioner of the cow asks Truth: What is the nature of thy judgement for the cow?
When cow-milking zeal, together with forage, takes possession of her, o you ruling ones, whom do you wish to be her Ahura, one who might break through the wrath caused by the deceitful?

2. A Young Avestan hymn to Victory

XIV.

(Varhrān Yašt.)

42—46.

42 pərəsaṯ zaraϑuštrō ahurəm mazdąm: «ahura mazda, mainyō spəništa, dātarə gaēϑanąm astvaitinąm ašāum, kva asti vərəϑraɣnahe ahuraδātahe nąma.azbāitiš, kva upa.stūitiš, kva ništūitiš?» 43 āaṯ mraoṯ ahurō mazdā̊: «yaṯ spāδa hanjasā̊nte, spitama zaraϑuštra, raštəm rasma katarascīṯ, vaštā̊ŋhō ahmya nōiṯ vazyā̊nte, jatā̊ŋhō ahmya nōiṯ janyā̊nte, 44 čataurō pərənā̊ viδārayōiš avi paϑąm katarascīṯ. yatārō pourvō frāyazāite — amō hutaštō huraoδō, vərəϑraɣnō ahuraδātō —, atārō vərəϑra hačaite. 45 ʿaməmča vərəϑraɣnəmča āfrīnāmi dva apātāra dva nipātāra dva nišharətāra. dva †adwō.žən dva †vīδwō.žən dva †fraδwō.žən dva āmarəzən dva vīmarəzən dva framarəzən!ʾ 46 zaraϑuštra, aētəm mąϑrəm mā fradaēsayōiš ainyaṯ piϑre vā puϑrāi brāϑre vā haδō.zātāi āϑravanāi vā ϑrāyaone. aētaēča tē vačō, yōi uɣra ās dərəzra ās uɣra ās vyāxaine ās uɣra ās vərəϑraɣne ās uɣra ās baēšazya ās.

42. We worship Ahura-created Wərəthraghna.

Zarathushtra asked Ahura Mazdā: Ahura Mazdā, most beneficent Spirit, righteous Creator of the material world, where is it that one should invoke Ahura-created Wərəthraghna by name? where praise (him)? where call (him) down?

43. Then Ahura Mazdā said: When two armies should come together, O Spitamid Zarathushtra, . . . (?),

44. you should arrange four feathers on the way. Whichever of the two (armies) shall be first to worship (with the words), "O well-made, well-built Strength, O Ahura-created Wərəthraghna!", that one shall be accompanied by victory.

45. I propitiate Strength and Wərəthraghna, the two protectors, the two defenders, the two guardians. . . . [The remainder is obscure.]

46. O Zarathushtra, do not teach this spell to anyone other than a father or a son or a blood brother or an athrawan student. And these (are) words for you which are strong (and) firm, strong (and) eloquent, strong (and) victorious, strong (and) curative; and these (are) words for you which (can) save even a forfeited head, (can) repel even the arm already unpraised (to strike) a blow.

GREEK

Many people think that Greek religion is thoroughly known and researched. After all, we have so many preserved temples from classical antiquity, we have detailed accounts of Greek mythology not only from Greek, but also from Roman sources, and we are familiar with the way the Greeks depicted their gods from thousands of preserved statues and pictures on Greek vases. Homer gave us vivid stories about the relationships of Gods and humans in his Iliad and Odyssey, and the whole history of the gods and the universe is presented in Hesiod's Theogony. We can also learn a whole lot about Greek's attitude to religion from the early lyrics and drama, especially from the solemn hymns of Pindar and the plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles.

However, none of the works mentioned were actually recited or otherwise used in Greek temples during religious services. There is no Greek equivalent of the "Rig Veda", and we know virtually nothing about how the priests addressed their gods. Many ceremonies are known only from depictions on vases and scarce references in works of ancient authors. Indeed, many of the ceremonies were intended to be secret, and these were called 'mysteries', while their participants were the *mýstai* (from *mýō* 'to shut', cf. Hitt. *munnaezi* 'to hide, conceal'). Although we know a lot about what was happening during these ceremonies, we do not have any "sacred texts" that were recited during them. Apparently, the Greeks did not need any such texts, there was plenty of room for improvisation. If anything, Greek religion was non-dogmatic and not based on any form of holy scriptures.

The lack of a religious and mythological "canon" explains why we have so many versions of individual Greek myths. Moreover, the Greek mythology was transmitted to us mostly in late sources, especially in works of Hellenistic authors who sought to systematize and preserve ancient and half-forgotten traditions, such as Pseudo-Apollodorus' "Bibliotheca" (an anonymous account of Greek mythology from the 1st or 2nd century A.D.). We also have some accounts of Greek customs – including religious festivities – in the works of such authors as Herodotus (in his "Histories" from the 5th century B.C.), Pausanias (in his "Description of Greece" from the 2nd century A.D.), or even the Christian author Nonnus, the author of the metaphorical epic *Dionysiaca* (5th century A.D.). We also have thousands of inscriptions, including laws and contracts carved into stone monuments, public decrees and decrees of religious associations. These documents often record names of ceremonies, priests and priestly families.

Of all the cultic texts, only some fragments used in the Orphic mysteries were preserved. Orphic mysteries became very popular in Greece in the 5th century B.C. and after, but their teaching, involving the belief in metempsychosis and reincarnation, never belonged to the mainstream of Greek religion. Especially numerous are short instructions to the soul of the dead, written on gold leafs, and fragments of Orphic poems. In this field there have been some interesting new discoveries, such as the famous *Derveni Papyrus*, found in 1962 but published only in 1997. It contains a commentary on a mythological Orphic poem.

Our first written sources for the history of Greek religion are the tablets written in the syllabic Linear B script. These are almost exclusively lists of offerings to various sanctuaries (such as the sanctuary of *Pa-ki-ja-ne* near Pylos) and gods. Many theonyms found on the tablets are known from the classical period, e.g. Zeus, Hera (who appears to have been already worshipped as Zeus's consort), Ares, Enyalios, Artemis, Paian (later

Apollo), and, interestingly, Dionysos. There are, however, some theonyms that are unknown in later periods, e.g. Masana, the mysterious Drimios, son of Zeus, or the various female deities called *po-ti-ni-ja* (= *pótnia* 'lady'), of which *A-ta-na po-ti-ni-ja* (the lady of Atana = *Athḗnē*) and *Da-pu-ri-to-jo po-ti-ni-ja* (the lady of the Labyrinthos) and *Po-ti-ni-ja i-qe-ja* 'the lady of horses' are prime examples. Items offered to the gods do not differ from those used in sacrifices in the classical period, e.g. grains, olive oil, wine and spices, but also sacrificial animals, e.g. the sheep, the bull, and the pig on one tablet, reminding one of Roman *suovetaurilia.* Interestingly, the Greeks seldom sacrificed horses, so there is no true Greek parallel to Vedic *aśvamedha-*. Besides blood sacrifices, there were, of course, libations; those made to the gods (Gr. *spondḗ,* usually involving wine, and *loibḗ*) were distinguished from those made to the dead (*khoḗ*), the latter including a mixture of wine, water, and honey and a strewing of twigs on the place of the libation (closely parallel to the *barhíṣ-* 'sacrificial litter', in the Vedic sacrifice). For the Greeks, the sacrifice included the ritual sharing of food of the slaughtered animal; the master of the sacrifice could, in principle, be anyone, there was no privileged priestly caste in charge of the sacred rites. The Greeks found it funny that the Persians could not sacrifice without a priest. This is not to say that certain individuals were not specialized in particular ways of communicating with the deities. Already in Homer we have evidence for the existence of seers (Gr. *mántis*, Il. I, 62), interpreters of sacrifices (*thyoskóos,* Il. XXKV, 221), the flight of birds (*oiōnopólos*, Il. I, 69) and dreams (*oneiropólos*, Il. I, 62); there is also evidence for priestesses (Gr. *hiéreia,* Il. VI, 300). The gods loved to communicate with men through signs, and interpreting these signs (*thésphata* < *d^hh_1s-, as in *theós* 'god' and *b^hh_2-to-, as in *phēmí* 'say') required specialized knowledge. Oracles (Gr. *khrēstḗria*) were places where specialized seers answered the questions asked by those willing to pay for the service. The most famous oracle was that of Apollo at Delphi, where the prophecies (*khrēsmoí,* a derivative of *khrḗ* 'one must, one should') were announced in a trance by a priestess, Pythia.

The sacrifices are publicly made in front of the temple, where the sacrificial fire is burnt; the temple itself is the place where the images and statues of gods are preserved, and the temple is seen as the house of god, just as in the Near Eastern religions. It has been stated that the classical temple evolved from the Mycenaean *mégaron*, or royal palace. In any case, the existence of temples in Greece is in sharp contrast to their lack in Vedic India, where sacrifices, for all we know, were perfomed out in the open. Moreover, as in the Hittite tradition, sanctuaries are tightly connected with particular places, e.g. the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi, or of Zeus at Olympia. Gods are especially powerful in particular places, not necessarily everywhere, which is fairly typical for the religions of sedentary, agricultural populations.

Sacrifices had to be made according to strict rules: the sacrificed animal was brought to the altar in a procession, and it hat to be without blemish; male animals were sacrificed to gods, and female to goddesses. The sacrificed animals had to be without blemish (*teléoi*). The sacrifice itself was preceded by ritual ablution of the sacrificer's hands in a special vessel (*khérnips*, from *kheír* 'hand' and *nízō* 'wash'), and usually some hair of the animal was burned before its throat was cut. The slaying of the victim was accompanied by loud cries of women. Only bones and skin, and maybe some fat was offered to the gods, and the rest of the meat and skin was divided among those present at the sacrifice. There were, however, instances where whole animals were burned in honour of gods, usually the underworld deities. This kind of sacrifice was called *holókaustos* (from *holós* 'whole' and *kaúō* 'burn'). Some sacrifices were expiatory in nature, i.e. they were made to make good

for a committed sin (*míasma,* a derivative of the verb *miaínō* 'defile, stain', without a PIE etymology). Every shedding of blood had to be expiated, often by blood of a sacrificed animal, especially pig.

Sacrifices were often made as part of more elaborate ceremonies, and some of them were, as we saw above, secret "mysteries". Probably the most famous of the mysteries were the "Eleusynian Mysteries", dedicated to Persephone and her mother, Demeter. Only the initiated could participate in the mysteries, but the initiated at some point included the majority of the citizens of Athens, and slaves and foreigners, as well as women, were also admitted. The "Eleusynian Mysteries" took place in the month of Boedromion (in late summer) and lasted for ten days. The festivities, only some elements of which are understood, involved a solemn procession to Eleusys along the 'sacred way' (*hierà hodós*), the consumption of a drink made of barley (*kýkeon*), an all-night vigil (*pannykhís*), and the revelation of the sacred objects to the initiates (*mýstai*) in the great hall called Telesterion; the initiates (*mýstai*) would recite: "I have fasted, I have drunk the *kykeon*, I have taken from the *kístē* ("box") and after working it have put it back in the *kálathos* ("open basket")". It is unknown what the contents of the box were (since revealing that secret was punisheable by death), but Hippolytus of Rome, a Christian writer from the 3rd century, who could not care less about the pagan secrets, claims that the sacred object was "an ear of grain reaped in silence". The celebration of the mysteries was administered by two families, the Eumolpidai and the Kerykes. The hierophant was always one of the former, and the sacred herald (*hierokḗryks*) was one of the latter. There was also the priestess of Demeter, who lived in the sanctuary.

Other ceremonies are somewhat better known, especially those organized in Athens, such as the "Thesmophoria", dedicated to Demeter, in which only women could participate, or the "Lenaia" and "Anthesteria", dedicated to Dionysus. The "Great Dionysia" was a festival during which dramatic performances (both comedy and tragedy) were organized, but some were also held during the Lenaia. Thus, it is from these religious festivities that the Greek (and Western) drama originates.

Greek has a rich terminology for the sacred. The opposition between *hierós* and *hósios*, both of which mean 'holy', was already mentioned in the introductory part of this book. In Homer, almost anything that belongs to god, or to a divine sphere, can be *hierós*: votive gifts, temples, the days of ceremonies, a priest and a temple slave. However, gods themselves are never *hieroí*. The opposite of *hierós* is *bébēlos* 'profane' (from PIE *g^weh$_2$- 'to tread', as the profane space may be accessed by anyone). The meaning of *hósios* is to be understood as that which is delimited, set apart, or tranformed by some kind of divine or supernatural action. On the other hand, *hágios* reflects not so much the objective property of being 'holy' or 'sacred', but the attitude with which a man should properly respect that, which is sacred. The adjective *hagnós* is derived from the same root (PIE *yag'-, cf. Ved. *yájña-* 'sacrifice'), and its meaning contains the implication of ritual purity: it applies to holy groves (*témenoi,* from the same root *temh$_1$- 'cut' as Lat. *témplum*), festivals, the sacrificial fire, etc. Its opposite is *miarós* 'polluted' (from the same root as *míasma* 'sin'). Finally, there is the adjective *sebastós* which is usually rendered as 'august, divine', but its derivation from *sébas* 'divinely inspired fear or awe' shows the original meaning. The compound *eusébeia* 'piety' derives from *h$_1$su- 'good' and *tyeg^w- 'retreat (from danger), shy away' (Skt. *tyaj-* 'abandon, retreat') and it denotes the proper attitude of mortals towards gods: full of awe and respect, readiness to perform

the proscribed rituals and duties, but certainly not love. To Greeks, the idea that gods should be loved by mortals (or vice versa) would appear strange indeed.

The Greeks had very vague and contradictory ideas about the afterlife. In Homer's epics, the souls of the fallen heroes wander like zombies about the Underworld, and have some recollections about their former selves only after drinking sacrificial blood. The very word for 'soul', *psykhḗ* (of non-Greek origin), originally probably meant simply 'breath', i.e. that which last departs from a body at the moment of dying. Even the greatest heroes, such as Achilles, end up in the dreary Underworld, and lead a miserable existence. However, apparently not all fates of men after death were exactly equal. Already Homer tells us stories about the dead who have been punished by gods for their *hýbris,* or transgressing pride, such as Sisyphus and Tantalus, and he knows about the deepest pit of the Underworld, *Tártaros* (of non-Greek origin), reserved for the fallen Titans. He also mentions the Elysian fields, where the souls of the blessed may live a happy afterlife. The dwelling of the dead is always surrounded by water: to reach the Underworld (called Hades, just like the god of the Underworld himself) one has to cross the river (or lake) *Akhérōn,* and in some sources this can be done by paying the ferryman, *Khárōn.* In some myths, the entrance to the Underworld is guarded by a three-headed dog, *Kérberos.* The Greeks' conceptions of one's destiny after death began to change in the 6th century B.C. with Orpheus and Pythagoras, who taught the doctrine of metempsychosis and rebirth, but these ideas were never so widespread as to affect the majority of the Greek world.

The chief god of the Greek Pantheon is, of course, *Zeús* < *dyēws 'sky' (Myc. genitive *Di-wo*); besides being the chief among the gods, he is also the thunderer (*terpsi-keraunós*) and cloud-gatherer (*nephelēgeréta*). His symbols are thunder, oak, eagle and bull. He is also the husband of *Hḗra* (Myc. *E-ra*), whom he cheated on with several gods and mortals (his illegitimate children include Artemis, Perseus, Heracles, Helen of Troy, etc., while his official offspring are Ares, Hebe and Hephaestus, by far the less interesting lot). The Mycenaean form of Hera's name shows that it cannot be related to the PIE word for 'year' (*yeH-ro- > Germ. *Jahr* 'year', Russ. *jar* 'warm part of the year'), because Mycenaean would have preserved the word-initial *y-. Therefore, the etymology of this name is unknown. She was the protector of marriage and the women in Greek society. Her sacred animal was a cow, and her standing epithet in Homer is *boȭpis* 'ox-eyed'. The original wife of Zeus was probably *Diṓnē*, who shared a sanctuary with him in Dodone. She was considered as one of the Titans in later Greek mythology, but her former importance is shown by her name, which is derived from the name of Zeus (PIE *diw-h₃en-). The noun *Tītãnes, Tītẽnes* is itself without etymology, just like the names of the gods belonging to this generation, e.g. *Krónos, Rhéa (Rheíē)* and *Gaía* 'Earth'.

If Zeus was originally the Sky-god, one would expect his consort to be the Earth; however, in Greek mythology things are never so simple. Gaia was actually an adversary of Zeus in the fight against the Titans. Another candidate for the earliest Earth goddess is Demeter (*Dēmḗtēr,* Doric *Dāmā́tēr*). She was the daughter of Kronos and Rheia, and she bore Zeus the daughter Persephone. The second part of her name (*-mētēr*) means 'mother', but there is no indication that the first part (*Dē-*) ever meant 'earth'. Besides, she is primarily a fertility goddess associated with grain, rather than with the earth itself, and in at least some texts her consort is said to be Poseidon, whose name also contains the element *-dā-* (on which see below). In Arcadia, Demeter was called *Erīnýs* (Pausanias, 8.25.6)*,* which is otherwise the name of the avenging, snake-haired goddess who pursues criminals. In the later Greek tradition, there are three Erynies, the children of Gaia born from the blood of Uranus; in Latin, they are called *Furiae,* from *furo* 'be mad, rave').

Although some linguists have tried to connect the name *Erīnȳs* to Ved. *Saraṇyū-,* the mother of Yama, this etymology is formally very difficult, and the connection with *éris* 'strife, quarrel' is no better (plus, the etymology of *éris* is unknown).

The castrated father of Kronos, *Ouranós* 'sky', may have originally been 'the rainer' (cf. Skr. *várṣati* 'rains'). *Apóllōn* was the protector of the arts, especially poetry, but he was also the god of medicine and healing. He dispenses the plague on the Greeks in Illiad by shooting arrows. He killed the *Pythȏn* (< PIE *bʰudʰ- 'bottom', cf. Ved. *áhi budhnya-* 'the serpent of the abyss'), a mythical dragon, in Delphi, where his major sanctuary was located. Though his name (also attested as *Apellōn*) is sometimes compared to ON *afl* 'strength' its etymology is ultimately unknown; the name of this "most Greek of gods" is probably borrowed from Anatolian, cf. the theonym *Apalliunaš* attested in Hittite documents dealing with Wiluša/Troy. In Homer's epics, he is the protector of the Trojans, and his cult was certainly very widely known in Asia Minor.

