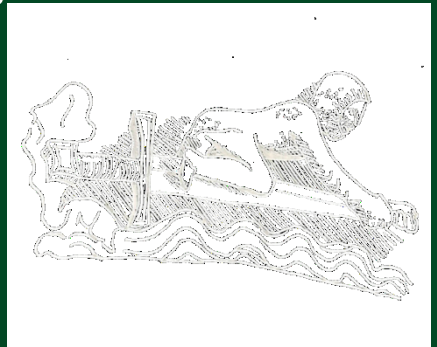


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Editor's Note

We present here a special issue of *Cosmos*, delayed due to the pandemic. In order to catch up, the present volume is a triple issue, *Cosmos* 33-35. The papers here cover a great range of topics in myth and folklore, across many regions, reaching deep into the past.

You will find explorations of the mythical Sword Bridge, of Romanian and Croatian wedding symbolism, of Nordic goddesses, Slavic werewolves, Columbian water myths, Old Testament shamanic masks. There is also a thematic section of papers on astro-archaeology, including studies of Indo-European star names, ancient tsunamis and eclipses.

An extended review article discusses recent developments in archaeology, along with shorter book reviews. Finally, the editors honour the passing of our friend and colleague, Dean Miller, with a short obituary.

LOUISE S. MILNE

Part 1

Sword Bridge, Chinvat Bridge and Golden Deer: Passages to the Otherworld in Vedic, Zoroastrian, Sarmatian and Arthurian Tradition

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abSTraCT. *A historical-comparative method is used to address possible connections between the Sword Bridge (Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*, Chrétien's *Charrette*) of the Arthurian legends and the "bridge as narrow as a hair" in Caucasian heroic sagas and traditional beliefs (Armenian, Georgian, Ossetian, etc.). This comparison is illuminated with additional Otherworld bridge images: the Bridge of Welfare of the Vedic (Rigveda,) the Chinvat Bridge of the Zoroastrian mythology ("Bridge of Judgement"; Avesta, *Bundahishn*, etc.).ⁱ What might be the nature of these affinities of ideas and motifs? The common feature is that 'perilous bridge' connects our world with the Otherworld, from where there is no return. In all these narratives, the bridge is closely related with death in semantic and symbolic terms. Though C. Scott Littleton and Linda A. Malcor compared fundamental motifs of the Arthurian Legends and Nart epic (*Holy Grail*, *Sword in the Stone*, *the White Animal*), but did not analyse the similar roles of the bridge to the Otherworld in Celtic and the Caucasian and Iranian mythologies, probably because the bridge to the Otherworld is not recounted in the Nart epic in the equivalent dramatic sequence as in Arthurian legends. First, I review the possibility of a relation between bridges in Arthurian and Alano-Sarmatian traditions the latter amalgamating Central Eurasian and Indo-Iranian mythology. Then, I analyse structural elements and mythological background for the 'narrow bridge' and the Otherworld of the narratives in question and show they are closely interrelated in a logical and symbolic perspectives, as are their denizens: the golden deer, the water fairy, the tutelary spirits of the dead in Siberian shamanhood, and demons of the Zoroastrian tradition.*

KeyWords: *Comparative mythology and folklore, Central Eurasian cosmology, animism, Siberian shamanism, heroic epic, wonderful deer, Sword and Chinvat Bridge, Land of the Dead, Scytho-Sarmatians, ethnocentrism in Arthurian Studies.*

THE TEXT CORPORA: A SKETCH

Arthurian Literature

Chrétien de Troyes: *Lancelot, the Knight of the Cart* (*Lancelot, Le Chevalier de la Charrette*; between 1175 and 1181)

Sir Thomas Malory: *Le Morte Darthur (D'Arthur)*, (London, 1485)

Penninc and Pieter Vostaert: *The Romance of Gawain (Roman van Walewein*; Middle Dutch Arthurian romance; 13th c.; the manuscript: U.B. Leiden, ed. Letterk. 195-2); Barber 2001, 225-314; Penninc and Vostaert 2000)

Ulrich von Zatzikhoven: *Lanzelet* (after 1194; Kragl 2006, 378-79; 402-3ii; Coomaraswamy 1944, 207)

Vedic Literature

Rigveda (composed between c. 1500 and 1200 BCE)

Zoroastrian Literature

Avesta (Sasanian Empire; 224–651 CE) - The oldest surviving manuscript (K1) of an Avestan language text is dated 1323 CE; *Gāthās* (old Avestan, ‘hymns, psalms’; Nyberg 1938, 182-87; Pavry 1926, 49-59)

Later (Younger) Avestan Texts

Vendīdād XIII. 9 (6), (24) and XIX. 29 f.; (The Zend-Avesta, Part I; trans. J. Darmesteter 1880)

Pahlavi Texts (Sasanian period, 226-651 CE):

Bundahishn XII. 7; XXX. 1 (9-13) (‘creation of the beginning’ or ‘original creation’; Pavry 1926, 91- 92)

Dādistan-i-Dīnīk XX-XXII; *Dādestān ī Dēnīg* (*The Datistan-i-dinik / Dādīstān-ī dīnīk*; ‘religious judgements’; ‘religious opinions or decisions’), Pahlavi work by Manūščihr, high priest of the Persian

Zoroastrian community in the 9th century CE (“several years before a.d. 881”; see Anklesaria [1913] 1976, 44-5; Boyce 1984, 83-4; West 1882, xxii-xxv, 1-276)iii

Arda Virāt (Ardā Wīrāz nāmāg / Artāk Vīrāz Nāmāk) V. 1 (Middle Persian Pahlavi texts, 8th and 9th centuries CE; the oldest existing copy dates to the mid-16th century; see Coomaraswamy 1944, 203; Pavry 1926, 14, 23, 85, 91, 107-9)

Caucasian Oral Epic Literature

Nart sagas (*Nartæ*; Abaza, Abkhaz, Chechen-Ingush, Circassian, Ossetian, Ubykh variants): syncretic oral epic cycle of ancient Scythian (600 BC to 300 CE), Sarmatian (*Iazyg / Iazyx*; 3rd c. BC to 4th c. CE) and Alanian (1st c. CE to 13th c. CE) oral epic tradition and Caucasian folk beliefs (Colarusso and Salbiev 2016).

CELTIC MYTHOLOGY AND ARTHURIAN STUDIES: A VERY SHORT CRITICAL SURVEY

The renowned British (Richard Barber, Nora K. Chadwick, Edward Davies, J. Gwenogvryn Evans, Stephen Thomas Knight, Alexander MacBain, Alfred Nutt, Jessy L. Weston, Sir Ifor Williams, and many others), German (e.g. Helmut Birkhan, Alfons Hilka, Heinrich Zimmer) and US American (e.g. James Douglas Bruce, Norris J. Lacy, Roger Sherman Loomis) scholars of Celtic mythology and Arthurian studies have compared exhaustively the Arthurian Legends and Romances with texts of Old Irish, Welsh,iv or French folklore from various centuries, or with so called “classical” motifs of mythology they had read during their university years. Their methodology is similar in this point as well: it never occurred to any of them that the basic elements of the Arthurian tradition may have partially or wholly originated from a different source than Celtic mythology itself. The names of Scythians, Alans, Sarmatians or of the Nart epic are never mentioned in their works or indices at all, although an English translation of the notable historico-geographical opus of Strabo (64 or 63 BCE – c. CE 24; *Geographica*) had been published already in 1856 in London, mentioning in detailed discussion the Kelto- Scythians in Thrace (Hamilton and Falconer 1856, I: 453-54; II: 240).vi This broad ethno-, Euro- and/or Western-centrism was due on part to British (academic) imperial and colonial thinking, and Romantic

assumptions about national identity and culture, including implicitly or explicitly, Celtic nationalism. Such attitudes are still present continue to and constitutes the mainstream approach to Arthurian and Celtic Studies, chiefly in Europe.vii.

SCYTHIAN AND SARMATIAN STUDIES: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Mikhail Ivanovich Rostovtzeff (1922, 1925) was the first modern scholar to study the history of these people; Georges Dumézil (1930, 1946, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1968, 1971, 1978) the first western scholar to deal with their mythology; followed by János Harmatta (1941, 1950, 1970) and Bernard S. Bachrach (1967, 1969, 1973). However, until C. Scott Littleton (with Ann C. Thomas 1978), and two minor publications on the similar deaths of Arthur and the Nart Batraz (Grisward 1969, 1973), the possibility of a historical-mythological connection between the Sarmato-Alan Nart sagas and the Arthurian tradition never came up. Referring to possible historical reasons for certain the close correspondences in motifs, Tadeusz Sulimirski was the author who, after writing two articles about the history and art of the Scythians and Sarmatians (1963, 1964), published an important book in English (1970). In the latter, he mentioned firstly the relevant historical data (Cassius Dio 71:11) about the sending of a number of Sarmatian *cataphracti* (auxiliary cavalry) to Britain by Marcus Aurelius in 175 CE. Much later another welcome and unique publication was the book by Urs Müller (University of Zurich) in German about cultural influences of Sarmatians on Germanic peoples in the Middle Ages (Müller 1998). As a reviewer wrote about this work, “this conservative tradition of scholarship... has treated barbarian groups as self-evident and ancient historians as conscientious observers of alien peoples... may [now] dissatisfy many readers.” The same scholar, Hummer also spoke of “sceptical readers” and “ideologically charged ancient ethnography” on the occasion of the very first book about this almost totally neglected research area (Hummer 2001, 1086). The first entire English translation of the Nart epic was thanks to Walter May, edited with a preface by John Colarusso and Tamirlan Salbiev (2016). The volume includes the first English translation of an extremely informative introductory paper on the Ossetian epic tradition by the renowned Ossetian linguist and scholar of mythology Vasily Ivanovich Abaev (ibid. XXIX-LXVIII). And, last but not at least, I have to mention John Colarusso, who has made an enormous contribution to western scholarship on Nart epic studies in the last four decades: as author of many scholarly papers devoted to the linguistic and

mythological problems of the different Caucasian variants of this oral epic tradition. He wrote also the foreword of the noteworthy book, *From Scythia to Camelot: a radical reassessment of the legends of King Arthur, the Knights of the Round Table, and the Holy Grail*, by Littleton and Malcor (1994, xiii-xx).

C. SCOTT LITTLETON & LINDA A. MALCOR. 1994. *FROM SCYTHIA TO CAMELOT*

This book appeared in 1994, 27 years ago now, and it is now well known; I only remark on its most important notes on the historical background of motif-correlation in Nart epic and Arthurian legends.

[...] at the end of the Marcomannian War in the year 175 of the Common Era (c.e.), the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius sent a contingent of 5,500 Sarmatian *cataphracti*, or heavily armed auxiliary cavalry, from Pannonia (modern Hungary) to Britain. [...] their descendants managed to survive as an identifiable ethnic enclave at least until the beginning of the fourth century, and perhaps longer. [...] the stories are so similar that the possibility of a chance parallelism is remote. [...] a passage in Dio Cassius's *Roman History*, written ca. 225 C.E., that describes how, at the end of the Marcomannian War, 8,000 *cataphracti* from a Sarmatian tribe known as the Iazyges (or Jazyges) were impressed into the Roman legions. Of these Iazyges 5,500 were sent to Britain. (Littleton & Malcor 1994, xxiii-xxiv)

There are very close similarities between Arthurian and Nart heroes and heroines: the Lady of the Lake, the famous Sword in the Stone episode, the magical cup (or cauldron) called the *Nartamongæ*, ("Revealer of the Narts"). This *Nartamongæ*, like the Grail, is a magical vessel that never runs dry; it appears at feasts before the bravest of heroes (ibid. xxv).

The White Animal

Among many other close correspondences are the hunt of the white animal (ibid. 102-3); or white hart, stag, deer or hind, (ibid. 121-22;

Loomis 1949, 68-70; cf. Pschmidt 1911). Littleton and Malcor wrote this short passage on the hunt:

Other Scythian elements appear in the Lancelot corpus ... One of the most prominent is the motif of the hunt for the white animal. In Ulrich von Zatzikhoven's *Lanzelet* Guinevere is abducted by Valerin as Lanzelet (Lancelot) and Walewein (Gawain) join Arthur on the hunt for a white stag. The custom that the successful hunter of the white stag would receive a kiss from the most beautiful woman was initiated, according to the text, by Uther Pendragon. The Middle Dutch verse romance *Lanceloet en het hert met de witte voet* (*Lancelot and the Deer with the White Foot*; 1200-1250; transmitted exclusively in the *Lancelot-Compilatie*), the Second Continuation of Chrétien's *Perceval*, the Didot-*Perceval*, the Welsh *Peredur*, and the late twelfth-century Old French *Tyolet* all use the white-footed animal. In *Tyolet* the hero cuts off the white foot of a stag, but a false knight claims to have accomplished the feat after Tyolet is attacked by lions who leave him for dead. In related tales a hound (of unspecified color) leads Gawain over a bridge to the Waste Manor, where he finds a woman with a dead knight. [...] The animal at the ford is a typical steppe motif and could have come from the Alans or Huns. (Littleton & Malcor 1994, 102-3)

The authors did not notice the connection between bridges leading to the Otherworld in Celtic tradition and Caucasian folklore. They only casually mentioned the motif of the bridge leading to an otherworldly castle in reviewing the hunt of the white animal:

In Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* Lancelot follows a black brachet, or female hound, which had been tracking a deer, over a bridge and eventually to a castle, where he finds a dead knight. At least on the surface these stories, combined with the Arthurian tales of the hunt for the white stag, resemble the Ossetic narrative in which a white stag leads Uryzmæg to an enchanted house where he meets a woman who involves him in an adventure. (ibid. 102)

The two successive motifs, the deer hunt and the crossing of the bridge, are in fact directly related logically, as well as symbolically; but the bridge-motif disappeared from the corresponding place in the Nart epic until its first collections and editions, at the beginning of the last third of the 19th century; it does appear there, however, not much later, in the events of the Land of the Dead, which is where the pursued doe leads the Nart hero Soslan.

Soslan in the Land of the Dead (36)

One evening Soslan was sitting at the meeting place in the village square. Suddenly he saw old Uryzmag [Uryzmæg] returning from hunting, with shoulders slumped, and bowed head.

‘What misfortune has overtaken you, Uryzmag?’ inquired Soslan.

‘I have seen many things in my long life,’ replied he, ‘but such a wonder has never happened to me before until this day. I was hunting among the rushes. Suddenly I glanced among the reeds, and there, as if it were the sun shining, stood a young doe. Her coat was of pure gold. I drew to within a bow-shot of her, strung my bow, and was about to shoot an arrow, when suddenly they all slipped out of the quiver and disappeared in the undergrowth where I could not see them. Not a single one remained. I reached for my sword, but that too flew out of my hand and God alone knows where it went! The doe immediately sped away. I chased after her, but she too seemed to have disappeared into the earth completely.’

That night Soslan could not sleep however he tried. In the early morning, when day divided from night, he threw his felt cloak round his shoulders, took his bow and quiver, hung his sword in his belt, and set off for the reeds and rushes where Uryzmag had seen the doe with its coat of gold. The sun had only just risen, and its first rays had penetrated the reeds. In their light Soslan saw the golden doe that Uryzmag had met. It was coming slowly toward him, nibbling around at the grass. The sun’s rays reflecting from

her golden pelt seemed finer than the sharpest small needles, and pricked Soslan's eyes, which were already large with surprise.

'If that deer only fell into my hands, there would be none more famous than I among the Narts!' said Soslan beneath his breath.

Creeping up quietly, grass blade by grass blade, he approached the golden doe. Now he was within bow-shot. He placed an arrow in his bow, and was about to shoot, when it suddenly dropped and disappeared. Soslan seized his quiver, but not another single arrow was left in it. The deer was still there, and had not moved from its place.

'Is it just there to shame me?' thought he to himself, and drawing his sword, he sped on toward the deer, and came quite near in one great leap. But the golden doe saw him and bounded away, making off toward the Black Mountains.

'No, no! You won't get away from me!' thought Soslan, and flew off after her.

The golden doe flew to the Black Mountains, and hid herself in a deep cavern.

Soslan was quite unaware that he was pursuing the daughter of the sun, Atsirukh, though disguised as a deer, who had seven giants to protect her. Still thinking that he was chasing a golden deer, he came to the cavern where she had hidden, and saw nearby a seven-storied tower of fortress. [...]

[...] Soslan [...]: 'Let our ward, the daughter of the sun, Atsirukh, tell us what to do!'

So the giants went to the daughter of the sun, and said to her, 'An unusual guest has visited us. He calls himself Nart Soslan. We wanted to make an offering of him, but our knives could not touch him!'

The daughter of the sun listened, and hearing the name Soslan, cried, ‘If that is really Soslan, then he is my predestined one!’ [...]” (Colarusso and Salbiev 2016, 160–62)

Somewhat later, when the hero is already in the Land of the Dead (still in the same episode/chapter):

Here was a river, and in the middle of it stood an island. From the bank to the island a bridge had been thrown, no wider than the sharp edge of a knife. On the island, in an eggshell, sat a naked old man. (ibid. 166)

“Farther on I saw a bridge, as thin as the blade of a knife, thrown across to an island in a river. On the sharp edge of the bridge sat an old man in an eggshell. What was the reason for that?” [asked Soslan]

“That old man lived unsociably all his life. Neither on weekdays nor on holidays did he ever invite any guests in, so now he sits alone in the Land of the Dead, and passes his days in solitude.” [answered Vedukha] (ibid. 173)

[...] Soslan had paid the bride-price in full, and so they handed over to him their ward, the daughter of the sun Atsirukh, to be his wife. (ibid. 181)

A few Celticists during the last decades have angrily criticised Littleton and Malcor. Among others, the German scholar Stefan Zimmer (University of Bonn) devoted roughly seven pages to what he saw as the over-free and sloppy interpretation of Littleton and Malcor, at the end of his book (Zimmer 2006, 181, 183-90), in which he published his German translation of the oldest completely preserved Arthur manuscript, about two-thirds of the text of Culhwch and Olwen in the *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* (written c. 1350, National Library of Wales, Peniarth MS 4-5), and a complete text of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (Jesus College, Oxford, MS 111), written c. 1400 (Zimmer 2006, 113-65). However, such critics have been neither

careful nor emotionless, thus they miss the serious arguments. Zimmer includes, for example the following negligent assertions (trans. from German into English by the author):

Naturally, there is in no way direct link between die Ossetic and the Arthurian literature...Many of his (i.e. Littleton and A. M.'s) far-reaching conclusions are not sufficiently established... So far the historical facts – everything else is speculation...So, let us talk about the speculations...I may mention that the possibility is not excluded that certain Iranian traditions, among them myths and legends, could have been preserved in the local provincial Roman population for centuries – however, it is supported in no way by arguments! It cannot be more than a mere assumption, which had just been employed in order to have hypothetic clues for Iranian impacts at the development of the Arthurian legend...However, Littleton & Malcor speculate onwards... (181, 185-6)

As one can see, Zimmer was not familiar with accepted forms of scrutiny of methods in comparative mythology and folklore, cultural anthropology, sociology and structural text analysis.

Another hypercritical approach is by Richard Barber. He devoted a short paragraph to the earlier theory of Littleton and Thomas (1978) about the Sarmatian origin of the Holy Grail concept in the Arthurian literature (Barber 2004, 247). Instead of scientific arguments (historical data, historico-comparative method, motif analysis, etc.), he interprets their theory as pure belief. He writes as follows:

Even more radical are the arguments of two American scholars, C. Scott Littleton and Ann C. Thomas, who believe that the legends of the Caucasian people known as the Ossetes, in what is present-day Georgia, are ‘an epic tradition that almost certainly dates back to the pre-Christian period’...They include a parallel with the death of Arthur, and the return of Excalibur to the lake before he dies, which is striking enough; there are also tales of a sacred cup, the ‘Amonga’, which have much vaguer parallels with the Grail. This all leads to a theory that Arthur himself was descended from the Sarmatians, the predecessors of the Ossetes, who were sent by

the Romans to serve in Britain...But the arguments are tenuous, and it would probably be just as easy, with a similar use of ingenuity and general analogies, to prove the reserve: that the Arthurian stories had reached the Caucasus in the late Middle Ages and were the origin of these heroic narratives. (Barber 2004, 247)

Barber did not attempt to find supporting data for such a motif diffusion from Western Europe (Britain and Bretagne) to the Caucasus in the late Middle Ages. He also forgets the fact that the Ossetes of the Caucasus (not just in present-day Georgia but in neighbouring Russia as well) have never been in Western Europe in their history. The British scholar neglected to mention another relevant paper of Littleton as well, in which the latter clearly expressed that “there is no specifically Christian symbolism attached to the Nartyamonga. It remains a ‘pagan’ talisman, despite the fact that the majority of the Ossetes have been Orthodox Christians for over a millennium” (Littleton 1979, 329). Therefore, this idea of Barber is weak and far from the scientific level of the detailed and complex arguments of the two American scholars, especially Littleton.

THE SWORD BRIDGE AND THE WATER BRIDGE OF THE ARTHURIAN TRADITION

As mentioned at the start, well known scholars of Arthurian literature have published in abundance on the different texts of the Arthurian tradition. Therefore I do not comment on Irish, Welsh and French renditions of this tradition, other than quoting how these correlations are summed up by Roger Sherman Loomis (1949), as follows:

Chapter XXXIII

THE WATER BRIDGE

Verses 651-71, 693-700, 5116-47

The damsel who informed Lancelot and Gauvain that Guenievre had been carried off to the land of Goirre went on to say that one

could not enter that land except by two passages. One was called the “Pont Evage,” and consisted of a bridge a foot and a half in width, which lay beneath the surface of the water so that there was as much water above it as below it. Gauvain chose to follow the road which led to this bridge. Several days later, when nothing had been seen or heard of him, a search was made at the water bridge at the instance of Lancelot, and Gauvain was discovered, still wearing hauberk and helm and rising and sinking in the stream. In attempting to cross the bridge he had fallen off. By means of poles and hooks the half-drowned knight was dragged out and his body was emptied of water. As soon as he recovered consciousness, he asked for news of the Queen and learned of her deliverance by Lancelot.

Loomis then quotes older remarks regarding the Pont Evage: “This bridge seems directly reminiscent of the concept of an Otherworld lying beneath water.” (Loomis 1949, 222)

Loomis’s next chapter deals with the Sword Bridge:

Chapter XXXIV

THE SWORD BRIDGE

Verses 672-77, 3017-55

Of the two passages to the land of Goirre the more dangerous was the Sword Bridge. Lancelot, after parting from Gauvain and encountering various adventures, came to a black and raging stream. The bridge which spanned it was a sword as long as two lances, fixed at each end in a tree trunk. At the farther side there appeared to be two lions tied to a great rock. Removing the mail from his hands and feet, Lancelot crept across the sword, which was sharper than a scythe and cut his hands, knees, and feet. When he reached the other bank of the stream, he looked for the

lions, but he did not see so much as a lizard.(ibid. 225)

In the Irish *Training of Cuchulainn* the Bridge of the Cliff by which the hero reaches the island of Scathach combines the features of the various Bridges just noted. “When one sprang upon it, it was narrowed till it was as narrow as a hair, and it was as sharp as a blade-edge and as slippery as an eel’s tail. At another time it would rise so that it was as high as a mast.” Here, then, is a bridge which combines the properties of sharpness, narrowness, and automatic elevation, and which well deserves to be called “le Pont de l’Anguille.” This group of correspondences did not occur by chance. And since... several characteristic features of the *Charrette* are of Irish origin, it is natural to assume that the sword bridge is derived from *The Training of Cuchulainn*... In one version the bridge leading to Scathach’s isle is a narrow rope; in another it rises. In these earlier stages of the tradition, therefore, the Bridge of the Cliff already possessed two of the four properties attributed to it in the fifteenth century. There is a balance of probability, therefore, that the author of *The Training of Cuchulainn* found the other two properties – blade-like sharpness and eel-like slipperiness – in earlier traditions concerning the Bridge of the Cliff - traditions as old perhaps as the tenth century...

... Passed on by the Welsh, this concept of the perilous bridge was connected with the island abode of Bran, son of Llyr... (ibid. 226)

Two other features of the Sword Bridge may be plausibly accounted for by Irish tradition...one of the feats of the famous lover Diarmaid was to place two forked poles upright, fix a sword, edge upward, between them, and then thrice measure the sword by paces from the hilt to the point. This may well be the “blade feat,” which Cuchulainn learned on the isle of Scathach, and which might very naturally coalesce with the crossing of the narrow bridge to the same island. Certainly, the fixing of the sword in the forked poles seems to correspond to Chrétien’s assertion that the *Pont de l’Epée* was fixed in two tree trunks on opposite sides of the river. Another feature possibly derived from Irish saga is the two phantom lions, for in Version III of *The*

Wooring of Emer the glen crossed by the rising bridge was filled with spectral monsters. (ibid. 227)

To sum up the most significant attributes of the various motifs in Arthurian tradition:

- 1 The hero (Lancelot or Gawain)
- 2 goes to hunt
- 3 chases a white doe (“animal”)
- 4 across the sword bridge, which was sharper than a scythe
- 5 the bridge is guarded by two lions, and
- 6 the perilous bridge leads to a castle, where the hero finds
- 7 a woman with
- 8 a dead knight

It is undisputed that the place beyond the bridge is the Otherworld. Every significant motif of the motif-sequence can be found in extremely similar relation in the Nart epic, as well as in traditional folk beliefs about the Otherworld of the Caucasian peoples. The two lions and the two four-eyed dogs appear in Zoroastrian Mythology: mythological beings guarding the Chinvat Bridge that leads to the Otherworld. Mircea Eliade writes as follows:

It is known that the Caucasian peoples, and especially the Osset, have preserved a number of the mythological and religious traditions of the Scythians. Now, the conceptions of the afterlife held by certain Caucasian peoples are close to those of the Iranians, particularly in regard to the deceased crossing a bridge as narrow as a hair, the myth of a Cosmic Tree whose top touches the sky and at whose root there is a miraculous spring, and so on. (Eliade 1964, 395)

Then he goes on (ibid. 395-96; n. 91) quoting Dumézil, on the Osset,

the deceased, after taking leave of his family, mounts on horseback. On his road, he soon comes to various kinds of sentinels, to whom

he must give some cakes, the same that have been placed in his grave. Then he comes to a river, over which, by way of bridge, there is only a beam...Under the steps of the just, or rather, of the truthful, the beam widens, becomes stronger, turns into a magnificent bridge...

There is no doubt that the 'bridge' of the beyond comes from Mazdaism, like the 'narrow bridge' of the Armenians, the 'hair bridge' of the Georgians. All these beams, hairs, etc. have the power to widen generously for the soul of the just man and to narrow to the width of a sword blade for the guilty soul (Dumézil, *Légendes sur les Nartes*, 220-21, 202).

Concerning the correlations of the Zoroastrian and Vedic Chinvat Bridge with the Perilous Bridge (Coomaraswamy, 1944), as with the inner correlations of the Celtic tradition I cannot comment in detail here. The entire subject (Celtic-Alano-Sarmatian-Caucasian-Iranian/Zoroastrian-Indian/Vedic) deserves a wider analysis. However, concerning the connection of the Arthurian tradition with the Nart epic, a direct relation of the two seems undeniable.