In contrast to the male-dominated Vedic religion, Greeks worshipped quite a number of powerful goddesses. *Athḗnē* was attested in Linear B tablets (Myc. *A-ta-na*), but it seems to have been the general noun, perhaps meaning 'lady'. It is of pre-Greek origin. Athene was depicted as a virgin, the protector of arts, but also a warrior goddess dressed in full armour. Another independent-minded virgin of non-Greek origin was *Ártemis,* the hunter-goddess, (Myc. *A-ti-mi-te*, dat.), cf. Lyd. *Artimuś*, Etruscan *Aritimi*. Attempts to derive her name from Gr. *árktos* 'bear' are futile. The name was probably forrowed from some Anatolian language. Likewise, *Hḗphaistos*, the blacksmith god, has a name of unknown origin. Although he was certainly worshipped by the professional smiths, few of the myths about him have been preserved, and he is chiefly know as the husband of the unfaithful *Aphrodítē*, the goddess of love. Her name is also obscure, though her bimbo-like appearance and many attributes (e.g. *khrysḗē* 'golden', or *thygátēr Diós* 'daughter of Zeus') make her comparable to the Vedic Dawn Goddess, *Uṣās*. Aphrodite's name bears no relation whatsoever with *aphrós* 'foam', despite the folk-etymology; the true origin of the name is unknown. Her cult seems to have spread from Paphos on Cyprus, where she had her oldest sanctuary, and Greeks sometimes called her Cypris, 'the Cyprian'. On the other hand, the Greek Dawn Goddess, *Ēṓs,* whose name is identical to *Uṣās,* is somewhat eclipsed already in Homer. She is mentioned rarely, though, and her name is often modified by the beautiful poetic epithet *rhododáktylos* 'rose-fingered'. In Greek myth, she does not do much, except abducting young and pretty boys such as *Tithōnós* (of pre-Greek origin), whom she kept as an eternally living but also ageing lover (allegedly, he turned into a cricket after all). *Árēs,* the god of war, is a personified abstraction – his name is obviously derived from *ará* 'curse'. Likewise, *Hermȇs* (Myc. *E-ma-ha*) seems to have been, originally, 'the binder'; his name has been derived from *ser- 'fasten together' (Gr. *eírō,* Lat. *sero* 'link together', *sermo* 'speech', Skr. *sísarti* 'stretches, extends', which is often predicated of Mitra's hands. However, the word formation of Hermes' name is unclear. He can be compared to Varuna, who binds the sinners in the RV (Hermes is the *psychopomp* in the Greek religion), and also to Vedic *Pūṣan,* who is connected to cattle and cattle-raiding (it was Hermes who stole Apollo's cattle). Hermes is also a god of boundaries and the protector of thieves and heralds. The daughter of Zeus and Hera, *Hḗbē,* was the cupbearer of the Olympian gods; her name simply means 'youth' (< PIE *yeh₁gʷeh₂, cf. Lith. *jėgà* 'power'); *Baba Jaga,* a figure from the Russian folklore, has a similar name (*Jaga* may be derived from *yeh₁gʷeh₂), but in many respects she is the very opposite of *Hḗbē* (she is an ugly old hag). *Poseidáōn* (also *Poseidȏn,* Myc. *Po-si-da-wo-ne*, dat.), the lord of the sea and Zeus' brother, was originally called *potey-dāwōn 'the lord (*potis) of *dā, whatever that is; the comparison with Varuṇa's epithet *páti- dȃnunas*

'the lord of waters' (RV 1.136.3) makes one think whether Poseidon was originally 'the lord of waters' as well. Besides ruling the sea, armed with a trident, Poseidon is also the earth-shaker (*elelíkhthōn*) causing earthquakes. He is also connected with horses and honoured at chariot-races. According to one tradition, he was actually the progenitor of horses: he is said to have spilled his semen on a rock from which the first horse was shaped, and with his wife Demeter (or with the wrathful goddess Erynis) he fathered the famous horse Areion. In a rare account of horse-sacrifice among the Greeks, Pausanias (8.7.2) tells us how horses were drowned for Poseidon near Argos.

There were other gods who never made it to the Olympus. *Pân*, the protector of roads and shepherds, is probably related to Ved. *Pūṣan-*(< *pewh$_2$son-, see above), and the name of the god of wine, *Diónysos* (Myc. *Di-wo-nu-so*) is derivable from *diwos nuso- 'the *nuso-* of the Sky', whatever *nuso-* originally meant. He is also called *Bákkhos*, but this name is also etymologically unclear. His sacred wand made of vine, *thýrsos*, may be a loanword from Anatolian (cf. Hitt. *tuwarša-* 'vine'), while the cult hymn in the praise of Dionysus, *thríambos* (whence Lat. *triumphus* and Eng. *triumph*) is without etymology. Finally, the name of *Órpheus,* the mythical divine singer, may be related to Ved. *Ṛbhu-*, the craftsman among the gods. Both names may go back to PIE *h$_3$rb^{h}ew-.

Persephónē was the abducted wife of the god of the underworld, Hades (Hesiod, Theog. 912f.. Her name is probably derivable from *peírein* 'pierce' and *phaós* 'light', but she is often called simply *Kórē* 'girl', especially in her function of a vegetation goddess (she was often depicted with a sheaf of grain); in Arcadia she was worshipped under the title of *déspoina* 'mistress'. The name of her spouse, *Haídēs,* according to some linguists, may be from *sm-wid- (?) 'the place where one sees his ancestors again', but it is more probably from *Haywid- < *sh$_2$ey-w-, cf. Lat. *saevus* 'cruel', from the root *sh$_2$ey-'to bind', cf. Ved. *sétu-,* the fetter of *Varuṇa*. The name of the Muse, *Moûsa,* is from PIE *montyeh$_2$ (or *mon-d^{h}h$_1$yeh$_2$) 'memory', from the root *men- 'think' (Lat. *mens,* OCS *mьniti*, Skr. *mányate*, etc.). There was originally only one Muse, and their classical number of seven has been fixed only during the classical period. There are some other goddesses of lesser standing. The name of the domestic goddess *Hestía* is the word for 'fireplace, hearth', Gr. *hestía* < *westi-, cf. Lat. *Vesta*, who is more important as a virgin keeper of domestic fire. The goddess of childbirth, *Eileíthya* (earlier *Eleúthya*, Myc. *e-re-u-ti-ja*); her name is usually related to Gr. *ḗlython, êlthon* 'I came' (< PIE *h$_1$lewd^h-, OIr. *luid* 'came'), because she comes to the help of women at childbirth, but this may be just folk etymology. The goddess *Hekátē* is not yet mentioned in Homer, and may have been imported from Asia Minor (her cult was widespread in Caria); she was the goddess of paths, but she has also ties with the underground, as the leader of ghosts and witches. The etymology of her name is unknown. The dark goddesses of death, *Kêres,* might be etymologically connected to OInd. *Kālī,* who becomes the goddess of death only in later Hinduism, but whose name was initially an epithet of *Rātrī,* the goddess of night.

1. An inscription in Linear B from Pylos (PY Fr 343-1213)

e-ti-we po-]se-da-o-ne re-ke-to-ro-te-ri-jo OIL[

For Poseidon, festival of the Spreading of the Couch, oil perfumed with *e-ti-*

2. Chryses' Prayer to Apollo (The Iliad, I, 33-42)

ὣς ἔφατ᾽, ἔδεισεν δ᾽ ὃ γέρων καὶ ἐπείθετο μύθῳ:
βῆ δ᾽ ἀκέων παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης:
πολλὰ δ᾽ ἔπειτ᾽ ἀπάνευθε κιὼν ἠρᾶθ᾽ ὃ γεραιὸς
Ἀπόλλωνι ἄνακτι, τὸν ἠΰκομος τέκε Λητώ:
κλῦθί μευ ἀργυρότοξ᾽, ὃς Χρύσην ἀμφιβέβηκας
Κίλλάν τε ζαθέην Τενέδοιό τε ἶφι ἀνάσσεις,
Σμινθεῦ εἴ ποτέ τοι χαρίεντ᾽ ἐπὶ νηὸν ἔρεψα,
ἢ εἰ δή ποτέ τοι κατὰ πίονα μηρί᾽ ἔκηα
ταύρων ἠδ᾽ αἰγῶν, τὸ δέ μοι κρήηνον ἐέλδωρ:
τίσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν.

"He went forth in silence along the shore of the loud-resounding sea, and earnestly then, when he had gone apart, the old man prayed to the lord Apollo, whom fair-haired Leto bore: 'Hear me, god of the silver bow, who stand over Chryse and holy Cilla, and rule mightily over Tenedos, Sminthian god, if ever I roofed over a temple to your pleasing, or if ever I burned to you fat thigh-pieces of bulls and goats, fulfill this prayer for me: let the Danaans pay for my tears by your arrows'"

(Translated by Samuel Butler, 1924)

3. Homeric Hymn 6 to Aphrodite

αἰδοίην, χρυσοστέφανον, καλὴν Ἀφροδίτην
ᾄσομαι, ἣ πάσης Κύπρου κρήδεμνα λέλογχεν
εἰναλίης, ὅθι μιν Ζεφύρου μένος ὑγρὸν ἀέντος
ἤνεικεν κατὰ κῦμα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης
5 ἀφρῷ ἔνι μαλακῷ: τὴν δὲ χρυσάμπυκες Ὧραι
δέξαντ᾽ ἀσπασίως, περὶ δ᾽ ἄμβροτα εἵματα ἕσσαν:
κρατὶ δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἀθανάτῳ στεφάνην εὔτυκτον ἔθηκαν
καλήν, χρυσείην: ἐν δὲ τρητοῖσι λοβοῖσιν
ἄνθεμ᾽ ὀρειχάλκου χρυσοῖό τε τιμήεντος:
10 δειρῇ δ᾽ ἀμφ᾽ ἁπαλῇ καὶ στήθεσιν ἀργυφέοισιν
ὅρμοισι χρυσέοισιν ἐκόσμεον, οἷσί περ αὐταὶ
Ὧραι κοσμείσθην χρυσάμπυκες, ὁππότ᾽ ἴοιεν
ἐς χορὸν ἱμερόεντα θεῶν καὶ δώματα πατρός.
αὐτὰρ ἐπειδὴ πάντα περὶ χροῒ κόσμον ἔθηκαν,
15 ἦγον ἐς ἀθανάτους: οἳ δ᾽ ἠσπάζοντο ἰδόντες
χερσί τ᾽ ἐδεξιόωντο καὶ ἠρήσαντο ἕκαστος
εἶναι κουριδίην ἄλοχον καὶ οἴκαδ᾽ ἄγεσθαι,
εἶδος θαυμάζοντες ἰοστεφάνου Κυθερείης.
χαῖρ᾽ ἑλικοβλέφαρε, γλυκυμείλιχε: δὸς δ᾽ ἐν ἀγῶνι
20 νίκην τῷδε φέρεσθαι, ἐμὴν δ᾽ ἔντυνον ἀοιδήν.
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ σεῖο καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ᾽ ἀοιδῆς.

"I will sing of stately Aphrodite, gold-crowned and beautiful, whose dominion is the walled cities of all sea-set Cyprus. There the moist breath of the western wind wafted her over the waves of the loud-moaning sea [5] in soft foam, and there the gold-filleted Hours welcomed

her joyously. They clothed her with heavenly garments: on her head they put a fine, well-wrought crown of gold, and in her pierced ears they hung ornaments of orichalc and precious gold, [10] and adorned her with golden necklaces over her soft neck and snow-white breasts, jewels which the gold-filleted Hours wear themselves whenever they go to their father's house to join the lovely dances of the gods. And when they had fully decked her, [15] they brought her to the gods, who welcomed her when they saw her, giving her their hands. Each one of them prayed that he might lead her home to be his wedded wife, so greatly were they amazed at the beauty of violet-crowned Cytherea.

Hail, sweetly-winning, coy-eyed goddess! Grant that I may gain the victory in this contest, [20] and order you my song. And now I will remember you and another song also."

4.Hera swears to Zeus by the waters of the underground river Styx (Homer, The Iliad 15, 37-41)

ἴστω νῦν τόδε Γαῖα καὶ Οὐρανὸς εὐρὺς ὕπερθε
καὶ τὸ κατειβόμενον Στυγὸς ὕδωρ, ὅς τε μέγιστος
ὅρκος δεινότατός τε πέλει μακάρεσσι θεοῖσι,
σή θ᾽ ἱερὴ κεφαλὴ καὶ νωΐτερον λέχος αὐτῶν
κουρίδιον, τὸ μὲν οὐκ ἂν ἐγώ ποτε μὰψ ὀμόσαιμι:

"Hereto now be Earth my witness and the broad Heaven above, and the down-flowing water of Styx, which is the greatest and most dread oath for the blessed gods, and thine own sacred head, and the couch of us twain, couch of our wedded love, whereby I verily would never forswear myself."

5. Sappho, fr. 1 (Hymn to Aphrodite)

Ποικιλόθρον', ἀθάνατ' Ἀφρόδιτα,
παῖ Δίος, δολόπλοκε, λίσσομαί σε
μή μ' ἄσαισι μήτ' ὀνίαισι δάμνα,
        πότνια, θῦμον·

ἀλλὰ τυῖδ' ἔλθ', αἴποτα κἀτέρωτα
τᾶς ἔμας αὔδως ἀΐοισα πήλυι
ἔκλυες, πάτρος δὲ δόμον λίποισα
        χρύσιον ἦλθες

ἄρμ' ὑποζεύξαισα· κάλοι δέ σ' ἆγον
ὤκεες στροῦθοι περὶ γᾶς μελαίνας
πύκνα δινεῦντες πτέρ' ἀπ' ὠράνω αἴθε-
        ρας διὰ μέσσω.

αἶψα δ' ἐξίκοντο· τὺ δ', ὦ μάκαιρα,
μειδιάσαισ' ἀθανάτῳ προσώπῳ,
ἤρε', ὅττι δηῦτε πέπονθα κὦττι

δηὖτε κάλημι,

κὤττι μοι μάλιστα θέλω γένεσθαι
μαινόλᾳ θύμῳ· τίνα δηὖτε Πείθω
μαῖς ἄγην ἐς σὰν φιλότατα, τίς σ', ὦ
    Ψάπφ', ἀδικήει;

καὶ γὰρ αἰ φεύγει, ταχέως διώξει,
αἰ δὲ δῶρα μὴ δέκετ' ἀλλὰ δώσει,
αἰ δὲ μὴ φίλει, ταχέως φιλήσει
    κωὐκ ἐθέλοισα.

ἔλθε μοι καὶ νῦν, χαλεπᾶν δὲ λῦσον
ἐκ μεριμνᾶν, ὄσσα δέ μοι τελέσσαι
θῦμος ἰμέρρει, τέλεσον· σὺ δ' αὔτα
    σύμμαχος ἔσσο.

"Immortal Aphrodite of the broidered throne, daughter of Zeus, weaver of wiles, I pray thee break not my spirit with anguish and distress, O Queen. But come hither, if ever before thou didst hear my voice afar, and listen, and leaving thy father's golden house camest with chariot yoked, and fair fleet sparrows drew thee, flapping fast their wings around the dark earth, from heaven through mid sky. Quickly arrived they; and thou, blessed one, smiling with immortal countenance, didst ask What now is befallen me, and Why now I call, and What I in my mad heart most desire to see. 'What Beauty now wouldst thou draw to love thee? Who wrongs thee, Sappho? For even if she flies she shall soon follow, and if she rejects gifts shall yet give, and if she loves not shall soon love, however loth.' Come, I pray thee, now too, and release me from cruel cares; and all that my heart desires to accomplish, accomplish thou, and be thyself my ally."

6. Instructions on how to make a libation: Sophocles, "Oedipus at Colonus"

Οἰδίπους
465ὦ φίλταθ᾽, ὡς νῦν πᾶν τελοῦντι προξένει.
Χορός
θοῦ νῦν καθαρμὸν τῶνδε δαιμόνων, ἐφ᾽ ἃς
τὸ πρῶτον ἵκου καὶ κατέστειψας πέδον.
Οἰδίπους
τρόποισι ποίοις; ὦ ξένοι, διδάσκετε.
Χορός
πρῶτον μὲν ἱερὰς ἐξ ἀειρύτου χοὰς
470κρήνης ἐνεγκοῦ, δι᾽ ὁσίων χειρῶν θιγών.
Οἰδίπους
ὅταν δὲ τοῦτο χεῦμ᾽ ἀκήρατον λάβω;
Χορός
κρατῆρές εἰσιν, ἀνδρὸς εὔχειρος τέχνη,
ὧν κρᾶτ᾽ ἔρεψον καὶ λαβὰς ἀμφιστόμους.
Οἰδίπους
θαλλοῖσιν ἢ κρόκαισιν, ἢ ποίῳ τρόπῳ;

Χορός
475οἷός γε νεαρᾶς νεοπόκῳ μαλλῷ λαβών.
Οἰδίπους
εἶεν: τὸ δ᾽ ἔνθεν ποῖ τελευτῆσαί με χρή;
Χορός
χοὰς χέασθαι στάντα πρὸς πρώτην ἕω.
Οἰδίπους
ἦ τοῖσδε κρωσσοῖς οἷς λέγεις χέω τάδε;
Χορός
τρισσάς γε πηγάς: τὸν τελευταῖον δ᾽ ὅλον.
Οἰδίπους
480τοῦ τόνδε πλήσας θῶ; δίδασκε καὶ τόδε.
Χορός
ὕδατος, μελίσσης: μηδὲ προσφέρειν μέθυ.
Οἰδίπους
ὅταν δὲ τούτων γῆ μελάμφυλλος τύχῃ;
Χορός
τρὶς ἐννέ᾽ αὐτῇ κλῶνας ἐξ ἀμφοῖν χεροῖν
τιθεὶς ἐλαίας τάσδ᾽ ἐπεύχεσθαι λιτάς.
Οἰδίπους
485τούτων ἀκοῦσαι βούλομαι: μέγιστα γάρ.

"Oedipus
[465] Dearest friends, be my patrons, and I will bring everything to completion.
Chorus
Then make atonement to these divinities, to whom you have come first, and on whose ground you have trespassed.
Oedipus
With what rites? Instruct me, strangers.
Chorus
First, from an ever-flowing [470] spring bring sacred drink-offerings, borne in ritually pure hands.
Oedipus
And when I have gotten this unmixed draught?
Chorus
There are bowls, the work of a skilled craftsman; crown their edges and the handles at either side.
Oedipus
With olive branches, or woollen cloths, or in what way?
Chorus
[475] Take the freshly-shorn wool of a ewe-lamb.
Oedipus
Good; and then to what last rite shall I proceed?
Chorus
Pour the drink-offerings, with your face to the dawn.
Oedipus
Shall I pour them with these vessels of which you speak?
Chorus
Yes, in three streams; but the last vessel—

Oedipus
[480] With what shall I fill this, before I set it down? Teach me this also.
Chorus
With water and honey; but add no wine.
Oedipus
And when the ground under the dark shade has drunk these?
Chorus
Three times lay on it nine branches of olive with both your hands, and meanwhile make this prayer.
Oedipus
[485] I wish to hear this prayer; it is the most important part."