THE CHINVAT BRIDGE IN THE ZOROASTRIAN TRADITION

The Chinvat Bridge (*Cinvatō Peretûm*; *Āinvatō pārətu*) (Boyce 1984, 83-4; Nyberg 1938, 180-86; Pavry 1926, viii, 49-59, 72-98; West 1882, 46-9) is a razor-thin bridge, a passage to the beyond in Zoroastrian mythological texts and religious beliefs, and in Indo-Iranian cosmological conceptions. The soul of the deceased must cross it to go to Paradise. It is mentioned several times in the *Avesta* and in the *Bundahishn*. The bridge is guarded by two four-eyed dogs, in both Vedic and Zoroastrian tradition. I quote an illustrative short paragraph from a Zoroastrian text (Anklesaria 1976 [1913]):

6.2.2 From the *Dadestan i denig*, Question 20

This, the 'Religious Judgments', is a collection of answers given

by Manushchihhr, Zoroastrian high priest in the ninth century A. C, to questions put to him by members of his community.

(3) The [Chinvat] Bridge is like a sword... “one of whose surfaces is broad, one narrow and sharp. With its broad side, it is so ample that it is twenty-seven poles wide; with its sharp side, it is so constructed that it is as narrow as a razor’s edge. (4) when the souls of the just and the wicked arrive, it turns on that side which is required for them. (5) Through the great glory of the Creator, and at the command of him who is the true judge and protector of the Bridge, it becomes a broad crossing for the just...; for the wicked it becomes a narrow crossing, just like a razor’s edge. (6) The soul of a just person sets foot on the Bridge, because of the... sharpness it falls from the middle of the Bridge and tumbles down. (Text, T. D. Anklesaria, *The Datistan-i-dinik*, 44-5; translation, E. W. West, *SBE*, XVIII, 48-9; Pavry 1926, 94-5; Boyce 1984, 83-4)

For the most detailed characterization of the Chinvat Bridge in Zoroastrian literature, the best book authority is probably Pavry (1926), who writes,

The *Vidēvdāt* [*Vendīdād*] (13. 8-9) gives a vivid description of the suffering undergone at the Bridge by the souls of the wicked who have committed certain mortal sins. We are told that...

His (namely, the sinner’s) soul will go to the other world with louder cries and greater lamentations than the howls of pain a wolf raises when trapped in a very deep pit.

No other soul will help his soul at death in spite of (its) cry and lamentation in (the other) world, nor will the two dogs that keep the Bridge help his soul after death, in spite of (its) cry and lamentation in (the other) world (Pavry 1926, 70)

Here is Pavry’s substantive analysis of the role of the Chinvat Bridge in Pahlavi literature (*Bundahishn* 30. I, 9-13):

The difficulties of the passage over this ‘Brig o’Dread’ are often alluded to and dilated upon in the Pahlavi books. Their teaching is that the Bridge becomes broad or narrow according to the nature of the soul that steps upon it, presenting to the righteous a pathway nine spears (*nēzak*) or twenty-seven arrows (*nāδ*) or a league (*frasang*) in breadth; but it turns to the godless man a sharp edge (*tāy I tēž*), like that of a sword (*šapšēr*) or a razor (*ōstarak*), so that this soul, when half-way across, falls into the abyss of Hell...

The same notable chapter goes on to give another account of the crossing, namely, that the soul of the righteous is guided over the Bridge by its own Daēnā (conscience) in the form of a lovely damsel, and is led by three steps, which are its good thoughts (*humat*), good words (*huxt*), and good deeds (*hvaršt*), to the resplendent Garōtmān. But if the soul is wicked, it is met by the Conscience of its evil deeds, which commands it to walk over the sharp edge of the Bridge. The wicked soul cries out that it would rather be cut to pieces by a sharp knife (*kārt*) or be pierced by an arrow (*tiyr*) or be utterly annihilated, than be forced to walk over the keen edge...(91-3)

There is no hunt into the Otherworld in the whole of Zoroastrian literature, but it is an essential element both in Siberian shamanic rituals and in Central Eurasian (Hunnic, Turkic and Hungarian origin legends; Mongolic/Oirat: Geser; Turkic: Alpamysh; Ossetian: Nart) heroic epic tradition.

INTERPRETATION OF THE MOTIFS

In the motive sequence I have discussed, of the Arthurian tradition, there are several elements that are impossible to clarify without the text of the Nart epic and Central Eurasian mythology or mythologies.

- 1 Why do they hunt?
- 2 Why is the hound leading them a female (brachet)?
- 3 Why is the deer (doe) white?
- 4 Why does it have to be chased to the other side of the bridge?
- 5 Why is the most successful hunter given a kiss by the most

beautiful lady?

These are five important questions, for which the Arthurian Legends hold no answer. Briefly, I would argue that there is a tight semantic relation between the dawn and the colour of the chased deer. As is clearly shown in the Nart epic, the doe is a Sun-symbol in Central Eurasian cosmology (Anisimov 1991 [1959], 19; Berze Nagy 1927, 66-8; Colarusso and Salbiev 2016, 160-61; Martynov 1991, 229; Pschmidt 1911, 22-7; Sebestyén 1902, 4: 402; etc.). That is why it appears at dawn; it is white in the Arthurian tradition and golden in the Nart epic for the very same reason. It is a doe (Mother or Master of the Animals, Jacobson-Tepfer 2015; Vitebsky 1995, 32; Hauptgeist, ein *ijä-kyl*, ‘*Mutter-Tier*’ Harva 1938, 477; leading female animal guardian or *Tiermutter* [animal mother] Vajda 1964, 268-90; Hultkrantz 1993, 8-9; female-spirit, Hamayon 1993, 16; spirit of animals, Helskog 1999, 77; roe deer, hind or doe, Mátéffy 2012, 955-7) because the hero is fated to marry her, after she gains human shape (totemic transformation). Therefore, the hero should not receive merely a kiss (which does not make sense in this context) from, but rather get married to, the most beautiful lady. This kiss of the fairest maiden (Loomis 1949: 68) in Arthurian tradition must be a late survival element of the original North Central Asian/South Siberian animistic, shamanic and totemic transformation of the (antlered reindeer) doe into human form and marriage between the hero (shaman, hunter) and the doe (Hamayon 1993, 16; Vitebsky 1995, 32), a tradition transmitted to Britain by the 5,500 Sarmatian *cataphracti* in 175 CE, and adopted by the local population during the following centuries.

The doe is chased across the bridge because she (as a female tutelary spirit) leads the main protagonist (originally the shaman) to the Otherworld; either into the celestial sphere, or into the underworld. This is the motif that does not appear in ancient Indo-Iranian religious and mythological texts, but we can deduce that it was a core characteristic of the world views and proto-shamanic ritual practices of Neolithic, Bronze and early Iron Age (third-second millennium–7C BCE) Siberian hunter-gatherer societies and their descendants (Jacobson 1983). That is why it was adopted by North-Asian Scytho-Siberians (early Iron Age) as well as Scythian (i.e. Black Sea Alan and Sarmatian) nomads (for periodisation and terminology, Jacobson-Tepfer 2015, 25); it was part of mythology and folklore already in these ancient times. There are a number of Stone Age (Arctic Norway, Alta; Helskog 1999, 73) and Neolithic rock carvings (Siberia and Inner Asia) which evidently represent cosmological scenes: male figures (most probably shamans or hunters) copulating with female

moose or solar deer (Tom and Angara rivers; Martynov 1991, 153). These petroglyphs are situated mostly on river banks (Amur, Angara, Ob, Tom, etc; Martynov 1991, Helskog 1999), where we can imagine Neolithic rituals taking place; suitable venues for rites of passage (van Genneep 1960 [1909]) and for journeys to the Otherworld with the help of tutelary spirits, such as the solar reindeer doe.

Such connections went unnoticed by Dumézil and Eliade. The celestial or solar doe leading the hero to the Otherworld is not Indo-Iranian origin, but arises from ancient Siberian cosmology, amalgamated into Scytho-Siberian and Alano-Sarmatian mythology and folklore. On the one hand the bridge leading to the Otherworld has been borrowed from Iranian funerary customs and beliefs into non-Iranian (Armenian, Circassian, Georgian, etc.) mythologies of the Caucasus. On the other hand, it must be also an archaic Iranian (Zoroastrian) substratum in the Scytho-Sarmatian cosmology, which is why it appears consequently in Nart epic. The Arthurian Legends are indirect proof of the theory that it must have already featured in Alano-Sarmatian traditions of the 2nd century CE.

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT: THE OTHERWORLD AND ITS DENIZENS

The Chinvat Bridge (*Činvatō pārətu*) in the *Avesta* (Coomaraswamy 1944, 201-3, 205; Nyberg 1938, 180-1) is guarded by two four-eyed dogs. In the work of Chrétien de Troyes two lions are featured (Loomis 1949, 225-7). In Welsh mythology and folklore, the *Cŵn Annwn*, “Hounds of Annwn,” are the snow-white, red-eared or red-grey otherworldly hounds that belonged to *Annwn*, the ruler of the land of the dead (Sherman 2008, 119; Minard 2012, 238; MacKillop 2004). It is impossible to tell whether this motif – the dogs at the gate of the Land of the Dead – both in Arthurian and Zoroastrian traditions, is connected through an early Sarmatian form of the Nart epic (2nd c. CE). There are no dogs in the equivalent scene here in the form in which we know the epic from 19th century collections. It is also possible that the white (or black, or unspecified colour) female dog (brachet) was added later in the Arthurian tradition, for instance, to replace the original Central Eurasian white (golden) doe. Or, their narrative functions may have become mixed in the syncretic processes which gave rise to various narrative traditions (Siberian, Sarmatian, Zoroastrian and at last Celtic). This doe figure is one of the Central Eurasian, especially Siberian, tutelary spirits, but not of the original Iranian tradition.

According to Eliade,

Here we find a “classic” cosmological schema of the three cosmic regions connected by a central axis (pillar, tree, bridge, etc.). The shamans travel freely among the three zones; the dead must cross a bridge on their journey to the beyond. We have encountered this funerary motif a number of times, and shall do so again. The important feature of the Iranian tradition (at least as it survived after Zarathustra’s reform) is that, at the crossing of the bridge, there is a sort of struggle between the demons, who try to cast the soul down to hell, and the tutelary spirits (whom the relatives of the deceased have invoked for the purpose), who resist them: Aristât, “the conductor of heavenly and earthly beings,” and the good Vayu. On the bridge, Vayu supports the souls of the pious; the souls of the dead also come to help them cross. The function of psychopomp assumed by the good Vayu may reflect a “shamanistic” ideology. (Eliade 1964, 397)

The Siberian shaman is guided in the Otherworld by the (reindeer) doe. In Central Eurasian heroic epics, she always is the one to lead the hero or heroes to the other side of a shallow, marsh, river or mountain-pass, or through an otherworldly cavern. This is, I would argue, evidence for an ancient connection between Siberian oral culture and epic, ritual and oral text. The solar doe appears at the end of the night, at dawn, and, as her apparition divides the night from day, it connects the two cosmic regions of Otherworld with our world.

CONCLUSIONS

Alfred L. Kroeber wrote the following thought-provoking observations about the nature and effects of cultural diffusion:

Diffused culture material often contains concrete or specific elements by which can be subsequently recognized even in the absence of a record of the event. In some cases it happens that the diffusion is definitely fragments of a larger complex or system

reach the accepted by it. In this event, the fragments are isolated into an entirely new context in the culture which they enter...

What is really involved in every true example of stimulus diffusion is the birth of a pattern new to the culture in which it develops, though not completely new in human culture. There is historical connection and dependence, but there is also originality. Analogically, ordinary diffusion is like adoption, stimulus diffusion like procreation, with the influencing culture in the role of the father; though by strict rules of historical evidence paternity is sometimes clouded. In essence, stimulus diffusion might be defined as new pattern growth initiated by precedent in a foreign culture. (Kroeber 1940, 1, 20)

In my opinion, the very same processes happened in our case. Every source text reviewed here includes the motif of the narrow bridge leading to the Otherworld that must be passed with difficulty by the hero. The Arthurian tales and the Nart epic show significant affinity in both a number of basic motifs, and in particular details. This cannot be mere coincidence, considering the long historical as well as inter-ethnic connections between the Sarmatian and the Celtic tribes, and the inherent logic of the motif sequence (partially lost in the Arthurian variants). In the large geographical space between Britain and the Caucasus we do not know any other folklore narrative (fairy-tale, legend or other genre), which includes the motif of a peculiar sword or razor-thin bridge leading to the Otherworld. After investigating the Celtic Arthurian and Scytho-Sarmatian Nart epic traditions and oral narratives, my conclusion is, that the motif of the Sword Bridge connected with the hunt of a (white or golden) deer was introduced into Britain by the members of the Sarmatian Iazyges in 175 CE, then supported through lasting inter-ethnic communications during the subsequent centuries, just as were the other basic motifs and narrative elements of the Nart epic, as discussed by Littleton and Malcor, as well as by Colarusso (the water bridge, the underwater castle/fortress).

It also seems clear that the essential motive sequence of hunt for the white/golden [reindeer] doe into the Otherworld through a river/mountain pass/cavern, the transformation of the doe into human shape, marriage with the shaman/hunter, and return from the otherworld journey was adopted by the early Scythian tribes during their long inter-ethnic contacts

with indigenous Siberian peoples in the Bronze and Iron Age (Jacobson 1983). This syncretic (Zoroastrian-Siberian) religious and narrative tradition was transmitted to later generations of Central Eurasian Scythian tribes, before their further waves of westwards migration to the Pontic Steppe region, the northern slopes of the Caucasus Mountain, Thrace and the Carpathian Basin (Great Hungarian Plain), among the other Alano-Sarmatians tribes, the Iazyges. The narrative motifs discussed in this paper were most probably transmitted into Britain by the latter.

Loomis wrote his conclusions about the close correspondences and similarities between the early Irish and Welsh legends as follows: “It is impossible to explain all these correspondences between *Perlesvaus*, *Sone*, *Historia Meriadoci*, *Le Chevalier de la Charrette*, and *Vita Gildae* as due to late literary borrowings. The relationships are too complex” (Loomis 1941, 935). My conclusion is very similar to this summary. It is impossible to explain all these correspondences between the Zoroastrian literature, the Nart epic and the Arthurian tradition as due to chance. The relationships are both too close and too complex.

APPENDIX 1

A PRELIMINARY TABULATION OF THE CORRELATED
NARRATIVE MOTIFS AND ELEMENTS:

<p>arThurian LiTeRaTure</p>	<p>VediC (RigVeda) and ZOrOaSTrian MyThOIOgy (aVeSTa & bundahishn)</p>	<p>narT ePIC (SOslan in The Land Of The dead)</p>
	<p>RV: “the Bridge as a ray of light” (Coomaraswamy 1944: 203); Avesta: “Albūr̥z at world’s end, the place of judgment, <u>whence the sun rises</u>” (ibid.)</p>	<p>“That night Soslan could not sleep however he tried. In the early morning, when day divided from night. [...] That night Soslan could not sleep however he tried. In the early morning, when day divided from night. [...] <u>The sun had only just risen</u>, and its first rays had penetrated the reeds.”</p>
<p>“How Sir Lancelot followed a brachet [...]. [...] black brachet [...] the feute of a <u>hurt deer</u>.”</p> <p>“hunting of <u>white hart/stag/animal</u>” (<i>The Romance of Erec and Enide</i>, Chapter VII, etc.); “the <u>marvelous white doe</u> of <i>Guigemar</i>” (see Loomis 1949: 68-70)</p>	<p><u>No hunt.</u></p> <p>“The account of the soul’s progress after death [...] the righteous man is assisted across the Bridge by a <u>beautiful maiden</u>, [...]” (Brown 1879: 22); “a <u>beautiful girl</u>” (Yasna 31; Boyce 1984)</p> <p>“in the form of a lovely damsel” (Bundahishn 30. I, 9-13)</p>	<p>“[...] I was hunting [...]”; as if it were the sun shining, stood a <u>young doe</u>. Her coat was of <u>pure gold</u>. [...] he approached the golden doe [...]”</p>
<p>“[...] in a deep forest. [...] she went through a <u>great marsh</u>”</p>		<p>“[...] <u>among the rushes</u>. [...] <u>among the reeds</u>. [...]”</p>
	<p>Albūr̥z (Mount Elbrus); Cakād-i-dāīfik, central <u>world mountain</u></p>	<p>“[...] toward the <u>Black Mountains</u>.”</p>
	<p>at the <u>gate of hell</u></p>	<p>“[...] he came to the <u>iron gates</u> that lead into the Land of the Dead.”</p>
<p><u>Bridgekeeper</u></p>		<p><u>Gatekeeper</u> of the Land of the Dead (Aminon)</p>
<p>The Land of Goire (Chrétien)</p> <p>Annwn (earlier Annwfn): Otherworld (medieval Welsh <i>Mabinogi, Preiddiau Annwfn/Book of Taliesin</i>)</p>	<p>“the underworld kingdom of the dead, thought be ruled over by Yima (Skt. Yama)” (Boyce 1984: 10)</p>	<p>The Land of the Dead</p>

<p>“[...] into <u>a castle</u>, [...].” “Chrétien’s Water Bridge is always and wholly <u>under water</u>”; “a strong bridge <u>like a fortress</u>” (Malory, Book IX: Chapter VII)</p>		<p>“[...] a seven-storied tower of <u>fortress</u>.” (<u>under water</u>)</p>
<p>“[...] he found a <u>dead knight</u>, [...] he saw lie a <u>dead knight</u> [...]”</p>	<p>The bridge [...] separates the world of the living from <u>the world of the dead</u>.</p>	<p>“other <u>dead ones</u> gathered round him. [in the Land of the Dead]”</p>
<p>“[...] So Sir Lancelot rode over <u>that bridge</u> that was old and feeble, [...]”; “[...] the sword was <u>sharper than a scythe</u> and cut his hands, knees, and feet.”; it was narrowed till it was <u>as narrow as a hair</u>, and it was as sharp as a blade-edge and as slippery as an eel’s tail.</p>	<p>The Chinvat Bridge (Avestan <i>Cinvatō Peretūm</i>, “bridge of judgement” or “<u>beam-shaped bridge</u>”); The bridge will appear <u>narrow</u>. RV: “the Bridge <u>as consisting of a thread or a hair</u>, or <u>as sharper than a razor or the edge of a sword</u>, or if of wood, [...]”</p>	<p>“a bridge [...] <u>no wider than the sharp edge of a knife</u>.”</p>
<p>“[...] Merlin let make a <u>bridge</u> of iron and of steel <u>into that island</u>, [...]”; the island of Scathach</p>		<p>“Here was a river, and in the middle of it stood <u>an island</u>. <u>From the bank to the island a bridge had been thrown</u>, <u>no wider than the sharp edge of a knife</u>. On the island, in an eggshell, sat a naked old man.” (<u>in the Land of the Dead</u>)</p>
<p><u>Two lions</u> (a black brachet; Malory); “<u>white, red-eared hounds</u> that belonged to <i>Anwnn</i>, the ruler of the land of the dead.” Welsh legend)</p>	<p>“The bridge is guarded by <u>two four-eyed dogs</u>.”</p>	<p>“[...] who had <u>seven giants</u> to protect her.”</p>

APPENDIX 2

There is a bridge to the Otherworld not just in Iranian (Zoroastrian), Sanskrit, Caucasian, Islam and Celtic (Arthurian) traditions, but also in orthodox Romanian and the Roman Catholic Moldavian Csángó (e.g. the villages of Diószén [Gioseni], Klézse [Cleja], Lábnyik [Vladnic], Magyarfalu [Arini]; Bacău County, Romania; Egyházaskozár, Hungary) funerary customs (Virt 1998, 9-10, 14; 2001, 67-73, 296-301; Róheim 1925, 177) and Romanian, partially pre-Christian origin calendric ritual texts (Christmas ballads; *colindă*). Béla Bartók (1881-1945), the Hungarian composer, pianist and ethnomusicologist, used for the libretto of his famous opus *Cantata profana* (subtitled: “The nine enchanted stags”; 1930) such Romanian *colinde* which he collected from Transylvania in April 1914. The plot of the libretto is briefly the following: a father has taught his nine sons only how to hunt; they do no other work, and spend all of their time in the forest. *One day while hunting a large and beautiful stag, they cross a haunted bridge and are themselves transformed into stags* (László 1967, 34; Suchoff 2001, 112; Vikárius 1993-4, 264, footnote 59). It seems apparent, that the original roles of the chased animal and the hunters have been inverted in the Romanian *colinde* in question (consequently in Bartók’s *Cantata profana* too), but it cannot be coincidence, that the deer hunt across a haunted bridge appears even in folk traditions of the geographical area of Thrace.

However, the Romanian ethnographer, Octavian Buhociu (1919-1978) made the following important remarks:

As we have done in the case of the symbolically hunted animals, we would like to remind here again, that the big and small animal breeding of Romania has been instrumental to the survival and preservation of numerous animal myths and rites. Furthermore, let it be noted that the ties with the steppe never seized due to transhumance, a surviving contact with the Caucasus, as many tribes, like the Alans (Moldavia), Sarmatians (Muntenia, Banat) and the Iazyges (Transylvania) were assimilated by the people, and whose animal traditions are well known. (Buhociu 1974, 97; trans. from German by the author)

Notes

- 1 Or “Bridge of the Judge”; “This bridge leads across the aerial abyss to Heaven, and all souls must essay to traverse it; but the righteous alone can succeed, whilst the wicked fall from it into Hell beneath. It is the origin of the Muhammedan bridge Al Sirât, ‘laid over the midst of hell, finer than a hair, and sharper than the edge of a sword,’ whence the wicked will fall into the abyss.” (Brown 1879, 21-2); “the place of judgment” (Coomaraswamy 1944, 203)
- 2 6730 den wîzen hirz si wolten vân, || und daz der künic danne næme || von rehte, als im gezæme, || der schoensten kus; daz was sîn lôn. || sîn vater Urprandagôn, || 6735 der het ez alsô ûf geleit. || di selben gewonheit || behielt der sun imer sît. (...) (Kragl 2006: 378); 6730 Sie wollten den weißen Hirsch fangen, || und damit der König dann rechtens, || wie es ihm ziemte, den Kuss || der Schönsten nehmen würde; das war sein Lohn. || Sein Vater Urprandagon || 6735 der hatte es so festgesetzt. || Dieselbe Gewohnheit || behielt der Sohn für immer (...) (Kragl 2006, 379); 7145 zeiner brücke gein dem wege. || diu hiez ze dem Stiebendem Stege. (Kragl 2006, 402); 7145 zu einer Brücke, die am Weg lag. || Die hieß Zum Stiebenden Steg. (Kragl 2006, 403)
- 3 The word *Chinvat Bridge* had been transcribed by E. W. West as *Kinvad* bridge (see West 1882, 469; under *K-* in his Index), by Darmesteter as *Kinvad* or *Kinvat* bridge (Darmesteter 1880, lxxxviii, 152, 154). In the Subject Index (*Sachregister*) of Henrik Samuel Nyberg: *Činvat-Brücke* (*Činvatō pārətu*) (Nyberg, 1938: 489; 180-6; The Younger Avestan texts: *Vendidād* 18: 5-6 (adjectival usage: *činvat.ustāna*; *ustāna* ‘die Lebensseele’), 19: 28-32; Middle Persian Pahlavi texts: *Mēnōkē chrat* (*Mēnōkē xrat*), Chapter 2, *Bundahišn*, Chapter 30, 34, Book of *Arda Viraf* (*Ardā Wīrāz*), Chapter 3, 1-2, 4:7, 5: 1-4, 53: 1-2; as well as the *Gāthās* 32: 13, 46: 10-11, 48: 8, 50: 2-4, 51: 13).
- 4 “It is impossible to explain all these correspondences between *Perlesvaus*, *Sone*, *Historia Meriadoci*, *Le Chevalier de la Charrette*, and *Vita Gildae* as due to late literary borrowings. The relationships are too complex.” (Loomis 1941, 935)
- 5 Completed with the Theory of Christian origin of the motif of Holy

Grail (see Bruce 1928, I: 219-69). Here should be mentioned that Richard Barber who has also argued for the Celtic origins of the Grail (e.g. Barber 2004, 240-3), discusses the theory of C. Scott Littleton on the Sarmatian origin of the Arthurian sacred cup in a very short paragraph (ibid. 247). However, he does not have any argument against this theory, but he calls the arguments of Littleton and Ann C. Thomas (1978) as radical and tenuous.

- 6 The first complete English translation of Cassius Dio (c. 155 – c. 235 CE) is due to Herbert Baldwin Foster. It had been published under the title of *Dio's Rome* (...) in 1905–6. C. Scott Littleton has used the translation of Earnest Cary, which is based on the translation of the former one (Cary 1927 (9), 35-7; Dio, Book LXXII, 16): “[a.d. 175] (...) The Iazyges were defeated (...). Indeed, the emperor had wished to exterminate them utterly. For that they were still strong at this time and had done the Romans great harm was evident from the fact that they returned a hundred thousand captives that were still in their hands even after the many who had been sold, had died, or had escaped, and that they promptly furnished as their contribution to the alliance eight thousand cavalry, fifty-five hundred of whom he sent to Britain (...)”
- 7 A very slight one from the sporadic recent counter examples by an Irish-American author, Patricia Monaghan: “(...) the skillful artists and artisans of La Tène expanded their repertoire by using designs inspired by the Etruscans, the Scythians, and other distant cultures. Some scholars date the beginning of Celtic culture to this period.” (Monaghan 2004, VII) “Old European or pre-Indo-European designs have been traced in the art of La Tène, as have Greek, Etruscan, Scythian, and even Persian designs, suggesting that the La Tène people were part of a wide network of cultural exchange in the Mediterranean world.” (ibid. 283) “Several Irish texts, notably the *book of invasions*, claim that the Irish originated in Scythia. Although there was no actual ancient land by that name, there was a migratory group in eastern Europe called the Scythians. Noted for their horsemanship and their impressive gold, they may have in fact interacted with the Celts in their original homeland in central Europe, as the similarity of swirling La Tène art and some Scythian patterns suggests.” (ibid. 411) However, the author does still not mention the

Alans, Sarmatians, the Nart epic or the theory of C. Scott Littleton and Linda A. Malcor at all. Although the title of this volume is “Encyclopedia”, it does not contain an entry or just a single mentioning of Sword Bridge or Water Bridge as well.

- 8 In this place, Littleton & Malcor referred to the northern Central Eurasian origin narrative type of the chased doe (AaTh 401/ATU 400; see in greater detail: Mátéffy 2012) in the antique literature (Gregory of Tours, Priscus, Jordanes), but not to the motif of the “bridge had been thrown, no wider than the sharp edge of a knife” (Colarusso & Salbiev 2016, 166) from the Nart epic.
- 9 Here, the authors referred to Dumézil (1930, 27), but not the original text of Nart epic; most probably that is the reason why the continuation of the story slipped their notice: Soslan in the Land of the Dead (Colarusso & Salbiev 2016, 160-81).
- 10 “The first documentary transcriptions of the Nart tales were made by teachers of the Tbilisi Spiritual Seminary: the Ossetian Vasily Tsoraev, and the Georgian writer [...], Daniel Chonkadze. They were translated into Russian with commentaries in *Ossetian Texts*, and published as “Papers of the Academy of Sciences” in 1868. The translation and notes were the work of the Russian academician Anton A. Schiefner.” (Colarusso & Salbiev 2016, XV)
- 11 The transliteration of the name of this hero is ‘Shoshlan’ in the English edition in question, but this form is false; the correct form of the name is *Soslan* (personal communication with John Colarusso, June 2017, Edinburgh, Scotland); I have corrected the name throughout the quoted sequence of the oral narrative. Hereby, I would like to express my gratitude to him for his helpfulness.
- 12 The name of the Nart hero appears in this edition in the form of ‘Urizhmag’; the changes here have been made by me.
- 13 This is also a very close parallel of the Nart epic with the Turkic and Tibetan (Gesar) heroic epics, that the gateway to the underworld is through a rocky hole or cave on a mountain summit (see Chadwick and Zhirmunsky 1969, 263–4).
- 14 The correct English transliteration of the Ossetian heroine is *Atsirukh*

instead of 'Asirukhsh' (personal communication with John Colarusso, June 2017, Edinburgh, Scotland); I have corrected the false form in every places.