(Translated by Sir Richard Jebb, 1899)

ITALIC

In sharp contrast to the rich literary and epigraphic sources for the study of the Greek religion, the early sources on Latin religion are very modest. A few fragments of the ancient cultic songs, such as the famous *Carmen Arvale* (found on an inscription from 218 B.C., but presumably much older) and the *Carmina Saliaria*, and a handful of inscriptions earlier than the 3rd century B.C. is all that is left before the Hellenistic period, when the original Roman religion underwent a profound influence of the Greek religion. Names of many Greek mythological figures were transmitted to Rome through an Etruscan or Italic intermediar, e.g. *Hercules* (from Greek *Heracles*) or *Proserpina* (from Greek *Persephone*). In the second century B.C., many cults from the Orient spread in Rome, and it took a formal decision by the Senate to prohibit the orgiastic cult of Dionysus (*Senatusconsultum de Bacchanalibus*, the text of which is preserved in full). It was Augustus who sought to restore the original Roman piety in the late 1st century B.C. and in the early 1st century A.D., and the literary mythological works of Virgil (*The Aeneid*) and Ovid (especially *The Metamorphoses*) should be viewed in the light of Augustus's refoms. Whatever ancient lore is preserved in these works, we have to bear in mind that much of the mythology contained in them is an artificial creation of their authors.

We have a fair idea about the ancient Roman piety from references made by classical authors to sacrifices, priestly offices, and the organization of the temples; moreover, a number of authentic prayers have been preserved, including famous Cato's prayer from *De re rustica*. We also have a good knowledge about the ancient Roman festivities, especially those that occurred during the first half of the year, since Ovid was only able to write the first half of his calendar in verses (*Fasti*) before being banished to the Black Sea by Augustus. There are, however, no original and integral sacred texts comparable to the Rig-Vedic hymns, but the practical, down-to-earth nature of Roman religion teaches us that Romans probably never had anything similar to the Rig-Veda. However, since we know so much about the daily lives of ordinary Romans, thanks to the abundance of our sources, we also know a lot about their piety and attitude towards religion: we can easily vividly imagine Horace making an offering to the source of Bandusia, just as we find numerous references to superstitions and silly customs in Cicero's letters to his friends. From all this we can easily conclude that the Roman's approach to religion was practical; Cicero says (*De natura deorum,* III, 87) that 'Jupiter is called Best and Greatest because he does not make us just or sober or wise but healthy and rich and prosperous'. The favour of the gods can be won by careful and regular observance of rites (*disciplina*), and this was mostly delegated to priests, organized as *flamines* and *pontifices*, as well as to priestesses (the best known were the Vestal Virgins who were in charge of the sacred fire in the temple of Vesta). The priests were not a caste, separated from the rest of society, but rather influential and wealthy citizens; the highest priests were often the most powerful politicians, so that, for example, Caesar was during his career a *pontifex maximus* (the chief priest of Jupiter). Since the *pontifices* were in charge of public worship, it was a sensible thing that they were chosen among the rich citizens (unlike contemporary politicians, who tend to raise taxes as they like, the Roman dignitaries had to provide the money for public services and festivities from their own pocket). In contrast to the *pontifices,* the *flamines,* devoted to the Capitoline triad (Jupiter, Mars, and Quirinus) had little public influence, since their office was subject to severe taboos. The chief priest of Jupiter, the *flamen Dialis,* could not ride a horse and could not spend more than three consecutive nights outside Rome. The general term for a 'priest' was *sacerdōs*, a compound of *sacer* 'holy' and *dōt-* < PIE *deh₃-t- 'give' (Lat. *dō, dare*); the original meaning was presumably 'the one with sacred endowments'. Ordinary people had to observe their own private rites, mostly in relation to their ancestors, but they were not obliged to participate in public worship. Horace

tells us how he dropped in on a service in a temple (*Sat.* I, 114), more from curiosity than from piety, and Horace tells us that he was a *parcus deorum cultor et infrenquens* (Od. I.34) 'a sparing and occasional worshipper'.

The Roman sacrifice was similar to Greek, but it was also peculiar in some respects. The favourite sacrificial animals were the pig, the sheep and the ox (the *suovetaurilia* included all three), and in contrast to the Greeks, the Romans also sacrificed horses to Mars on October 15 (the *October Equus*). The sacrificial animal was brought to the temple, and its forehead was sprinkled with a mixture of salt and flour (*mola salsa*, hence the term *immolatio*); the slaying of the victim had to be done in complete silence, except for the sound of the flute played by a *tibicen*. Sacrifices were often promised as vows (*vota*) to the gods, but other vows might include gifts to temples or building of various monuments. The formula *votum soluit libens merito* is one of the most common phrases found on Roman inscriptions. The methods of divination employed by the Romans were similar to those of the other ancient peoples, but there were also some local fashions, especially in procedures for examining the entrails of victims, performed by *haruspices* (from PIE *g'ʰrHu- 'intestines', Lith. *žarnà*, Skr. *hirǻ-* 'vein', and *-spek'- 'to watch', Gr. *sképtomai*). There were also curious methods of divination from the flight of birds (performed by *augures*, from *avis* 'bird', and the root found in *gustus* 'taste', or rather from the root of *augeo* 'increase' < PIE *h₂ewg-, Lith. *áugti* 'grow'), or the pecking of chickens.

It has been claimed by Georges Dumézil and his followers that the original mythology of Rome is preserved, but camouflaged, in Titus Livius' account of the history of the early Rome. For example, the story of the founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus is interpreted as the original (Indo-European) cosmogonic myth, in which the world is created from the body of the primeval man, who had been sacrificed by his twin brother; the name of Remus is then derived from *Yemos, and compared to Skr. *Yama-*, and the initial *R-* is explained on the analogy with *Rōmulus*, whose name is certainly eponymous with *Rōma*. There are certainly other elements of ancient mythology spread and concealed in Livius's work, but it is difficult to gain any certainty in these matters.

Finally, the least reliable sources for the study of the Roman religion are the Christian writers, such as St. Augustine, or Arnobius (*Contra Paganos*) who often deliberately ridiculed the rites and customs of the pagans. However, they sometimes corroborate hypotheses established independently on the basis of other sources. Thus, while Arnobius (*Contra Paganos* II. 15.5) claims that there was a deity presiding over the threshold (*Limentinus*), a deity in charge of the hinges (*Cardea*) and one protecting the leaf of the door (*Forculus*), we know from authors such as Aulus Gellius and Servius (who wrote and important commentary on the Aeneid), that there were pontifical books containing detailed lists of *indigitāmenta* formulas used to invoke the *dii indigetes*, or deities responsible for little everyday activities and objects (the epithet *indiges* is derivable from *endo* 'within' and *ago* 'act', so these were the deities working within objects of the natural world and the social community). For example, Aulus Gellius (XIII, 23) lists *Lua Saturni, Salacia Neptuni, Hora Quirini, Virites Quirini, Moles Martis*, and others. These were the *numina,* or various aspects of divinity (from *-nuo, adnuo* 'give a sign, nod'). The universe was full of divinity, or, as Virgil says (Georg. IV, 221f.) '"God passes throught all lands, all tracts of sea and the depths of the sky".

The chief god of the Roman pantheon, and the head of the Capitoline Triad is *Jūpiter* (or *Juppiter*); his name is actually from the PIE phrase *dyēws ph₂tēr 'father Sky' (see above); his consort, *Jūno,* bears the name of Etruscan *Uni,* but perhaps it is originally from the PIE root *dyew-/*diw- 'sky' (Lat. *deus* 'god', Gr. *Zeús*, see above); if her original name was

*Diwō (Gen. *Diwōn-es), it can be compared to Gr. *Diṓnē*, who was also the original wife of Zeus. In that case, the name of Iuno must have been borrowed in Latin through some intermediary language, since it is *never* written as *Diuno, even in the archaic monuments. Another etymology relates her name to Lat. *iuvenis* 'young' and interprets it as 'the young wife'; she would have been the woman's counterpart to the *genius,* the personal spirit of every man. In her epiphany as *Iuno Lucina* she was especially worshipped as the goddess of birth (parallel to Gr. Eileithya). The somewhat obscure god *Quirīnus* was an agricultural deity whose name is easily derived from *co-virīnus (from *vir* < PIE *wiHro- 'man', Skr. *vīrás*, Lith. *vȳ́ras*). He was originally the protector of the community, cf. also *cūria* < *co-viria. Besides Juppiter and Quirinus, the third member of the Capitoline Triad was *Mārs,* who was rather clumsily identified with Gr. Ares. He was also originally an agricultural deity rather than the god of war. His name is known in its older forms *Mavors, Māmers,* and *Marmar,* and, unsurprisingly, it is of unknown origin. The name of *Venus* is originally an abstract numen, from the neuter *wenos 'desire, lust', Skr. *vánas.* She was identified with Gr. Aphrodite, and the name of *Apollo* was directly borrowed from Greek. The god of trade and the protector of roads, *Mercurius* (identified with Gr. *Hermes*), was likewise originally an abstract numen, and his name was derived from *merx* 'commerce', of unknown, perhaps Etruscan origin. Another possibility would be to derive *merx* from *merg'- 'divide' (Hitt. *mārk-^{i}* 'divide, separate'), from which we also have *margō, marginis* 'border, limit'. A proto-form *merg-s would have assimilated to *merx,* and it would have been an abstract root noun meaning 'a division, a sharing', just as its formal parallels such as *pāx, lēx, nex,* etc. The semantic development would have been from 'what is divided, a share' to 'goods, merchandise'.

The two-faced god *Jānus*, who protected the entrances of Roman houses and the beginnings of all endeavors, bears the name identical to the noun *iānus,* 'arched passage, doorway' < PIE *yeh$_2$-no-, cf. Skr. *yā́ti* 'goes', Lith. *jóti* 'ride'). The name of *Minerva*, the goddess of wisdom (identified with Athena) was probably borrowed from Etruscan; in that language, it could also be a borrowing from some IE dialect. It might ultimately be from *Mēneswā, a derivative of PIE *meh$_1$nos- 'moon', Lith. *ménuo,* or from PIE *menos 'mind' (Ved. *mánas*). The name of *Sāturnus* is of uncertain origin. It is sometimes compared to Ved. *Savitár-* (see above), but a more likely source is Etruscan *Satre;* he was certainly a god of agriculture and fertility, and his wife was *Ops* 'wealth' (< PIE *h$_3$ep-, cf. Hitt. *happinant-* 'rich'). The legends associating Saturnus with an early golden age of abundance (*Saturnia aetas*) led to his rather clumsy identification with Greek *Krónos.* Another ancient fertility god was *Consus,* to whom the feast of *Consualia* was dedicated. He was represented as a grain seed and was meant to be the protector of grains. The origin of his name is unknown, and the sometimes proposed derivation from *condo, condere* 'to store (grain)' is unlikely. The name of the wild forest divinity *Faunus* is also unclear; it is sometimes derived from *b^{h}h$_2$u-no-, from the root 'to be, become' (cf. OIr. *búan* 'good, favourable'). The goddess of the hearth, *Vesta,* is of course identical to Gr. *Hestía* (see above), and *Līber* is from PIE *h$_1$lewd^{h}ro- 'free (man)' (OCS *ljudьje,* Germ. *Leute,* etc.). The god of the blacksmiths *Volcanus* bears the name of unknown origin. It may have been derived from the Etruscan *gens Volca*, if he was originally their protector deity. *Tellus*, of which little is known from classical sources, may have been the original Roman *Terra Māter,* 'Mother Earth' (Virgil calls her *prima deorum* in Aen. 7.136). Her name is, of course, the normal Latin word for 'earth, ground' < PIE *telh$_2$- 'ground' (Skr. *tala-* 'surface, bottom', ORuss. *tьlo,* OIr. *talam* 'ground'). She is often identified with *Cerēs,* the goddes of grain and fruits (from *k'erH- 'nourishment', Lith. *šérti* 'feed', OHG *hirso* 'millet'). The name of the protectors of the household (in particular of the hearth) was *Lārēs* < *Lāsēs* in *Carmen Arvale*. It is of unknown origin, but perhaps it may be derived from PIE *deh$_2$-es- 'divide, apportion' (with the common development of *d > l, and rhotacism of −s-

from the original s-stem). The other household deities, the *Penātēs,* have the name derived from *penus*, 'food, provisions', cf. Lith. *penéti* 'feed'. The etymology of *Manēs* (pl., Roman ancestor spirits) is unknown as well as of *Palēs* (sg., a goddess of shepherds) and of *Lemures* (malevolent spirits of the dead). The *Lārvae,* another word for ancestor spirits, has been derived from **gʰlh₃r-wo-* 'the bleak ones' (Gr. *khlōrós* 'greenish', OCS *zelenъ* 'green'). *Bona Dea* was, of course, 'the good goddess', and the name of *Fortūna* is derived from *fors* 'destiny, fate', from the root **bʰer-* 'carry'. The name of the wood goddess *Diāna* is presumably derived from **dyew-* 'sky, day' (Lat. *diū* 'by day', cf. also the name of Greek *Diṓnē* above). The Roman god of the sea, *Neptūnus,* is usually related to Skr. *Apām Napāt* 'the descendant of waters', an epithet of Agni, but a different etymology is also viable: *Neptūnus* can be from the root **nebʰ-* as in *nebula* 'fog', *imber* 'rain' with a dental suffix, i.e. **nebʰ-tu- > *neptu-*, with the typical suffix characteristic of other theonyms (e.g. *Portūnus,* the protector of gates, Lat. *porta*) and terms for officials (e.g. *tribūnus*, *dominus*).

Religions of other Italic peoples are considerably less well-known, but luckily enough we have a rather large religious text in Umbrian, the famous *Tabulae Iguvinae,* bronze tables found in 1444. in Gubbio (ancient Iguvium). They contain a description of a ritual involving a procession and several sacrifices to various deities, e.g. Mars Grabovius. Ethnographers have claimed that the ritual shows certain resemblances to the worship of Catholic saints still taking place in Gubbio today.

1. Cato's prayer (*Suovetaurilia*, from *De re rustica,* 2.1.10)

Mars pater, te precor quaesoque uti sies volens propitius mihi domo familiaeque nostrae, quoius re ergo agrum terram fundumque meum suovitaurilia circumagi iussi, uti tu morbos visos invisosque, viduertatem vastitudinemque, calamitates intemperiasque prohibessis defendas averruncesque; utique tu fruges, frumenta, vineta virgultaque grandire beneque evenire siris, pastores pecuaque salva servassis duisque bonam salutem valetudinemque mihi domo familiaeque nostrae; harumce rerum ergo, fundi terrae agrique mei lustrandi lustrique faciendi ergo, sicuti dixi, macte hisce suovitaurilibus lactentibus inmolandis esto; Mars pater, eiusdem rei ergo macte hisce suovitaurilibus lactentibus esto

'Father Mars, I pray and beseech thee that thou be gracious and merciful to me, my house, and my household; to which intent I have bidden this suovetaurilia to be led around my land, my ground, my farm; that thou keep away, ward off, and remove sickness, seen and unseen, barrenness and destruction, ruin and unseasonable influence; and that thou permit my harvests, my grain, my vineyards, and my plantations to flourish and to come to good issue, preserve in health my shepherds and my flocks, and give good health and strength to me, my house, and my household. To this intent, to the intent of purifying my farm, my land, my ground, and of making an expiation, as I have said, deign to accept the offering of these suckling victims; Father Mars, to the same intent deign to accept the offering of these suckling offering.'

2. Augustine on the pagan beliefs (*De civitate dei,* 6.9.3)

Cum mas et femina coniunguntur, adhibetur deus Iugatinus; sit hoc ferendum. Sed domum est ducenda quae nubit; adhibetur et deus Domiducus; ut in domo sit, adhibetur deus Domitius;

ut maneat cum viro, additur dea Manturna. Quid ultra quaeritur? Parcatur humanae verecundiae; peragat cetera concupiscentia carnis et sanguinis procurato secreto pudoris. Quid impletur cubiculum turba numinum, quando et paranymphi inde discedunt? Et ad hoc impletur, non ut eorum praesentia cogitata maior sit cura pudicitiae, sed ut feminae sexu infirmae, novitate pavidae illis cooperantibus sine ulla difficultate virginitas auferatur. Adest enim dea Virginensis et deus pater Subigus, et dea mater Prema et dea Pertunda, et Venus et Priapus. Quid est hoc? Si omnino laborantem in illo opere virum ab diis adiuvari oportebat, non sufficeret aliquis unus aut aliqua una? Numquid Venus sola parum esset, quae ob hoc etiam dicitur nuncupata, quod sine vi femina virgo esse non desinat? Si est ulla frons in hominibus, quae non est in numinibus, nonne, cum credunt coniugati tot deos utriusque sexus esse praesentes et huic operi instantes, ita pudore afficiuntur, ut et ille minus moveatur et illa plus reluctetur? Et certe si adest Virginensis dea, ut virgini zona solvatur; si adest deus Subigus, ut viro subigatur; si adest dea Prema, ut subacta, ne se commoveat, comprimatur: dea Pertunda ibi quid facit? Erubescat, eat foras; agat aliquid et maritus.

"When a man and a woman get together the god Jugatinus is invoked. This may be borne, but the bride must be taken to one's house, and thus the god Domiducus is invoked, and the goddess Manturna so that she would stay with the man. What else is needed? Let human shame be spared; let the carnal desire finish the rest, in the secrecy demanded by decency. Why fill the marriage bed with the mob made of deities, when the wedding companions are getting away? And they gather there, not in order to cause more concern for decency, but so that the woman, who is of the weaker sex and scared by the new situation, should be deprived of her virginity through their assistance. There is also the goddesss Virginensis, the fatherly god Subigus, the motherly Prema and the goddess Pertunda, as well as Venus and Priapus. What is all that? If the husband, labouring in these matters needs any help at all, would it not suffice only one of them, male or female? Would only Venus not be enough, who is called that way, because a woman does not cease to be a virgin without force? If there is any shyness in men (since there is none among gods), and since the newly weds believe that so many deities of both sexes are present and engaged in the act, will they not be too overwhelmed by shame, so that he will lose all lust, and she will be more resilient? And really, if the goddess Virginensis is there to unleash the virgin's belt, if the god Subigus is also present to make her submissive to the husband, if the goddess Prema is there to make her motionless, when she submits, what is the goddess Pertunda doing there? May she blush with shame and get out! Let the husband do something!"

3. Horace promises a sacrifice (*Odes* 3.13)

O fons Bandusiae splendidior vitro,
dulci digne mero non sine floribus,
cras donaberis haedo,
cui frons turgida cornibus

primis et venerem et proelia destinat;
frustra: nam gelidos inficiet tibi
rubro sanguine rivos
lascivi suboles gregis.

te flagrantis atrox hora Caniculae
nescit tangere, tu frigus amabile

fessis vomere tauris
praebes et pecori vago.

fies nobilium tu quoque fontium
me dicente cavis inpositam ilicem
saxis, unde loquaces
lymphae desiliunt tuae.

Bandusia's fount, in clearness crystalline,
O worthy of the wine, the flowers we vow!
Tomorrow shall be thine
A kid, whose crescent brow

Is sprouting all for love and victory.
In vain: his warm red blood, so early stirr'd.
Thy gelid stream shall dye,
Child of the wanton herd.

Thee the fierce Sirian star, to madness fired,
Forbears to touch: sweet cool thy waters yield
To ox with ploughing tired,
And lazy sheep afield.

Thou too one day shalt win proud eminence
'Mid honour'd founts, while I the ilex sing
Crowning the cavern, whence
Thy babbling wavelets spring.

(Translated by John Conington, 1882)

4. Tabulae Iguvinae VI a:

este persclo
    aueis aseriater enetu
    parfa curnaśe dersua
    peiqu peica merstu

poei angla aseriato � eest
eso tremnu serse arsferture ehueltu
stiplo aseriaia
    parfa dersua
    curnaco dersua�
    peico mersto
    peica mersta
    mersta auuei
    mersta angla esona

arfertur eso anstiplatu �
    eſ aserio
        parſa dersua
        curnaco dersua
        peico mersto
        peica mersta
        mersta aueiſ
        merstaſ⁵ anglaſ esona   5
    mehe
    tote iioueine
    esmei stahmei stahmeitei

sersi pirsi sesust
    poi angla � aseriato est
erse neip mugatu
      nep arsir andersistu
nersa courtust
      porsi angla anseriato � iust
sue muieto fust
ote pisi arsir andersesust
          disleralinśust �

This rite
shall start with the observation of the birds
parfa (?owl)*, the horned one, dersua*
woodpecker, *peica, merstu*
He who will go to observe the messages (of birds)
should, sitting at the *tremno* ask the priest (*arfertur*):
Ascertain that I am observing
the owl, the *dersua*, the horned one *dersua*
the woodpecker *merso*
the peica *mersta*

mersta birds
mersta divine messengers.
The *arfertur* ascertains in his answer:
There you should observe
the owl, the *dersua*, the horned one *dersua*
the woodpecker *merso*
the peica *mersta*
mersta birds
mersta divine signs
for me,
for the city of Iguvium
in this *stahmo stahmito*.
When one who went to watch the messengers
will have sat on the seat,
no sound should be made,
and others should not sit at the same time (with him)
until he who went to watch the messengers
shall have returned.
If any sound is made
or if anyone sits in the meanwhile (with him)
the rite is void.

5. Carmen Arvale (Old Latin)

enos Lases iuuate
enos Lases iuuate
enos Lases iuuate
neue lue rue Marmar sins incurrere in pleores
neue lue rue Marmar sins incurrere in pleores
neue lue rue Marmar sins incurrere in pleores
satur fu, fere Mars, limen sali, sta berber
satur fu, fere Mars, limen sali, sta berber
satur fu, fere Mars, limen sali, sta berber
semunis alternei advocapit conctos
semunis alternei advocapit conctos
semunis alternei advocapit conctos
enos Marmor iuuato
enos Marmor iuuato
enos Marmor iuuato
triumpe triumpe triumpe triumpe triumpe

The translation is tentative, since the text is corrupted and was no longer understood when it was written down (in 218. B.C.): "Help us, Lares (3x); do not let Mars or plague overtake the fields (3x); be content, come, Mars, jump over the threshold, stop (?); he will call all the Semones (sowing deities?, 3x). Help us, Mars (3x); triumph (3x)".

CELTIC

The study of Celtic religion is difficult for a number of reasons. First of all, it is quite uncertain whether there was ever "the Celtic religion" in the first place. All we have from the Roman and pre-Roman periods are local cults devoted to many deities, very few of which have pan-Celtic character. Besides that, our sources for the study of pagan Celtic rites and beliefs are very limited. Besides archaeological data, all we have about the subject from the period when Celts were still pagan, are references by Classical authors, such as Caesar, who are biased in their approach. Caesar, for example, in his *De Bello Gallico,* does give an account of the Gaulish religion, but his purpose is not so much to teach his audiences in Rome about what the Gauls actually believed, but rather to convince them that their beliefs were not so dissimilar from the Roman ones, and that therefore Gaul is worth conquering after all. Other Classical references to Celtic religion are scarce and too fragmentary to be of any use, e.g. the mention of three Gaulish gods (*Teutates, Esus,* and *Taranis*) in Lucan (*De Bello Civili* I, 444-6).

There are a few Gaulish inscriptions in Roman alphabet dealing with magic, e.g. the 'Plomb from Larzac' and the 'Inscription from Chamalières'. Most of these documents are poorly understood, since the Gaulish language is not well attested, and its grammar appears to have been quite different from the grammars of the Insular Celtic languages. The druidic 'Calendar from Coligny' also dates from the early years after the Roman conquest, but it preserves only names of months and of some religious festivities.

The post-classical sources are most numerous, but they all come from the period when the Celtic peoples were already Christianized. To what extent the old traditions may have been preserved, and transmitted in the Insular Celtic oral literature, is a matter of dispute among scholars. In Old Irish, we have several dozens of sagas, prose texts written down in the Middle Ages, but certainly going back to an oral tradition stretching back to the first centuries A.D. In the nineteenth century, scholars classified the Old Irish sagas into four "cycles": "The Ulster Cycle", dealing with the heroes of the eponymous tribe of *Ulaid* (the Old Irish name for Ulster is *Ulad*), the "Mythological Cycle", dealing with the mythical prehistory of Ireland, "The Leinster Cycle", which focuses on the pseudohistorical early kings of *Lagain* (the Irish name of Leinster) and the "Fenian Cycle", whose main character is *Find mac Cumaill,* the leader of the wild group of youthful warriors, the *fíana.* However, mythological elements are present in sagas belonging to all four cycles, and the native Irish tradition classifies the sagas not in cycles, but according to their subjects: wooings (*tochmarca*), destructions (*togala*), cattle raids (*Tána*), deaths of prominent chiefs (*aideda*), etc. The most famous of the sagas are *Táin bó Cúailnge* 'The Cattle Raid of Cuailnge', which tells about a war between two tribes (the *Ulaid* and the *Connachta*) over a wondrous bull, *Tochmarc Étaine,* in which a fairy called *Étain* serially changes husbands and forms, and *Aislinge Óengusso,* in which the young hero is incapacitated by his love for a fabulous fairy who visits him in his sleep in the form of a swan. *Lebor Gabála Érenn* 'The Book of the Conquests of Ireland' is not properly a saga, but rather a pseudohistorical account of several invasions that allegedly brought different 'races' to Ireland before the arrival of the Irish. One of them were the *Túatha Dé Danann,* 'the tribe of the goddess Danu' which conquered the island and replaced the demonical *Fomoire* and the *Fir Bolg.* The earliest manuscript containing Irish sagas is *Lebor na hUidre* ('The Book of the Dun Cow') from the late 11th century, but it is certain that earlier manuscripts with this material existed. Old Irish sagas were written down, and latter copied, by Christian monks, and there is little doubt that all pagan content passed through Christian censorhip. The same holds for the early Welsh prose stories, which are much less numerous. Mythological

elements are especially prominent in the 'Four Branches of the Mabinogi' (*Pedeir Ceinc y Mabinogi,* 12th century).

It is difficult to reconstruct the Celtic pantheon, and there is no proof that "*the* pantheon" ever existed among the Celts. Most deities attested in ancient Gaul were local, and there is no evidence that they were widespread in the whole of the Celtic world. The medieval sagas in Welsh and Irish are late sources, and as such often unreliable, especially if one attempts to relate the mythological elements contained in them with what is known about Gaulish religion. Perhaps the only Celtic god attested in all Celtic-speaking countries is *Lugos. In Gaulish inscriptions from the Roman period, he is known as *Lugus*, while his Welsh name was *Llew* and OIr. *Lug*. The name is of unknown origin; it is sometimes compared to Gr. *lýnks* 'lynx', but it could also be derived from the root *lewg- 'to bend, twist' (Goth. *ga-lūkan* 'close') or *lewg^h- 'lie' (OCS *lъžą*, Goth. *liugan*). Lug's association with the arts can be deduced from his OIr. epithet *samildánach* 'having all the skills'. He was admitted to the feast in Tara (OIr. *Temair*), the pagan sanctuary of Ireland, after bragging that he was a wright, as mith, a champion, hero, historian, sorcerer and leech. The Irish thought he was also the inventor of the board-game *fidchell* (literally 'wood-sense'). In Gaul, Lug seems to have been identified with Roman *Mercurius*, of whom Casear (*De bello Gallico,* 6.17) says he was the most revered Gaulish deity. In Gaulish art, he is depicted as young, beardless, and carrying a caduceus and purse. He is sometimes accompanied by cock, goat or tortoise and is often associated with the goddess called *Maia* or *Rosmerta* (on which see below), who may have been a goddess of abundance.

Gaul. *Maponos* (from PCelt. *makkwo- 'son, boy', OIr. *macc*) was probably an underworld god; he is identical with OIr. *Macc ind Óc* 'the young son', the son of Dagdae, the ruler of the *Túatha Dé Danann*. An inscription from Roman Britain calls Maponos a *citharoedus* 'the harper', which means that he was associated with the arts. Taranis may have been the Celtic Thunderer. His name is probably from the same root as OIr. *torann* 'thunder', ON *Thórr*, etc. Gaul. *Borvo* (also *Bormo*), known from a number of Roman inscriptions, was a god of termal springs, whose name is from the root of OIr. *berbaid* 'brew' (PIE *b^{h}erw-, cf. Lat. *fervo*, Eng. *brew*). Gaul. *Teutates* seems to have been the protector of the tribe. His name is form PIE *tewto- 'tribe', cf. OIr. *túath*, Goth. *þiuda* 'people, tribe'. Lucan's *Teutates, Esus,* and *Taranis* may have actually represented a three-part name of a single deity, since *Esus* is nicely derived from PIE *h$_1$esh$_2$os 'lord' (Lat. *erus*, Hitt. *išhaš*), so the three names quoted by Lucan may simply reflect 'Taranis, the lord of the tribe'.

The god *Grannos,* associated with thermal springs at *Aquae Granni* (present day *Aachen*) seems to have been identified with Gallo-Roman Apollo. His name may have meant 'the bearded one', cf. OIr. *grend* 'beard', W *gran* 'chin, beard', OHG *grana* 'moustache'. In inscriptions from Noricum Apollo bears the epithet *Belenus,* which may have meant 'shining, brilliant' (cf. the pagan Irish feast of *beltene* on the 1st of May, which is interpreted as 'the shining fire (*tene*), but this is far from certain).

The Gaulish goddesses include *Sirona* (probably from the PIE word for 'star', PIE *h$_2$stēr > OIr. *sir*, Lat. *stēlla*, Gr. *astér*), *Rosmerta* (whose name is probably formed with the prefix *ro- 'very' and the root *smer- 'think, remember', cf. Ved. *smárati*, Gr. *himeírō* 'wish for', perhaps also Croat. *máriti* 'take care of') and *Epona,* whose name is derivable from Gaul. *epos 'horse' < PIE *h$_1$ek'wos, Lat. *equus*. Her Welsh equivalent may have been W *Rhiannon* < *Rīgantōnā 'the great queen', a disobedient lady forced to serve as a mare in the 'Four Branches of the Mabinogi'.

Gaulish *Sucellus*, who is depicted as a middle-aged man carrying a club or mallet, is sometimes identified with Caesar's Dis Pater, the otherworld deit from which the Gauls were thought to be descended. His name may have meant 'the good striker' (from $*h_1$su- 'well' and $*k'elh_2$- 'strike', cf. Lat. *per-cello* 'strike'), but it has also been interpreted as $*h_1$su-k'el-mno- 'protecting well' (from the root of Lat. *celo* 'hide', OIr. *celid*) and parallel to the OInd. name *Suśarman-*. Sucellus is often paired with the goddess *Nantosvelta*, whose name contains the root *nant-* 'brook' (W *nant*); the second element of her name may be from PCelt. *swel- 'turn' (OIr. *sel* 'turn, moment', MW *chwyl* 'destiny, course'), or from PIE *swel- 'burn' (OHG *swellen*).

Cernunnos is perhaps the best known of the Gaulish deities with theriomorphic features. He is depicted as a deity with antlers, or horns. His name is similar to the epithet *Cernach* born by one of the heroes of the Old Irish Ulster cycle of tales, *Connall Cernach*. Gaul. *Damona* 'the great cow' (cf. OIr. *dam* 'ox' < PCelt. *damo-) was a companion of the aforementioned god of the thermal springs, Borvo.

The name of *Dagdae*, the chief of the Túatha Dé Danann, is an old compound (as we saw above), consisting of the prefixed adjective PCelt. *dago- 'good' (cf. W *da* 'good', otherwise the etymology is unknown) and PCelt. *dēwo- < PIE *deywo-, the term for the celestial god (Lat. *deus*, Skr. *devá-*, etc.). He is sometimes also called *Echu Ollathir* 'Echu, the father of all'; *Echu* is, of course, derived from OIr. *ech* 'horse', so he has been compared to deities connected with horses in other traditions, such as Greek Poseidon. Some scholars see in him the Irish equivalent of Caesar's Gaulish Dis Pater and of Sucellus, because he had a club, with which he killed the living and revived the dead. He was also called *Rúad Rofessa* 'The Mighty One of Great Knowledge' and he had a magical cauldron that was always full. OIr. *Óengus*, who figures as the son of *Dagdae*, is also called *Macc ind Óc,* 'the young son' (see above); his name comes from PCelt. *oyno-gusto- 'the only strong one', cf. OIr. *gus* 'power, strength'.

Núada Argatlám 'Nuada of the silver arm' is also one of the Túatha Dé Danann. He is the Irish equivalent of Welsh *Lludd Llaw Ereint* 'Lludd of the silver arm' who figures in the medieval tale *Lludd ac Llefelys*. The original for of the Welsh name began with a *N-* (changed to *Ll-* by analogy with *llaw* 'arm'), and it is attested in a Romano-British dedication to the god *Nodons* at Lydney Perk in Gloucestershire. The PIE etymology is unknown, but a derivation from the root *newd- 'strike' (Ved. *nudáte*) is possible. The god of blacksmiths was OIr. *Goibniu*, doubtlessly identical with Welsh *Gofannon*, who occurs in the 'Four Branches of the Mabinogi'; both figures bear the name meaning 'great smith' (cf. OIr. *gobae,* gen. sg. *gobann* 'smith', perhaps related to Lat. *faber* < PIE $*g^{wh}ob^h$-). As one of the Túatha Dé Danann, Goibniu forged weapons no one whom they wounded could survive. Another god related to the crafts was *Ogmae* (presumably the same as Gaul. *Ogmios,* whom Lucian, writing in the 2nd century A.D., identified as a Gaulish Hercules). He is traditionally credited with the invention of the Ogam script, but the etymology of his name is unclear. Ogmios, on the other hand, was a figure armed with a club and bow, and also as an old man who was associated with eloquence (he was depicted as drawing behind him men attached to him by thin chains to the tip of his tongue).

Other prominent mythological figures in the OIr. sagas include the goddesses *Étain* (of unknown etymology), *Macha* (of unknown origin), *Danu* (of unknown etymology, but presumably related to W *Dôn*), *Anu* (of unknown origin, but perhaps originally identical to *Danu*), as well as *Brigit*, who may have been the goddess of poetry (Cormac's dictionary, from the 10th century, says that she was *deam...esse poetarum*). Later she was euhemerized as

the Christian St. Brigid from Kilkenny. Her name comes from PCelt. *brigantī < *PIE bʰr̥gʰntih₂ 'the exalted one', cf. Ved. br̥hatī (an epithet of Uṣās, the Dawn). A goddess *Brigantia* (the patron of the tribe *Brigantes*) is known from a votive inscription in Roman Britain. She may be the same figure that Caesar calls Minerva in his account of the Gaulish religion (*De bello Gallico*, 6.17); Solinus, writing in the 3ʳᵈ century A.D. says that perpetual fire burned in the sanctuary of Minerva in Britain, and her standing epithet was *Belisama* 'most brilliant'. This fits well with the information about Brigit, supplied by Giraldus Cambrensis in the 12ᵗʰ century, who says that she and her nuns guarded a sacred fire in her sancturary-turned-convent. Her feast-day was February 1, coinciding with *Imbolc*, the pagan Irish festival of spring.

OIr. *Bodb* is the female demon of war in several medieval sagas. She sometimes appears on the battlefield as a crow, so as a common noun *bodb* means simply 'crow'. The name is connected to OE *beadu* 'fight, battle' and probably derived from PIE *bʰodʰ- 'pierce, fight' (Lat. *fodio*, OCS *bosti*).

A somewhat mysterious figure of OIr. *Lir* seems to be comparable to W *Llyr* from the 'Four Branches of the Mabinogi'; his name (OIr. *lir,* W *llyr*) means simply 'the sea', perhaps from the root *leyH- 'to pour', but this has been doubted on both semantic and formal grounds. His son is called *Manannán* in Irish and *Manawydan* in Welsh, but the Welsh name may have been borrowed from Irish. In the OIr. saga *Immram Brain* 'The Voyage of Bran' *Manannán* is represented as traveling over the sea in a chariot.

1. Caesar, De Bello Gallico VI, 17, On the Gaulish Religion

Deorum maxime Mercurium colunt. Huius sunt maxima simulacra, hunc omnium inventorem artium ferunt, hunc viarum atque itinerum ducem, hunc ad questus pecuniae mercaturasque habere vim maximam arbitrantur. Post hunc Apollinem et Martem et Iovem et Minervam. De his eandem fere quam reliquae gentes habent opinionem: Apollinem morbos depellere, Minervam operum atque artificiorum initia tradere, Iovem imperium caelestium tenere, Martem bella regere.