- 15 “Natürlich gibt es keinerlei direkte Verbindung zwischen der ossetischen und der arthurischen Literatur. (...) Viele seiner (i.e. C. Scott Littleton; A. M.) weitreichenden Schlüsse sind nicht hinreichend gesichert (s.u. Anhang 4).” (Zimmer 2006, 181) “Soweit die historischen Fakten; alles andere ist Spekulation.” (ibid. 185) “Nun zu den Spekulationen: (...)”; “Die Möglichkeit ist daher nicht auszuschließen – allerdings auch in keiner Weise durch Argumente zu stützen! – daß sich gewisse iranische Traditionen, darunter auch Mythen und Sagen, in der lokalen provinzialrömischen Bevölkerung jahrhundertlang gehalten haben könnten. Dies kann nicht mehr als eine bloße Vermutung sein, die ja nur angestellt wurde, um hypothetische Anhaltspunkte für iranische Einflüsse bei der Herausbildung der Artussage zu haben. (...)” (ibid. 186); “Littleton & Malcor spekulieren aber noch weiter: (...)”; “Jeder weitere Kommentar erübrigt sich.” (ibid. 189).
- 16 A relevant list of these would include: bilingualism, inter-marriage, intercultural communication, stability and change (See, e.g.: Shils 1981), orality and cross-cultural oral transmission (See, e.g.: Rubin 1995, 122-45; Ortutay 1965, 3-8), intertextuality (See, e.g.: Bauman 2004), cultural and/or religious syncretism (See, e.g.: Heissig and Klimkeit 1987; many excellent papers among others by Ulla Johansen, Annemarie von Gabain, Roberte Hamayon, Alice Sárközi, Katalin [Käthe] Uray-*Kőhalmi and Charles R. Bawden*), internal and external memory (See, e.g.: Bloch 1992, 1998), motif and allomotif (See, e.g.: Dundes 2007, 319-24), variability, variant, invariant, affinity (Ortutay 1959, 1965), creativity and innovation (See e.g.: Bauman 1975), cross-cultural transmission of narrative (See, e.g.: Kim 2013), survival. These and many other important terms, methods and scientific approaches seem to be unknown to the author, who tends to follow rather a hypercritical scepticism instead of professional argumentation.
- 17 Chapter VII. The Stag Hunt; Chapter XXXII. The Land of Goirre; Chapter XXXIII. The Water Bridge; Chapter XXXIV. The Sword Bridge

(Loomis 1949, 68-70; 222-7)

- 18 “(652) But two desperately dangerous || Bridges can get you in. || One is called *The SunKen* || (655) bridge – because, in fact, || it’s under the water, exactly || halfway down, set || Right in the middle, as much || Water below as above it, || (660) Hung between surface and bottom. || And since it’s barely a foot || And a half in width and thickness, || It’s a feast you ought to refuse - || Though it’s far and away the least || (665) Dangerous. (There are many other || Pathways I won’t even mention.) || But the second bridge is the worst, || So exceedingly risky that no one || Has ever gotten across, || (670) For it’s honed as sharp as a sword blade- || Which is why it’s called *The SWOrd* || bridge. Whatever I’ve told you || Is true, and as much of the truth || As it’s in my power to tell you.” (...)” (Raffel 1997, 22) “(...) So the brothers followed the bloody trail that led them to the seashore. “It goes on into the water!” said *Akhshar* [Ahsar], and *Akhshartag* [Ahsartag] replied, “I shall go to the bottom of the sea. (...) Then *Akhshartag* pulled up the ends of his overcoat and stepped into the water, and down to the bottom he went... (...) After a long descent through the dim waters *Akhshartag* found himself in the house of *Donbettir*. (...) The seven brothers and her two sisters were all so glad, that they happily gave *Zerashsha* [Dzerassa] to *Akhshartag* as his bride. (...) *Akhshartag* and his beautiful bride, *Zerashsha*, lived in the underwater land of *Donbettir*.” (Colarusso and Salbiev 2016, 8-10; “*Donbettir* Sovereign lord of the watery kingdom, especially seas, living below the ocean.”; *ibid.* XXII) Although the underwater bridge fails from this episode of Nart Saga (collected in the 19th century), but the underwater castle or fortress visited by the hero in both, the Arthurian and the Nart epics is more than a thought-provoking correspondence (“the concept of an Otherworld lying beneath water”; Loomis 1949, 222). The two epic stories of *Akhsar* and *Dzerassa* as well as *Soslan* and *Atsirukh* in the Nart cycle are folkloric variants of the one and same Central Eurasian tradition: hunt for a (white) female animal (swan, dove or deer) into the Otherworld, totemic transformation of the animal, marriage with the hero and return to his homeland.
- 19 In *The Romance of Gawain*: “*gaWain COMeS TO King aSSenTin’s CaSTle*, and *MeeTS rOgeS*, *The TalKing fOx*. And Sir Gawain rode on, through

forest and narrow passes and through wastelands where he suffered more heavy hardships than I am able to describe. Then one day he came to a river and saw on the *other side* a splendidly built castle. He thought to himself, 'I shall ride along this river till I can cross to the castle.' But if he had known the true nature of the river, he would have done better to ride off: it was by nature a *most perilous river*, though on the surface the water was clear. When Gawain had ridden about a mile, he saw before him a bridge spanning the width of the river. *Never was there an iron or steel razor so sharp as the edge of that bridge which Sir Gawain found before him*; this disturbed him greatly. He said to himself, 'Blessed Mary, is this the bridge over which one must cross? My horse would rather swim over than cross here: it would carry no one over that.' At that he dismounted and, tightening his saddle girth, prepared to ford the river. But he thought, 'This river is unfamiliar to me. I shall test the depth to see if I can ride across.' So he took his lance in hand and walked to the edge of the river. He tested the depth with his lance, which at once burst into flames: wherever anything touched the water it was burned and reduced entirely to cold ashes. Then Sir Gawain was amazed and said, 'Lord, how can this be? I have never heard of such wonders as I see here before me – water that burns like fire and *a bridge sharper than a razor.*' (Barber 2001, 265-66) (italic made by me – A. M.) See also: Penninc and Vostaert 2000, 9, 13, 235, 239.

- 20 In Islam, it is called *As-Sirāt*, the hair-narrow bridge. It occurs some forty-five times in *Qur'ān* (*Sirāt*; Jeffery 2007, 195-6); see also: Coomaraswamy 1944, 199, 202-3.
- 21 It is remarkable that while the Welsh name of the Otherworld is *Annwn* (earlier *Annwfn*) has more than one possible etymology (Koch and Minard 2012, 31-32), these forms are very similar to the name of the Gatekeeper of the Land of the Dead in the Nart Epic: *Aminon*. The second etymological suggestion is related to the Gaulish word *andounnabo* 'to the underworld spirits' (Collias' idea), which would be a cognate of *Anaon*. "*Anaon* is the name of the community of the souls of the dead in Breton tradition. (...) The Middle Breton form is *Anaffoun*. It is the cognate of Old Irish *anmin* 'souls' < Celtic **anamones*, itself cognate to Latin *animus* 'soul, spirit'." (Koch and Minard 2012, 17) The

possible etymology of the Ossetian *Aminon* suggested by Abaev would be **/amon-on/* ‘(to.)reveal-name.sfx’ (...) (Abaev 1964, 90; Colarusso and Salbiev 2016, 430) The suggested meaning ‘Revelation, Revealer, Teacher’, which differs from the idea of *Collias*, interpreted by Koch (2012). I do not want to suggest any other etymologies, just would like to drawing the attention to the weakness of the forced internal reconstructions, which seems to be pretty popular in the Indo-European linguistics.

- 22 See also the footnote 3 given by Darmesteter to the *Vendîdâd* XIX. 29 (94): “not long ago they sang in Yorkshire of ‘the Brig o’ Dread, na brader than a thread” (Thorns, Anecdotes, 89) (Darmesteter 1880, 212-3). Further parallel is the the English (Yorkshire dialect) traditional song ‘Lyke-Wake Dirge’: “(...) to Brig o’ Dread thou com’st at last; || And Christie receive thye saule. || From Brig o’Dread when thou may’st pass, || - Every nighte and alle, || To Purgatory fire thou com’st at last; || And Christe receive thye saule. (...)” (Macphail 1916)
- 23 Caption: “Solar reindeer. Tom’ river petroglyph (Okladnikov and Martynov 1979, pl. 24).”
- 24 The ancient mythological connection between the North Central Asian fertility and solar symbol white doe and a river or a lake (otherworld) has been documented by Chinese sources already in 860 CE from the Old Turks: “The ancestor spirit of the Türks was called Shê-mo-shê-li, a lake spirit who lived to the west of the A-shih-tê cavern. A miraculous thing happened to Shê-mo. Every evening the daughter of the lake spirit sent a white deer to fetch him and take him into the lake. At dawn she sent him back. After several decades the tribe (of Shê-mo) set out for a great hunt. In the middle of the night the (daughter of the) lake spirit said to Shê-mo: ‘Tomorrow during the hunt a white deer with golden horns will come out from the cavern where your ancestors were born. If your arrow hits the deer we will keep in touch as long as you live, but if you miss it our relationship will end.’ [...]” (Sinor 1982, 230)
- 25 The ancient North and Inner Asian as well as Scytho-Sarmatian cosmology and astral mythology the chased (antlered) reindeer doe (or female moose) is the solar symbol, while in the Sanskrit (*R̥gveda*)

tradition the Solar Hero is male (see among others: Coomaraswamy 1944, 201). This is one of the main differences between the two characteristic mythological traditions.

- 26 “The Princess Transformed into Deer” (AaTh 401; Aarne and Thompson 1961, 131); “Prinzessin als Hirschkuh” (AaTh 401/ATU 400; Rühle 2002, 1351-5); Uther 2004, I: 231-4.
- 27 “Jakobson (as quoted by Emsheimer 1944, 145) and summarized by Austerlitz (1977, 19; 1977, 19, note 2) suggests that Nivkh **qas** “(shaman’s) drum” is etymologically connected with the verbal root **χa-** “shoot”. This powerful suggestion is the origin for my own proposal below.
- 28 Jakobson’s underlying assumption that the function of the shaman’s drum is analogous to the function of the hunter’s bow makes good sense.” (Austerlitz 1984, 232); for further semantic connections in the context of ‘shaman/hunter-marriage/seduction with the hunted female animal’ among the traditional, mostly but not exclusively Siberian hunter-gatherer communities: “There is a common conceptual link between hunting and seduction, with the penetration of the animal’s body analogous to sexual union. Among the Desana of the upper Amazon, the word for “to hunt” also means “to make love to the animals”. The prey is courted and sexually excited so that it will draw toward the hunter and allow itself to be shot.” (Vitebsky 1995, 32); see also: Anderson 2002, 125; Endres 2015, 134; Hermanns 1965, 319-20; Willerslev 2007, 100, 109, 110ff, 175; 2012, 94f, 106f; Tanner 1979, 136ff; Descola 2013, 504, 524, 532.
- 29 That is the reason why the shaman figure bears deer antlers and is surrounded by deer figures on the interior plate A of the Gundestrup cauldron (between 150 BC and 1 BC), and he is not “Cernunnos”, it is more than obvious. This iconographical motif most probably had been adopted by Celts of Thrace (or rather Thracian silversmiths; see Bergquist and Taylor 1987) from the Sarmatian tribes (Scythians). “The Greeks indeed considered the Getæ to be Thracians. They occupied either bank of the Danube, as also did the Mysians, likewise a Thracian people, [...], who are the Scythian Hamaxoeci and Sarmatians; for this day, all these

nations, as well as the Bastarnæ, are mixed with the Thracians, more especially with those beyond the Danube, and some even with the Thracians on this side the Danube; also amongst these are the Keltic tribes of the Boii, Scordisci, and Taurisci. [...]”; „[...] The ancient Greek historians called all the nations towards the north by the common name of Scythians, and Kelto-Scythians.” (Strabo: *Geographica*, 7.3.2; 11.6.2; Hamilton and Falconer 1856, I: 453-4; II: 240).

- 30 “The Parsis, being at a loss to find four-eyed dogs, interpret the name as meaning a dog with two spots above the eyes: but it is clear that the two-spotted dog's services are only accepted for want of a four-eyed one, or of a white one with yellow ears, which amounts to saying that there were myths, according to which the death-fiend was driven away by dogs of that description. This reminds one at once of the three-headed Kerberos, watching at the doors of hell, and, still more, of the two brown, four-eyed dogs of Yama, who guard the ways to the realm of death. The identity of the four-eyed dog of the Parsi with Kerberos and Yama's dogs appears, moreover, from the Parsi tradition that the yellow-eared dog watches at the head of the *Kinvat* bridge, which leads from this to the next world, and with his barking drives away the fiend from the souls of the holy ones, lest he should drag them to hell.” (Darmesteter 1880, lxxxvii-lxxxviii).
- 31 Or *cŵn annwfn*, *cŵ annwn* (MacKillop 2004)
- 32 Georgias Halkias also cited Kroeber for another similar case of cross-cultural exchange: “Asymmetrical diffusions between cultures and systems of knowledge.” (Halkias 2014, 108-9)
- 33 Until the present day, I have still not found this character in the Arthurian literature. However, the legendary scene of “The Bridge of Death” (Scene 22) in the comedy film *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975, directed by Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones) implies that some of the Welsh legends or tales may contain the character of the Gatekeeper (Bridge-keeper) of the Land of the Dead, where the bridge spans over the Gorge of Eternal Peril.
- 34 The author has skipped the basic motif of the crossing the bridge (at the end of the First Movement of Béla Bartók's *Cantata Profana*) from his

very short synopsis.

- 35 However, the original Rumanian folklore texts and their readings are not without some complications: “I shall not include in the list of the text sources all the existing copies of the two *colinde*, although, in a wider sense, they belong to the sources as well, but I do enumerate here each version I myself was able to study: (...). The copies of the two *colinde* are especially important with regard to deviations of the libretto from the folk texts. A word that has played a vital role in the interpretation of the work is “punte” / “híd” / “bridge” appearing and remaining in the libretto in spite of the fact that it was corrected in the prepared but only posthumously published edition of the *colindă* texts. For me it has not become quite clear when exactly Bartók replaced “punte” with “p’unde” (where) in the text of colinds No. 4a. (...) he “Brăiloiu copy” reads namely: “Punte și-au d-a-fla-tu: / Ur-ma de cerb ma-re” rendered later by the composer as “Hogy hídra találtak: / Nagy szarvas nyomára.” (That they found a bridge: / The track of a great stag.) on the same manuscript. Could it not have been understood as “Where they found: / The track of a great stag”. To be sure, it is far less convincing a possibility if we take the second occurrence -- during the father’s hunting tour where the same copy reads: “Punte și-o d-a-fla-tu. / Ce mai și-o d-a-fla-tu? / Ur-ma de cerbi ma-ri.” The inserted question plus the word “mai” (else) separate the verb “a se afla” (to find) in the first sentence from its original direct object “urmă” (track) and, consequently, it is easier to understand “punte” as another direct object rather than as an adverb (like: Where he found... / Whatever did he find? / ...The track of great stags; or, as it was translated by Erdélyi: “... s megtalálta őket. / Haj, mit is talált ő? / Csuda szarvasnyájat.” [and he found them. / Hey, whatever did he find? / A herd of wondrous stags]). Remarkably enough, Brăiloiu, as reported by László, *op.cit.*, 241 [László 1967], gives the *colindă* text without corrections in his 1938 review of Bartók’s *Melodien der rumänischen Colinde*. Moreover, it is also curious that Bartók made no correction to the passage in Erdélyi’s translation (“Hogy előtaláltak / Csuda fűszarvast”) neither did he to Rothchild’s English translation (...).” (Vikárius 264-5).

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The ‘Deer Hunt’ Motif in the Romanian Wedding Ceremony

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Abstract: *Romanian wedding rituals, documented in folklore collections from the 19th century, record the poem oratio nuptiae, recited during the wedding ceremony, that preserves an ancient ‘deer hunt motif,’ a ritual act interpreted as preceding the sacred union between a god in the shape of a stag (the ‘king’ of the forest), symbol of eternal youth and rebirth, and a goddess in the shape of a doe, symbol of fertility and procreation. The song describes a pre-marital rite, in conjunction with invoking divine forces, for good omens to the newly married couple, as they are about to establish a family.*

Keywords: *folklore and mythology, Romanian folklore, wedding ceremonies, deer hunt mythic motif, guiding animals motif, marriage rituals, hierogamy rites, sacred marriage, god in shape of a stag, goddess in shape of a deer, marriage by capture.*

Traditionally, Romanians held their wedding ceremonies in the Autumn or right after Christmas, very rarely in the summer. They used to marry early in life, at around 18 years of age. The custom was that, in the Spring, around Easter, the Sunday of St. Thomas, or in the ‘Rusalii’ period, 50 days after Easter, boys and girls would gather by the church yard, or in the cemetery, and play all sorts of games, giving boys the chance to interact with girls they like, to get to know them better (Marian 1995, 17). A pair would joke around, play, or walk together, closely followed by the girl’s mother. When the young man came to a decision, he would discuss his intentions with his parents, who would find out the girl’s dowry. If everything was acceptable, the father of the young man, or a relative, or a village dignitary, together with a woman versed in marriage matters, would go to the girl’s house. After exchanging special greetings, the parents would reach an agreement, and decide on the engagement date. During the visit, the girl should leave the house and stay with a neighbour. On the evening of the official engagement, the young man, with his best male friends and relatives, go to the girl’s house. There, the ceremony begins with the reciting of the *oratio nuptiae*, a poem specific to this occasion, enacted by the speaker for the groom, called in Romanian ‘*vătaf*,’ ‘captain,’

or ‘god father.’ The poem is recited by a man known for his talents in declamation and ability to conduct the entire process. The *oratio nuptiae* poem, remembered in its entirety for generations, recreates the story of an ideal ceremony, aiming to ensure good fortune for the new couple.

The poem consists of a dialog between the speaker of the boy’s group and the girl’s father. After the customary greetings, the father asks them, in formulaic speech, what they are looking for. The speaker begins to explain that the group coming to this house is their king’s (Romanian *împărat*) hunting escort, coming from afar after a long day of hunting, with good intentions, to honour an understanding between the two families, hoping that it is still valid. The father assures them that the understanding is still on. Then the groom’s speaker asks to see ‘the one’ for whom they came. The girl’s entourage - her father, brothers, cousins, and such - would try to slow things down, calling the girl’s name; although she is not supposed to answer. This aspect of the ritual is shared by many European traditions; joking about various reasons why the girl is not answering the calls; someone would bring out an old lady, or a very young girl, to the protests and amusement of all. When, finally, the bride is brought in, everyone approves. The bride and the groom are seated at reserved places at the head of table. In front of them are arranged two large handkerchiefs with money, grain, basil, and the rings. The pair’s godfather asks them if they are willingly getting engaged to each other, after which they exchange the rings. Dinner is served, and, after many hours of celebrating, the groom’s father hands back the girl to her father, asking him to take good care of her until they will come back on the wedding day (Marian 1995, 125).

Following the engagement, the pair ask two of their friends to be their ‘callers’ for the wedding. Three days before the wedding day, these callers start to go around the village, carrying special ceremonial canes, decorated with coloured ribbons, flowers and wheat, and inviting everyone to the wedding.

On the wedding day, a group of 20-30 people, relatives and friends, gather together with the groom - ‘the king’ - forming ‘the groom’s hunting suite.’ This group of young men recalls Indo-European youth bands; the Romanian word for groom (*mire*, pl. *miri*, fem. *mireasă* ‘bride’) has roots in Proto-Indo-European **méryos* ‘young man’ and **meriha-* ‘young woman’(cf. Pokorny 1959, 738-9, **merio-* ‘young man, woman’, with cognates in Latin,

marītus 'husband, lover, suitor'; Greek, *meīraks* 'young man or woman'; Av *mairya* 'young man'; Sanskrit, *mārya-* 'young man, lover, suitor.')

After assembling the hunting party, guided by the speaker, they go to the bride's house, where they come upon the bride's father with her brothers and other relatives, waiting behind the gate that is secured with ropes. The argument for letting them enter the bride's yard is made by the 'speaker' as he recites the poem *oratio nuptiae*. In most Romanian regions, the poem recited in front of the bride's gate by the groom's speaker is the same as the one recited during the engagement ceremony. The groom's speaker addresses the bride's father, who sternly asked them what it is that they want. Paraphrasing the content of the poem, the speaker of the groom begins reciting that they are not wrong-doers, but an army assembled in the morning by their 'king' (the groom), who woke up that morning, washed, combed his hair, dressed up in his best outfit, and asked them to join him in hunting, because it was the time for him to get married (Marian 1995, 291). By calling the groom 'king,' the poem *oratio nuptiae* echoes wedding rituals seen on early Greek bas-reliefs, which show a crowned pair for their wedding ceremony (Lyons 1997, 8). This also evokes ancient Greek and Latin documents, that characterise the groom and his bride as crowned king and queen for the wedding day (Oakley and Sinos 1993, 16). Calling the groom 'king' brings to mind the annual royal wedding ceremonies from antiquity, described by James Frazer: "In earlier times the Roman king, as representative of Jupiter, would naturally play the part of the heavenly bridegroom at the sacred marriage, while his queen would figure as the heavenly bride ... that the Roman king and queen should act the parts of Jupiter and Juno would seem all the more natural because these deities themselves bore the title of King and Queen" (Frazer 1971, 171). This metaphor is alive today in Romanian and Greek Orthodox religious wedding ceremonies, during which the bride and the groom are crowned by the priest.

The speaker continues reciting: how they hunted all day long and all around the region without any luck; tired, their 'king' stopped by a fountain or a spring for a drink of water, and there he saw the trails of a wild beast. He consulted his followers on the nature of this trail, debating whether it was of a deer, a fairy, or a heavenly flower. It is worthwhile noticing that in the old traditions, the belief was that the footprints, humans or animals, magically retain the

qualities of their owner (Hulubaş 2009). They decided to follow the trails that guided them to ‘this’ house, the bride’s house; this demonstrates the presence of the entire ‘deer hunt’ mythic motif, in association with that of ‘the guiding animal.’ The *oratio nuptiae* recitation ends here. After pretending to protect his gates, arguing that there was no deer or fairy coming into his house, the father ends up opening the gates and inviting the groom and his best men inside the house, with more greetings and best wishes for prosperity and long life, then the entire audience enjoys eating and singing (Marian 1995, 310).

In Northern parts of Romania, the ceremony continues with someone from the bride’s company questioning the groom’s knowledge and abilities through riddles, to which he should know the answer. These could include: ‘what is the dense shadow above us?’ (‘the sky’); ‘what is the biggest water on earth?’ (‘the dew in the fall’); ‘what is the biggest mountain among all mountains?’ (‘the anthill on top of the mountain’); ‘what food would you feed your bride?’, (‘bread of pure wheat and wine’). And so on they continue, referring to the groom’s work in the fields during summer and around the house during winter (Olinescu 1944, 259).

After eating, drinking and celebrating, the bride has to leave her parents’ house carried by her father over the threshold. One of the groom’s men takes her by the hand, and the entire company goes to the groom’s house, following the bride’s decorated cart, stuffed with her dowry. At the groom’s house, a woman relative greets them with a bucket full of water, from which she splashes the entire group with water and grain. The newlyweds go into the garden, where stand an ox and plough (prepared in advance), to perform the so called ‘covering of the bride’s head’ ceremony. Staying on one side of the plough, the groom un-braids his bride’s hair and covers her head with a handkerchief, while women sing to her that she is now changing her girlish costume for that of a married woman. A similar custom is found in Austria, where, after the wedding, the bride is uncrowned and her head covered with a bonnet, the sign of her new position among married women. In some parts of Romania, after the head covering ceremony, the bride and her suite go to a spring or river, where the bride breaks a ceramic bowl and throws in the river a round sweet bread, the ‘colac.’ A boy from the group runs to get the bread from the water and brings it to the house, where everybody must have a piece from it. The wedding party continues celebrating until late at night

(Marian 1995, 312).

The motif of a 'deer hunt' and the tracking of the animal-fairy-flower from the *oratio nuptiae* are found in every region of Romania. Variations of the 'ritual hunt' motif, wherein the hunted animal, the doe or stag, is replaced by a bird, or a flower guiding the hero, are found in other European traditions; for example in Ukraine, where the king 'knyeaz' follows an unspecified kind of bird to the bride's house. In Italian tradition, the bird is a dove; in Serbian tradition, the animal guide is replaced by a red flower growing by the side of the road (Marian 1995, 96). These stories, however, are significantly different from the Romanian wedding poem, which seems to retain a more archaic structure.

Romanian wedding traditions, and their origins in the distant past, could be compared with the images found on Greek vases depicting ancient wedding ceremonies that follow closely those of gods. The ceremonies figured on such vases display significant similarities with certain aspects described in the Romanian *oratio nuptiae* poem. Consider for example the groom's purification bath on the morning of the wedding, as in the verses: "Our emperor/this morning woke up/his white face he washed..."; the coronation of the bride and the groom for their wedding day with a crown of flowers; and the bride's company ('*paides propempontes*') led by a '*proegetes*', as she is taken to a cart (Oakley & Sinos 1993, 27).

In antiquity, the image of the goddess was associated with a cervid, symbolizing life force and renewal. The chasing of a deer motif occurs in many Greek myths, such as the myth of Taygete (Ταυγέτη). According to Apollodorus (*Library* 3.10.1), the nymph Taygete - one of the Pleiades, and a companion of Artemis - was pursued by Zeus; refusing the Olympian's advances, she invoked her protectress Artemis, who turned her into a doe with golden horns. Another case of a deer pursued by a hero is related in the Third Herculean labour. Eurystheus demands that Herakles capture the female Ceryneian Hind, the fastest in the land. Herakles chased the hind on foot for a full year before catching it (Apollodorus, *Library* 2. 81). Although the hunt of the cervid from these myths does not end in marriage, the motif of the 'deer' hunted by a deity, king or hero clearly dates from ancient times. The most famous relevant story from classical mythology involves Artemis, often pictured in the company of a deer or a stag, or wearing a doe skin on her shoulder. In a *Hymn to Artemis*, the goddess is surprised by Actaeon, a passionate hunter, while bathing; his intrusion stirs her

anger, and she punishes him by turning him into a deer; neither his companions nor his dogs recognize him, and the dogs kill him (Callimachus, *Hymn to Artemis V*).

Similarly, in the Romanian wedding song *oratio nuptiae*, the hunter/groom discovers the tracks of the deer near a body of water, symbolising a boundary with the Otherworld, the magic realm of fairy. This suggests perhaps a rite of passage, wherein the young hunter enters the realm of the divine. Possibly, these stories describe a re-enactment of a hierogamy ritual, between the goddess as a doe and her lover as a stag (Baring and Cashford 1993, 331). This suggests a pre-marital rite preserved in the episode of the deer / fairy / bride, whose trails near a fountain are found by the king / hunter / groom, in the Romanian song,

The Romanian motif of 'deer hunt' in relation to a bride, as a possible pre-marital rite, could be compared with the Irish story of Oisín of the Land of Eternal Youths. Oisín's own mother, Sadhbh, had been changed into a young doe by the Druid, Fear Doirche, because she refused his advances. The doe is hunted by Fionn MacCumhail, who catches the fawn but refuses to kill his prey. Magically, the doe changes back into the beautiful girl. They wed and Saddyb is soon with child, Oisín (Flannery 1896).

An interesting development, from a pre-marital rite to the foundation of state boundaries, is recorded in an Indian story of the Visukamma (Visvakarma), who turned himself into a golden stag that the king in that country was unable to capture. The king sends his son to fulfil this task; gathering thirty-two men, the son follows the golden stag. After many months, the prince makes love with a local woman, and stays with her for a long period of time, while the stag is waiting. In the end, the prince and his entourage restart the hunt. When they reach the end of the kingdom, the stag disappears completely. This myth could be related to a 'ritual of settlement', in which the stag takes the prince through his entire country up to the borders, before it disappears; the erotic relation signifies a ritual of sovereignty, that of a king copulating with a chthonic being, akin to the Irish mythic warrior's obligation to marry a goddess as a condition to reach sovereignty (Eliade 1972, 152).

Stories about deer and the complex beliefs surrounding them are found in many folk stories all over Europe. In an interesting communication, J. G. McKay (1932, 169) analyses the role of deer in Scottish folklore, where they were looked upon as fairy cattle,

supernatural animals; only supernatural women had the ability or privilege of being able to turn themselves into deer. The author concludes that some of these deer-women love and marry their hunter-lovers, to live happily ever after.

The tracking of animals in the hunting act, present in classical mythology, could signify the path followed by the hunter under the guidance of a sacred animal, leading to a new condition. A. Krappe in his article *Guiding Animals* (1942) gives details of many old stories narrating the mythic motif of a hero and his entourage, pursuing a wild animal, a cervid, cow, buck, aurochs, bird, or even a water animal, that in the end, guides the hunter to a new situation, the foundation of a new settlement, a town, or state. Stories of following a guiding animal sacred to a divinity are quite common in European antiquity; Cadmus builds Thebes on the place where a cow lies down (Apollodorus *Library* 3.4.1), and this 'guiding cow' motif also recurs in the legend of Ilus the founder of Troy (Apollodorus *Library* 3.12.3).

The motif of the 'guiding animal,' often a stag, is found in foundation legends (of a dynasty, city or state); not to establishing a marital situation, as in the Romanian wedding song. But these stories are tangentially related to the deer as a bride from the Romanian song, if establishing a new family is viewed as a settlement.

In classical mythology, the guiding animal mythic motif, resulting in the beginning of a town, state, etc., resurfaced in medieval literature, fulfilling similar needs, to validate the name or location of a community, or, in Christian contexts, the foundation of a monastery. The motif is found in various legends such as the one recorded by Gregory, Bishop of Tours, in his *History of the Franks* (2, 37), where a hind showed Clovis and his army the path to cross the river Vienne in the fight against Goths, or the story recording how Charlemagne was guided by a white stag across the Alps (Krappe, 1942, 236). The guiding animal motif also appears often in Christian legends; so, for example, the Roman general Placidus, a passionate hunter, follows a stag to the top of a mountain, where he sees a cross between the animal's antlers, hears a voice say that the stag is Christ, and so converts to become St. Eustathius. As Krappe explains, (1942, 235) the motif was used in the late middle ages in a very large group of stories, clearly etiological in character, created to explain place names and legendary ancestries; thus for example:

Procopius of Caesarea tells the story of how the ‘Cimmerians’, i.e. the Huns, followed a stag across the Sea of Azov and, beholding the fertile fields on the other side, decided to invade that country. Jordanes reports a similar story on the invasion of Scythia by the Huns: Hunnish hunters followed a hind through the Sea of Azov. On the opposite shore the animal disappeared, hunters returned home full of praise of the country they found, the land to be invaded by the Huns.

And Krappe (1942, 237) further comments that:

True enough, no far-reaching conclusions can be drawn from the recurrence of the story among the Hungarians [54];⁷¹ for it is well known that the Magyars down to modern times erroneously believed themselves the descendants of the Huns, and the adoption of the story by their chroniclers betrays a literary, not a popular, tradition. What is more significant is the story recorded by Ricold of Monte Croce, a thirteenth-century traveller, of how the enclosed nations of Gog and Magog, identified with the Tatars, at last found their way beyond the mountains, guided by a hare and an owl. Hence, adds the traveller, wonderful is the honour they still pay to owls, whose feathers they wear in memory of their deliverance.

The guiding animal motif, well represented then, in European medieval literature, is also found in a Romanian legend about the foundation of the Moldavian royal dynasty: in early historical documents, Prince Dragoş of Maramureş, located in the northeast part of Romania, hunts an aurochs with his entourage, and kills the animal by the river Moldova, where they decide to settle (Eliade 1972, 132).

The motif of the ‘deer hunt’ extends beyond the European area, surfacing in heroic epics from Central Eurasia, as the famous Gesar Epic of Tibetan origin, where the hero hunts a deer that is actually the daughter of a foreign king, or of the Dragon King (Mátéffy 2017, 337).

So there are common elements from European, Indian and Tibetan traditions: the young prince with his escort, the hunt of a

cervid, the erotic encounter, the settlement leading to a change in his situation, are all part of the 'ritual hunt' complex. The motif plays a key role in the Romanian wedding song, the *oratio nuptiae*, leading not to a Christian conversion or monastery foundation, but to the foundation of a family.

The erotic allegorical element in the hunt, revealed by the two characters of the chase - the doe as feminine principle, chased by the hunter as masculine principle - forms the subject of many medieval poems and stories, presented by M. Thiébaux in her work suggestively entitled *The Stag of Love*. Beginning her investigation with a chapter called *Sacred Chase*, the author traces how the stag guides the hero into the Otherworld, as a process of initiation into knowledge/self-knowledge, involving passionate love and/or death. The *Love Chase* chapter regards the hunted-hunter relation as expressing an erotic game; the chase expressing the hunter's sense of conquest and pleasure.

Marriage is itself, of course, the subject of many studies. The old work of Eduard Westermarck (1894, 389) touches on a custom spread around the world, called 'marriage by capture,' Dumézil (1979, 73) addressed the marriage customs of the Indo-Europeans, giving special attention to Romulus and the Rape of the Sabines legend. Customs involving similar metaphors are also known to the Romanians: the 'groom' together with a group of his friends organises the kidnaping of the 'bride,' sometimes with the girl's consent, sometimes against her will. Usually this version of 'marriage by capture' results from the parents' refusal to give consent to wedding plans and dowry, so the two youngsters consummate the marriage in the fields, an act that could not be undone by relatives (Marian 1995, 115). In case of a violent capture, the girl is forcefully captured by a young man whom either she or her family does not like; such an act often results in family feud and violence. In such a case, the girl has no choice but to stay in the man's house and become his wife without further wedding ceremony (Olinescu 1944, 286).

In an interesting study, Ernst S. Dick (1966) considers marriage as a rite of passage for the young woman, who must experience separation from her parents and also acceptance in her new (husband's) family. Dick distinguishes between rites of separation and rites of acceptance; 'seizing' the bride becomes part of the separation rites, in which the hostilities are only ritual play. This idea corresponds to the scene from the Romanian *oratio nuptiae*,

of the bride's father's pretend fight with the groom and his escort. The same pretend hostilities, writes Dick, were common in Norway, where the maiden was taken with a show of force by the groom's friends.

The 'hunting of a deer/stag' ritual as a process which 'leads to a radical change in the hunter's situation', to establish a dynasty, a settlement, etc., can be extended to the Romanian wedding ritual, in which the young man, 'the king of the day,' is about to fundamentally change his life and establish a family. As mentioned above, in antiquity, scenes from Greek vases show that people's wedding ceremonies were closely modelled on those of the gods. The similarities between the ceremonies as seen on the Greek vases and the details in the Romanian *oratio nuptiae* poem are striking. The practice of calling the newly-weds *king* and *queen/fairy* for the day of the wedding may indeed have very old roots.

Not directly related to the wedding ceremony, but worth noting here, is the appearance in a number of Romanian Christmas carols ('*colinde*') of elements from the old motif of the goddess as doe, and her consort as stag (for instance, Artemis and Actaeon), and the ritual dismembering of a stag. In a Christmas carol addressed to a young man, the caroler invokes a sacred stag of mythic proportions, the color of gold (perhaps a solar manifestation), a towering animal that invades and damage the community's fields. The place to find this stag is under a singular tree, seemingly the cosmic tree; the caroler wishes the young man to show courage and strength, shoot the stag with his deadly arrow, and restore fertility to the fields (Hulubaş 2009, 122). The description of a ritual killing of a stag from the Romanian carol resembles the ritual killing of a 'primordial being,' followed by its dismembering; this act, a symbolic creation of a new world, involves regrowth for the fields, and the building of a house for the future couple. The carol details instructions for young man on how to use each of the stag's body parts: the horns should be used as stilts for his house, the blood should colour the house as red paint, the flesh should be used to feed the wedding guests. The events described in the carol, the killing of the sacred animal and the dismembering ritual, again suggest initiation rites for a young man (Coman 1986, I. 163).

The same process takes place in another Christmas carol: the hero hunts a deer, hind, or doe; after a long and difficult hunt the deer is killed, and the hunter proceeds to perform a sacrificial fertility ritual. He gives the deer's blood to the earth, thus fertilising

Nature and ensuring prosperity for the community. In yet another carol, a young man wearing the mask of a stag wishes prosperity for the people of the house, assuring them that the stag will bring them sacred objects: a table symbolizing food, crops and wealth, weapons for the boys of the house, and a wreath of flowers ('*cununa*,' Latin *corona*), signifying marriage for the young girl in the house. Also, carols addressed to young girls soon to get married, describe a sacred stag with a silk hammock hooked between his horns, on which the girl will be carried to her groom's home. At her wedding, the young girl should have the animal killed, and, following the same process, the blood will fertilise the earth, the horns will be used to build her house, the meat to feed the guests. In another song, the stag carries on this antler-slung hammock the soul of a dead young person; further confirming the connection between this animal and the sacred, Otherworld (Coman 1986, I. 163). As offered in these carols, the stories of the stag suggest that the deer hunt motif is not an element unique to the *oratio nuptiae* but one which has deep roots in Romanian cultural heritage.

The image of the archaic powerful goddess, protectress of wild animals, often represented with a deer or a stag by her side, to emphasise her attributes as goddess of life, death and rejuvenation, can be observed in European folklore, for instance in the figure of the Fairy Queen and her companions. In an interesting article on the collision between what she saw as two ideologies, Old and New European, Marjia Gimbutas (1990, 175) wrote that:

[The] functions and images of gods, of beliefs in afterlife, and the different sets of symbols prove the existence of two religions and mythologies, the Old European indigenous, inherited from Palaeolithic, and the Indo-European, intrusive, related to the Near Eastern. Their collision on European territory resulted in the hybridization of two symbol structures. The Indo-European prevailed, but the Old European survived as an undercurrent... Both sets are still existent today in the mythologies and folklore of Europe.

As Gimbutas argues in her well-known work, the life-giving and life-protecting Neolithic goddess, often represented by the zoomorphic image of a deer - beautifully preserved on cult vases,

particularly on pictorial Cucuteni ceramics from Romanian territory - continued as a presence in European cultural tradition (Gimbutas 1982). Traits of this ‘Old Europe’ magnificent goddess may be discerned in the Romanian fairy Ileana Cosanzeana (‘*zâna zânelor, doamna florilor*’ “the fairy of fairies, mistress of flowers”), often portrayed as carried on the silk hammock between the stag’s horns, as described in the Christmas carol from above.

It could be argued that both Romanian cultural expressions - the *oratio nuptiae* poem from the Romanian wedding ceremony and the Romanian Christmas Carols – represent traces of a very old ritual scenario, involving a mythological motif of the union between a goddess of fertility and procreation in the shape of a doe, and a god in the shape of a stag, perhaps the ‘emperor’ of the forests, symbol of eternal rejuvenating youth. This union was originally mirrored in the rite of marriage described in the song *oratio nuptiae*, which is an invocation addressed to the divine powers, to help the young couple into their new status of husband and wife, and to wish them good luck in establishing their new family.

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The Proto-Slavic Pre-Christian Ritual Scenario of a Međimurje Wedding as an Imitation of the Divine Wedding¹

JELKA VINCE PALLUA

abSTraCT. *Fruitfulness and fertility are widely represented symbolically in wedding traditions. The objective of this paper is to examine a folk Međimurje wedding comedy “Baba² Went Mushroom Picking,” in a completely new research context, as a document of an a-graphic culture, a source and path to the reconstruction of the fragments of former religious systems, specifically, vestiges of a Proto-Slavic ritual scenario on the basis of which the Međimurje wedding could be connected with the divine wedding as a paradigmatic model for all weddings. The paper also raises the crucial question of whether this performative form also provides insight into pre-Christian wedding traditions and the ritual wedding scenario as a repetition of the sacred divine wedding.*

Key words: *mythology, Proto-Slavic mythology, mushroom, Slavs, Croatia, Međimurje, Baba, wedding, divine wedding, representational form*

Fertility and fruitfulness are symbolically represented in wedding traditions all over the world. Elements from this life-cycle ritual, a rite of passage, have been interpreted by some researchers as vestiges of the pagan myth of the divine wedding, an imitation of what the gods did to enhance the desired fertility of the wedding couple and the annual renewal of the agrarian cycle (cf. Eliade 2002 [1957]; Belaj 1998; Katičić 2010). The objective of this contribution is to consider the traditional Međimurje³ play, *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*, in an entirely new research context. An attempt will be made to use this folk play as a document from an a-graphic culture, a source and means toward the reconstruction of former religious systems, specifically the Proto-Slavic rites on the basis of which the Međimurje wedding rite could be connected with the divine as the prototype of all weddings.

This topic is particularly intriguing because the play, *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*,⁴ to the best of my knowledge, cannot be found anywhere except in Prekmurje, Upper (Gornji) and Lower (Donji) Međimurje, the valley of the Drava River (Podravina), and Croatian communities on the Hungarian side of the Croatia-Hungary border (Prečki Hrvati).⁵ In this Međimurje wedding comedy, actors portray an elderly couple, Baba (Grandma) and Djeda (Grandpa), characters that are well

known in many other Croatian regions and throughout southeastern Europe, similar to figures found elsewhere in Europe.

The play, *Baba Went Mushroom Picking* (Figs. 1 and 2), is a firmly entrenched wedding tradition in which the costumography features sexual inversion: Baba is always played by a man.⁶ Baba is a grotesque figure with exaggerated sexual attributes - abnormally large breasts and a protruding stomach indicative of pregnancy - although she is already carrying a child/doll under her arm:

A chorus is singing about Baba, not as an old woman in the beginning but as a young girl who lost her virginity while picking mushrooms and is now asking the celebrants for money to pay the doctors/barbers (who used to provide simple medical services, such as bloodletting) to sew up the wound she incurred while jumping over logs in the forest. Costumed men accompany the content of the song with gestures, which can be quite lascivious (Zvonar 2009, 35).

Baba is holding a wooden bread peel with a chalk or charcoal drawing of “Baba’s wound,” actually a depiction of female genitalia (Hranjec 2011, 242).⁷

Baba, accompanied by her “husband,” a costumed man with an artificial hump on his back, seeks the culprit for her extramarital pregnancy among the wedding celebrants, making accusations of paternity. Another variant of this play is when Baba enters the wedding area limping because “the wound has become torn,” followed by several women singing the song *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*, carrying “mushrooms” on platters, i.e., ritual mushroom-shaped pastries. Therefore, the mushroom motif in a Međimurje wedding occurs not only in song but in the tangible form of mushroom-shaped pastries.

BABA GLJIVE BRALA

*Baba gljive brala, po bukovi prahi/kladi
Po bukovi prahi, po jalšovim strnišću.*

*Grabu/kladu preskočila,
Ranu razdrapila.*

BABA WENT MUSHROOM PICKING

Baba went picking mushrooms, on the soil/logs around beeches,
On the soil around beeches, on barren stubble.

She jumped over a pit/log,
And tore her wound.

<i>Plaćajte katani doktore, barbere</i>	Cavaliers, pay the doctors, barbers,
<i>Kaj bodo zašilji to čemerno rano</i>	Who will sew up this wretched wound
<i>Koja me dostigla dok sem gljive brala,</i>	That I incurred while picking mushrooms,
<i>Dok sem gljive brala na bukovi kladi/prahi.</i>	While I was picking mushrooms on the soil/logs around beeches.

The entire play undoubtedly emphasises the symbolism of fertility and fecundity, as is generally the case in wedding customs. In addition to the proclaimed aphrodisiac property of mushrooms, at first glance, it is obvious that their shape resembles the congress of the male and female genitalia, and so symbolizes both fertility and the bond of marriage, happiness and life force. Ethnologists are well acquainted with the monograph *Dvoje leglo troje osvanilo* (Two Lay Down, Three Rose Up) by Zvonimir Toldi, on the subject of woollen bedspreads with magical fertility symbols; one of these covered the marriage bed of a couple during the early years of their union, in order to bring the bed (i.e., the married couple) fertility. The symbolic depictions on these bedspreads are ordered chronologically in a manner resembling comic strips (Fig.

3). Toldi comments,

The mushroom motif is most often repeated on bedspreads and is embroidered in a multitude of variants, from mushrooms that have just sprouted to those that are fully open, and are always shown in cross section, like an X-ray, with the stalk and cap strongly reminiscent of the male and female sexual organs, that is, their coming together in the rhythm of intercourse, because as a rule images of mushroom caps separated from their stalks alternate with those in which the stalks are deeply thrust into the caps (Toldi 1999, 58).

In addition, the mushroom is considered a direct symbol for female genitalia:

<i>Da znaš mili šta imam pod krili!?</i>	Would you know, my dear, what I have under my lap?
<i>Milo janje, lipo eklovanje.</i>	Dear lamb, pretty little lacework,
<i>Turi ruku, pa ćeš nać pečurku.</i>	Push your hand in, and you'll find a mushroom .

Folk rhyme, a village near Slavonski Brod (Toldi 1999, 45)

As we have seen, the shape of a mushroom suggests fertility. In the wedding comedy *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*, the obscenity of the gestures of Baba's escort, Djeda, and the free and lascivious dialogue between the wedding celebrants and Baba should be considered in the same context of the desire for fertility in marriage. The erotic symbolism of the wooden bread peel, with a drawing of Baba's "wound" (mentioned in the song *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*), is also in the service of fecundity, as is that of the mushroom-shaped pastry with a stalk made of dough topped with a coloured cap (Figs. 4 and 5), and the cap itself, fashioned from half a boiled egg white, symbolizing life, the periodic renewal of nature and fertility.

The unusual mixture of mushrooms and fruits (Fig. 5), here in the form of pastries, takes its meaning from their common attribute of abundance.

In the play, all these fertility details and the dramatic action come down in the end to an extramarital illegitimate child, *fačuk*, that Baba throws at the newlyweds, so that they will be able to conceive a child. Before us, we see numerous elements with magical functions for the fertility of the newlyweds during their wedding rite of passage.

In addition to the erotic symbolism in the service of pure magic for fertility, mushrooms also have their place both in mycology, the study of fungi, and in mythology.⁸ Mushrooms are associated with the Other World, and, in ritual-mythological contexts, have sacred symbolism.⁹ Therefore, we can try to account for the presence of the mushroom motif in the Međimurje wedding in sacred terms also, as an aspect of the pagan Proto-Slavic myth of the divine wedding. Specifically, Belaj has already established that, "only in the event that we people perform the wedding ceremony as the ancient gods did can we expect fertility in our actual marriage, as testified to us by the mythical event. This means that the Slavic person imitates what the gods did in his own wedding ceremony..." (Belaj 1998, 208). This is expressed in another way by Eliade:

The sacrality of woman depends on the holiness of the earth. Feminine fecundity has a cosmic model—that of Terra Mater, the universal Genetrix...In other religions the cosmic creation, or at least its completion, is the result of a hierogamy between the Sky-God and Mother Earth...cosmogonic myth is pre-eminently the paradigmatic myth; it serves as a model for human behavior. This is why human marriage is regarded as an imitation of the cosmic hierogamy...the divine myth is the paradigmatic model for the

human union. (2002, 88-9).

Thus, the desired fertility can only be ensured if human marriage ritually imitates the model of the divine wedding, and the myth concerning it as a paradigmatic myth.

* * *

It should be asked whether in the Medimurje wedding, specifically in the song and play *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*, it is possible to find some fragments of ancient religious systems, and even a small trace of the sacrality of the wedding ceremony scenario, in which mushrooms could have a role.

According to Toporov,

the set of data on mushrooms in Slavic traditions, including the broader ‘mushroom’ context, as indicated by other sources, provides the basis for the impression that ‘mushroom’ mythology is connected with some motifs and persons of the ‘principal’ myth (2002, 83).

And we know, of course, what this principal myth is about. There is, in fact, as presented by Toporov (2002, 83), a living Slavic tradition, that mushrooms appear where lightning has struck, and that a “Thursday” storm is particularly conducive to the sprouting of mushrooms; the latter obviously associated with the day of Perun, lord of thunder, Thursday. Furthermore, names for mushrooms, according to Toporov, are also connected with Perun’s thunder and mushrooms, for example, *molnjena goba* in the Slovenian language and the Russian word for mushroom, *gromovik*.

In Ukrainian mythology, “for the successful gathering of mushrooms, one should roll on the ground at the first thunderclap” (Voitovič 2005, 118),¹⁰ evidently connected with the activity of Perun, and the place struck by lightning. In folklore, rolling on the earth, or, for example, placing a newborn on the (Mother) earth, is a known practice, with the objective of transferring the strength of the earth to the newborn (cf. Eliade 2002, 87; Perusini 1964, 263; Hoffmann-Krayer and Stäubli 1929-30, 898). There is no doubt that the earth as the universal Genetrix, Magna Mater, is known in the context of fertility, and we recall that a mushroom can be a symbol for the female genitalia (cf. the previously mentioned example



Fig. 1 The folk comedy *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*, Goričan, 1975
(Hranjec 2011, 244)



Fig. 2 Baba and Djeda in the wedding play *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*, Nedelišće, 1975; (Hranjec 2011, 243)

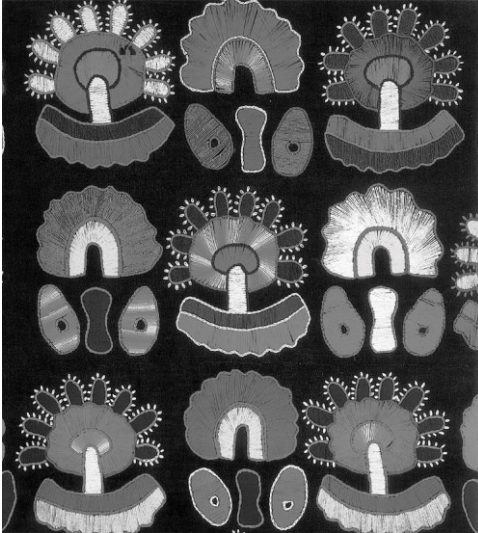


Fig. 3 (Toldi 1999, 59)



Fig. 4 Mushroom-shaped wedding pastry, Dragoslavec-Breg, 2012.

from the village near Slavonski Brod), and therefore directly connected with fertility.

Apparently, “The growth of mushrooms can be intentionally caused if the earth where they usually grow is beaten once a year with a juniper or hazelnut switch, or if one rolls on it with his own body” (Bajuk 1999, 249). In this sentence, found under the entry “*muhara*” (toadstool) in the book *Kneja* by the author Lidija Bajuk,¹¹ both activities connected to the earth, found in the aforementioned examples, are combined: striking the earth (there by lightning, here by using a switch), and rolling on the earth. Improving mushroom growth by striking the land, particularly where mushrooms already grow, is also found in Hiller’s entry on mushrooms: “If a place where mushrooms grow had been struck with a juniper switch or a one-year-old hazelnut switch, many mushrooms were expected to grow there” (Hiller 1986).¹²

Striking with lightning, *treskanje*, is Perun’s task. Many have written about the word *treskati*, with the meaning of “to strike” (cf. Belaj 1998, 74-7, 88-98; Katičić 2008: 240-1). We find interesting material on striking the buttocks of the old Baba using a rod, with a comparison to Mara/Morana, in a work by Hrobat (2010, 213-14). The verb *treskati*, in addition to the meaning of “discharge thunder and lightning, strike and clamour,”



Fig. 5 Wedding mushroom-shaped pastries in a bowl with various fruit-shaped pastries, Dragoslavec-Breg, 2012.

also has a connection with the blow of the flail when threshing grain, by which the grain is released from the chaff; the action of “lightning bolts,” actually also means threshing (freeing mushrooms from the earth with lightning)” (Toporov 2002, 83).

Toporov explains both the liberation of the grain from the chaff and the liberation, i.e., sprouting, of mushrooms from the ground with the help of a bolt of lightning. We present this clear parallel:

Blow of a flail → freeing grain from the chaff

Lightning bolt → freeing mushrooms from the ground

I assume that few present-day mushroom pickers are aware of the significance of the saying, that someone/something “grows like mushrooms after the rain,” more precisely, after the earth is shaken by thunder and lightning. Of course, rain is important for the sprouting of mushrooms, but rain is a consequence of storms sent by Perun, who strikes with bolts of lightning and shakes the ground. Could not the aforementioned practice of striking the earth with a switch for a good mushroom harvest, as an act of analogous magic, be an echo and vestige of the former belief in the efficacy of Perun’s act: shaking the ground with lightning bolts to make mushrooms grow?

I found an association between mushrooms and, indirectly, grains of wheat (symbols of fertility, i.e., products thereof in the form of bread), in a Ukrainian legend from the Precarpathian region, in which the origin of mushrooms is interpreted. The legend goes like this: “St. Peter, wandering with Jesus, was very hungry and secretly bit off a piece of bread. In order to respond to a question Jesus asked him, Peter had to spit the bread out, from which mushrooms sprouted.” Another legend is somewhat simpler and says that “breadcrumbs fell on St. Peter, from which mushrooms sprouted” (Voitovič 2005, 118).

Would we be able to anticipate the *interpretatio christiana* that resulted in the substitution of the supreme deity Perun by St. Peter - Peter the Rock - to whom Jesus entrusted the role of the head of the Church and who holds the keys to the Kingdom? Could this have been influenced by the similar sounds of the names Perun and Peter? In any case, the association of wheat/bread and the Feast of St. Peter (June 29), is evident in the folk belief that several saints, contribute to the growth and vigour of wheat. In the chronological order of the Catholic Church calendar, from St. George to St. Elijah, these include St. Peter, as we read in *Zeleni lug* (Green Grove) (Katičić 2010, 22-3). Moreover, the motif of the origin of mushrooms as divine spittle (cf. Toporov 1985, 306) is a well-known and widespread motif, older than the Christian figure of St. Peter.

In addition to the motif of mushrooms as divine expectoration (see n. 6), we also find the motif of mushrooms as divine excrement or urine (cf. Toporov 1985, 306). However, even more interesting is an older notion of the origin of mushrooms from northwestern Tajikistan, in which a female deity is included, Magna Mater, the Great Mother: “According to these beliefs, *thunder* occurs when the celestial deity known as Mama, Great Mother, shakes lice from her long underwear, which turn into *mushrooms* when they fall to the ground” (Toporov, *ibid.*).