Among the gods they worship Mercury most of all. He is most often represented in pictures, and they think of him as the inventor of all the arts and a guide on the roads and on journeys and the most influential for money-making and commerce. After him, they worhip Apollo, Mars, Jupiter and Minerva. They have almost the same opinion of them as the other peoples do: they think that Apollo drives away diseases, that Minerva takes care of the works and arts, that Jupiter holds the empire of the sky and that Mars rules over war.

2. Inscription from Chamalières

Andedion uediiumi diiiuion risun / aritumapon arueriiatin / lopites snieđđic sosbrixtiaanderon / clucionfloronnigrinon adgarion aemili / on paterin claudion legitumon caelion / pelign claudio pelign marcion uictorin asiaticonađđedilli etic secoui toncnaman toncsiíontío meíon toncsesit buetid ollon reguccambion exops pissíumítsoccantí rissuis onson bissíet luge dessummiíis luge dessumiís luge dessumiís luxe.

Tentative translation: 'I invoke Maponos Arveriatis among the infernal deities; may you punish (?) and torture them with infernal magic: Caius Lucius, Florus Nigrinus, the *adgarios*

(?'accuser'), Aemilius Paterinus, Claudius Legitumus, Caelius Pelignus, Claudius, Pelignus, Marcus Victorinus, and Asiaticus Ađđedili. And those who swear by such false oaths, moreover, he swore: 'May everything be crooked (?bad) to him! I see it blind (?). It will be good (?) for us (?). O Lugus, take them (?), take them, Lugus, take them, Lugus (?)'

4. Old Irish saga 'The Voyage of Conlae'

Echtrae Chonnlai maic Cuinn Chétchathaig in so.

[1] Connlae Rúad mac do Chunn Chétchathach, a mboíe laa n-and for láim a athar i n-úachtur Uisnig, co:n-accae in mnaí i n-étuch anetargnad.

[2] As:bert Connle: "Can do:dechad-so, a banscál?"

[3] Mulier respondit:

> "Do:dechad-sa a tírib béo, i-nna:bí bás na peccad na imarmus.
> Do:melom fleda búana cen frithgnam.
> Caínchomrac lenn cen debuid.
> Síd már i:taam, conid de suidib no-n:ainmnigther áes síde."

[4] "Cía ad:gláiter?" ol Conn Cétchathach. Ní:acci nech in mnaí acht Connle a óenur.

[5] Mulier respondit:

> "Ad:gládadar mnaí n-oic n-álaind sochenéoil
> nad:fresci bás na sentaid.
> Ro:carus Connle Rúad.
> Co-t:ngairim do Maig Meld
> inid rí Bóadag bithsuthain
> cen gol cen mairg inna thír
> ó gabais flaith.
> Tair lemm,
> a Chonnlai Rúaid muinbric caindildeirc.
> Barr buide for-dut:tá óas gnúis chorcordai,
> bid ordan do rígdelbae.
> Ma cho-tum:éitis, ní:crínfa do delbae óitiu áilde
> co bráth mbrindach."

[6] As:bert Conn fria druid, Coran a ainm-side, a rro:cólatar uili an ro:rádi in ben na-che:n-acatar:

> "No-t:álim, a Chorinn
> mórchétlaig mórdánaig.
> Forband do-dom:ánic
> as-dom moo airli,
> as-dom moo cumachtu,
> níth na-cham:thánic
> ó gabsu flaith.

This is the voyage of Connlae, the son of Conn Cétchathach.

I. Connlae the Red, the son of Conn Cétchatach, was standing once before his father on the heights of Uisnech, when he saw a women in unusual clothes.

II. Connlae said: 'Whence do you come, woman?'

III. *Mulier respondit*:

'I come from the Land of the Living, where there is no sin or transgression. We eat in constant feasts without exertion. We have peace without strife. We live in a *síd* and therefore they call us 'people of the síd''.

IV. 'Who are you talking to?' asked Conn Cétchathach. Nobody saw the woman except Connlae.

V. *Mulier respondit*: 'He is speaking to a young, lovely woman from a good family, who does not expect either death or old age. I have fallen in love with Connlae the Red. I call him to Mag Mell, where the eternal Bóadag reigns, without cry or laments he is in his land since he had assumed his throne. Come with me, Connlae the Red, o speckled-necked, candle-red one. The red hair on your purple face will be the ornament of your royal appearance. If you come with me, the youth and beauty of your appearance will not be lost until the Judgement.'

4. The Fourth Branch of the Mabinogi (Math mab Mathonwy), p. 176ff.:

Sef a wnaeth ynteu: edrych ym blaen y prenn; a phan edrych, ef a welei eryr ym blaen y prenn. A phan ymysgytwei yr eryr, y syrthei y pryuet ar kic pwdyr ohonaw, ar hwch yn yssu y rei hynny. Sef a wnaeth ynteu: medylyaw, mae Lleu, oed yr eryr; a chanu eglyn:

Dar a dyf yrwng deu lynn;
Gordu-wrych awyr a glynn:
Ony dywetaf i eu,
Oulodeu Lleu pan yw hynn.

'Then he looked at the top of the tree and saw an eagle; whenever the eagle shook, worms and rotten flesh would drop off, and the sow would eat them. Gwydion thought that the eagle was Lleu, and he sang an *englyn*:

An oak-tree grows between two lakes:
dark sky and a plain;
If I should not tell a lie,
these are Lleu's feathers.'

GERMANIC

Our first written source for the study of Germanic religion is a brief account of it in Caesar's *De Bello Gallico* (6.21); Caesar contrasts the Gaulish religion with Germanic, which he believes to be much more primitive, concentrating on the 'visible' gods such as the Sun and the Moon, and neglecting institutionalized priests, temples and sacrifices. The second important Roman source is Tacitus' *Germania*. It is a thorough account of the Germanic tribes known to Romans in the 1st-2nd century A.D., and it includes several passages dealing with Germanic religious beliefs and customs. He even captures their cosmological story, according to which all Germans were descended from the earth-born god *Tuisco* (or *Tuisto* 'twin') and his son *Mannus* 'man': *Celebrant carminibus antiquis, quod unus apud illos memoriae et annalium genus est, Tuistonem deum terra editum, ei filium Mannum originem gentis* 'In old songs, their [sc. the Germans'] only form of history and annals, they praise Tuisto, the earth-born god, and Mannus, his son and originator of the [German] race' (Tacitus, *Germania,* 2.3). However, we should bear in mind that the main purpose of Tacitus' writing was to show example of the barbarians' vices and virtues to his fellow Romans, rather than to give a scientific account of the Germans' customs and beliefs. Late Classical authors, such as Jordanes, who wrote the history of the Goths based partly on native traditions, also contain references to pagan Germanic religion.

The Runic inscriptions, found in Scandinavia and Britain in the Early Middle Ages, are mostly short and contain proper names, with few references to pagan worship. We do have, however, ecclesiastical authors, who wrote in Latin, and made several references to Germanic and Slavic peoples who were still pagan, or only recently baptized, during their lifetime, e.g. Adam of Bremen (*Gesta Hamburgensis Ecclesiae,* around 1080) and Saxo Grammaticus (*Gesta Danorum,* early 13th century).

The only written source for the study of Germanic paganism preserved on the Continent are the Old High German *Merseburg Incantations* (Germ. *Merseburger Zaubersprüche*); they contain references to the sun-goddess *Sunna,* her sister *Sinthgunt,* and some other theonyms familiar from the Scandinavian sources.

The main source for the study of the Scandinavian paganism is the *Poetic Edda*, an anonymous collection of pagan poems that had probably been transmitted orally before being written down in the only surviving manuscript, the *Codex Regius* from the 13th century. The name *Edda* probably meant simply 'poetry' and is a derivative of *óðr* 'poem, poetry'. The best known of the poems in the *Poetic Edda* are the *Völuspá* 'The Vision of the Prophetess' (an account of the origin and the fate of the world) and *Hávamál*, a collection of the wise advices by the god Óðinn himself. *Skírnismál* ('The words of Skírnir') tells a story about the love of the god Freyr for the beautiful female giant Gerd.

The Prose Edda (or *Snorra Edda*) was written in early 13th century by the learned Icelandman, Snorri Sturluson (1178-1241). Snorri was a bishop and a very important politician, but his interest as an author is chiefly antiquarian. He wanted to contribute to the preservation and understanding of the old, mostly pagan Norse poetry, and a necessary pre-condition for this was the understanding of the pagan mythology which permeated these texts. Of course, as a Christian, Snorri euhemerized his material, stating, for instance, that the ancient Norse gods were Trojan heroes who came 'from Asia', which is why they were called *Aesir*. This ingenious, but utterly false etymology is just an example of his pseudo-historical approach to Norse mythology.

Snorra Edda has three parts: *Gylfaginning* ('The delusion of Gylfi'), *Skáldskaparmál* ('A word on Poetry') and *Háttatal* ('A list of verses'). *Gylfaginning* is the most important source for the pagan Norse mythology. It contains a dialogue between the mythical king of Sweden, *Gylfi*, and three pagan deities (*Har* 'the High', *Jafnhar* 'the equally High' and *Tridi* 'the Third') who tell him about the pagan Norse mythology. The history of the world is seen through the clash between the heavenly gods (*Áss,* pl. *Aesir*) and the earthly gods (*Van,* pl. *Vanir*). Snorri lists all of the major gods of both groups and usually gives several names of each figure; this was necessary in order to understand many poetic riddles (*kennings*) of the Norse poets (*skalds*) who referred to them. In many instances Snorri harmonized different traditions which contradicted each other: for example, in telling the story of Thorr's fishing of the sea-serpent *Miðgardsormr*, Snorri let the serpent survive, because he knew that Thorr would fight it again during Ragnarök, the mythical ending of the world. We know, however, that there was a different version, according to which Thorr killed the serpent; this is implied in a skaldic poem by Ulfr Uggason, but for most mythological stories Snorri's is the only version we have.

The chief among the *Aesir* was *Óðinn,* together with his brothers *Vili* 'Will' and *Vé* 'Holy', who are both less prominent in the extant mythological texts. The most important of the Vanir were *Njörðr* and his children *Freyr* and *Freyja,* who were taken hostages by the Aesir. The euhemerization of the conflict between the Aesir and Vanir is reminiscent of the similar procedure in Livy's history of Rome, where ancient deities are represented as pseudohistorical figures. It must be remembered that Snorri was a Christian, and that the Scandinavian peoples were in contact with the Christians for centuries before the two Eddas were written down, so that it is reasonable to assume that Christianity in many ways influenced our sources. This can be seen, for example, in the myth of the *Ragnarök* as told in the *Völuspá* and, especially, by Snorri. Baldr, the beautiful son of the chief god Odin, will be killed by his blind brother, Hod, who will shoot him by an arrow made of mistletoe. This will be provided by the evil god Loki, who will then by punished by the gods: he will be tied with his sons'guts to a stone, where a snake's venom will drop in his face. Then the wolf Garm will be set free, and all hell will break loose: 'brother will fight brother and be his slayer, brother and sister will violate the bond of kinship, hard it is in the world, there is much adultery, ax-age, sword-age, shields are cleft asunder, wind-age, wolf-age, before the world plunges headlong. No man will spare another' (*Völuspá* 45). Then Odin will be killed by the wolf, and the giant Surt will muder Freyr; finally, Thor will be killed by Miðgardsormr, but after the sun turns black and the earth sinks into the sea, there will be a revival: the earth will rise again and a new, better world will be created. In this account of the Ragnarök commentators have seen the influence of the Christian Apocalypsis, as well as the figure of Christ, who was sacrificed innocent just like Baldr. Likewise, the resurrection of the world prophesized by the Völuspá has been compared to the Christian conception of the Second Coming.

Besides the Eddas, the Norse texts in which we find some evidence of pagan beliefs include the Icelandic sagas - stories telling mostly about the period of the settling of Iceland - and the scaldic poetry - the poems of the court poets, partly stemming from the pagan period and transmitted orally before they were written down.

None of the mythological texts actually tell us much about the religious practices of pre-Christian Scandinavians, or other Germanic peoples. For this, we have to rely on archaeological evidence, which is not as rich as we would have wished. A temple unearthed at Uppåkra, in Sweden's province of Scania, has been in continuous use from the 3rd until the 9th century A.D. Many animal bones were found there, and some human ones, implying that humans were sacrificed along with animals; weapons and gold leaflets (*guldgubbar*) were

also found in a context suggesting that they were sacrificial offerings. From other sources we know that Vikings used to sacrifice the weapons of the vanquished enemies by throwing them into lakes, and that gold and other precious objects used to be buried in underground hoards for use in the sacrificer's afterlife. Adam of Bremen, writing about 1070 (in Latin), claims tha huge sacrifices were organized at the great pagan temple in Uppsala (in Sweden), and that men, along with dogs and horses, were ritually hanged from the trees there. However, no temple was found in the archaeological remains in Uppsala so far.

The Norse divine family consists of *Óðinn* (OE *Woden*, OHG *Wotan,* from PIE *weh$_2$tu- 'insight, inspiration', cf. Lat. *vātes* 'sooth-sayer', OIr. *fáith* 'prophet') and his wife *Frigg* < *priHyo- 'dear' (Croat. *prijatelj* 'friend', Skr. *priyá-* 'dear'). Their son is the beautiful *Baldr* (from PGerm. *balda- 'brave', OE *beald*, OGH *bald*), whose death will eventually bring about the destruction of the world (Ragnarök). The trickster god who actually causes Baldr's death was *Loki* (of unknown etymology, sometimes derived from PIE *lewg'- 'break, crush', cf. OE *to-lūcan* 'destroy', Skr. *rujáti* 'breaks'). A very important god was the thunderer *Thórr* whose name originally meant simply 'thunder' (Eng. *thunder*, Germ. *Donner*), from PIE *tonh$_2$ro-, (cf. Gaul. *Taranis* above). He is the one who fished the 'dragon of the deep', *Miðgardsormr.* In this endeavour, he was paired with the giant *Hymir,* 'the dark one', whose mile-wide brewing cauldron Thor took from him. His importance can also be seen in the Scandinavian toponymy, where the number of placenames containing his name far exceeds all other divine names, including Óðinn's, and he is most often invoked in runic inscription left by Viking expeditions (e.g. 'May Thor hallow these runes!'). *Heimdallr* was also called 'white Áss' (*hvíti áss*), and Snorri says that he was born by nine sisters and that he is the guardian of the gods, with excellent sight and hearing. His name is probably derived from Germanic *hayma- 'home' < PIE * k'oymo- (Lith. *šiema* 'family').

Njörðr was one of the Vanir, and his name is derived from PIE *nertu-, most probably a derivative of *ner-to- 'under, deep', Gr. *nérteros*, OIc. *norðr* 'north'. *Njörðr* is probably the same figure as Tacitus' *Nerthus*, who is, however, represented as female in "Germania". *Ullr*, who was claimed to be a bow-god by Snorri, has a name that originally meant 'glory' (OE *wuldor*) < PIE *wltu- (Lat. *voltus, vultus* 'face'). The name of the goddess of spring was preserved only in OE (*Ēostre,* mentioned by Bede) and OHG *(Ôstarâ)*; the month of April was called originally *Ēostur-monath,* cf. Eng. *easter*. The attested forms are derivable from PIE *h$_2$ewsōs 'dawn' (see above). The other goddesses include *Fjörgynn* (a mother of gods, whose name is often compared to Slav. *Perunъ,* etc., but more likely derived from *pork'o- 'furrow', Lat. *porca*) and *Freyja*, originally probably the same goddess as Frigg mentioned above. The goddess *Iörð,* who is not very prominent in the Norse mythology, was the personified Earth (cf. Germ. *Erde*, Goth. *airþa*). PGerm. *erþō 'earth' has been etymologically connected to W *erw* 'field', Arm. *erkir* 'earth' and Gr. (gloss) *éra* 'earth', but none of these connections are certain.

The world is seen as encompassed by the ocean and the snake *Miðgarðsormr* - probably originally the personification of the world ocean, just as the Greek *ōkeanós*, which is also sometimes depicted as a snake on Greek vases. In the middle of the world is the sacred tree, the *Yggdrasill* (from *Ygg* 'ash-tree', related to Croat. *ȉva* 'osier', Lith. *íeva* and Eng. *yew*). It is probably the same tree (although this is not explicitly stated anywhere) on which Óðinn sacrificed himself to himself (*Hávamál,* 138). Near its roots are two wells, the well of wisdom (the well of *Mímir*, the giant whose name means 'Rememberer') and the well of Fate (*Urðr*). Mímir was beheaded in the Aesir-Vanir war and his head was carried off by Óðinn, who gained secret knowledge from it. Somewhere near the edge of the world was *Hel* (also called *Niflhel*), the kingdom of the eponymous goddess of the dead, who was the daughter of Loki

and the sister of the monstrous wolf Fenrir and the snake Miðgarðsormr. According to one tradition, Hel was in Iceland, so one had to travel a water expanse (as in most Indo-European tradition) to reach it. Etymologically, *Hel* is derivable from the root *k'el- 'to cover, hide', like Lat. *cēlo*, Skr. *śarman-* 'shelter'. Hel was not the only otherworld in the Germanic tradition: Valhalla (ON *Valhöll*) was a magnificent hall in the city of the Aesir (*Ásgarðr*) where half of the slain heroes feasted with Óðinn, while the other half were sent to the field *Fólkvangr* ('field fo the host'), ruled by the goddess Freyja (*Gylfaginning* 24).

1. Tacitus, Germania 9-10, on the gods of the Germanic peoples

Deorum maxime Mercurium colunt, cui certis diebus humanis quoque hostiis litare fas habent. Herculem ac Martem concessis animalibus placant. [2] pars Sueborum et Isidi sacrificat: unde causa et origo peregrino sacro parum comperi nisi quod signum ipsum in modum liburnae figuratum [3] docet advectam religionem. ceterum nec cohibere parietibus deos neque in ullam humani oris speciem adsimulare ex magnitudine caelestium arbitrantur: lucos ac nemora consecrant deorumque nominibus appellant secretum illud, quod sola reverentia vident.

Auspicia sortesque ut qui maxime observant. sortium consuetudo simplex. virgam frugiferae arbori decisam in surculos amputant eosque notis quibusdam discretos super [2] candidam vestem temere ac fortuito spargunt. mox, si publice consultetur, sacerdos civitatis, sin privatim, ipse pater familiae, precatus deos caelumque suspiciens ter singulos tollit, sublatos secundum impressam ante notam [3] interpretatur. si prohibuerunt, nulla de eadem re in eundem diem consultatio; sin permissum, auspiciorum adhuc fides exigitur. et illud quidem etiam hic notum, avium voces volatusque interrogare: proprium gentis equorum [4] quoque praesagia ac monitus experiri. publice aluntur isdem nemoribus ac lucis, candidi et nullo mortali opere contacti; quos pressos sacro curru sacerdos ac rex vel princeps civitatis comitantur hinnitusque ac fremitus observant. [5] nec ulli auspicio maior fides, non solum apud plebem, sed apud proceres, apud sacerdotes; se enim ministros deorum, illos conscios putant. est et alia observatio auspiciorum, qua gravium bellorum eventus explorant. [6] eius gentis cum qua bellum est captivum quoquo modo interceptum cum electo popularium suorum, patriis quemque armis, committunt: victoria huius vel illius pro praeiudicio accipitur.

Mercury is the deity whom they chiefly worship, and on certain days they deem it right to sacrifice to him even with human victims. Hercules and Mars they appease with more lawful offerings. Some of the Suevi also sacrifice to Isis. Of the occasion and origin of this foreign rite I have discovered nothing, but that the image, which is fashioned like a light galley, indicates an imported worship. The Germans, however, do not consider it consistent with the grandeur of celestial beings to confine the gods within walls, or to liken them to the form of any human countenance. They consecrate woods and groves, and they apply the names of deities to the abstraction which they see only in spiritual worship.

Augury and divination by lot no people practise more diligently. The use of the lots is simple. A little bough is lopped off a fruit-bearing tree, and cut into small pieces; these are distinguished by certain marks, and thrown carelessly and at random over a white garment. In public questions the priest of the particular state, in private the father of the family, invokes the gods, and, with his eyes toward heaven, takes up each piece three times, and finds in them a meaning according to the mark previously impressed on them. If they prove unfavourable, there is no further consultation that day about the matter; if they sanction it, the confirmation

of augury is still required. For they are also familiar with the practice of consulting the notes and flight of birds. It is peculiar to this people to seek omens and monitions from horses. Kept at the public expense, in these same woods and groves, are white horses, pure from the taint of earthly labour; these are yoked to a sacred car, and accompanied by the priest and the king, or chief of the tribe, who note their neighings and snortings. No species of augury is more trusted, not only by the people and by the nobility, but also by the priests, who regard themselves as the ministers of the gods, and the horses as acquainted with their will. They have also another method of observing auspices, by which they seek to learn the result of an important war. Having taken, by whatever means, a prisoner from the tribe with whom they are at war, they pit him against a picked man of their own tribe, each combatant using the weapons of their country. The victory of the one or the other is accepted as an indication of the issue.

2. Tacitus on the Festivity of Nerthus (Germania, 40):

Contra Langobardos paucitas nobilitat: plurimis ac valentissimis notionibus cincti non per obsequium sed proeliis et perclitando tuti sunt. Reudigni deinde et Aviones et Anglii et Varini et Eudoses et Suardones et Nuithones fluminibus aut silvis muniuntur. 2. Nec quicquam notabile in singulis, nisi quod in commune Nerthum, id est Terram matrem, colunt eamque intervenire rebus hominum, invehi populis arbitrantur. Est in insula Oceani castum nemus, dicatumque in eo vehiculum, veste contectum; attingere uni sacerdoti concessum. 3. Is adesse penetrali deam intellegit vectamque bubus feminis multa cum veneratione prosequitur. Laeti tunc dies, festa loca, quaecumque adventu hospitioque dignatur. 4. Non bella ineunt, non arma sumunt; clausum omne ferrum; pax et quies nunc tantum nota, tunc tantum amata, donec idem sacerdos satiatam conversatione mortalium deam templo reddat. 5. Mox vehiculum et vestes et, si credere velis, numen ipsum secreto lacu abluitur. Servi ministrant, quos statim idem lacus haurit. Arcanus hinc terror sanctaque ignorantia, quid sit illud quod tantum perituri vident.

What on the contrary ennobles the Langobards is the smallness of their number, for that they, who are surrounded with very many and very powerful nations, derive their security from no obsequiousness or plying; but from the dint of battle and adventurous deeds. There follow in order the Reudignians, and Aviones, and Angles, and Varinians, and Eudoses, and Suardones and Nuithones; all defended by rivers or forests. Nor in one of these nations does aught remarkable occur, only that they universally join in the worship of Herthum; that is to say, the Mother Earth. Her they believe to interpose in the affairs of man, and to visit countries. In an island of the ocean stands the wood Castum: in it is a chariot dedicated to the Goddess, covered over with a curtain, and permitted to be touched by none but the Priest. Whenever the Goddess enters this her holy vehicle, he perceives her; and with profound veneration attends the motion of the chariot, which is always drawn by yoked cows. Then it is that days of rejoicing always ensue, and in all places whatsoever which she descends to honour with a visit and her company, feasts and recreation abound. They go not to war; they touch no arms; fast laid up is every hostile weapon; peace and repose are then only known, then only beloved, till to the temple the same priest reconducts the Goddess when well tired with the conversation of mortal beings. Anon the chariot is washed and purified in a secret lake, as also the curtains; nay, the Deity herself too, if you choose to believe it. In this office it is slaves who minister, and they are forthwith doomed to be swallowed up in the same lake. Hence all men are possessed with mysterious terror; as well as with a holy ignorance what that must be, which none see but such as are immediately to perish.

3. The Poetic Edda. Völuspá 1-7.

1. Hljóðs bið ek allar
helgar kindir,
meiri ok minni
mögu Heimdallar;
viltu, at ek, Valföðr!
vel framtelja
forn spjöll fíra,
þau er fremst um man.

2. Ek man jötna
ár um borna,
þá er forðum
mik fædda höfðu;
níu man ek heima,
níu íviði,
mjötvið mæran
fyr mold neðan.

3. Ár var alda
þar er Ýmir bygði,
vara sandr né sær
né svalar unnir,
jörð fannsk æva
né upphiminn,
gap var ginnunga,
en gras hvergi.

4. Áðr Burs synir
bjöðum um ypðu,
þeir er Miðgarð
mæran skópu;
sól skein sunnan
á salar steina,
þá var grund gróin
grænum lauki.

5. Sól varp sunnan,
sinni mána,
hendi inni hægri
um himinjódyr;
sól þat ne vissi
hvar hon sali átti,
máni þat ne vissi
hvat hann megins átti,
stjörnur þat ne vissu
hvar þær staði áttu.

6. Þá gengu regin öll
á rökstóla,
ginnheilug goð,
ok um þat gættusk;
nátt ok niðjum
nöfn um gáfu,
morgin hétu
ok miðjan dag,
undorn ok aptan,
árum at telja.

7. Hittusk æsir
á Iðavelli,
þeir er hörg ok hof
hátimbruðu,
afla lögðu,
auð smíðuðu,
tangir skópu
ok tól görðu.

1. Hearing I ask | from the holy races,
From Heimdall's sons, | both high and low;
Thou wilt, Valfather, | that well I relate
Old tales I remember | of men long ago.

2. I remember yet | the giants of yore,
Who gave me bread | in the days gone by;
Nine worlds I knew, | the nine in the tree
With mighty roots | beneath the mold.

3. Of old was the age | when Ymir lived;
Sea nor cool waves | nor sand there were;
Earth had not been, | nor heaven above,
But a yawning gap, | and grass nowhere.

4. Then Bur's sons lifted | the level land,
Mithgarth the mighty | there they made;
The sun from the south | warmed the stones
of earth,
And green was the ground | with growing
leeks.

5. The sun, the sister | of the moon, from
the south
Her right hand cast | over heaven's rim;
No knowledge she had | where her home
should be,
The moon knew not | what might was his,
The stars knew not | where their stations
were.

4. Snorra Edda, Gylfagynning 11: The Celestial family

Þá maelti Gangleri: 'Hversu stýrir hann gang sólar ok tungls?' Hár segir: 'Sá maðr er nefndr Mundilfoeri er átti tvau bǫrn; Þau vóro svá fǫgr ok fríð at hann kallaði annat Mána en dóttur sína Sól ok gipti hana Þeim manne er Glenr hét. En guðin reidduz Þessu ofdrambi ok tóku Þau syskin ok settu up á himin, létu Sól keyra Þá hesta er drógu kerru sólarinnar Þeirar er guðin hǫfðu skapat til at lýsa heimana af Þeiri sío er flaug ór Muspellzheimi. Þeir hestar heita svá: Árvakr ok Alsviðr.

Gangleri asked again: 'How does one govern the path of the sun and the stars?' The High One said: 'The man who was called Mundilfari had two children. They were so nice and kind that he called his son Mani or the Moon, and his daughter Sol or the Sun. He married her to the man who was called Glen. But the gods were angry at this impertinence and took the brother and the sister and placed them in the sky. Sol had to drive the horses who drew the chariot with the suns. And the gods created them from sparks flying out of Muspellsheim to light up the worlds. The horses were called thus: Arvak and Alsvið.

5. 2ND Merseburg Charm

Phol ende Uuôdan uuorun zi holza.
Dû uuart demo Balderes uolon sîn uuoz birenkit.
thû biguol en Sinthgunt, Sunna era suister,
thû biguol en Frîia, Uolla era suister;
thû biguol en Uuôdan sô hê uuola conda:
sôse bênrenkî, sôse bluotrenkî,
sôse lidirenkî:
bên zi bêna, bluot zi bluoda,
lid zi geliden, sôse gelimida sin!

Phol and Wodan rode to the wood.
There Balder's foal disjointed his foot.
Then Sinthgunt addressed him, and Sunna, her sister,
Then Friia addressed him, and Wolla, her sister.
Then Wodan addressed him, so as he understood:
As the bone disjointment, so the blood disjointment,
so the limb disjointment.
Leg to leg, blood to blood,
limb to limb, so they should be joined!

6. Adam of Bremen describes the pagan sanctuary at Uppsala (*Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum* 5, 26-27)

26. Nunc de supersticione Sueonum pauca dicemus. Nobilissimum illa gens templum habet, quod Ubsola dicitur, non longe positum ab Sictona civitate. In hoc templo, quod totum ex auro paratum est, statuas trium deorum veneratur populus, ita ut potentissimus eorum Thor in medio solium habeat triclinio; hinc et inde locum possident Wodan et Fricco. Quorum significationes eiusmodi sunt: 'Thor', inquiunt, 'praesidet in aere, qui tonitrus et fulmina, ventos ymbresque, serena et fruges gubernat. Alter Wodan, id est furor, bella gerit, hominique

ministrat virtutem contra inimicos. Tertius est Fricco, pacem voluptatemque largiens mortalibus'. Cuius etiam simulacrum fingunt cum ingenti priapo. Wodanem vero sculpunt armatum, sicut nostri Martem solent; Thor autem cum sceptro Iovem simulare videtur. Colunt et deos ex hominibus factos, quos pro ingentibus factis immortalitate donant, sicut in Vita sancti Anscarii leguntur Hericum regem fecisse.

27. Omnibus itaque diis suis attributos habent sacerdotes, qui sacrificia populi offerant. Si pestis et famis imminet, Thorydolo lybatur, si bellum, Wodani, si nuptiae celebrandae sunt, Fricconi. Solet quoque post novem annos communis omnium Sueoniae provintiarum sollempnitas in Ubsola celebrari. Ad quam videlicet sollempnitatem nulli praestatur immunitas. Reges et populi, omnes et singuli sua dona transmittunt ad Ubsolam, et quod omni poena crudelius est, illi qui iam induerunt christianitatem, ab illis se redimunt cerimoniis. Sacrificium itaque tale est. Ex omni animante, quod masculinum est, novem capita offeruntur, quorum sanguine deos placari mos est. Corpora autem suspenduntur in lucum, qui proximus est templo. Is enim lucus tam sacer est gentilibus, ut singulae arbores eius ex morte vel tabo immolatorum divinae credantur. Ibi etiam canes et equi pendent cum hominibus, quorum corpora mixtim suspensa narravit mihi aliquis christianorum 72 vidisse. Ceterum neniae, quae in eiusmodi ritu libationis fieri solent, multiplices et inhonestae ideoque melius reticendae.

'xxvi (26). That folk has a very famous temple called Uppsala, situated not far from the city of Sigtuna and Bjorko. 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 crops. The other, Wotan-that is, the Furious-carries on war and imparts to man strength against his enemies. The third is Frikko, who bestows peace and pleasure on mortals. His likeness, too, they fashion with an immense phallus. But Wotan they chisel armed, as our people are wont to represent Mars. Thor with his scepter apparently resembles Jove. The people also worship heroes made gods, whom they endow with immortality because of their remarkable exploits, as one reads in the Vita of Saint Ansgar they did in the case of King Eric.

xxvii (27). 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. It is customary also to solemnize in Uppsala, at nine-year intervals, a general feast of all the provinces of Sweden. From attendance at this festival no one is exempted.3 Kings and people all and singly send their gifts to Uppsala and, what is more distressing than any kind of punishment, those who have already adopted Christianity redeem themselves through these ceremonies. The sacrifice is of this nature: of every living thing that is male, they offer nine heads,4 with the blood of which it is customary to placate gods of this sort. The bodies they hang in the sacred grove that adjoins the temple. Mow this grove is so sacred in the eyes of the heathen that each and every tree in it is believed divine because of the death or putrefaction of the victims. Even dogs and horses hang there with men. A Christian seventy-two years old told me that he had seen their bodies suspended promiscuously. Furthermore, the incantations customarily chanted in the ritual of a sacrifice of this kind are manifold and unseemly; therefore, it is better to keep silence about them.

(Translated by Francis J. Tschan)

ARMENIAN

The pre-Christian Armenian religion is very poorly known; after all, Armenia was the first country in the world to embrace Christianity as the official religion, in the beginning of the 4th century A.D.. Our main sources for the study of Armenian paganism are the ecclesiastical writers such as Moyses of Koren (*Mowsēs K^c orenac^c i*) who wrote a 'History of Armenia' in which he noted some ancient traditions and even fragments of pre-Christian poetry. It appears that the Armenian religion, just as the Armenian language, was subject to a strong Iranian influence. This is not surprising, since Armenia was ruled by Parthians for nearly half a millennium. The name of the mythical hero *Vahagn,* celebrated in a famous passage from Moyses' History, is from Iranian, cf. Av. *Vərəθraγna-*. We also learn that the chief god of the pagan Armenians was *Aramazd*, which is clearly the avestan name of *Ahura Mazdā*, borrowed from the Parthians. However, unlike his Iranian model, Aramazd was conceived as a god of thunder (*ampropayin*). The goddess *Anahit*, called "lady" (*tikin*), was clearly modelled on Avestan *Arədvī Sūrā Anāhitā* (see above). Cattle bearing the brand of a star were sacrificed to her, and it has been claimed that she has absorbed some of the elements of the worship of Ishtar, the ancient Near Eastern goddess of love. Finally, the great Armenian fire-festival, still celebrated on the 13th of February, is originally the Mazdaist festival *Āθrakāna*, celebrated in the fire-temples and associated with Mithra (the Avestan name of the pagan temple, *mehean*, probably comes from Iranian *māiθryāna-* also derived from the name of this god).

1. The birth of Vahagn (from 'The History of Armenia' of Mowsēs Kcorenac^c i)

Erknēr erkin, erknēr erkir
erknēr ew covn cirani;
erkn i covown ownēr ew zkarmrikn ełegnik;
ənd ełegan p^c oł cux elanēr,
ənd ełegan p^c oł boc^c elanēr;
ew i boc^c oyn vazēr xarteaš patanekikna hur her unēr, boc^c unēr mōrus,
ew ač^c kunk^c n ēin aregakunk^c.

'The Sky was in labour, the Earth was in labour,
The purple sea was also in labour;
Labour caught also a small red reed in the sea.
Through the reed's tube came a smoke,
and from the reed's tube came a flame,
and from the flame a red-haired youth jumped.
He had fire as hair, fire as beard,
and his eyes were Suns'.

SLAVIC

By the time they became literate, all the Slavic peoples were Christianzied. We do not have any written texts from the pre-Christian period, and even the archaeological data about the Slavs before their great migrations (6th-7th centuries A.D.) are rather limited. Some scarce information about pagan Slavs' beliefs and religious practices can be found in the works of the Byzantine authors, such as Procopius. Russian *Povest' Vremennyx let* (The Primary Chronicle) contains valuable references to the paganism of the Eastern Slavs, including an account of the baptism of Kiev (988), when the Russian prince Vladimir accepted Christianity and threw the large statue of the chief pagan god Perun into the Dnieper. There are also several references to pagan gods in the earliest Russian literary text, 'The tale of Prince Igor' (*Slovo o Polku Igorevě*, 12th century). Although this poem was composed in Christian Russia and it tells about an unsuccessful raid by the (Christian) prince Igor against the pagan Polovtsians, the poetic language preserved several formulas inherited from the pagan period, including the mention of several gods, e.g. *Velesъ* and *Svarogъ*.

Western medieval chroniclers, such as Thietmar of Merseburg (11th century), also mention pagan practices among the Slavs, e.g. the pagan temple dedicated to *Zuarasic* (*Svarožičь, a deminutive of *Svarogъ, otherwise known as one of the Slavic deities) in Riedegost. In Russian medieval sources, *Svarožičь* is explained as the personification of fire. Other authors who gave accounts of Slavic paganism include Saxo Grammaticus (see above) and Helmold (*Chronica Slavorum*, 12th century), who mentions, e.g., *Zerneboh* (*Čьrnobogъ 'the black god') and the goddess *Ziva* (*Živa 'the living one'). Most of these references (in Latin) are about the religion of the Western Slavs, with whom the Germans were in contacts during the Middle Ages.

Other than the mentioned sources, we have rich collections of Slavic folklore, which often mentions pagan gods and other supernatural creatures in euhemerized forms. Traces of Slavic paganism are also visible in the toponymy of the Slavic-speaking countries, cf., e.g., the placenames *Perunovo brdo* and *Mokošica* in Croatia, or *Veles* in Macedonia. Several lexical traces of paganism in Slavic languages are no longer understood, e.g. why the flower *Iris* is called *perunika* in Croatian, and also *bogiša* (a derivative of *bog* 'god') in dialects. Was it the flower dedicated to *Perun*?