Some of the following examples are more of an invitation for reflection than a definitive solution. I should first like to point out why I have chosen the play *Baba Went Mushroom Picking* for this contribution. I have been drawn to the character of Baba, about whom I had already written (Vince Pallua 1995-1996; cf. Vince Pallua 2004). That the monolith Baba is a female cultic substrate of fertility and prosperity has been confirmed by the supporting phenomena I have found over the course of extensive field studies in Istria and Primorje, which gradually revealed themselves as constants in all the cases encountered, regarding the ubiquitous element of moisture/water, the offering of wheat, wine etc. to Baba etc.; and legends about kissing Baba. In 1996, I determined that, together with the Baba from Grobnik near Rijeka (Figs. 6 and 7) - the sole example that is not an amorphous monolith, but a figure with markedly feminine characteristics - the amorphous Babas I had studied on Krk, in Istria and on Velebit actually also personify female characters. The Baba from Grobnik is a grotesque female figure carved out of rock, somewhat larger than life-size, with a big head, ponderous breasts and broad hips. We also encounter grotesqueness, in the form of unnaturally large hips and breasts filled with straw, in the Međimurje play, *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*. Like all the other amorphous Babas, the one from Grobnik is “sniffly and muddy,” as her wetness is described by informants from the region; the quality is visible in the dark trail of water along the entire stone figure. This Grobnik *Baba*, discovered by the author in 1996, is the first figurative representation of the mythical *Baba*. The second one the author managed to find in Gračišće in Istria (Vince Pallua 2018, 105–17).

It is not necessary to dwell here on the pervasive characteristics of water, moisture and wetness, elements associated with the great goddess Mokosh, whose name derives from the same Slavic root. Moreover, in Katičić’s *Gazdarica na vratima* (Mistress at the Gates), in the section “*Mokra Mokoš na močilu*,” we find that the Russian term, *mokosja*, means “a woman of easy virtue,” and that wetness associated with a woman is a sign of “slatternliness,” and irresponsible sexual behavior (2011, 209). It should be noted that slatternly, (i.e., vulgar, promiscuous) behaviour is encountered to a considerable extent with Baba in the play, *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*, as previously discussed. Furthermore, offerings are bestowed upon both the monolith Babas and the Baba in the play; and in each case, their sexual attributes are grotesquely exaggerated.

In connection with Baba and the element of moisture/water, during field research in the villages of Selnica and Žabljak in Upper Međimurje in June 2012, informants testified to the existence of the chrononym,

bablje ljeto (literally “Baba’s summer”), a period of unusually warm, dry weather in the late autumn), as well as the concept of, *bablji kot* (“Baba’s corner”), as they say, from whence storms come so that “a wagon should be brought under a roof to prevent it from becoming soaked with rain.”¹³ In the syntagma, *bablji kot*, we rediscover Baba’s connection with water, moisture and rain,¹⁴ as in the case of mushrooms, which are largely composed of water.¹⁵ Also, when we speak about Baba who picks mushrooms, we are speaking about Baba who is going into a wet area in the forest covered with decay, as the goddess Mokosh had done in connection with the watery underworld.

In the end, we could argue that Baba and mushrooms embody the same thing: the female genitalia¹⁶ - and therefore fertility, a highly desirable attribute for newlyweds, particularly emphasized in various ways during the wedding ritual scenario. In addition, it should be noted that both Baba and mushrooms appear as ritual pastries named after them. The mushroom-shaped pastries placed before the newlyweds have already been discussed. A *baba* is baked for baptismal celebrations: “A *baba* is a small bread that guests kiss when offering congratulations, remains on the table and is cut on the third day of the celebration” (Savić 2002, 39).

We could compare the practices of kissing in the cases of the Grobnik and amorphous Babas, as discussed above in connection with my 1996 field research, including the kissing of the festive bread known as *baba*.

We have seen that a Thursday storm is particularly conducive for the sprouting of mushrooms, a storm on the fourth day of the week, a day that belongs to the God of Thunder, “the day of the most important German god Donar, which was once celebrated as a holiday” (Hiller 1986, the entry “*Četvrtak*”).¹⁷ It is certainly necessary to connect the name of the Germanic god Donar with the German word for Thursday, *Donnerstag* (from the verb *donnern*/to thunder), the day that is not only the day of the Slavic god of thunder, Perun, but also, owing to the lightning bolts he sends to earth, the best day to pick mushrooms.

The connection between weddings and mushrooms, namely weddings and Thursday storms sent by the god Perun conducive to the sprouting of mushrooms, can be seen from data provided by the same author:

Even later, Thursday was long considered the most popular day for social gatherings. Storms on Thursday were considered harmless. The significance of this day for weddings differed according to region: where the deity Donar was still considered to have retained his original function as the god of the legal order.

Thursday was considered a suitable day for weddings, while in some regions it was avoided because, otherwise, there would be “thunder in the marriage” (Hiller 1986, the entry “*Četvrtak*”).

Therefore, the link between weddings and mushrooms can be placed in the context of the mythological deities. Finally, we have already noted that mushrooms are regarded as food for the gods (cf. Toporov 1985, 19, 29), so mushroom-shaped pastries at weddings can be considered divine food, as befits the sublime occasion of a marriage ceremony, in which it is necessary to imitate the divine.

Immediately following the wedding play, *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*, to the same melody (see the audio source in the list of references), a wedding song, *The Nightingale from the Beech Fortress is Getting Married*, is sung. In this, human elements are introduced into the wedding of birds, and one element (indicated in bold), comes from a mythological, sacred poetic context:

Slaviček se ženi z Bukovoga grada,
fortress is getting married
Njegva zaručnica slavičica mlada.

The nightingale from the Beech
His bride is a young nightingale.

Orlin starešina, sokol deverina,
groomsman.

An eagle is the elder, a falcon the
groomsman.

Zeba je zebrana gospa podsnehalja.
of honor.

A finch has been chosen as the maid

Mlada lastavička bila podeklička.

A young swallow was the
bridesmaid.

Zastavnik zebrani bil je prav gizdavi.

The chosen flag bearer was quite
gaudy.

Viteška peršona palčeka gospona,
Njega su zebrali svatom za kaprola.
corporal.

A knightly persona, Mr. Wren,
Was chosen as the wedding

A grlica siva katane podbriva,
Labud vodu nosi, se po redu vmiva.
each in turn

A grey dove shaves the cavaliers,
The swan brings water, washing

(Žganec 1924, 47–8)

Various wedding tasks are assigned to different species of birds, and, later in the poem, to the rest of the animal world, led by the “eagle elder” and the “falcon groomsmen,” birds well known from mythological Proto-Slavic devotional poetry, and frequently encountered, for example, in the works of Ivanov, Toporov, Katičić and Belaj, as well as other writers on this subject.

Within the wedding-mushroom context, we might also place another Međimurje wedding element, the circle dance, *kolo*, performed by women at weddings, which in Međimurje occurs just after the play, *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*, and the song, *The Nightingale from the Beech Fortress Is Getting Married*. This dance is exclusively performed by women, who are followed by a man holding a bottle. When the song stops, he places it behind one of the dancers, who then ostensibly sits on it.¹⁸ Can we interpret this dance according to the symbolism we saw on the wooden bedsreads from Slavonski Brod, with mushroom: caps and stalks, as female and male genitalia? In this case, the women’s dance, which, as stated, is performed immediately after the play *Baba Went Mushroom Picking* (and which I would unhesitatingly call a ceremonial dance), could represent the mushroom cap (the female sexual organ), and the bottle its stalk; when sat upon, this “stalk” also enters the mushroom cap, as in multiple repetitions, as depicted on the woollen bedsread mentioned earlier (cf. fig. 3). However, in this case glass would certainly replace the older traditional material, pottery for example, used to fashion *bidre*, ceramic vessels for baking various cakes (*bidrenjaka*), that young daughters-in-law and marriageable girls carry on their heads during another ritual wedding dance, the *bidre* also for fertility. (cf. Novak 2007, 286).

Mushrooms, as we see, become symbols - here I refer to the Međimurje region - of marital fecundity and general abundance and prosperity, both on the basis of association with their shape and erotic symbolism, as discussed in the first part of the paper, and on the basis of their related markedly distinctive religious characteristics. From our childhood days, we recall wooden mushroom-shaped banks, piggy banks or, rather, mushroom banks. Both concepts, pigs and mushrooms (as we have attempted to demonstrate here for mushrooms), are symbols of abundance and fertility, with the former entrenched.¹⁹

In this paper, I attempt to approach the play *Baba Went Mushroom Picking* in an entirely new way, to understand it, and then interpret it, as

a performative form that, even today, could represent the Proto-Slavic ritual scenario of a wedding (or elements thereof) repeating the divine wedding, in order to ensure the desired fertility and prosperity in marriage. The elements we have examined, particularly the multiple manifestations and symbolic links among Babas, mushrooms and (holy) matrimony, undoubtedly affirm the fertility/fruitfulness and the general abundance needed by the future married couple.

In addition, on the basis of two Ukrainian legends from the Precarpathian region, we have determined the possible Christianization of a legend about the origin of mushrooms, wherein Perun is replaced by St. Peter, and the origin of mushrooms is interpreted as the divine expectoration of a piece of bread.

If we take several prerequisites for successful mushroom picking into consideration, as well as the interweaving motifs and symbolism of Babas, mushrooms and wedding - 1) the mushroom as a synonym for the female genitalia, as shown above; 2) the rolling on the universal Genetrix, Magna Mater at the sound of the first thunderclap; 3) the placing of a newborn on the (Mother) earth; 4) Baba's requisite bread peel with a drawing of "Baba's wound" and all her other exaggerated sexual attributes (as particularly emphasized in the Grobnik Baba) - we shall see that we are constantly in the area of accentuated symbols of the fertility and fruitfulness of (Mother) earth as the universal Genetrix,²⁰ which will ensure marital happiness, fertility and general prosperity for the newly married couple.²¹

* * *

Is it possible to discern some vestiges of the performance of a previous pre-Christian wedding ritual, as an imitation of the divine holy wedding, in the performative form of *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*? Čale Feldman makes the following observation, based on a different research motif:

It would be interesting to see a kind of presentation of the reality of peasant life in the representational forms. The majority of these performances actually present folk customs: engagements, proposals, weddings, births, bargaining during commerce or funerals. They are most often performed by special "actors"/instrumentalists, and sometimes the wedding celebrants themselves.



Fig. 6 Grobnik Baba, photo J. Vince Pallua 1996

For this purpose, they cross-dress and wear costumes, i.e., create the illusion that the ritual is actually taking place. Thus, an interesting performance situation is created within the framework of an actual tradition with some elements providing an illusional view of the customs in the performance (1991, 229).

In the performative form of *Baba Went Mushroom Picking*, it would be interesting to see a depiction of actual peasant life. However, for our type of research, the interest of this comedy is not its depiction of the village life of today but the insight it offers into older reality. The village wedding can be seen as a genuine echo and imitation of the divine wedding from pre-Christian times, because of what Eliade calls, the

“cosmic structure of the conjugal ritual and, hence, of human sexual behavior, this *cosmic* and simultaneously *sacred* dimension of conjugal union is difficult for the nonreligious person of modern societies to grasp. However, ... it must not be forgotten that the religious man of the archaic societies sees the world as fraught with messages” (Eliade 2002, 89).



Fig. 7 Grobnik Baba and the author, photo Zdenka Novačić 1996

It is precisely those messages that are difficult for us to read. But as fragments of their former cosmic-ritual function - although forgotten today and replaced by social, entertainment, economic, magic or similar functions - these should be taken seriously as the symbols, source and path to their mythological background, as possible vestiges of Proto-Slavic religious systems. They should be understood as possible documents of an a-graphic culture, enabling some reconstruction of the vestiges that remain today, fragments of lost ritual significance, on the basis of which we have attempted to compare and connect the Međimurje wedding ritual with the divine wedding, the paradigmatic model of all weddings.

Notes

- 1 This research (here with some minor changes) was originally published in the Croatian language in the academic journal *Studia Ethnologica Croatica* under the title “Baba gljive brala” – međimurska svadbena dramska igra kao izvor i put do svetosti praslavenskoga obreda,” (Zagreb 2013, 231–52)
- 2 Besides the meaning old woman/grandmother, Baba in many Slavic languages means also a hag, an ugly old woman.
- 3 Međimurje is a small region in northwestern Croatia.
- 4 There are examples of this song with the verb in the third person present (picks/*bere*) or in the third person perfect (has picked/*brala*). Nonetheless, it is more often in the past tense, as cited here.
- 5 The first record of this comedy comes from the locality of Cirkovljan near Prelog, a village in Lower Međimurje (Blažeka 1924, 194-202). We shall find it in both Lower and Upper Međimurje in records from Nedelišće (cf. Bonifačić Rožin 1969, 49, 52), although more often in Lower Međimurje.
- 6 The play *Baba Went Mushroom Picking* is “... a play with a ludic inversion of gender that is part of popular wedding customs as a period of transition from one social status to another, during which the existing order is reassessed. (...) The use of disguises in these customs signal that the participants are in transition. By their transformation, they distort the cosmos as they know it so that after the conclusion of the act, they will become reintegrated into the newly created order” (Škrbić Alempijević

2006, 52, 58).

- 7 It should be noted that this Međimurje wedding comedy was first recorded and described in detail by Nikola Bonifačić Rožin in an article dated 1969, based on field research he conducted in Upper and Lower Međimurje during 1957, in which he presents three versions, noting that details from these three types can be mixed in practice, even in the same village at various weddings.
- 8 Despite the name, the special discipline of ethnomycology can be considered to be closer to mythology than mycology.
- 9 In various cultures, mushrooms are connected with celestial phenomena, even heaven itself, and considered to be divine expeoration (cf. Toporov 1985, 306).
- 10 This and all other Ukrainian texts were translated by the author.
- 11 I wish to thank my former student and now colleague Lidija Bajuk, originally from Međimurje, who, knowing that I had already conducted research on the monolith Baba, drew my attention to the existence of this folk wedding play in Međimurje.
- 12 The pages are unnumbered and topics are listed in alphabetical order.
- 13 For Baba's chrononyms, precipitation and Baba's bodily fluids, cf. Šmitek 2004 and Hrobat 2010.
- 14 In this context, regarding small wooden weather houses, hygrometers embellished with folk art, it could not be arbitrary that there will be rain when Baba comes out the door and sunny weather when Djeda comes out.
- 15 Mushrooms, which are 95% water, draw moisture from the soil and grow quickly, anywhere from a few hours to 14 days, hence the expression "you are growing like a mushroom after the rain."
- 16 Such an interpretation of Baba was particularly advocated by Pleterški (2009, 42-3).
- 17 The pages are unnumbered and the topics are in alphabetical order.
- 18 In any case, the verses of the song are lascivious and, as we shall see, are also directly connected with the fertility and fruitfulness of the married couple: "There are countless versions of the song accompanying this

dance, which are never the same, depending on the imagination of the musicians, but always beginning with the verse *Three Girls Pulled the C...k/Tri su dekle k...a vlekle* (I sincerely thank Ines Novak Virč, a research assistant at the Institute of Croatian Language and Linguistics, born in Međimurje, who obtained this information from informants in Zasadbreg, Upper Međimurje).

- 19 There are numerous sources about the pig as a symbol of fertility, fruitfulness, abundance, happiness and satisfaction, e.g., cf. Germ 2006, the entry “*prašič*.”
- 20 Although we have considered the Međimurje wedding play in the light of the Proto-Slavic (divine) wedding, the aforementioned elements, especially the concept of the origin of mushrooms in which, as we saw earlier, the goddess Magna Mater was included, could point to an even older cultic complex. In the introductory section of a previous paper (Vince Pallua 2004, 21), the possibility of the preservation of the female cult substrate of the Baba was raised, together with a far larger concentration of female cults in some areas of the Adriatic (e.g., in Liburnia), where the process of Indo-Europeanization was less present and which, therefore, preserved some markedly conservative features (also cf. Hrobat 2010, 223-4).
- 21 A similar meaning has been preserved by the scenario in a Macedonian wedding ritual, where the oldest woman in the village (does she not represent the aforementioned universal Genetrix?), the Macedonian Baba, standing with one leg on a table and the other on a small basin, says a magical formula over the newlyweds to enhance their fertility (Risteski 2005, 109, according to Hrobat 2010, 212).

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Musical Notation

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The Slavic Werewolf – **vlkodlak* and its European Parallels¹

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Abstract. Based on well-known ethnolinguistic data about the werewolf, an attempt is made to inscribe this Slavic mythological character in its European context. Beliefs about the werewolf, and man-to-wolf shape-changing appear in northern Europe (Slavic, Baltic, Germanic traditions, both on the continent and through the British Isles), with corresponding terms for this character, meaning ‘wolf’ + ‘skin’ (Slav. волколак, *vlkodlak*, Balt. vilkalakas, *vilkதாக*) or ‘man’ + ‘wolf’ (German *währwolf*, *werwolf*). Though beliefs about shape-changing into wolf and other animals are known widely in the world, Baltic-Slavic and German terms, formally different, are supposed to be formed after the separation of their respective Indo-European protodialects. During the migrations of the early Middle Ages (4th-7th centuries), the Slavic term spread by contact to their neighbours (Greeks, Eastern Romans, Albanians), though semantics varied considerably, and the Germans lent their term to the French (*loup-garou*). On the outskirts of the designated area (for example, in Scandinavia, in northern Russian regions etc.), probably under the influence of the beliefs of neighbouring non-European peoples, the bear competes with the wolf as the basic hypostasis of the shapeshifter, as the bear is totemic among, for example, Finno-Ugric and Turkic peoples.

Keywords: *ethnolinguistics, Slavic mythology, European parallels, werewolf/vlko(d)lak, borrowings.*

A large literature is dedicated to beliefs about the Slavic werewolf: *vlkodlak* (e.g. Gura, Levkiewskaia 1995, 418–20 with literature; Dukova 2015, 88–92; Radenković 2009 etc.). Special attention is paid therein to the etymology of Slavic word (Ivanov 1975, 1977, 1982, 2007, 2008; Toporov 1984; Zaikovskii 2007, 193-97; Oguibénine 2016, 64-5).

The Slavic werewolf and its beliefs are well-known; but an attempt to inscribe this mythological character into its wider pan-European mythology may be useful. Let us start by briefly defining this character in Slavic traditions.

Mythological ideas about the **vlko(d)lak* (man-wolf, werewolf) are known to nearly all Slavic peoples; best preserved in Ukrainian, Belarusian and Polish traditions. According to Levkivskaia, “*Vlko(d)lak (vovkulak)* is a man-werewolf transforming on his own or transformed by someone else into a wolf, with the help of witchcraft, for a certain period of time, and retaining human mind in a wolf shape” (2010, 478). The character can have the following meanings: 1. person (wizard), capable of voluntary turning into a wolf (usually with a malicious purpose); 2. person who, due to his nature, is bound to turn into a wolf, usually once a month, in a full moon (a plot common in the Carpathians); 3. person (or group of people) forcibly turned into a wolf (or wolves) by a sorcerer; alternatively, one turned into a wolf by a curse; 4. “walking deadman”, a kind of vampire, often covered with hair or appearing in the guise of a wolf (mainly south-Slavic plot).

Slavic terms for this character are fairly similar. They represent the composition of two stems: *vľ kь* ‘wolf’ and **dlākā* ‘skin, fur (hair)’ with various phonetic and morphological modifications corresponding to the historical development of each of the Slavic languages and other variations: Rus. *волкодлак, волколак, волкулá к, вурдалак*; Ukr. *волкулак, вовкулак(a), вовкун*; Bel. *воўколак(a), ваўкалак(a), вавкулак*; Pol. *wilkolak, wilkolek, wilkotap*; Czech *vlkodlak*, Slovak *vlkodlak, vlkolak, vrkolak*; Sloven. *volkodlak, okodlak, kodlak, verkodlak, vrkodlak, vukodlak, vulkodlak*; SCr. *вукодлак, вркò лак*; Bolg. *връколак, врколя к, врколо̀ к, враколá к, вракалок, фърколак* and others.

Etymologically, the common Slavic (proto-Slavic) form **vľ kodlakь* is a compound of **vľ k* ‘wolf’ and **dlaka* ‘animal skin’ and typologically is compared with old-Icel. *bersekr*, formed from *ber* ‘bear’ and *sekr* ‘shirt’ [Moszyński 1967, 546-47]². R. Jacobson [Jacobson 1966, 344] gives another comparison – old-Icel. *ulfharm* ‘wolf skin’» (Dukova 2015, 89). The same form is mentioned by A.N. Afanas'ev, “In German beliefs, turning into a wolf is done by throwing a “wolf shirt” on oneself (a skin, *úlfahamr = wolfhemd*) or putting on a wolf belt (*wolfgürtel*), metaphorical wolf skin (1994, 531).

The same understanding is preserved in Kashubian beliefs. In Kashubian (a northern language or dialect of Polish, common in Pomerania Province), according to Bernard Sychta’s representational dictionary, the term *vlkodlak* was not retained, but there are traces of so-called *wilkolactwo*, folk belief in werewolves. For example, they believe, that the wolf has nine skins. Sometimes he sheds one or more of them. One who finds such a skin, and throws it on, will turn into a wolf, with a wolfish voice, eyes like burning coals, belching fire from the mouth. It

was believed that, out of vengeance, one could curse a man into a wolf (Nakla). The image of a wolf was used to frighten children, and warn them to return home before dark, otherwise “wolves would drink their blood” (Sychta 1973, 154). There is a story about a musician, attacked by wolves on a forest road, but he started playing the violin, and the wolves were spellbound listening to music; so the musician was saved (Sychta 1973, 157).

A word similar to the Slavic one is known to Lithuanians: *vilkolakas*, *vilkalokas*, *vilkã lokis*, *vikalotas*, *vilkolã kis*, *vilkã lakis*, *vilkotakis*, *vilkólakis*, *vikalatas*, *vilk(a)lakis*, *viltakys*, *viltakas*, *vilkatas*, *viltakas* etc. (Toporov 1984, 74; Dukova 2015, 90). The name denotes exactly a werewolf (wolf skinwalker), as in northern Slavic beliefs (Tokarev 1997, 236), but the form of the word varies more significantly than in the Slavic languages. For example, the forms *vilkatakas*, *vilkatakỹs* are compared to Lith. *vilk* ‘wolf’ and *tãkas* ‘path’, *tekėti* ‘to run’ (Mo, 1252); so the creature is understood as ‘running wolf’. Some researchers attribute the Lithuanian terms to Slavic borrowings (Fraenkel, 1253; Dukova 2015; 90). But there is reason to consider them as common Baltic-Slavic formation of the Balto-Slavic unity era or, at least, parallel development. In Slavic (or Baltic-Slavic) traditions, **vlko(d)lak* as a common aspect of the character and the term appears in a certain complex of motives. In general, the complex of all these components is not repeated in any other tradition.

A special situation could be seen in south-Slavic folk traditions. The main meaning of the word *vlkodlak/vukodlak* is ‘vampire/walking corpse’. According to the Serbian researcher Ljubinko Radenković, beliefs about the werewolf as ‘man-wolf’ were not known at all, even to that expert connoisseur of Serbian antiquity, and compiler of the first dictionary of Serbian folk language, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić. Nevertheless, beliefs about men turning into wolves, though rare, still can be met in Southern Slavia. According to E. Lilek, in late 19C Bosnia and Herzegovina, there were no beliefs about werewolves, but he relates a legend “about a certain woman from Trebinje surroundings, who turned into a wolf and slaughtered about forty sheep. She did it like this: [she] put ropes in a circle, took off her clothes and threw them inside the circle, then rolled over [on] her head three times. Later, she turned back into a woman in the same way” (1899, 704-5). Similar beliefs and legends for Croatia and Slovenia are more commonly recorded for Eastern and Western Slavs (Radenković 2009, 280). The old semantics were retained also in Slovenian: *volkodlãk* ‘werewolf (a man, spell-bound into a wolf unless released)’ (Pleteršnik 1895, 785), *volkodlak* ‘a baby on which appears fur and wolfish teeth,

and which can be in turn wolf, or human’ (Sodrazhica); ‘a cursed man, half-wolf–half-man’ (Ribnica etc.; cf. Kelemina 1997, 99-102, 308; Plotnikova 2016, 199-200). As well as in peripheral parts of Slovenia, the exact meaning ‘werewolf’ for the Bosnian term *vukodlak*, appears among Muslim populations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as we see in modern fieldwork by Anna Plotnikova (2016, 199).

As it is known, southern Slavs are descendants of Slavic tribes, which migrated to the Balkans in the 6-8C CE, presumably over the Carpathians, where they must have spent a certain amount of time. Here is where some significant semantic shifts of the Slavic vocabulary took place, and new notations appeared, responding to the new reality of mountainous terrain and climate, and new subsistence economy. After migration to the Balkans, further changes happened in their vocabulary, now also renewed with many borrowings from the bordering Greek, Albanian, Romance and Turkic languages (and later, Hungarian), and also from substrate languages (Dacian, Illyrian, Thracian). Accordingly, there were changes in beliefs and mythological motives and ideas.

In their turn, south-Slavic dialects exerted influence on the language landscape of the Balkans and the Mediterranean. From Slavic dialects, the word *vrkolak* (with its specific meaning ‘vampire’³), was borrowed into Greek: *βουρκόλακας*, *βρουκόλακας*, *βρυκόλακας*, *βουρκούλακας*, *βροκόλακο*; and further modified forms, *βουθρόλακας*, *βουρδόλακας*, *βουρδούλακας*, *βορβόλακας*, *βουρβόλακας* (Dukova 2015, 92; Klimova 2008, 102-3, with review of Greek etymologies; Zaïkovskii 2007, 195-96). And also – directly or through Greek – the meaning “vampire” was transmitted into other neighbouring languages and traditions; later contaminated with local beliefs.

In Romanian, *vîrcolác*, *vărculác*, *virgolác* means ‘a werewolf, a transformed child that died unbaptized; this werewolf devours the moon and the sun’; cf. Aroman. *vurculák*, *vircolác*, *vurcolác* (Dukova 2015, 91–2); Rom. *svîrcolak* etc., and the meaning ‘soul of a child who died before being baptized, incarnated in a werewolf’, a creature which eats the sun and the moon, bringing eclipses (Ivanov 2007, 75). The figure of the werewolf is very indistinct in Romanian demonology. It merges with a number of other demons; it can take a shape of a snake, lizard, worm, cat, dog, heaven beast; sometimes it is said that *vîrcolaks* is a snake, which, during an eclipse of the sun, pretends to be a sunbeam (Kabakova 1989, 135-6). It is thought that Rom. *vîrcolác* (also *pricolici*, *strigói*) is a borrowed name and character, and in general not common in Romania.

The motive of devouring the moon and the sun (as a mythologisation of lunar and solar eclipses), present in Romanian, as well as in other Carpathian beliefs, must be ancient. As well as among the Slavs (OSlav., OSerb.) and Romanians, according to the electronic catalogue of mythological motives by Yury Berezkin, this is motive A.12 (Eclipses: as monster attack), known in several parts of the world, including (among IE peoples), the Germans and French, who also consider “werewolf” to be the culprit of the eclipse (Germ. *solulf*, *wehrf-wolf/sonnen-wolf*, Fr. *loup-garou*). The figure of a werewolf as a strong sorcerer or magician (as in Ukrainian legends about witches, who pull down the moon from the sky), seems to be of the same origin.