It is generally agreed that the chief deity of the Slavic pantheon was *Perunъ*, who is usually mentioned first in the lists of pagan deities. His name is probably derivable from *peru-n- 'rock' (Hitt. *peruna*-), but it may also be connected to the root *per- 'beat, strike' (Lith. *peřti*, Russ. *prat'* 'beat (linen), wash'. Pol. *piorun* still means 'thunder', and in Gr. we have *keraunós* 'thunderbolt' with unexpected *k*-. *Velesъ/Volosъ* is sometimes glossed as *skotii bogъ* 'the god of cattle'; his name is probably related to Lith. *vėlė* 'soul of the deceased' and *Vélnias* 'devil', less certainly with Hitt. *wellu*- 'meadow', etc.). In Old Norse, the name of the Valkyries (ON *Valkyrja* 'chooser of the slain') may be from the same root, which is also contained in *Valhalla,* the hall of the slain. While the domain of Perunъ is the high ground (*gora) and sky (*nebo), the domain of Velesъ/Volosъ is the low ground, the mud and the swamp (*bolto), where Perunъ slays him with his weapon, the thunder (*gromъ/*trěskъ), mythologically represented as an arrow (*strěla, cf. the Byelorussian expression *stralá perunóva*). In the Slavic folk-lore representation of the world-tree, the thunderer Perunъ is usually represented as a bird or prey (*orьlъ 'eagle' or *sokolъ 'falcon'), which bears resemblance to similar representations of Old Norse Óðinn (whose sacred bird is the eagle) and Celtic *Lugos (note that his Welsh incarnation, *Llew*, is represented as an eagle, *eryr*, in

the Mabinogi). Velesъ/Volosъ, on the other hand, is represented as a snake (*zmьja, or *zmьjь 'dragon') lying in water by the root of the world-tree. Occasionally, he is also represented as a bear (*medvědъ), or some other kind of 'fierce beast' (PSl. *ljutъ zvěrь). It has been argued that Velesъ/Volosъ is a cattle-stealer, and Old Russian sources call him *skotii bogъ* 'the god of cattle'. When Perunъ killed him, the cattle was apparently released. Perunъ's killing of *Velesъ/Volosъ is thus parallel to Indra's killing of Vṛtra in the Rig-Veda, which also leads to the freeing of cattle and the flowing of rivers.

Svantevid, or *Svętovitъ,* the pagan deity worshipped on the island of Arkona in the Baltic and mentioned by Saxo, may be derived from *svętъ* 'holy' and *vitъ,* or rather *vidъ* 'appearance'. The god *Triglavъ* at least has a transparent etymology, since his name simply means 'three headed one', cf. OCS *glava* 'head'; three- and four-headed gods are well known in Early Slavic iconography, and they are attested in the writings of authors such as Saxo Grammaticus (in his account of the sanctuary of Arkona among the Baltic Slavs). *Stribogъ* is also a compound name, but its first element is unclear; some connect it to PIE *ph₂tēr (Lat. *pater,* Gr. *patḗr,* etc.) and see in him the father of the gods (*ph₂trey-bʰogo-); however, this etymology is very disputable, as the regular reflex of *pHt- in Slavic is uncertain. The gods *Xъrsъ (ORuss. *Xors*) and *Simarglъ,* mentioned in ORuss. chronicles, are generally believed to be borrowed from Iranian, and this is also possible for *Svarogъ,* although this latter deity is often connected with PSl. *svarъ* 'dispute, strife' (Russ. *svára,* Pol. *swar*); this etymology faces both semantic problems (*Svarogъ* was probably a fire-god) and formal difficulties (*-ogъ is not a suffix in Slavic). The Hypathian Codex (a 15ᵗʰ century Russian translation of the 6ᵗʰ century Greek text by John Malalas) translates Greek *Hephaestus* as *Svarogъ,* which implies the connection of this god with smiths; the same text also claims that the Sun was a son of Svarogъ, and that he was called *Dažьbogъ.* His name means 'the giving god' (from ORuss. *dati* 'give' and *bogъ* 'god'), but this etymology does not make the connection with the Sun any clearer. Moreover, it is uncertain how reliable the Hypathian Codex is as a source on pre-Christian Russian (and Slavic) mythology.

The goddesses seem to have been scarce among the Slavic deities. *Mokošь,* mentioned in the Russian Chronicles and well attested in toponymy (e.g. in Croatian placename *Mokošica*), is of unknown origin; the connection with OCS *mokrъ* 'wet' is slightly more probable than the relationship with OIr. *Macha,* a goddess connected with horses in the Old Irish Ulster cycle. The goddess *Morana,* scarcely attested, and not in early sources, most likely represents a female demon, and her name is usually derived from *moriti* 'to kill'. There may have also been the goddess of the spring, *Vesna.* Her name means simply 'spring', cf. Russ. *vesná* < PIE *wesr- (Skr. *vasanta-,* Gr. *éar,* Lat. *vēr,* etc.). In Slovene dialects on the Sontia river she is attested only as a sort of a wood fairy, and otherwise the attestations of such a deity are scarce. The general name for female nymphs in Slavic folklore is *Vila* (Croat. *víla,* Slov. *vîla,* ORuss. *vila,* Cz. *víla*); the etymology of this noun is uncertain, but it may be related to Lith. *vejù, výti* 'chase, hunt', OHG *weidōn* 'hunt'.

Little is known with any certainty about the pagan Slavic rites and customs. Christian authors tell us that there were temples to gods (such as the temple of Perunъ above ancient Kiev, or the temple of Velesъ in Yaroslavl'), and certain rites apparently involved keeping of eternal fires (in the temple of Velesъ in Yaroslavl'), sacrifices of animals and (if Christian chroniclers are to be believed) humans. Gods were represented by giant statues (CSl. *kumirъ,* a word of Turkic origin). There were fertility rites, that may have involved orgiastic elements, e.g. the feast of Jarylo celebrated in the early spring (he was later confused with St. George, whose day fell on April 23). As reconstructed chiefly from folk-lore texts (Katičić 2010), the myth of

Jarylo represented this god as a traveller who is coming from afar (*jьz za morja čьrvenaego 'from beyond the red sea') and whose arrival made the fields bear crops (*Kǫda Jarylo xoditъ, tǫda pole roditъ). His voyage takes him over muddy roads (*do kolěna bolto, do ormene voda 'mud (reaching his) knees, water reaching his elbows') on which he rides a white or grey horse (*Jarylo jadetъ na bělomь/sivomь koni). He uses his sword to cut of the head of a dragon or snake (*pozoju/zmьji mьčetь golvǫ sěčetъ), and is met in an enclosed dwelling (*gordъ) by a female personality whose name Katičić reconstructs as *Morana* or *Mara* (*Mara děvojьka po gordu xoditъ, děvery buditъ 'The girl Mara walks in a *gordъ* and awakens (her) brothers-in-law'). She has a golden apple (*zolto jablъko) and uses it to choose Jarylo as her bridegroom (*Jemu že jablъko, tomu děvojьka. Jarylu jablъko, Jarylu děvojьka). There follows a ritual of holy wedding between Jarylo and Mara, which takes place in a moist, dewy meadow (*padla jestь rosa, děvojьka xoditъ bosa 'the dew fell, the girl is walking barefoot). After a ritualized conversation (*děvice, kaka jego jesi roda 'Maiden, what is your kin?'), Jarylo and Mara recognize each other as brother and sister (*děvice, ty jesi moja sestrica 'maiden, you are my sister'). The holy matrimony celebrated to bring about fertility to the fields is thus incestuous. After the marriage, the bridegroom is driven to the fields and slaughtered as a horse, a gruesome end to the ritual which has been compared to the Old Indian horse-sacrifice (*aśvamedha*).

1. Vladimir worships pagan gods (*Povest' vremennyx let,* Laurentian Codex (1377), sub anno 980)

И нача княжити Володимеръ въ Києвѣ єдинъ . и постави кумиръі на холму . внѣ двора теремнаго . Перуна древѧна . а главу єго сребрену . а оусъ златъ . и Хърса Дажьба҃ . и Стриба҃ . и Симарьгла . и Мокошь [и] ᴬ жрѧху имъ наричюще æ б[ог]ъı ᴮ. [и] ᴬ привожаху сн҃ъı своæ и дъщери . и жрѧху бѣсомъ . [и] ᴬ wcᵏвернѧху землю теребами своими . и wскверниса кровьми землѧ Руска . и холмо-тъ но прблг҃ии Бъ҃ не хотѧ смр҃ти грѣшникомъ . на тᵒмъ холмѣ нынѣ цр҃ки стоить . ст҃го Васильæ єсᵗь . /л.25об./ æкоже послѣди скажемъ . мъı же на преднеє възратимсѧ. Володимеръ же посади Добрыну ᴮ оуæ своєго в Новѣгородѣ . и пришедъ Добрына Нооугороду . постави кумира надъ рѣкою Волховомъ . и жрѧху єму людьє Нооугородьстıи . аки Бу҃.

Translation into Modern Russian:

И стал Владимир княжить в Киеве один, и поставил кумиры на холме за теремным двором: деревянного Перуна с серебряной головой и золотыми усами, и Хорса, Дажьбога, и Стрибога, и Симаргла, и Мокошь. И приносили им жертвы, называя их богами, и приводили своих сыновей и дочерей, и приносили жертвы бесам, и оскверняли землю жертвоприношениями своими. И осквернилась кровью земля Русская и холм тот. Но преблагой Бог не захотел гибели грешников, и на том холме стоит ныне церковь святого Василия, как расскажем об этом после. Теперь же возвратимся к прежнему.
Владимир посадил Добрыню, своего дядю, в Новгороде. И, придя в Новгород, Добрыня поставил кумира над рекою Волховом, и приносили ему жертвы новгородцы как богу.

'And Vladimir started to rule alone in Kiev, and he placed the idols on the hill behind the castle: a wooden statue of Perun with a silver head and golden moustache, and Xors, Dažьbog and Stribog, Simargl and Mokošь. And they sacrificed to them, calling them gods, and

brought their sons and daughters, and they made sacrifices to demons, and they desecrated the earth with their sacrifices. And the Russian land and that hill were desecrated by blood. But the very merciful God did not want the sinners to perish, and the church of Saint Basil stands on that hill today, as we shall tell later. Now let us return to our story. Vladimir set up Dobrynya, his uncle, in Novgorod. And when he came to Novgorod, Dobrynya placed an idol above the river Volkhov, and the Novgorodians made sacrifices to that idol as if it were God.'

2. Saxo Grammaticus' description of the pagan Slavic worship at Arkona (Rügen), *Gesta Danorum* 14.39.1ff.

[1] Interea, dum haec geruntur, Rugianorum ex regis longius agentis occupatione fidentium defectio incidit. [2] Qui cum, finita hieme, expeditionem adversum se destinari cognoscerent, quendam conspectioris ingenii ac facundiae politioris subornant, qui regis propositum exquisita adulationis arte subverteret. [3] Quod cum minime efficere quivisset, reditu suo hostium adventum praecurrere noluit, ne aut civibus bellum dissuadendo suspectus aut concitando perniciosus exsisteret. [4] Igitur Absalonem, uti se comitem pateretur, oravit, quoad eius consilium a civibus posceretur, quod stolidae mentis hominibus plus requisita quam oblata consilia placere soleant. [5] Rex, varias Rugiae partes adortus, cum ubique praedae, nusquam vero pugnae materiam repperisset, fundendi sanguinis aviditate perductus, urbem Arkon obsidione tentavit.

[1] Haec, in excelso promontorii cuiusdam vertice collocata, ab ortu, meridie et aquilone non manu factis, sed naturalibus praesidiis munitur, praecipitiis moenium speciem praeferentibus, quorum cacumen excussae tormento sagittae iactus aequare non possit. [2] Ab iisdem quoque plagis circumfluo mari saepitur, ab occasu vero vallo quinquaginta cubitos alto concluditur, cuius inferior medietas terrea erat, superior ligna glaebis intersita continebat. [3] Septentrionale eius latus fonte irriguo scatet, ad quem muniti callis beneficio oppidanis iter patebat. [4] Huius quondam Ericus usu violentius intercluso, non levius siti quam armis obsessos premebat. [5] Medium urbis planities habebat, in qua delubrum materia ligneum, opere elegantissimum visebatur, non solum magnificentia cultus, sed etiam simulacri in eo collocati numine reverendum. [6] Exterior aedis ambitus accurato caelamine renitebat, rudi atque impolito picturae artificio varias rerum formas complectens. [7] Unicum in eo ostium intraturis patebat. [8] Ipsum vero fanum duplex saeptorum ordo claudebat, e quibus exterior parietibus contextus puniceo culmine tegebatur, interior vero, quattuor subnixus postibus, parietum loco pensilibus aulaeis nitebat nec quicquam cum exteriore praeter tectum et pauca laquearia communicabat.

[1] Ingens in aede simulacrum, omnem humani corporis habitum granditate transscendens, quattuor capitibus totidemque cervicibus mirandum perstabat, e quibus duo pectus totidemque tergum respicere videbantur. [2] Ceterum tam ante quam retro collocatorum unum dextrorsum, alterum laevorsum contemplationem dirigere videbatur. [3] Corrasae barbae, crines attonsi figurabantur, ut artificis industriam Rugianorum ritum in cultu capitum aemulatam putares. [4] In dextra cornu vario metalli genere excultum gestabat, quod sacerdos sacrorum eius peritus annuatim mero perfundere consueverat, ex ipso liquoris habitu sequentis anni copias prospecturus. [5] Laeva arcum reflexo in latus brachio figurabat. [6] Tunica ad tibias prominens fingebatur, quae ex diversa ligni materia creatae tam arcano nexu genibus iungebantur, ut compaginis locus non nisi curiosiori contemplatione deprehendi potuerit. [7] Pedes humo contigui cernebantur, eorum basi intra solum latente. [8] Haud procul frenum ac sella simulacri compluraque divinitatis insignia visebantur. [9]

Quorum admirationem conspicuae granditatis ensis augebat, cuius vaginam ac capulum praeter excellentem caelaturae decorem exterior argenti species commendabat.

3. A Byelorussian charm

Гэто спорував Бог (var. Илья) зь нячисьциком: я цябе, каець, забъю! – А як ты мяне забъёш: я схуваюся! – Куды? – Под чаловека! – Я чаловека забъю, гре́хы яму́ отпущу, – цябе забъю! – А я пот коня! – Я й коня забъю; чаловека на гэтым месьци награджу, а цябе забъю! – А я пот корову схуваюся! – Я й корову забъю; хозяину на гэто место награджу, а цябе забъю! – А я под будынок! – Я й будынок спалю; чаловека на гэтым месьци награджу, а цябе забъю! – А я под дзераво схуваюся; там ты мяне не забъеш! –Я дзераво разобъю, и цябе забъю! – Ну, дык я, каець, схуваюся у воду пот корч пот колоду! – Ну, там твоё место, там сабе будзь!

Дык гэто коли удариць идзе пярун, дык гэто Бог нячисьцика бъёць. Ён, як находзиць хмара, здаётца ци собаком, ци свиньне́й, ци кошкую – абы чим; ды й хуваетца пот кого-нибудзь. Тоды там пярун бъець.

(Р 4, 155–156, Дополнение № 3)

'This is how God (*var.* Ilias) quarrelled with the Devil: I will, kill you, he says!. -And how will you kill me? -I will hide. -Where? -Under a man! -I will kill the man, forgive his sins, and kill you. -Then I will hide under a horse! -I will kill the horse, too. I will recompensate the man, and kill you. -Then I will hide under a cow! -I will kill the cow too, recompensate her master at once, and I will kill you. -Then I'll hide under a building. -I will burn down the building, recompensate the man, and kill you. -Then I will hide under a tree. There you will not kill me. -I will crush the tree, and kill you! -Then, he says, I will hide in the water, under a trunk, under a plank! -Well, there is your place, there you should be! So, when a thunder comes to strike, it is God who strikes the devil. He changes into a dog, or a pig, or a cat, as the dark cloud comes. He will change into anything and hide under anyone. Then the thunder strikes there.'

4. A Serbian song about the Sun and the Moon (Vuk Karadžić, *Srpske narodne pjesme* I, 235)

Aj gjevojko, dušo moja!
Što si tako jednolika
i u pasu tankovita
kan'da s Suncu kose plela,
a Mjesecu dvore mela,
van stajala, te gledala
gdje se Munja s Gromom igra;
munja groma nadigrala
dvjema, trima jabukama.

'O girl, my soul!
Why are you so simple-looking
and thin on the waist,
as if you wove the Sun's hair
and swept the court of the Moon,
as if you stood outside and watched
how the Thunder played with the Lightning;
the Lightning outplayed the Thunder
with two or three apples.'

BALTIC

Baltic peoples were among the last in Europe to accept Christianity. Lithuania was definitely baptized only in the 14th century. No wonder, then, that all of our sources for the study of Baltic paganism are rather late. Some pagan customs and rites were recorded by German authors who wrote about the Balts, or mention them in other contexts, e.g. by Adam of Bremen, in his *History of the Bishops of Hamburg* (11th century), or Simon Grunau, in his *Prussian Chronicle* (15th century), but such texts are often unreliable. Therefore, we have to rely on folklore texts collected in the Baltic countries long time after Christianization, such as the monumental collection of Latvian folk-songs (*dainas*) by Christian Bārons (finished in the 1st half of the 20th century).

In Latvian and Lithuanian dainas we find many names of pagan gods. The word for 'god' (Lith. *dievas,* Latv. *dievs*) originally referred to only one of the pagan gods, as is still clear from many dainas, where *dieva dēli* 'god's sons' are mentioned. The thunderer, *Perkúnas*, Latv. *Pērkons*, is certainly related to Slav. *Perunъ (ORuss. *Perunъ*, etc.), but the forms are not superimposable on each other. The Baltic theonym was probably contaminated by the reflex of PIE *perk^{w}u- 'oak' (Lat. *quercus,* etc.), since the oak-tree is the favorite target of Perkunas's thunder, cf. Latv. *Pērkons spēra ozolā* 'Perkons hit the oak' (*LD* 33713).