In some contemporary Slavic (Carpathian) beliefs *werewolf* is also connected to astronomical motives, for example: man turning into wolf during the summer or winter solstice (Slovak; Cibulová and Gašpariková 1995, 309); at the time of the full moon (Slovak; Orava region, author’s own notes), at the time of the change of the moon (i.e. when the new moon is born; Ukr. hucul.; Hobzej 2002, 72-3).

The corresponding terms in Albanian – *vurkollák*, *vurvollák*, dial. *vrkollak* and Tur. *vrkolak* – are borrowings from Slavic through Greek (Dukova 2015, 92; Zaïkovskii 2007, 195).

The closest tradition to the Baltic-Slavic ones is German. The character here is denoted by the term *werwolf* “man, shape-shifting into wolf”: Germ. *we(h)rwolf*, OGerm. *werwulf*, MHGerm. *werwolf*, Swed. *varulf*, MDan. *weerwolf*, OE. *Werewolf*. The latter is etymologically explained by the composition of OE. *wer* (lat. *vir*) ‘man’ + *wulf* (Hoed 1996, 538), where Germ. *Wer* < *Welt*, mhd. *welt*, *wer(e)lt*, ahd. *weralt*, frk. *werold*, finally coming to *wer-*, *vir-* ‘man, human’ (Kluge 2002, 983 & 985). One possible etymology for the first component in *werwolf* is OHG *weri* ‘wear’, so the whole word would mean ‘wearer of the wolf-skin’ (Thomas, McLennan 1911, 524).

German beliefs also hold that turning into a wolf is executed by throwing on a wolf’s skin; this confirms the etymology of the Slavic word – ‘wolf + skin’: “everyone wearing a wolf’s shirt becomes a werewolf and runs as a wolf for nine days; on the tenth day he throws off his animal cover and returns to his former state. As other sagas state, he remains in the wolf image for three, seven or nine years ... Turning into a wolf, a man acquires the voice and predatory propensities of the beast: he moves away to the woods, attacks travelers and livestock and, tormented with hunger, howls wildly and even gobbles carrion” (Afanas’ev 1994, 531). In another source, the Germanic werewolf, or man-wolf, is a transformed person; a wolf which is really a human being; so the

werewolf is a man in wolf's form, or wolf's dress (Stewart 1909, 2 (253).

Much has been written about the German werewolf by Willem de Blécourt (2007, 2015 etc.). Some German legends, widespread, from the middle of Germany to the Netherlands and Belgium, are known to the Slavs in almost the same form ("husband-werewolf"). Some are modified ("farm hand puts on belt and turns into werewolf, eats a foal"), others include motives otherwise associated with witches (motif of riding on a man's back; or of mutilating a wolf suspected of being werewolf, in order to recognise it, when its human form has the same mutilation), or with *mara/mora*⁴ (choking nightmare demons) in Slavic territory.

On the basis of all this material, we might conclude that the epicenter where the character and beliefs about the werewolf appeared, framed by special terms ("man-wolf", "a man in a wolf skin"), was in Northern Europe, specifically in the Germanic-Baltic-Slavic area. Here, werewolf beliefs developed around a concrete mythological character, the man-wolf; though the two groups of those ancient tribes formed their own terminology.

Werewolf, designated by other terms, is also known among many Indo-European peoples. Kluge (2002, 854) citing Müller (1937, 28), summarises philological backing for the view that it was "known to all tribes that migrated to the west. Compare Germ. *Werwolf*, OHG., MHG. *wërwolf* 'man-wolf', Gr. *λυκάνθρωπος*, Lat. *Versipellis*" (cf. Dukova 2015, 90). In other words, the Greek ('wolf-man') and Latin ('one who changes/everts his skin') terms are close to the meaning of the German and Slavic terms. The Romance terms - Fr. *loup-garou*, OF. *garulfus* etc.

- etymologically come from Germanic; so, in medieval stories, "*Loup-garou*... is a man who roams in the night in the shape of a wolf. *Garou* < *garoul* < *gerulphus*. *Gerulphus* has the German origin and represents the Swedish *varulf* 'werewolf'. *Varulf* is composed from *var* 'man' and *ulf* 'wolf' and signifies a man-wolf. *Garulphus* gave old French *garoul* (Brachet 1872, 256)⁵. The splash of fearful werewolf fever was marked rather late: "France in particular seems to have been infested with werewolves during the 16th century, and the consequent trials were very numerous" (Thomas, McLennan 1911, 525).

So, the active influence of Germanic (on French) and Slavic (on Greek, Romanian, Albanian, Turkic) terminology and beliefs all over Europe, including traditions, having their own ancient mythological beliefs in wolfmen, probably could be the evidence of new "passionarity", or drive (as to Lev Gumilev's theory), brightness, given to these mythological ideas by the named two ethnics.

The very concept of shapeshifting belongs to the most archaic

mythological ideas and magical practices throughout the world. In Indo-European and non-Indo-European traditions, turnskins are associated not only with the wolf (as werewolf), but also with other animals. For example, in Romanian mythological narratives a man turns into a dog, in India – into serpent, in Africa – into lion, hyena or leopard etc. Even in the far end of the earth, the Far Eastern Ainu also recorded two stories, strikingly similar to the stories about werewolves. In one of them a woman hits on the head some unknown dog, and in the evening she saw on her husband's head a wound in the same place. The other story tells of a wife, who, when killed by her husband, shape-shifts into a dog (Sakhalin villages Otsehpoka and Tunaychi (now Okhotskoje) – Pilsudskii 2002). The most ancient beliefs are listed in Stewart (1909); the fund of world plots on werewolves are listed in the analytical catalogue of Berezkin & Duvakin: plots L1A, L113, L125). However, these transformations into different animals, birds, fish, etc. should be considered only as an archetypal idea, which was embodied in a well-defined, recognizable character of a *werewolf* and the stories about it in certain part of Europe.

The competing character of the werewolf in Europe is the bear, common also in Finno-Urgic, Turkic and other Asian traditions⁶. Ancient Greek materials describe “bear people” (Ἀρκάδες), Hittite texts – ritual character LU *hartagga*- ‘bear-man’ (parallel to other ritual personages – wolf-people, dog-people, lion-people) (Toporov 1984, 73). Some evidences about changing into a bear are noted in North-Russian districts, where the lexeme *vlkolak* is not represented at all, nor the werewolf itself, apparently due to the Finno-Urgic substratum. There exists the story of “the whole wedding procession launched into the chimney in the bear shape” by sorcerers (Vologda region); about people, who were made into bears (Vyatka region); about some people near the sea, who could do harm⁷ –they changed a whole wedding company into bears (Olonetsk region); stories that, under the bear's skin people might find a woman in traditional costume (Vologda province); about sorcerers taking shape of a bear (Novgorod, Kharkov, Brest regions). Rare stories of such kind were recorded in Polish Silesia and in Lusatian Sorbia (Gura 1997, 166- 7), the territories of the Slavic peripheries.

Old legends of the Lithuanians also tell of changes into wolf as well as bear. One testimony of this is the German traveller J. D. Wunderer, who visited Denmark, Russia and Sweden at the end of the 16C (1589 and 1590), and described aspects of life in Lithuania (region Samogitia – Rus. Zhmud'⁸), Russia and Livonia. He says: “Finally ... we arrived in Zhmud', through vast and thick forests, where at different times on a clear day horrible visions and spirits can appear. Scientists believe that

this is because until now a lot of local inhabitants live like animals, without any religion and care for the soul, and not only adore animals and other terrifying beings, like snakes, but indulge in diabolical pursuits, possessing a magic art of transforming into wolves and bears, consequently Satan is very strong among them. The inhabitants appear to travelers in the forms of different beasts and at the first opportunity attack and kill them” (Adelung 1864, 270).

All this confirms etymologies for the terms in consideration. According to etymological argument by Toporov and Ivanov for Slavic **vlko(d)lak*, the common Slavic form **ul̥k- & *dlakŭ* is to be reconstructed as the initial one, in which the second element ascends to South-Slavic appellative for ‘fur, hair’ (*δλακα*), to be compared finally with the Baltic name for bear: **(t)lōkis, lokys, lacis*. For the earlier period, one proposes “the relicts of the ancient IE name of a bear (Hitt. *ḫartagga-*, Gr. *ἄρκτος* etc.)...” (Ivanov, Toporov 1963, 139; Ivanov 2007, 75-6). There is also another etymology for Germanic *werwolf*: Germ. **bera-wulfaz* (>*wera-wulfaz*) ‘werewolf’ (particularly, “bear-wolf”), similar to Slavic *vlko-dlak* ‘wolf-bear’, Gr. *λεό-παρδος*; besides, the typically Baltic-Slavic **dlāk(i)as* could itself be a borrowing from North-Caucasian languages (Nikolaev 1983, 42); the same etymological version (composition of *wolf* and *bear*) by V. Orel is mentioned in Guuibénine (2016, 65).

But ethnolinguistic data do not support these latter etymologies. In all the traditions a man (a sorcerer) turns into a concrete animal (mainly the totem of the tribe) – either wolf, or bear, or some other animal. But wolf and bear never mix in one character, no hybrid forms were noted. A rare datum from Ukrainian Transcarpathia, that the man can be one month a wolf and another month a bear (Levkievskaja 1996, 191, without reference to the source, probably, field materials) – has to be considered as a late contamination, taking into account the interaction of certain traditions in the Carpathians, including Finno-Ugric (Hungarian) and earlier – Avarian (Turkish?).

Though beliefs about shapeshifting into animals are known all over the world, “throughout the greater part of Europe the werewolf is preferred; there are old traditions of his existence in England, in Wales and in Ireland; in southern France, Germany, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Servia, Bohemia, Poland and Russia he can hardly be pronounced extinct now; in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Iceland the bear competes with the wolf for pre-eminence” (Thomas, McLennan 1911, 524).

Yet the question arises, why do some Germanic peoples prefer bear as the shape for turnskins, and some the wolf shape? Both beasts were common in Europe, both could be totems and both were strong and

frightening enough to have their body parts (claws, skin, teeth) or names (cf. o.-Icel. *Ulf-biörn*, *Biörn-olfr*, OHG *Wulf-bero*, *Bero-ulf*, West-Got. *Ber-ulfus* (Ivanov 1975, 406), Sorb. *Vuk*) as apotropaic.

Maybe it is worth considering a substratum influence, namely, substrate borrowing by the German tribes, advancing from their homeland in Northern Europe, to Central, then to Southern and Western Europe, Celtic beliefs about wolf-man and wolf-people. There are Celtic legends about people that originated as wolves, and retained the ability to turn into wolves in order to hunt neighboring cattle. One author describes a family that turned into wolves every seventh year (such was the curse), retaining the ability to human speech and gaining the power of prophecy. The continental Celts worshiped the god Dis Pater, sometimes described as covered with a wolf skin. Julius Caesar marked that the Gauls believed that they were descendants of wolves. The Scots know *wulver* as a mythological character, half-human–half-wolf, described rather as a “wodwose”, he did not touch people, and sometimes helped them in trouble: he might leave on the threshold of homes “wild” food (Monaghan 2004, 474-75). Celtic tribes driven into the mountainous regions of British Isles preserved their legends of the “wolf” origin of peoples in Scotland and Ireland. In this case, Procopius’ information about the “neurs” (presumably Slavic tribe) could be the relict of Celtic beliefs.

At the same time, when speaking about the preference for bear-shapechanging, it could be considered that the bear-shape was inherited by the Germanic tribes from the substrate beliefs in Scandinavia, from Finno-Ugric people.

Specialists in Germanic studies continue to investigate difficult problems of Germanic ethnogenesis, language contacts and language history. Nevertheless, there are certain results, which do not contradict the data listed above. Yu. Kuz'menko states that morphological, phonological and lexical isoglosses, which he considered in his book, “show, that at the moment of forming of the Germanic features the Proto-Germanic has been for a long time in the contact with Italic, Baltic and Lappish-Finnic, or maybe with the language of the first wave of the Finno-Ugric people” (Kuz'menko 2011, 118-19). The beginning of forming the first pan-Germanic language “has to be referred to the II. half of the III. millennium B.C., when the first common Germanic-Italic- Celtic and Germanic-Baltic-Slavic innovations appear and at the same time, probably, the contacts with the language, relative to Proto-Lappish and Proto-Finnic occurred” (Kuz'menko 2011, 219). Though unique Germanic-Celtic innovations touch upon only vocabulary, that means that this contact was actual during the period of forming the pan-Germanic

language, i.e. during the Proto-Germanic period (Kuz'menko 2011, 119).

Territories where the bear is preferred as an animal of shape-shifting are the North-European districts of German, Baltic and Slavic regions: areas where IE peoples contacted non IE peoples (also later on – in Transcarpathia), as well as the regions where Slavs contacted Germans (Sorbia, Silesia).

There is still much to do with the mythologemas *vlkodlak* and *werewolf* and much to investigate, considering the great expanse of territory, and great quantity of local mythological traditions in Europe⁹.

Notes

- 1 The study appeared with the support of Russian Foundation for Basic Research, project *The Lower Mythology of the Slavs: New Methods and Approaches to Research* (RFBR No 20-012-00300A).
- 2 The references in the square brackets are used by the authors of the cited paper.
- 3 This meaning probably appeared under the influence of Turkic peoples beliefs in the South Europe and Balkans.
- 4 *Mora / mara* – a character of mainly Western and Southern Slavs, an evil spirit, which comes at night to suffocate, to oppress sleeping people.
- 5 cf.: Proto-Germ. **werawulfaz* > Frankish **wariwulf* > Old French *leu garoul* (*leu* 'wolf' + *garoul* 'werewolf' < *warous*) (<https://en.wiktionary.org>).
- 6 For instance, in Bashkir mythology *aiyu eget* (*айыу eget*) is a fairy-tale character, half-bear-half-man and is considered to be the relict of totemism; *aiyu tokmo* (*айыу токмо*) is a descendant of the bear; as a legend has it, the hero with the help of the knife, stricken into the earth, could change into a bear (Hisamitdinova 2010: 12, 13). In beliefs of the Komi, the sorcerers turned into bears; one of the legendary heroes of Komi-Perm legends was called Osh ('a bear') and his mother conceived him from the bear (Petrukhin 2003: 215).
- 7 In this context it is possible to suspect that this was some other, non-Slavic tribe.
- 8 The north-west part of modern Lithuania, coming out to the Baltic sea.
- 9 A joint monograph is in preparation, where beliefs about the werewolf

from all over Europe are to be investigated: *Werewolf Legends*, eds. W. de Blécourt, M. Mencej. London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2022.

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Humans As Keepers of the Universe: The Water Cycle in Native Colombian Cosmology

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abSTraCT. Indigenous communities living in secluded areas of Colombian mountains have always recognized the importance water has to the well-being of their society and to life in general. They possessed a surprisingly detailed knowledge of the water cycle and linked the beginning of the Universe and the birth of all living beings to water. In their understanding, the role of humans was to watch over the delicate balance of the cosmos. Their ability to efficiently and sustainably manage water supplies was supported on the ideological level with water-related myths, and strengthened with rituals connected to agriculture and healing. Thus the people were continuously reminded of the essential role water played in their life and in their natural environment, which they considered their home. With páramos (alpine tundra ecosystems - the main source of water in the Colombian Andean areas) continuously threatened by mining industries and with climate and civilization-related changes altering the delicate cycle of water, humans as a species have seemed to fail to retain the title of the “Keepers of the Universe”.

KeyWordS: Columbian mythologies, water cycle, creation myths, traditional ecological beliefs

INTRODUCTION

For most people living a modern urban lifestyle, water has become a mere commodity. Somehow, along the line of technological and scientific development, the awareness of natural world was traded for convenience and economic productivity, and in that process, our societies have forgotten the connection between water (with its manifold, multi-layered meanings and forms - as an element, as bodies of water, as the water cycle, as the most important life-promoting substance) and the most fundamental aspects of our existence. Nevertheless, the communities living on the margin of our “civilized” world have preserved the knowledge of water’s diversified manifestations, and of the way it is linked to our individual bodies, communities and environment and

incorporated that knowledge into their cosmologies, myths and rituals by which they continue to conduct their lives. These communities' everyday existence is still very much intertwined with their immediate natural environment. Through everyday observation and focused attention, they regard water as one of the most reliable indicators of nature's balance, as well as, projected on a smaller scale, the health of their lands and societies.

CONTEXT

For its undeniable indispensability and its mastery of shape-shifting and omnipresence, water has always captivated people's interest, and so has become an important archetypal motif/character in mythological systems all over the world. This paper's objective is to offer a brief insight into the complex systems of mythological stories, cosmological beliefs and ritual practices in a few selected Colombian tribes and explore the role water plays in the lives of their communities - in the domains of cultural traditions and lore, shared and individual imagination, and even in thoroughly practical everyday routines which are also, on many levels, connected to the mythological beliefs and religious rituals. For this study, I have chosen to compare three indigenous tribes living in the mountainous areas of Colombia. The first two tribes, Misak (Sp. Guambianos) and Nasa (Sp. Paéz), are neighbours¹, with their largest and culturally most important settlements situated throughout the region of Cauca (central part of south-west Colombia)². The third tribe, the Kogi (Sp. Cogui), live in the north-western part of Colombia, and their original habitat includes the mountains of Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta as well as the adjoining coastal areas.³ These tribes share more than just a close and detailed relationship to water and its role as a delicate indicator of the balance in nature. Throughout the past and the present, all the aforementioned communities have managed to preserve a lot of knowledge and customs directly descended from their traditional life philosophy and mythology by holding to their native languages and original rituals. And even though each of these tribes have adopted their very own specific techniques of sustaining their cultural legacy while living side by side with the invasive and dominant political and religious powers, we can observe striking similarities between the three tribes in the significance water motifs hold in their mythologies, and in the way their rituals – which are in many ways connected to water – are expressed.

Let's first draw our attention to the features of the geographical and

environmental background all these communities share. Some of the most noticeable common traits of their traditional territories are the access to the *páramos*⁴ and the proximity of the sea. Thus the high mountainous plains as well as the sea are both included into their water cycle schemes. The high mountain ecosystems – *páramos* – serve as crucial water sources supplying vast areas of agricultural land and pastures, as well as Colombian cities situated on the ranges of the Andes. Quite naturally, these areas – not easily approachable, far-reaching and very often inhospitable, rich in medicinal plants and rare animals – became in the native traditions a habitat of mythical water beings, whilst the clear and tranquil lakes scattered on the wet mountain plains have been for centuries celebrated as sacred wombs from which earthly beings, and in some cases humans themselves, originated. Water – whether as an element, or whether manifested in its myriad of forms as water bodies (the ocean, mountain lakes, streams, rivers) – thus plays a crucial part in the creation myths of all the aforementioned communities. It is considered a female principle, and its cycle accurately reflects the reproductive cycle in women. Its nature is unpredictable and stands beyond the human categories of what appears morally “good” and “bad”. Misak, Nasa and Kogi have all incorporated into their daily habits and their seasonal and healing procedures many rituals which have the purpose of promoting the regular and healthy water cycle in nature, thus preventing any possible misbalance of elemental forces. From this perspective, people have been traditionally seen as “the Keepers of Universe”, whose main mission is to maintain the universal balance through their religious rituals, as well as through the correctly performed day-to-day chores (Ereira 1992, 2012).⁵

WATER MOTIFS IN CREATION MYTHS

The Kogi myth of creation is connected to water in many aspects. It identifies the ocean waters with the universal and primordial Mother, who serves as a personification of both the omnipresent, ever-and- repeatedly creating Life-force, and the matrix into which all manifested beings and objects in our world have been born.

According to the Kogi creation myth,

*At the beginning there was nothing but darkness.
Nothing but the sea.*

*There was no Sun, Moon, people, animals or plants.
 Only the Sea was everywhere.
 The sea was the Mother.
 She was water - the river, the lake, the stream and the sea.
 At the beginning, there was only the Mother.
 The Mother was not people, she was not anything.
 She was Alúna.
 She was the spirit of what was yet going to come
 And she was thoughts and memory.
 Thus the Mother existed only in Alúna...⁶*

(Ereira 2004, 145, *Kogi Creation Myth*)

The Kogi creation myth, with its philosophical depth, complexity and holistic approach, may be categorized as one of the *ex nihilo*, or “out of nothing” creation myths which are found in many forms and adaptations across the whole globe. In these myths, a supreme deity- occupying the timeless space of the original Emptiness – creates and organizes the whole Universe from itself and on its own. From the geographical and historical perspective, we can find *ex nihilo* creation myths in the ancient Egypt and Sumer, in the Indian *Upanishads*, in numerous native American traditions, among the Inuit, and of course in the principal monotheistic religions like Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Leeming 2010 [1994]).

Interestingly, many motifs in the Kogi cosmological beliefs correspond with those of the Mesoamerican Mayas. In the Mayan creation myth, the pre-creation world, the Nothingness, consisted of the Sky and the Sea, and their two principal makers (the gods) created the world and all the life forms by expressing them or discussing them into existence. While comparing these two myths, we can find more than just the common motif of the primordial Ocean and the god-creator figure. Incorporated within the philosophical context, there is also the idea of each living creature and object being primarily made as a *sound with a meaning* – a word, or more accurately as an idea, before obtaining its physical quality in the material real. This stands in contrast to the Judeo-Christian cosmological concept, that beings and things were first created and only afterwards named. Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, in his article *Templos Kogi* (1975), hints at the possibility that the Kogi people came to the north Colombian coast originally from Mesoamerica. The striking similarities found in the motifs appearing in both of the creation myths and in the concepts of the structure of the Cosmos – where the Universe

was created in a certain number of layers – may indeed support this theory, despite the unquestionable uniqueness of the Kogi cosmology which indeed, in many ways, varies from its Mayan, as well as from its Andean and Amazonian, counterparts (Reichel-Dolmatoff, 1975).

Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff (1912-1994), an Austria born anthropologist and archaeologist, devoted most of his life to the research of many Amazonian ethnics, among which he conducted in-depth fieldwork. Among various indigenous tribes he encountered, the Kogi in particular captured much of his interest. In his article *The Great Mother and the Kogi Universe*, he described the concept of the pre-creation space of the Void, as well as the supreme deity of the Kogi Cosmos, the primordial Mother, in great detail. The description runs from the most abstract to a variety of more concrete, narrative-based manifestations. As the underlying, deeply philosophical concept, this “*imagery [of a] self-fecundating primal Mother Goddess... is said [to be], originally, pure thought (alúna) – an invisible force floating upon the dark primeval waters.*” (Reichel- Dolmatoff 1987, 77-8)

Reichel-Dolmatoff adds definitions of the word *alúna*, which can have multiple meanings: “thought”, “spirit”, “memory”, “soul”, “mind”, “imagination”. However, in the more folkloric narrative context, the Mother may be perceived as “*a beautiful naked woman with long black hair sitting upon a black stone disc at the bottom of the sea*”, while in other contexts, she may be identified with a “*huge black serpent that encircles the sea and... is the daughter of the Lord of Thunder*” or seen as a “*huge black bird that laid the cosmic egg.*” (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1987, 84).

Even though the original, all-creating deity is understood as the Mother, some of her characteristics and behaviour traits remain typically male. This suggests that her “*real nature*” is more hermaphroditic than just purely female. She is thus described as wearing male clothing, chewing coca leaves, using the lime gourd and having a bearded face and a deep voice- attributes traditionally strongly connected with the masculine gender. Later, as the Creation progresses and the Mother gives birth to her first sons, she decides to keep only the female characteristics to herself and passes the male traits over to her sons. (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1987, 84)

One of the first human beings and original ancestor figure, the primordial Mother’s son, Sintána, is also very much connected to water.

He is said to arise at the dawn of the earthly existence (before anything else was created), from his original dwelling in the depths of the ocean. The place of his “gestation” was described as “*the House of the Sea*

*Foam, in the darkness, in water...*⁷ In Kogi cosmology, water is also linked to the “circulatory system” of the Earth – with streams and rivers representing veins of the land. At times, water is even perceived as the sacred menstrual blood of the Mother (Ereira 2004, 145, *Kogi Creation Myth*).⁸

The Kogis have always perceived their home, the territory of their ancestors in which their community thrived for many centuries before the arrival of Europeans, as the significant part – and accurate representation of – the Universe in its entirety. The sea and the Caribbean beaches have some crucially important river estuaries and marsh areas, whose flawless functioning has – especially during the last few decades – become characterized by some dramatic, human-induced changes to the environment. They remain a crucial indicator reflecting the equilibrium of natural cycles on a larger scale. These have always been considered an important part of the sacred area of the original “homeland”, even though the Kogis and their neighbouring tribes were deprived of these lands for almost five centuries by the newly arriving Spanish settlers.

The striking clarity of the detailed observation of the manner in which natural processes manifest themselves in the functioning of this fragile ecosystem has become an inalienable part of Kogi folklore and cosmology.

Especially in the last few decades, the Kogi campaign to reestablish the disturbed equilibrium of their home ecosystem has been supported by a number of academic researchers, artists and international associations.

Alan Ereira (b. 1943), British author, historian and filmmaker, managed to catch the attention of a worldwide audience with a few of his well-received pieces which directly dealt with Kogi issues. The film *From the Heart of the World: The Elder Brothers' Warning* (1990), introduced the

essence of Kogi cosmology, and was created with the permission of the *mamos* (Kogi shamans). As the title suggests, the film was meant as a warning to the people of the West (perceived by the *mamos* as the “younger brothers”) from their “older and much more experienced siblings” against the way the “younger brothers” carelessly and irretrievably alter the natural environment on the planet. In his book *The Heart of the World* (1990), Ereira described the experience of his and his film crew’s close encounters with the Kogis and the basic cosmological and religious concepts of this unique tribe. More than twenty years after the first visit Ereira paid to the area of Santa Nevada de Santa Marta, the Kogi shamans called for his collaboration once again, and consequently the film *Alina* (2012) was shot. The *mamos* felt that their original message was not taken quite as seriously as they had hoped, and they were prepared to emphasize their point further with yet another testimony. *Alina* became

internationally recognized, and it certainly played its part not only in supporting the growing awareness of global ecological issues, but also in the internationally run campaigns for the restoration of the original territory of the Kogis and their neighbouring tribes. Also as a consequence of this popularization (among other reasons), in 2013, the Kogi regained the legal control over certain coastal areas of the Caribbean.⁹

In the Czech Republic, the nonprofit organization Mosty-Puentes runs various activities and events which promote the holistic essence of the Kogi's attitude to ecosystems, launching various campaigns and volunteer-based work simultaneously in both countries. And since Ereira's work is often cited during the presentations and talks, it can be concluded that the *mamos`* message has reached the ears of at least a small number of willing listeners.

But the creation myths connected to water are in no way restricted to the area of Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. In his book *El Pensamiento de las Aguas de las Montañas* (2000), Hugo Portela Guarín quoted an excerpt from Nasa oral tradition:

...Nosotros existimos por el agua... que ella, si se va, vuelve a estar con nosotros... ella es eterna y quiere que existamos.

(... We exist because of water... because if She goes, She returns again to be with us... She is eternal and wants us to exist.)¹⁰

(Guarín 2000, 96)

According to the Nasa tribe's creation myth, all animals, people, plants and even minerals came into the world from water. In the context of Nasa cosmological tradition, the element of water is personified as a female deity who has a real "human-like" affection for her earthly children, especially for people to whom she gave birth after the sacred union with *señor Estrella*, or "Mr. Star". The water "herself" would be, in this particular oral tradition, euphemistically called *señorita agua*, or "Ms. Water". As a consequence, the Nasas¹¹ would label themselves "Children of the Star", tracing their ancestry directly back to this primordial cosmological event. Incidentally, the fusion of fire and water is an abundantly reappearing motif throughout Nasa and Misak narratives, and the tales portraying the birth scenes of special chieftains and important personas throughout their history would repeatedly apply the same principal pattern of a *water body* (lake, underground lake or the sea)

being impregnated by a *celestial body* (usually a falling star, a falling point (beam of light) of a star, etc.). The sacred lakes situated in the highest *páramo* plains would thus represent the limitless sources of life, from which all knowledge, magical powers and universal social rules, desirable to be maintained by the local communities, have come – and not only once, but continuously, giving birth to creatures and providing wisdom and universal consultation until the present day. These lakes are regarded as home to powerful ancestors and spirits, with which the Nasa shamans – the *walas*¹² – are able to communicate, and that the access to these sacred lands is very often restricted to the shamans and their associates.

Misaks¹³, who are more commonly known under the Spanish name *Guambianos*, feel connected to water even more closely than the two aforementioned tribes. Not only do they call themselves *pi urek* which literally means “Children of Water” to emphasize the pivotal point of their belief that they originated from the specific sacred lakes situated within their traditional territory,¹⁴ but they also compare the history (the cyclic flow of time) of their land and tribe (which are inseparably connected) to a water stream. The flow of time, as well as of life itself, unfolds in cycles (a cycle of each individual’s life, a historical cycle, an agricultural cycle, etc.) which are thought to be parts of the ever moving, eternal element of water. According to the Misak creation myth, at the beginning, there was land and two lakes – the female lake, Nupisu, meaning “sea” or *Piendamó*, and the male lake, *Nupitrapuik* (Bautista 2009, p. 349). From the union of these, all the living forms and minerals came into being. First the spirit of *páramos*¹⁵ sprang into existence followed by other beings: plants, minerals, animals and humans. In Misak folklore, we can also find a unique “great flood myth”, describing a situation when all created earthly beings were forced to live, for some time, on a giant straw hat because their original land had become flooded by a great ocean. The whole disaster was the handiwork of a mischievous “spirit-hero”, whose identity gradually became associated with the “hero-trickster” of medieval Spanish tales, Pedro Urdemales (Guarín 2000, 34-9). In the end, a star fell through the hat, punctured the seabed and created a hole through which all the water drained off underground. The Misak’s traditional stories, myths and legends are very rich in water motifs and for this reason, this tribe and its cosmological views will be frequently referred to throughout the following sections of this article.

As a short conclusion to the water-based creation motifs dominating the cosmologies of these three tribes, I would like to draw our attention, once again, to the common underlining concept of the great Mother-

goddess (either in the form of the Ocean of Darkness in the case of the Kogis, or in the form of the life-giving *páramo* lakes in the case of the Nasas and Misaks) creating the World (or the whole multilayered universe) by herself, *ex nihilo*. From these mythological narratives (although some of which may have been in time heavily influenced by incoming religions and beliefs), we can clearly sense the very same amniotic reference which directly connects the sacred womb of the primordial, all-creating Mother with the existing and locally based water bodies. The original concept in which the life-giving Mother goddess's amniotic water stands at the beginning of Creation, happens to find its expression in a great variety of adaptations across the whole globe and suggests the existence of much older, prehistoric creation myths from which the Kogi, Misak and Nasa narratives and motifs have derived over long periods of time.

MYTHICAL WATER CREATURES IN MISAK FOLKLORE

The vast mountainous plains of Cauca, with their crystal-clear lakes, distant volcano craters covered in eternal mist and the ever-changing weather characterized by frequent rains and sudden, intense sun-spells, gave birth to a multitude of curious mythical creatures whose essence is unavoidably linked to these dramatic and perpetually shape-shifting natural conditions. Since water is the main theme of this discussion, I will briefly list below the mythical creatures and entities which appear to play the most significant role in the local folklore.

The most noteworthy spirit which is said to have inhabited the area of *páramos* and the sacred lakes since the very beginning of creation, is Pishimisak (*pi* “water”, *pishi* “cold”, *misak* “person”), a very ambivalent character. The roles associated with his persona range from being looked upon as the “supremely beneficial”, original provider of natural sources, wisdom and healing powers (Guarín 2000, 59-60, Abelino, Aranda, Uribe 2015, 5.)¹⁶, to being feared as a formidable, death and illnesses-inflicting spirit with dread-inspiring names such as “the Lord of Thunderstorm” or “*fantasma negra*” (Guarín 2000, 55), prepared to punish anybody for disobeying his laws and challenging his order. Pishimisak's nature is said to be both male and female, and he-she appears in Misak narratives and legends in many manifestations: as an old man collecting herbs (helping in the initiation of new shamans); as a guardian of sacred sites and healing plants; as lightning bolts and thunder; as an all giving and caring mother figure, “*mama Dominga*” (Abelino, Aranda Uribe 2015, 87-8) etc. One of his male manifestations is a *duende* – a mainly mischievous, but

sometimes dangerous spirit (especially to children and pregnant women), closely related to the element of water and to the rainbow, who is, under the same name, but in various forms, known throughout many cultures of South America.

The following mythical water creatures, which have found a significant place in many forms and variations throughout the narratives and cosmologies of the three tribes we have been looking at, include either the motif of a snake or a rainbow, and in many cases, the combination of both. The well-known and globally distributed concept of the ouroboros – the giant, self-devouring snake encompassing the whole created world – is believed to find its origin in the observation of intense atmospheric auroral phenomena at the end of the Neolithic period (Van der Sluijs and Peratt. 2009, 3–41.)

The primordial Mother-Goddess *Gaulčováng*, the only protagonist of the Kogi creation myth, was described in some narratives as a giant black serpent encircling the dark sea (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1987, 84). It is very important to point out that the motif of an enormous primeval snake coiled around the newly created universe/world appears in many mythologies within Central and South America. It has been linked, in many of its narratives and adaptations, to the luminous and colourful essence of the rainbow; to lightning; and to the concept of an *axis mundi*. It is said to have a feline aspect, the colouring of birds' plumage, and reappears in the persona of a shaman (Van der Sluijs and Peratt 2009, 3–41.)

Within Misak mythology, the rainbow (Nam. *kəsrəmpətə*¹⁷) was given a privileged status. It was born of water and is considered one of the original *páramo* spirits, which sprang into existence at the time when there was nothing else, except Pishimisak. There are male and female versions of the rainbow (with the matching colours facing each other, should they appear together in the sky) and sometimes even small rainbows representing their children. If the rainbow is observed for longer periods of time by certain, vulnerable people – pregnant or menstruating women, men belonging to a household where there are pregnant or menstruating women, or a deceased body present at that moment, etc.) – it may cause serious illness, and miscarriages. This relationship between the colourful appearance of the rainbow and illness (especially those caused by a poison) is not an isolated motif limited to the Andean areas. Claude Lévi-Strauss, in his classic work, *The Raw and the Cooked: An Introduction to a Science of Mythology* (1970), analysed the connection between the rainbow, poison and disease using examples from Amazonian tribes. The rain that falls when the rainbow appears is in reality its urine – a very

dangerous substance containing so-called *papə*, “contamination” (Abelino, Aranda Uribe 2015, 25-7, Guarín 2000, 72-8)¹⁸. This idea comes from a narrative in which the rainbow snake, before becoming the actual rainbow, devoured a whole crowd of people – a feat which consequently contaminated its urine (Guarín 2000, 59-60).

Sierpi (Nam., *ul*), which simply means “snake”, is a mythical water creature that takes upon itself, in most cases, the form of a water snake living in marshes and swamps. However, for the purposes of wooing, it has the power to shape-shift into a young woman or a young man (depending on the target of its sexual desires). It impregnates women with its children and causes illnesses in men (male afflictions being usually described as tumors or “strange skin conditions”). The nature of the physical harm it may cause is in this respect very similar to that of the rainbow. On the positive side, *Sierpi* is seen as the guardian of certain medicinal and poisonous plants, and whenever shamans feel the necessity of using these in their healing or cleansing rituals, they have to ask *Sierpi* for permission prior to collecting them and using them in their practice (Abelino, Aranda Uribe 2015, 28-9).

THE BIRTH OF LEGENDARY CHIEFTAINS (NASA AND MISAK)

As we have mentioned before, the birth of important and often legendary or semi-legendary personas in Misak and Nasa tribes are closely related to water (especially to the sacred lakes) and celestial bodies. According to Misak and Nasa oral tradition, all important prodigies and heroic historical figures who have come to the human world in order to improve their communities’ way of life, appear on the scene at regular intervals (even though the intervals vary from 40 to hundreds of years (Abelino, Aranda Uribe 2015, 21) and arrive floating on a body of water. Examples of those legendary chieftains, teachers, leaders or warriors are Juan Tama de la Estrella (for the Nasa), and Teresita de la Estrella (for Misaks).¹⁹ The birth of these “chieftains” or “teachers”, which are called *sat* by the Nasas and *piuno* or *pishau* by the Misaks, originated from the union of water and a celestial body (in both of these cases a star, as their names suggest). They usually come from the inside of a mountain (and/or underground lakes), where they spent a long time prior to making an appearance (sometimes whole centuries), “gestating” and being fed by a giant puma. Then, after a landslide or a tremor, they appear floating in a stream of water and mud in the form of a little baby, or an unidentified creature²⁰. They are usually swaddled in very ornate clothes, which might

even be decorated with gold. These “prodigies”, whose arrival is very often marked with unusual occurrences (falling stars, earthquakes) and whose peculiar habits (even in early childhood) foretell the special role they are to play in their communities, usually spend all their lives serving their people, and when their time comes, they re-enter the water from which they were born, sometimes together with their life-partners (as was the case of Juan Tama) (Guarín, Gómez 1993, 89).

The communities of Cauca have awaited their “prodigies” and “teachers” until the present day. The last major earthquake and mud avalanche in northeast Cauca in 1994 was a promising sign of the advent of such a person. Even though the affected communities were somewhat disappointed that their “chieftain” did not appear at the appointed time, the atmosphere of expectation and common beliefs strengthened the local communities and supported the practices of their traditional customs (Orozco, Paredes and Tocancipá-Falla 2014, 245).

TYPES OF WATER AND THE CONNECTION TO WOMEN’S FERTILITY

In all the indigenous communities selected for this study, the water cycle, its functioning and its close relationship with the environment is directly linked to women’s reproduction cycle and fertility. The Misaks and the Nasas recognize two main categories of water, representing the basic bipolar symbolic classification in regard to the quality of water, whilst at the same time participating in the “water cycle process”. The two categories are *still* (non-moving), which include lakes and underground lakes; and *running*²¹, which is manifested in streams, rivers and waterfalls. Specific qualities and symbolic meanings are associated with each of these contrasting kinds of water.

Lakes represent the *still water* which supports a growing life, just like the amniotic fluid in a womb protects a gestating fetus (Guarín 1994, 88). Mountain lakes are thus highly respected and regarded as sacred sites where the ancestors and the most powerful spirits dwell (the “Thunder” *Pishimisak* and the “Rainbow” *Kəsrəmpətə*). These lakes are considered to be direct manifestations, as the Kogis explicitly say, of the “wombs of the Mother”.

Streams and rivers, on the other hand, fall into the category of the *running water*, which – depending on the circumstances – may represent either birth (exceptional chieftains) or menstruation (certain seasonal changes of the river Piendamó) (Orozco, Paredes and Tocancipá-Falla

2014, 245) and thus, in a sense, the death of the fetus or a futile attempt for life. The nature of running water²² can be predicted by analyzing its colours and textures, while both of these qualities depend on the time of the day, the season, and the weather conditions (Guarín 1994, 88). For the Kogis, running water, as well as gold, represents the Earth's menstrual blood.

There are several daily customs and routines observed in connection to these beliefs. In Nasa and Misak tribes, for instance, menstruating women are strongly advised not to bathe in running water (Guarín 1994, 89) and not to venture into the high mountainous areas where the sacred lakes are situated.

WATER CYCLE AND CONNECTED RITUALS

In order to appreciate the detailed knowledge the local Andean communities demonstrate when it comes to the understanding of the water cycle, let us read an excerpt from the Misak oral tradition:

“... Water is life. It is born in the springs and flows down in rivers towards the sea. And it comes back, only not in the same rivers, but in the air, in clouds... then it falls again as rain. The water which is good and bad falls down again...” (Abelino, Aranda Uribe 2015, 44)²³

Springs and lakes found high up in the mountainous areas of the *páramos* are identified and appreciated as the main water sources. The water therefore originates from the “sacred land” where, to certain sites, access is granted exclusively to shamans (as it is in the case of the communities belonging to the Kogi and Misak tribes). Lakes and springs are linked to the birth of all living beings, as well as to the cyclically reoccurring births of special prodigies. With so much attention placed on the water element and its interconnection with the land and communities, it is perhaps not surprising that a wide variety of important rituals happen to be directly linked either to the sacred lakes - like many cleansing rituals (Sp. *refrescamientos*), summoning the rain, initiation of shamans, etc., - or purely to the water essence itself (rituals linked to agriculture, healing, etc.). In the case of certain seasonal ritual ceremonies, a wider public might be invited to the sacred sites together with the shaman (Bautista 2009, 349).

Afterwards, the water continues its journey, running down the mountain slopes in the form of streams and rivers. For the Kogis, these represent the veins of the world. As the water currents flow down the rivers, they are affectionately perceived as a “baby” being carried on the ripples down into the valley, laughing on its bumpy ride (Ereira 2004, 259).

For the Misaks, the river Piendamó (the most important river in the area) represents the axis of the world, which is directly identified as their immediate territory, dividing it into two principal sides of their cosmological reality - *left* and *right*. In the same way, in each person, the axis cuts through the centre of the body (from the crown of one’s head, along the spine all the way to the coccyx). This principle proves crucial in most healing rituals within Cauca communities.

Once a river ends its journey, it unites with the sea. The sea is considered a crucial stage in the water cycle. Especially for the Kogis, in whose cosmology, the Mother standing behind the existence of all beings and things is directly identified with the ocean, sea water being seen as the amniotic fluid of the Earth (Ereira 2004, 258).

(As an aside to the importance of the ocean, I cannot forget the interesting role sea shells play in various rituals. Misak and Nasa tribes, for example, have a seasonal ritual of connecting the waters of the “female” lake²⁴ situated in their territory with the sea water brought in a seashell from the Pacific coast. This ceremony is performed at the beginning of the new agricultural cycle, and its purpose is to summon and welcome the regular seasonal rains (Abelino, Aranda Uribe 2015, 83-4). We can also observe a similar ritual in Kogi communities for which it represents one of the ways of keeping the world in balance. The Kogis would travel across vast areas on foot - from their home in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, all the way to Salto del Tequendama or to La Guatavita in central Colombia - just to obtain the fresh sacred water sample and re-connect it with its sea counterpart. The sea shells would be, on the other hand, taken from Dibulla in La Guajira (Navia, “Los Mamos y Sus Aguas Mitológicas”),²⁵ a site very near the heart of the Kogis’ reservation.)

When water returns to the mountains, it does so in the forms of clouds, vapour and rain. As in the case of rivers, it becomes important to pay close attention to the colours of the clouds and types of rain, as well as the direction they are coming from (Abelino, Aranda Uribe 2015, 75). Being able to distinguish between the many types of cloud formations, their distinct colours, and the various kinds of rain, proves crucial for the balanced functioning of communities, since the character of the “air-bound” water is directly linked to the religious and practical events

observed in the context of agricultural activities and the general well-being of the locally-based tribes.

PEOPLE AS KEEPERS OF THE UNIVERSE

The most meaningful link that connects all the native communities selected for this study is the role human beings play in their cosmologies, for people as a species enjoy a very privileged position indeed. From the perspective of the native, aforementioned tribes, humans were originally introduced into creation as no less than the keepers (or guardians) of the universe, and were entrusted by the universal mother (or the primordial spirit) with maintaining its smooth and flawless functioning. This – from our western perspective, a daunting and somewhat Sisyphean task – is, within the mindset of the native tribes, done quite effortlessly, by the right execution of daily chores and rituals (seasonal and life-cycle related). People should, in this orderly manner, ensure equilibrium in the whole multi-layered scheme of existence: in their bodies (which results in their health), community (which leads to an active re-acting of the sequences from the main mythological stories, balancing peace and skirmishes), territory (healthy environment), and consequently, in the whole Universe (represented by the natural equilibrium of dualistically based primal forces). The situation of an individual human body thus directly mirrors the situation of the land (the specific territory on which the mythological history of the tribe has unfolded in real and mythological time), and is ultimately reflected upon the whole world (Vargas 2011).

In this sense, we can see a specific illness manifested in an individual as a disclosure of the real situation within the whole *psychobiogeochemical continuity* of that particular ecosystem in which the “*biogeochemical*” components represent the part of the story ascribed to modern science, while the “*psycho*” component points at the strongly rooted and acutely active part of the relevant mythological narrative. In this manner, the sickness becomes interpreted within the cosmological concepts of the specific community and is treated accordingly. Applying the philosophical scheme of the mythological narrative, the subject of the correctly performed daily chores and religious rituals becomes crucial in tracing the causes of the potential illness.

In the case of the Kogis for instance, keeping the universal equilibrium primarily means a strict division of chores between men and women. This is because each chore – be it weaving, spinning, clothes making or pottery making – corresponds with the most profound processes that once

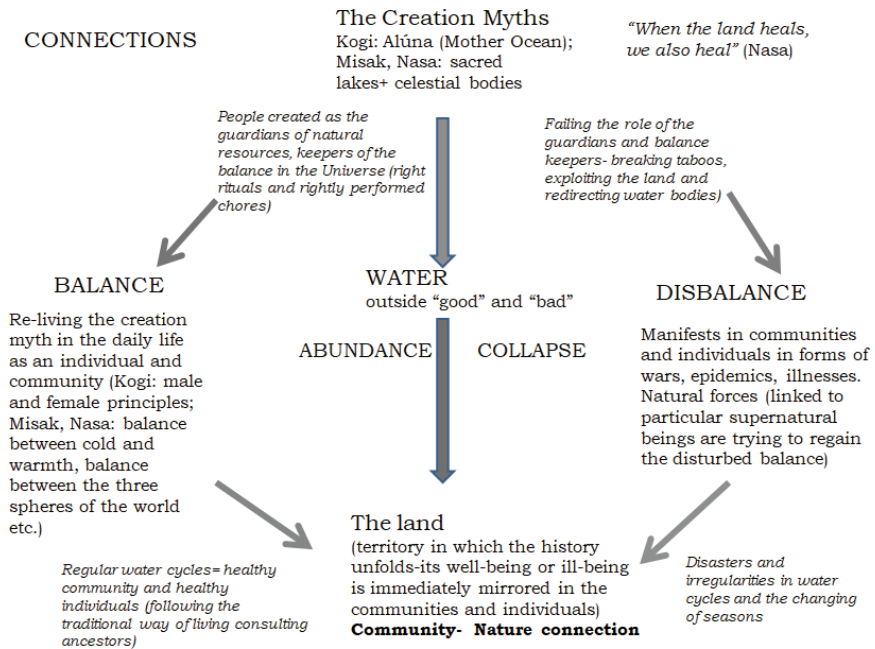


Figure 1. The mutual interconnectedness of the natural water cycle, the landscape and human society. The water and its manifestations serve as indicators of the balance or imbalance in the cosmos, represented by the landscape, human society and the health of each individual.

stood behind the creation of the Universe, and by repeating the actions, the act of the original Creation is being re-acted, re-lived and re-experienced, albeit on a smaller scale, but with no lesser significance for the functioning of the whole Cosmos.

One of the Kogi's most interesting customs linked to this concept is reflected in the ritual of connecting the sites of spiritual distinction with ceremonial objects. These clay (but historically golden) figures of spirits and elements, or symbolic tokens representing particular animal or plant species, are ceremoniously buried at places of religious importance. The Kogis call these figures "mothers", and their purpose is to ensure thriving of certain wild animals or to correct the misbalanced functioning of natural elements and regular cycles. The Kogis would also be very particular about bringing these "mothers" regular offerings and performing rituals connected to the essential elements and significant celestial bodies (Ereira 2004, 203-5). In this way, they actually feel obliged to look after the Sun, the Moon, the Earth, Water, and to provide them with regular

offerings, correctly performed rituals, etc. (Ereira 2004, 194, 203-5).

In the area of Cauca – home to the Nasa and Misak – the crucial objective is to keep the main universal forces (or dimensions) in balance. These forces usually come as dualistically based polarities (*hot, cold; left, right; up, down*) and any, even the most miniscule, imbalance in the equilibrium of these fundamental elements (or dimensions) would eventually affect all the layers of the known cosmos – from the smallest scale (human body) to the largest (whole Universe). Observation of this knowledge is applied especially during healing rituals, when a shaman pays attention to the *left* or *right* sides of the patient's body and to its specific prevailing qualities (*hot* or *cold*), according to which he administers a suitable medicinal plant or performs other treatment (Guarin 1995, 1-3).

The desired balance is kept, similarly as it is in the case of the Kogis, by the correct way of performing daily actions and rituals (like for example cleansing ceremonies, summoning of the rain rituals, offerings to the ancestors and deceased relatives, keeping menstruating women away from running water and the pregnant away from rainbows, etc.).

In the graph below (fig. 1), and in the charts at the end of this article, I offer a more detailed summary of the interconnectedness between all the layers of the ritual and daily aspects of life (concerning the world-view of the selected tribes), with some specific examples indicating the manners of how any misbalance might affect each of the domains of existence.

Figure 2. (Overleaf)

Tables showing the way the cosmological landscape, local communities and the life of every individual are closely connected, viewed through the lens of the fundamental concepts concerning the myths of creation, natural cycles and seasons, equilibrium and imbalance.

	The Land (Territory, resguardos-reservations)	People - communities (agriculture and well-being)	People - individuals (body and well-being)
Creation myths, cosmology	<p>The creation myths are being continuously replayed in the specific part of the territory. The myths are directly linked to the real places within the community surroundings. Kogi- Sierra Navada- “The Heart of the Earth”. Misak- <i>páramo</i> is the “Realm of the Dead Ancestors”; lakes from which the Life and people were created, etc.</p>	<p>The activities of the community are linked to the specific processes described by the creation myths. Kogi - temples and houses built to represent the universe; making pottery, clothes, spinning imitate the processes of the creation. Misak- the traditional hat represents the universe and the territory.</p>	<p>People have come from nature and live within a community. Misak - people are born from water, water and its cycles imitate each person`s life cycle. Nasa - human body mirrors the territory and natural beings (trees).</p>
Seasons and regular cycles in nature	<p>Regular changes of the weather conditions. Connected with water cycles and the movements of celestial bodies. Kogi, Misak- houses and esp. temples serve as calendars.</p>	<p>Agriculture Rituals - summoning the rain. Kogi, Misak, Nasa- cleansing rituals which keep the water cycle flowing (connecting lakes and the sea). Misak- the festival of offering to the dead ancestors - their souls come bringing the seasonal rains needed for the crop. Misak, Nasa - <i>mingas</i> “the organized, collective work events). Misak - shamans` participation (soil preparation, sowing, harvest)</p>	<p>Supplies of food, water; seasonal work and festivals Misak, Nasa- participation in <i>mingas</i> “the organized, collective work events). Kogi, Misak, Nasa - sowing and harvesting plants according to the season and the Moon phases.</p>

	The Land (Territory, resguardos- reservations)	People- communities (agriculture and well-being)	People- individuals (body and well-being)
Keeping the equilibrium	<p>The land is in harmony (seasons, water, plants, animals, people, spirits). Misak, Nasa - there is equilibrium between the main forces (cold and warm) and between the main directions (left and right; above and under). Point of the reference might be an important river. Kogi- the land is kept in balance with the help of so called “mothers”- golden and clay figures that represent natural forces or specific species of animals and plants.</p>	<p>Community lives in harmony following the “great” ancestors. Kogi - people keep the equilibrium by performing the right rituals and keeping to the traditional division of chores (male, female). Misak, Nasa - the cleansing rituals, offerings to the dead ancestors (the importance of shamans).</p>	<p>Personal health and fertility Be careful not to violate any taboos. Misak, Nasa - balance of the <i>cold</i> and <i>warm</i> principles in one’s body (follow restrictions advised by shamans). Kogi - approach carefully to one’s responsibilities in the community (everything is an intention first created in <i>alúna</i>).</p>
Disbalance	<p>Sudden, destructive changes to the natural environment. Draughts, floods, eruptions, avalanches appear as the Earth is trying to reach the balance. Kogi - the changes on a small scale (microregions) mirror the destructive changes in the whole created world. Misak, Nasa - cleansing rituals (summoning the rain), trying to “rebuild” the house of <i>Pishimisak</i>, saving the water sources campaigns.</p>	<p>The community is stricken by wars, skirmishes and epidemics. Misak, Nasa - special prodigies come from the underground lands to help re-establish the balance.</p>	<p>The imbalance in one’s body causes illness or miscarriage. Misak, Nasa - it is important to observe traditional regulations (esp. pregnant women) eg. going to <i>páramo</i>, washing in streams, be exposed to the rainbow etc.</p>

CHANGES IN ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS AND BEHIND THE SCENES

Throughout the last few years, a few positive changes have occurred in the Colombian legislative approach towards the natural environment and Native American communities. In 2015, for example, the Constitutional Court of Colombia defined a number of *páramo* ecosystems on which mining (especially gold, silver, coal) and oil and gas extraction was prohibited (Hill, “Colombian court bans oil, gas and mining operations in paramos”).²⁶ In 2013, *El Espectador*, a widely read Colombian newspaper, announced the Kogi’s triumphant return to the sea, with the tribal community regaining ownership of some sacred sites on the Caribbean coast after almost five centuries of repression (Escobar Roldán. “*Los Koguis vuelven al mar*”).²⁷

In Cauca, Nasa and Misak tribes coordinate projects with objectives of the recuperation and protection of water sources, springs, rivers and lakes, and the communities actively participate in organized voluntary work in the affected areas, assuring effective conservation of sacred sites (especially in the area of *páramos* and high mountain woodland). There are also attempts at reforestation of some areas with native plant species (Valencia, Gómez 2000, 167-202).

However, in reality, only a fraction of the overall Colombian *páramo* areas have been officially recognized - sadly, the share makes no more than 20% - which means that in most areas the mining continues, government negotiations being kept indefinitely suspended by the mining industries. As a matter of fact, all the discussed areas of the studied native tribes - Cauca and Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta - have not yet been defined as protected areas, and the mining, as well as other exploitation of the land, continues until the present day (Milsar “*Pese a fallo de la Corte*” 2017).²⁸ Furthermore, for precious metal extractions, a dangerous mercury-based technique has been used, which has caused, over the years, serious water contamination in extended areas throughout the Colombian mountains. South east of Cauca is coincidentally referred to as “*la estrella fluvial*” (Guarín 2000, 22) or “the fluvial star”, which means that the majority of water sources originate in these vast areas or pass through them at one point or the other during the water cycle. Once this water becomes severely contaminated, it poses a serious threat to the health of many indigenous communities, but also to the inhabitants of nearby towns and cities.

Moreover, sulphur mining in the Puracé National Park has caused dangerous seasonal rains which directly affect the crops and health of

Misak, Nasa and Coconuco communities (Guarín 2000, 21-2), and because of the severe, long-term deforestation and climatic changes, the whole area suffers from a high risk of dangerous landslides, especially since, due to its volcanic character, the whole region is prone to frequent earth tremors.