The name of the sun-goddess, *Saulė*, is the PIE word for 'sun', PIE *seh$_2$wōl 'sun' (Lat. *sōl,* Gr. *hḗlios,* etc.). Another important mythological figure in the dainas is her daughter, Lith. *Saulės dukrytė* (= 'sun's daughter'), Latv. *Saules meita* 'the Sun-maiden'. *Vélnias*, Latv. *Vēlns* 'devil' is the Baltic counterpart to Slavic *Velesъ, ORuss. *Velesъ, Volosъ* (related to Lith. *vėlė,* Latv. *velis* 'soul of the deceased', which might be connected to Hitt. *wellu-* 'meadow', see above). The 'lord of the wind' in Lithuanian dainas is called *Vėjopatis* (from *vėjas* 'wind' and *patis* 'master', cf. Gr. *Poseidáōn,* which is a similar compound). The goddess of fate, Lith. *Laimė,* Latv. *Laima* is also the abstract noun meaning 'luck', but this word is without a clear etymology. The earth-goddess, or the personified Earth, is Latv. *Zeme,* or *Zemes māte* 'mother of the earth', Lith. *Žemynė* (a deminutive of *žemė* 'earth' < PIE *d^{h}g$^{'h}$em-, OCS *zemlja,* Lat. *humus*, etc.). Similarly, Latv. *Mēness* (Lith. *Mėnulis*) is simply 'the Moon'. Latv. *Meža māte* 'the mother of the wood' (Lith. *Medeinė*) rules over the wild animals, and there is also the *Jūras māte* 'the mother of the sea', the *Sniega māte* 'the mother of the snow', and the *Lietus māte* 'the mother of the rain'. The Baltic cult of the 'mothers' is comparable to the cult of the mothers (*matres*) in Gaul (e.g. the 'Mothers of Namausis' from a Gaulish inscription), or to Latin *Mater Matuta* (originally the Dawn Goddess).

The chief god of the Prussians, according to Simon Grunau's Chronicle, was *Patollo* (also called *Pickols*, and *Pickollos*), portrayed as an old man with a pale, deathly color. He may have been the god of death, and his name i srelated to Lith. *pykstù* 'be angry'.

One of the most important motives in Baltic dainas is a heavenly wedding between the Sun and the Moon, or, alternatively, between the Sun Maiden and one of her suitors (often the Moon, or the son of Dievs), e.g. Latv. *Dieva dēla... Saules meitas vedamā* 'Dievs' son, who is destined to wed the daughter of the Sun, *LD* 34039-3.

1. A Latvian Daina, (Bārons, LD 34127).

Kuplis auga ozoliņš
Dieva nama galiņē;

Speṛ pērkons, rīb zemiṇ',
Ne lapiṇa nedrebēja.

'A branchy oak-tree grows
by the house of Dievs;
Perkons shot it, the earth trembled,
not a leaf shivered'.

2. Bārons, LD 32909

Vāj, Jāniti, Dieva dēls,
tavu platu cepuriti
visa plata pasaulite
apakš tavas cepurites.

'O Janis, son of Dievs,
your hat is so broad!
The whole broad world
is under your hat!'

3. Bārons, LD 33742

Aiz kalniṇa ezeriṇš,
Aiz ezera ozoliṇš;
Dieva dēls jostu kāra,
Saules meita vaiṇadziṇu.

'Behind the hill there is a lake,
behind the lake there is an oak-tree;
The son of Dievs hangs the belt,
the Sun-mainden hangs the garland'.

4. A Lithuanian daina (Rhesa, 48 1-4)

Po klevelių šaltinaitis	Under the ash-three there is a well
Čystas vandenaitis.	of clear water,
Kur ateit Saulės dukrytės	where the daughters of the Sun
anskti burną praustis.	come to wash their faces in the morning.
Prie klevelio šaltinaičio	I went to the ash-tree by the well
ėjau burną praustis;	to wash my face.
man beprausiant baltą burną,	And I washed my white face,
nuplovjau žiedaitį.	and my ring fell off.
O atėjo Dievo suneliai	And God's sons came
su šilku tinkleliais	with silk little nets
Ir žvejavo mano žiedaitį	they caught my ring,
iš vandens gilumos.	from the depth of the water.

Ir atjojo jauns bernytis
ant bėro žirgaičio;
O tas bėrasis žirgaitis
aukso padkavaitėms.

And a young boy came
on a brown horse;
and that brown horse
had golden hooves.

APPENDIX:
ILLUSTRATIONS

A HITTITE GOD

A VEDIC SACRIFICE

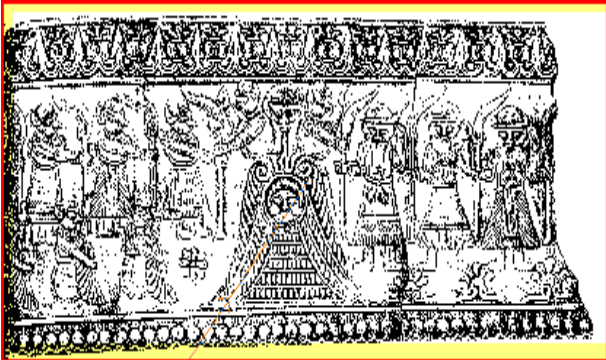A PROCESSION OF HITTITE GODS IN
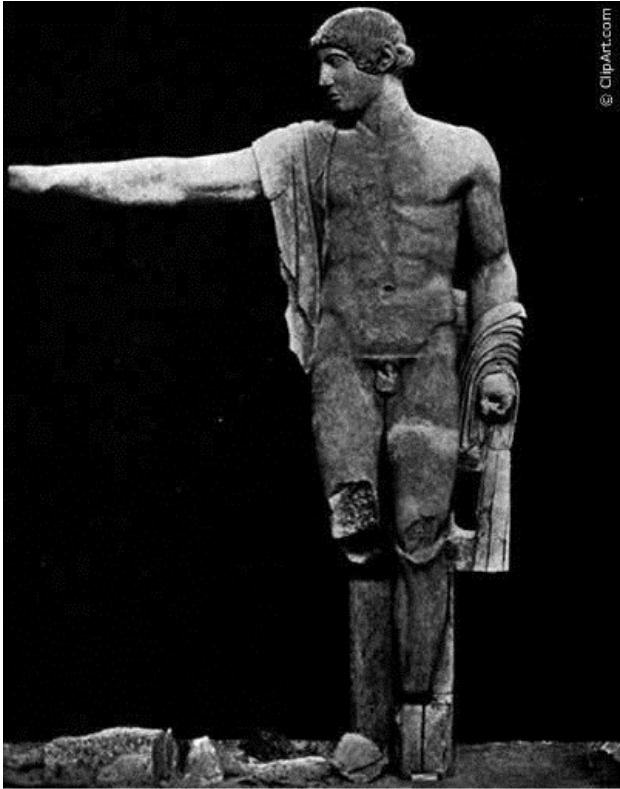THE SANCTUARY AT YAZILIKAYA

INDRA

AGNI

VARUNA

THE SILVER PLATE FROM LURISTAN

A STATUE OF APOLLO

ORPHEUS

Apollo

OKEANOS (FROM A GREEK VASE)

Figure 1: Okeanos with dragon tail.

THE GUNDESTRUP CAULDRON
WITH CELTIC DEITIES

Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY/Art Resource, NY

CALENDAR FROM COLIGNY
(ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM,
LYON)

THE SUOVETAURILIA

TARANIS (JUPITER) FROM
CHÂTELET:

THÓRR

A PAGAN SLAVIC IDOL

ЗБРУЧСКИЙ ИДОЛ. СВЯТОВИТ-РОД. IX в. н. э.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abaev, V. I. *Nartovskij èpos osetin*, in: *Skazanija o nartax*, Moskva 1978.

Allen, N. J. 'The Ideology of the Indo-Europeans: Dumézil's Theory and the Idea of a Fourth Function', *International Journal of Moral and Social Studies* 2/1987: 23-39.

Allen, N. J. 'Romulus and the Fourth Function', in: *Indo-European Religion after Dumézil*, ed. by E. C. Polomé, *JIES Monographs no. 16,* Institute for the Study of Man, Washington D.C.: 13-36.

Benveniste, E. *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes*, Les éditions de Minuit, Paris 1969.

Biezais, H. *Baltische Religion*, Kohlhammer, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 1975.

Boyce, M. *Zoroastrians: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London 1979.

Burkert, W. *Greek Religion*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA 1985.

Calin, D. 'Langage poétique du ritual PIE', *Wékwos* 2/2016: 35-48.

Calin, D. *Dictionary of Indo-European Poetic and Religious Themes*, Les Cent Chemins, Paris 2017.

De Vries, J. *La Religion des Celtes,* Payot, Paris 1963.

Dexter, M. R. 'Dawn-maid and Sun-maid: Celestial goddesses among the Proto-Indo-Europeans', in: *The Indo-Europeanization of Northern Europe*, ed. by K. Jones-Bley and M. E. Huld, Institute for the Study of Man, Washington: 228-246.

Disterheft, D. 'Irish Evidence for Indo-European Royal Consecration', in: *Studies in Honor of Jaan Puhvel, II: Mythology and Relition*, ed. by J. Greppin and E. C. Polomé, Institute for the Study of Man, Washington, DC 1997: 103-118.

Duchesne-Guillemin, J. *La religion de l'Iran ancien*, Paris 1962.

Dumézil, G. *Légendes sur les Nartes,* Paris: Institut d'Etudes Slaves, 1935.

Dumézil, G. 'Légendes sur les Nartes. Nouveaux textes relatifs au héros Sosryko', Revue de l'Histoire des Religions. Tome CXXV. N° 2-3. Avril-Juin 1942-1943: 97-128.

Dumézil, G. 'L'epopée Narte', *La Table Ronde* 132, 1958: 42-55.

Dumézil, G. *L'idéologie tri-partite des indo-européens*, Bruxelles 1958a.

Dumézil, G. *Le livre des héros: Légendes ossètes sur les Nartes*, Paris, Gallimard 1965.

Dumézil, G. *La rélignion romaine archaique*, Payot, Paris 1974.

Dumézil, G. *L'oubli de l'homme et l'honneur des dieux*, Payot, Paris 1985.

Dunkel, G. 'Vater Himmel's Gattin', *Die Sprache* 34/1990: 1-27.

Estell, M. 'Orpheus and Ṛbhu revisited', *JIES* 27/1999: 327-333.

Euler, W. 'Gab es eine indogermanische Götterfamilie?' in: *Studien zum indogermanischen Wortschatz*, ed. by W. Meid, IBS, Innsbruck 1987: 35-56.

Forssman, B. 'Apaoša der Gegner des Tištrya', KZ 82/1968: 37-61.

Gershenson, Daniel E. *Apollo the Wolf-god*, JIES Monographs, No 8, Institute for the Study of Man, Washington, D. C. 1993.

Gonda, J. *Die Religionen Indiens, I.* Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 1960.

Gonda, J. *Prayer and blessing: anceint Indian ritual terminology*, Brill, Leiden 1989.

Haas, V. *Die Geschichte der hethitischen Religion*, Brill, Leiden 1994.

Hale, W. E. *Asura in early Vedic religion*, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi 1986.

Haudry, J. *La rélignion cosmique des Indo-Européens*, Arché, Paris 1987.

Humbach, H. *The* Gāthās *of Zarathushtra*, Winter, Heidelberg 1991.

Ivanov, V. V. & Toporov, V. N. *Issledovanija v oblasti slavjanskix drevnostej*, Nauka, Moscow 1974.

Jackson, P. *The extended voice. Instances of myth in the Indo-European corpus*, Department of Theology, Uppsala 1999.

Jakobson, R. 'The Slavic God Velesъ and his IE Cognates', in: *Selected Writings VII. Contributions to Comparative Mythology*, Mouton, Berlin 1985c: 3-48.

Janda, M. *Eleusis. Das indogermanische Erbe der Mysterien*, IBS, Innsbruck 2000.

Janda, M. 'Tracce indoeuropee nel mito di Ullikummi, in: O. Carruba & W. Meid, eds. *Anatolisch und indogermanisch, Akten des Kolloquiums der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft in Pavia, 22-25 September 1998*, IBS, Innsbruck 2001: 193-204

Janda, M. 'The Religion of the Indo-Europeans', in: *Proceedings of the Seventeenth Annual UCLA Indo-European Conference*, ed. by Karlene Jones-Bley et alii, Institute for the Study of Man, Washington D.C. 2006: 1-30.

Jouet, P. *Religion et mythologie des Baltes,* Arché, Paris 1989.

Karaliūnas, S. 'Drevnij litovskij panteon i ego sravnitel'no-istoričeskij kontekst', *Bal'to-slavjanskie issledovanija* XVIII, 2009: 448-486.

Katičić, R. *Auf den Spuren sakraler Dichtung des slawischen und des baltischen Heidentums*, Nordrhein-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vorträge G 377, Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn 2003.

Katičić, R. *Die Hauswirtin am Tor. Auf en Spuren der großen Göttin in Fragmenten slawischer und baltischer sakraler Dichtung*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt a/M 2003a.

Katičić, R. *Božanski boj*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb 2008.

Katičić, R. *Zeleni lug*, Matica hrvatska, Zagreb 2010.

Katz, J. T. 'Evening Dress: the Metaphorical Background of Latin *vesper* and Greek *hésperos*', in: *Proceedings of the 11th UCLA Indo-European Conference, Los Angeles, June 4th-5th 1999,* ed. By Karlene Jones-Bley, Martin Huld and Angella Della Volpe, Institute for the Study of Man, Washington: 37-52.

Kazanas, N. D. 'Indo-European Deities and the *Rgveda*', *The Journal of Indo-European Studies,* 29/2001: 257-295.

Kerényi, K. *Die Mythologie der Griechen, I & II,* DTV München 1992.

Kölligan, D. 'Aphrodite of the Dawn: Indo-European Heritage in Greek Divine Epithets and Theonyms', *Letras Clássicas* 11/2007: 105-134.

Kurke, L. 'Pouring prayers: A formula of sacred IE poetry', *JIES* 17/1989: 113-125.

Littleton, C. Scott, *The New Comparative Mythology*, UCa Press, Berkeley 1982.

LIV = *Lexikon der indogermanischen verben*, H. Rix et alii, Reichert, Wiesbaden 2002.

Lüders, H. *Varuna*, I-II, Göttingen 1951-1959.

Lyle, E. *Ten Gods. A New Approach to Defining the Mythological Structures of the Indo-Europeans*, Cambridge Scholars, Newcastle 2012.

Mac Cana, P. *Celtic Mythology*, The Chancellor Press, London 1996.

Malandra, W. W. *An Introduction to Ancient Iranian Religion*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1983.

Mallory, J. *In Search of the Indo-Europeans*, Thames & Hudson, London 1989.

Mallory, J. and Adams, D. Q. (eds.) *The Encyclopedia of Indo-European Culture*, Fitzroy Dearborn, Chicago 1997.

Matasović, R. *A Theory of Textual Reconstruction in Indo-European Linguistics*, Lang, Frankfurt a/M 1996.

McCone, K. 'Hund, Wolf und Krieger bei den Indogermanen', in: *Studien zum indogermanischen Wortschatz*, ed. by W. Meid, IBS, Innsbruck 1987: 101-154.

Nagy, G. 'Perkūnas and Perunъ', in: M. Mayrhofer et. al. (eds.) *Antiquitates Indogermanicae. Gedenkschrift für H. Güntert*, Institut für Sprachwissenschaft, Innsbruck 1976: 113-131.

Narten, J. 'Avestisch frauuaši', Indo-Iranian Journal 28/1985: 35–48

Nilsson, M. P. *Geschichte der griechischen Religion, I.* Beck, München 1955.

Oberlies, T. *Der Rigveda und seine Religion*, Suhrkamp, Berlin 2012.

O'Brien, S. 'Indo-European Eschatology: a Model', *JIES* 4/1976: 296-320.

Ogilvie, R. M. *The Romans and their Gods*, Random House, London 2000.

Polomé, E. C. 'Der indogermanische Wortschatz auf dem Gebiete der Religion', in: *Studien zum indogermanischen Wortschatz*, ed. by W. Meid, IBS, Innsbruck 1987: 201-219.

Polomé, E. C. 'Some Reflections on the Vedic Religious Vocabulary', in: *Studies in Honor of Jaan Puhvel, II: Mythology and Religion*, ed. by J. Greppin and E. C. Polomé, Institute for the Study of Man, Washington, DC 1997: 225-234.

Polomé, E. C. 'Indo-European Religion', in: *Historical, Indo-European, and Lexicographical Studies. A Festschrift for Ladislav Zgusta on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday*, ed. by H. H. Hock, De Gruyter, Berlin 1997a: 129-145.

Prósper, B. M. 'Celtic and Non-Celtic Divinities from Ancient Hispania: Power, Daylight, Fertility, Water Spirits and What They Can Tell Us about Indo-European Morphology' *The Journal of Indo-European Studies. 43* (1 & 2)/2015: 35–36.

Puhvel, J. 'Meadow of the Otherworld in Indo-European Tradition', *KZ* 83/1969: 64-69.

Puhvel, J. 'Aspects of Equine Functionality', in: *Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans*, The University of California Press, Berkeley & LA 1970: 159-172.

Puhvel, J. *Comparative Mythology*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1987.

Renou, L. *Religions of Ancient India*, Schocken, New York 1968.

Schlerath, B. 'Können wir die urindogermanische Sozialstruktur rekonstruieren? Methodologische Erwägungen', in: *Studien zum indogermanischen Wortschatz*, ed. by W. Meid, IBS, Innsbruck 1987: 249-265.

Schlerath, B. 'Religion der Indogermanen', in: W. Meid, (Hg.), *Sprache und Kultur der Indogermanen. Akten der X. Fachtagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft Innsbruck, 22.-28. September 1996.*, IBS, Innsbruck 1998: 86-99.

Schmitt, R. *Dichtung und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit*, Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 1967.

Simek, R. *Lexikon der germanischen Mythologie*, Kröner, Stuttgart 1984.

Slade, B. 'How (exactly) to slay a dragon in Indo-European? PIE *bheid- ($h_3\acute{e}g^{wh}im$, $k^w\acute{r}mi$-)', *Historische Sprachforschung* 121/2008(2010): 3-53

Thieme, P. 'Vorzarathusstrisches bei den Zarathustriern und bei Zarathustra', *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 107/1957.

Watkins, C. 'Language of Gods and Language of Men: Remarks on Some Indo-European Metalinguistic Traditions', in: J. Puhvel, ed. *Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans*, The University of California Press, Berkeley and LA 1970: 1-19.

Watkins, C. *How to Kill a Dragon. Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*, OUP, Oxford 1995.

West, M. L. 'The Name of Aphrodite', *Glotta* 76/2000: 138.

West, M. L. *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, OUP, Oxford 2007.

Witzel, M. 'Sur le chemin du ciel', *Bulletin d'Etudes Indiennes* 2/1984: 213-279.

Witzel, M. *The origin of the world's mythologies*, OUP, Oxford 2013.

York, M. 'The divine twins in the Celtic pantheon', *JIES* 23/1995: 83-112.

Zaroff, R. 'Aśvamedha – A Vedic horse sacrifice', *Studia Mythologica Slavica* 8/2005, 75-86.

Zimmer, S. ''Sacrifice' in Proto-Indo-European', *Journal of Indo-EIruopean Studies* 37/2009: 178-190.