THE END OF THE UNIVERSE AS A CONCLUSION

Once people were assigned the responsibility for the universal balance, questions were naturally raised, inquiring what would happen in the case we, as a human race, fail in this continuous striving to maintain the fragile equilibrium of the ever-fidgeting Nature. Across the broad spectrum of the indigenous Colombian tribes, we would find a multitude of scenarios portraying the end of the world as we know it.

The end of the world, as seen by the U'Was²⁹, will be caused by severe imbalance between the “*world above*” (associated with the colour white) and the “*world below*” (to which the colour red is assigned). In the state of balance, these colours are only gently mixed within all the living beings (giving the surrounding world multiple hues and shades of blues and yellows). However, serious disturbances will one day cause the red of the “*world below*” to mix with the white of the “*world above*”, which will ultimately lead to the end of our Universe (Cárdenas Támara and Cleef 1995).

The alarming prospect of the disastrous end of our Universe encourages the Kogis, in keeping to their customs and traditions, to declare: “... *Our father Serankua created the world, so there is peace. When will the world finish? If we act and think correctly, if we continue bringing the offerings, the world won't come to an end... That is why we are still taking care of the Sun, the Moon and the Earth... That is why we live. If we continue doing it, nothing will happen...*” (Ereira 2004, 194-5, 208)³⁰

None of the traditions clearly state what will actually happen after our present Universe comes to an end, but there are clues suggesting that a new world will be created from the old one. But so far, the mission of the tribal communities, as well as each of their individual members, is to keep our Universe sound and alive - *well balanced* - for as long as possible. And even though the everyday reality of the native communities may seem somewhat contrasting to this ideal - bearing in mind the tribal skirmishes over neighbouring territories (which lately broke out between the Nasas and Misaks), health deterioration due to contamination and changed diet, an outflow of educated youth, tribal languages issues etc.,

- the traditional philosophies still hold on to the holistic model of the world and teach us the importance of balance within us and Nature, and the way these are inseparably intertwined.

Just as Reichel-Dolmatoff stated, rather prophetically, in his article *The Great Mother and the Kogi Universe* published in 1987, “[...] *the Kogi and other traditional societies can greatly contribute to a better understanding and handling of some of our modern dilemmas, and [...] we should consider ourselves fortunate to be the contemporaries of a people who, perhaps, can teach us to achieve a measure of balance.*” (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1987, 111-12)

In this much idealised and seemingly laboriously achieved “state of balance”, all natural processes are supposed to run harmoniously, keeping the whole ecosystem - in which not only human but also non-human communities must be consciously included - alive and thriving. As the Kogi and other traditional communities demonstrate, once this “state of balance” is achieved, an individual regains the chance to lead a life of “*discipline without authoritarianism, nonviolence without submission and pride of social rank combined with disdain for material goods.*” (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1987, 111-12)

nOTeS

- 1 *Misak* literally means “people” in the Namuy Wam language (Namuy Wam, or namtrik, means “our own language”); *Guambianos* is the name they are referred to in Spanish. Similarly, *Nasa* means “people” in the Nasa Yuwe language, while *Páez* is the name of their communities in Spanish. On the internet and in encyclopaedias, they would be found under their Spanish names rather than under the indigenous ones.
- 2 The Misaks (Guambianos), population *c.*20,000, live almost exclusively in *departamento* Cauca, while the Nasa (Páez) are larger, but more scattered and with more culturally assimilated communities. The Nasa population of *c.* 186,000 people live in *departamentos* Cauca, Valle del Cauca, Putumayo, Tolima, Huila, Meta and others.
- 3 The Kogis, population *c.*10,000 people, live in between the area of three *departamentos*- Magdalena, Cesar and La Guajira.
- 4 *Páramos* are usually identified as alpine tundra ecosystems. They are large areas of marshes, high-mountain plains and lakes in altitudes from

3000–4800 m. These distinctive biomes are known for their high rainfall and extreme temperature differences. Colombia has the largest areas of existing *páramos* in South America. These ecosystems provide drinking water to almost 70% of the Colombian population. About 70% of all the water in the Andes makes its way through the *páramos* at some point of its course through the cycle.

- 5 In the creation myths, people - the whole human race - were created with the intention to become the “the Keepers of the Universe” but, as Alan Ereira documented in his films, now the Kogi, for example, call the people of the West “younger brothers”, implying that they don’t see other cultures (and Western in particular) as being capable of exercising the role of “Keepers of the Universe”.
- 6 *Alúna* is a name referring to a realm of ideas before they are created on our earthly world as objects and creatures. Excerpt from: Ereira 2004, 145 and *Mito Kogi de la Creación*. Available at: <http://www.adepac.org/inicio/articulos-2/mitos/mitos-colombianos/kogi-creacion/>
- 7 *Mito Kogi de la Creación*. Available at: <http://www.adepac.org/inicio/articulos-2/mitos/mitos-colombianos/kogi-creacion/>
- 8 Gold is also often understood to be the Mother’s blood, and that’s why golden figures have played such an important role in many sacred rituals, Ereira 2004, 195 and *Mito Kogi de la Creación*. Available at: <http://www.adepac.org/inicio/articulos-2/mitos/mitos-colombianos/kogi-creacion/>
- 9 Escobar Roldán, Mariana. “*Los Koguis vuelven al mar*” [the comeback of Kogis after 5 centuries]. *El Espectador*, 25th May 2013.
- 10 Guarín 2000, trans. Lucie Vinsova.
- 11 The literal meaning of the word “*nasa*” in the Páez language is “a human being”.
- 12 In Nasa Yuwe (the language of the Nasas), *wala* “great”, refers to an old, wise man, a sage whose special powers might include curing, cleansing and communicating with spirits and deceased ancestors (Guarín, 2000, 23).
- 13 *Misak*, just like *Nasa*, can be translated as “human being, a man”.
- 14 The Misaks feel a very strong urge to strengthen the connections between

their mythology, history and contemporary political and economical rights to their territory. Lately they have embraced the archaeologically based hypothesis suggesting that the historical communities living in their land before – the legendary Pishau – were their direct ancestors. More archaeological research is being conducted to prove their claims (Vasco 1992, 176-91 and Guarín 2000, 59-60).

- 15 Called in Namtrik *Pishimisak* or literally “a cold man”. Bautista 2009, 347.
- 16 Pishimisak might be described as the one who “... *has always been in existence* [and is] *all white and good, all fresh.*” He was the one who kept and looked after all the food and other natural sources in *páramos* before he distributed them among the beings and let some be passed into the valleys. Guarín 2000, 59-60 and Dagua Hurtado, Aranda and Vasco Uribe 2015, 5.
- 17 In literal translation, *kəsrəmpətə* means “arcoiris”, “rain-circle” (Nam. *kəsrəm* “*páramo*”, *pətə* “circle”). This is because the rainbow is, in the Misak cosmology, in reality a full circle. We cannot see the lower part because it is underground (Dagua Hurtado, Aranda and Vasco Uribe 2015, 25-27).
- 18 Dagua Hurtado, Aranda and Vasco Uribe 2015, 25-27; Guarín 2000, 72-8 (Stories and manifestations of a rainbow in Misak and Nasa folklore).
- 19 Juan Tama was a historically documented leader of the Nasa communities who fought for the legal recognition of the tribal territories in the 17th century. Teresita de la Estrella is a legendary teacher who was said to reveal to her people the knowledge of gold and the way it can be processed.
- 20 Juan Tama de la Estrella first appeared, according to the Nasa legend, in a form of a strange looking worm. It cost seven wet-nurses their lives in order to nurture him into his human form (as he sucked their blood, his body was slowly changing, gradually taking on itself the human shape). Story of Juan Tama: see Guarín 2000, 59-62; Legends about water-born prodigies in the tradition of Misaks: Dagua Hurtado, Aranda and Vasco Uribe 2015, 196-98.
- 21 Another dualistically based perspective would consider water as either

cold or *warm*. This division is regarded as crucial in healing and cleansing rituals, and is deeply associated with the functioning of the whole known cosmos.

- 22 Running water may be, from the people's perspective "good" or "bad", it depends on its mood and the season. Sometimes it is beneficial to the land and the local communities, while at other times extremely damaging. As such it is regarded as one of the primordial spirits standing outside the human moral judgements. Because of the unpredictable nature of rivers, it is important to observe their colours and sounds to predict their intentions and behave accordingly- Dagua Hurtado, Aranda and Vasco Uribe 2015, 45 and Guarín 2000, 72-3.
- 23 Dagua Hurtado, Aranda and Vasco Uribe 2015, 44, trans. author.
- 24 According to the local traditions, there is a female lake and a male lake. Life of all creatures came to existence from their union (Bautista 2009, 349) and (Dagua Hurtado, Aranda and Vasco Uribe 2015, 45).
- 25 Navia, Jose R. "Los Mamos y Sus Aguas Mitológicas." *El Tiempo*, 29th March 1992.
- 26 Hill, David. "Colombian court bans oil, gas and mining operations in paramos." *The Guardian*, 21st February 2016.
- 27 Escobar Roldán, Mariana. "Los Koguis vuelven al mar" [the comeback of Kogis after 5 centuries]. *El Espectador*, 25th May 2013.
- 28 Milsar, Justica. "Pese a fallo de la Corte, sigue la minería en 20 páramos." *El Tiempo*, 20th February 2017.
- 29 A tribe living in Sierra Nevada del Cocuy.
- 30 Trans. author.

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Indo-European Astronomical Terminology in the near Eastern and Northern Euroasian context

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abSTRACT. Etymological studies have long tried to establish common IE designations for astronomical terminology by comparing Anatolian and non-Anatolian branches of Indo-European languages. This overview recapitulates and expands on the current state of research, detailing the cases in which correspondence between the two branches could not be found, and whether other linguistic roots can be suggested.

The most archaic Indo-European terms designating celestial bodies are those whose roots can be reconstructed for both Anatolian and non-Anatolian Indo-European. Only ***H₂ster-* “star” fulfills this condition. In the case of the non-Anatolian ***seH₂uel-* “sun” and ***meH₁ns-* “moon”, attempts have been made to identify etymological Anatolian counterparts, but the results of such efforts are not generally accepted. The word for “sun” may originate from the Nostratic protolanguage, while for “star” borrowing from Semitic is not excluded, and the designation for “moon” probably expresses the basic idea of “measure of time”. Non-Anatolian languages feature several other terms which are attested in at least two branches. In some cases, they probably reflect independent formations: for example, ***H₂rey-i-* “sun” (but “moon” in Old Irish), **louk(e)sno-/(e)snā* “moon” < “light”, and **(s)ke/ond-* “moon”. The Balto-Slavic **ġ^(h)uoġsd^(h)ā* equally represents a local dialectism which may be derived from the compound **ġ^{uh}/ġ^{uh}uoġd-* “shining [spot]” and ***d^heH₁-* “to put” or ***steH₂-* “to stand”.

Also remarkable are the common semantic models that emerge in the designations of some constellations, namely the Pleiades = “basket or sieve”, “numerous” or “seven stars”, and Sirius = “(belonging to) three stars”, which appear across Northern Eurasia, especially in the Fenno-Ugric languages.

KeyWords: etymology, Indo-European languages, astronomical terminology, celestial bodies

The main celestial bodies, i.e. the Sun, Moon and the stars carry names which are preserved by the majority of the Indo-European branches. Alternative designations are evidently of a later origin. The following lexicographical charts offer a comparative overview of the relevant astronomical terminology.

I. SUN

1. Indo-European ***seH₂ul̥*, gen. **sH₂uens* (reconstruction: Beekes 1984, 5-8; data: P 881)

1.1.1. Indo-Aryan: Sanskrit *svàr* and *súvar*, gen. *súras* n. “Sun, sun shine, sky” < ***suH₂el*, gen. ***suH₂los*, further masculines *súrya-*, *sūr(i)yá-* “Sun, the God of the Sun” and *súra-* “Sun” < ***suH₂lijo-* and ***suH₂lo-* (EWAI II, 742; 793-94).

1.1.2. Old Iranian: Old Avestan *huuarə*, gen. Young Avestan *hūrō* (= Vedic *súras*) next to Old Avestan *xʷəng* “Sun” < **xuuəng* < **huuənh* < ***suH₂éns*;

Middle Iranian: Sogdian *γwr*, *xwr* /*xwar*/*xur*/ < **huuar*, besides *γwyr*, *xwyr* /*xuwər*/*xōyr*/ and Khwarezmian *ʾx(y)r*, *xyr* id. < **hūrīja-*; Middle Persian *xwr^M*, *hw^L* /*xwar*/ (ESIJ 3, 438f);

Modern Iranian: Persian *xwar*, Yaghnobi *xur*, Ossetic Iron *xūr*, Digor *xor* “Sun”, Pashto *nwar*, dial. *nmar*, *lmar* id. < **V-nhwar* < **huar-* (NEVP 59); Yazghulami *xəvūr* < **huu ar-*, Shughni *xīr*, Wakhi (*y*)*ir* < **hūr-* (ESIJ 3, 438f).

1.1.3. ?Armenian *owlp* “Sun, shine, glitter”, used in compounds and derivatives; the final *-p* is perhaps derivable from *pʼail* “shine”, *pʼailem* “I shine”, *pʼalpʼalim* “I shine” (cf. Petersson 1926, 75; the forms in *pʼ-* are quoted after Pokorny 1959, 987). The original compound could mean “sun shine”.

1.1.4. Greek Attic ἥλιος, Homeric ἠέλιος, Doric ἀέλιος (= ἄελιος), ἄλιος, Cretan ἀβέλιος (Hesychios; β is one of the graphemes which Hesychios used to transcribe μ) < **sāuelijo-* < ***seH₂uel-* (Beekes 2010, 516).

1.1.5. Albanian *diell* “Sun” < **suel-* < ***suHel-* (Hamp 1975a, 101).

1.1.6. Italic: Latin *sōl*, gen. *sōlis* m. “Sun” < ***seH₂ul̥* (Beekes 1984, 5-8; Schrijver 1991, 258).

1.1.7. Celtic: Welsh *haul*, Old Cornish *heul*, Old Breton *houl*, Breton *heol* “Sun” < **sāul-* (Hamp 1975a, 98), with possible parallels in Gallo-British names and attributes of goddesses such as *Nanto-suelta* (“a sunny valley?”), *Sulis* – a goddess worshipped around the town Bath (= *Aquae Sulis*) in southern Britain, *suleviae* – an attribute of Gaulish Minerva, although some other explanations are also possible (Delamarre 2001, 236, 242-43). Even Old Irish *súil* f. “eye” is sometimes also counted here (Matasović 2009, 324). That is because a metaphoric shift from “Sun” < “eye” might have occurred. In this case, the original would be dual **sūle* (***suH₂l-eH₁*) according to Bammesberger (1982, 155-57).

N-stem appears in Middle Welsh *huan* “Sun, sunshine; shining, sunny”, which reflects Celtic **suuono-* or **suuano-* < ***suH₂-on-* or ***suH₂-en-* (Schrijver 1995, 334), and probably also Gaulish *sonnociŋos* “trajectory of the Sun” = “year” from the Coligny calendar (Delamarre 2001, 236).

1.1.8. Germanic **sōwila-* > Gothic *sauil* n. “Sun”, cf. Old Runic NV *Sawilagaz* (Lindholm, Sweden, 300 AD), next to **sōwulō* > Old Icelandic *sól* f. id., cf. Runic (Eggjum, Norway, 700 AD) dat.-instr. *solu* id. “Sun”; it appears also among the names of the runes, *sōl* (Abecedarium Normanicum), *soulu* (Codex Leidensis). The *n*-stem **sunōn*, gen. **sunnez* > Gothic *sunno*, Crimean Gothic *sune*, Old High German *sunna*, Old Frisian, Old English *sunne*, Old Icelandic *sunna* is more widespread; all preceding forms are feminine, besides Old Saxon *sunno* m. Another significant derivation is the Germanic word for “south, southern”, namely Old High German *sundar*, Old English adverb *sūþ*, Old Icelandic *súðr* (Lehmann 1986, 297, 330).

1.1.9. Baltic: Lithuanian *saulė* f., Latvian *saule*, Prussian *saule* “Sun” < **sāuliā*.

1.1.10. Slavic: Old Church Slavonic *slъnъce* n. “Sun” < Proto-Slavic **slъnъce* < **sulniko-* < **sH₂ul-ni-ko-*.

1.1.11. Tocharian A *swāñce*, B *swāñco* f. “ray of light” < **sueH₂ñtiā(-en-)* or **suēH₂nikīā* (Adams 1999, 725).

{1.1.12.} Starke (1990, 342-43) interpreted Cuneiform Luwian *šeḫuwal-/šiwal-/šiwān-* n. as “lamp” (recorded ^{URUDU}*ši-wa-al da-aš-šu* reveals that it designates a heavy copper lamp [= URUDU]), deriving it from **sēH₂uol-ó-*, which should be the vřddhi lengthening of the original stem **sēH₂ul*. Now it has been generally translated as “sharp, probably pointed, tool”, cf. *šiwai-/šiwī-* “sharp, bitter” (*CHD* 2013, 486). As it appears, the original IE word for “Sun” was replaced by a derivative formed by the *-ot*-suffix from the word for “day(light)” in the Luwian subbranch, while in Hittite it was replaced by ^d*Ištanu-*/^d*Aštanu-* “Sun, Sun-god(dess), solar deity”, adapted from Hattic *Eštan-* / *Aštan-* “Sun(- god), day”. The primary IE term for “Sun” may be hidden in the Hittite semi-logographic record with phonetic complement ^dUTU-*liya* [KUB xvii 19.9], where the Sumerogram UTU designated “Sun”. Puvel (1-2, 465- 66) reconstructed its reading as ⁺*Saweliya-*, to find the correspondence with proto-Greek **hāuelijos* (see §1.1.4.). It is tempting to take in account the Hittite theonym *Šuwaliyaz*, gen. *Šuwaliyattaš*, dat. *Šuwaliyatti* etc. Let us mention that *Šuwaliyaz* has been frequently referred to alongside another Storm-God, e.g. ^dIM-*aš=kan* ^dŠu-*ua-li-ja-za-aš-ša kat-ta-an-ta ta-an-ku-wa-i ták-ni-i i-ya-an-ni-ir* “Teššub and Šuwaliyaz were going down in the dark earth” [KBo 32.13, obv. I & II, 9-10] (Tischler 2004, 1226-27; Burgin 2017, 117). The theonym would correspond to Vedic *súvar-/svār-* in its apophonic grade and to Vedic *súrya-/súriya-* m., proto-Greek

**hāuelijos* m. in its suffixal extension.

1.2. Etymology: The original reconstruction is vital for the etymological interpretation.

1.2.1. Benveniste (1935, 11-12) ranked this word among the heteroclitic *l/n*-stems. Schindler (1975, 1-10) and Beekes (1984, 5) reconstructed the basic paradigms **seH₂-ul* : gen. **sH₂-uen-s*, similarly as **peH₂-ur* : **pH₂-uen-s* “fire”. External support for this kind of reconstruction can be found in the Altaic languages. A common Nostratic origin for the word designating “Sun” should not be surprising: Illič-Svityč (1967, 366) was the first to compare Indo-European and Altaic data, but only with a preliminary Altaic reconstruction **sibV*. Altaic data were only specified later by Starostin, Dybo and Mudrak in their monumental work *Etymological Dictionary of the Altaic Languages*, volume II (Leiden-Boston: Brill 2003), 1274: Tungusic **sigūn* “Sun” > Evenki *siyūn*, Negidal *siyun*, Ulch, Nanai. *siu(n)*, Manchu *šun* and others | Middle Korean *hǎi* “Sun” | Proto-Japanese *suà-rá* “sky” > Old Japanese *swora*.

1.2.2. An alternative theory assumes that *l* is a part of the Indo-European stem and *n* only appears in oblique cases. In this case, the origin is considered to be the stem **suel-* “to burn” (P 1045) > Sanskrit *svárati* “shines”, *svargá-* m. “sky” | Greek εἶλη, εἶλη, ἔλη f. “heat or shine of the Sun”, ἀλέα f. “heat of the Sun”, γέλαν’ ἀύγην ἡλίου = Laconian βέλα (Hesychius), cf. further ἐλάνη “torch”, ἀλεεινός “hot” | ?Latin *sulpur* “sulphur”, possibly “smouldering fire”, cf. Old English *cwic-fȳr* “sulphur”, literally “quick fire” (Mann 1984-87, 1344-45) | Old English *swelan* “to burn (down), flare (up)”, Middle Low German *swelen*, German *schwelen* “to burn”, Old Icelandic *svāla* “to smoke/bloat” and others | Lithuanian *svelti* “to burn”, *svilù* : *svilti* “to sunbathe, anneal; burn without a flame”, *svilis* “heat, fever”, Latvian *sveļu* : *svelt* “to sunbathe, anneal” | Tocharian A *slam*, B *sleme* “flame” < **swleme* < **suolmo-* = Old Low German *swalm* “thick fume” (Adams 1999, 724). This theory also finds support outside of the Indo-European area as Dolgopolskij (1974, 170) has proved. The Danish scholar Prasse (1974, 126-27) reconstructed the protoform **ā-ziHil*, pl. **ṭ-ziHlān*, which is attested in the Southern Berber languages (= Tuareg): Ahaggar *ahəl*, pl. *ihilān*, Awlemidden *azəl*, Ayr *āzəl* “day”; Northern Berber: Shilha *azāl* “daylight”, Kabyl *azal* “sunshine, daylight, Sun”, and also in the Guanche language of the Canarian Islands: *zeloj* “Sun”.

2. Indo-European ***H₂reu-i-* (P 873)

2.1.1. Indo-Aryan: Sanskrit *ravi-* m. “Sun, the God of the Sun”.

2.1.2. Armenian *arew* “Sun”, cf. also the compound *areg-akn* id., literally “sun-eye”.

2.1.3. ?Celtic: Old Irish *ré* “interval, span”, especially in terms of time, sometimes also “lunar phases”, which served as a basis for “moon” as well as for “month”; pl. *inna rei* “(sky) space”. The Celtic protoform **reŷ-īā* (Vendryes, *LEIA* 1974, R-10) is also related to the preceding forms as already assumed by MacBain (1911, 288).

2.1.4. ?Anatolian: Lydian *ora-* “month”, if the primary meaning was “moon” and if it is derivable from **aura-* < **aruā-* (Oettinger 2016-17, 256-57), may reflect **H₂oruo-/eH₂-*.

2.2. Etymology: The key to the etymology may be Hittite *ḫarwanae-* “to get light, dawn” (Eichner 1978, 156; *EWAI* II, 440; Kloekhorst 2008, 318: **H₂uon^o*).

2.3. Note₁: There are several lexical innovations replacing the original term “sun” in Iranian:

2.3.1. Parthian *myhr* /*mīhr*/, Middle Persian *myhr*^M, *mtr*^Z /*mīhr*/, Sogdian *myr* /*mēr*/ or /*mīr*/, Bactrian *mīuro*, *mīri*, *mīuro*, *meiro*, Pashto *myēr*, Wanetsi *mīr*, Ormuri *mēš^r*, Munji *mīrō*, Yidgha *mīra* “sun” – all these terms represent a transformation of the name of the solar deity known in Young Avesta as *miθra-* “god of contract” (Blažek & Schwarz 2017, 256, 273, 310).

2.3.2. Khotanese *urmaysda* < **ahura-mazdāh*, Sanglichi *ormōzd*, Ishkashimi *rémùzd* “sun” – originally the deity *Ahura Mazdah* (Bailey 1979, 40; Steblin-Kamenskij 1999, 426).

2.3.3. Persian *ruz*, Baluchi *rōč*, Kurdish *rō(ž)*, Zazaki *rož*, Parachi *ruč* “sun” vs. Avestan *raoča-* “light, lux”, Old Persian *rauča-*, Parthian *rōž*, Sangisari *rōč* “day” < Iranian **rauča-* < IE **louk-es-* (Blažek & Schwarz 2017, 256, 291).

2.3.4. Ormuri *tōa/tūwā/toawī*, Kurdish *tav*, Persian *āftāb* “sun” < **(abi-)tap-*; cf. Persian *tāb* “light”, Avestan *tap-* “heat” (Blažek & Schwarz 2017, 256, 291).

2.4. Note₂: In Anatolian languages another term for “sun” was used, which can be reconstructed as the *t*-stem **dīeŷ-ot-*: Palaic *Tiyat-* “Sun-god”, Cuneiform Luwian ^(d)*Tiwad-* “Sun-god”, gen.adj. ^d*tiwadašši-*, adj. *tiwaliya-/tiwariya-* “of the Sun-god”, Hieroglyphic Luwian ^{DEUS}*tiwad(i)-* “Sun-god”, besides Hittite ^(d)*šīwatt-* “day”, *anišiwat* “today” (Kloekhorst 2008, 766: nom. **dīeŷ-t-s*, acc. **dīu-ót-ṃ*, gen. **dīu-ot-ós* > Anatolian nom. **dīeŷots*, acc. **dīuōdom*, gen. **dīuodós*; concerning the word formation, related is Sanskrit *dyut-* “shine”).

3.1. ***meH₁ns^o* (P 731-32)

3.1.1. Indo-Aryan: Sanskrit *mās-* m. “moon, month” < ***meH₁ns-*. Already Ṛgveda shows also the *o*-stem *māsa-* m. “month” (*EWAI* II, 352-53).

3.1.2. Iranian: Old and Young Avestan nom.sg. *mā̎*, Young Avestan gen.sg. *mā̎hō*, also *o*-stem *mā̎ha-* “moon, month”, Old Persian *māh-* “month”, Parthian *m’h /māh/*, Middle Persian *m’h^{M,Z} /māh/*, Persian *māh* “month, moon”, Kurdish *meh*, *māh*, Sangisari *muong*, Sogdian *m’x*, *m’γ*, Khwarezmian *m’h*, Bactrian *ma(u)o*, Ossetic *mæj / mæje* id., Parachi *mahōk* id., besides the derivative **mās-ti-* > Khotanese *māstā*, Pashto *miyāst*, Shughni, Roshani *mēst*, Yazghulami, Sarikoli *māst* id. (Bailey 1979, 331), and such the compounds as Ormuri *maryōk* < **māh-rauka-* “moon-light”, or Zazaki *āsmī*, Pashto *wažmaī* < **uaxša-māhī-kā-* “growing moon”, *spožmaī* < **spašsa-māhī-kā-* “visible moon” (*NEVP* 75; Blažek & Schwarz 2017, 250, 284, 268, 304).

Note: There are several lexical innovations replacing the original term “moon” in Iranian:

3.1.2.1. Munji *yūmayikə*, Yidgha *imoγó*; Wakhi *mak*; Kurdish *heyv*, *hêv*, *hîv* (Cabolov I, 444) < **haumaka-*; further cf. Khwarezmian (‘) *xmyk* id.; Sanskrit *soma-* “soma; moon” (Steblyn-Kamenskij 1999, 230).

3.1.3. Armenian *amis*, gen. *amsoy* “month” is obviously composed of the word *am* “year” and the word for the moon itself, which Olsen (1999, 48) reconstructed as *o*-stem **mēnsō-*. Hamp (1975a, 381) argued *contra* that it originates in a compound of the numeral “one” and the *s*-stem “moon” **sm̥-mēns-es-*.

3.1.4. Greek Homeric μήν, gen. μηνός, Attic μείς, Doric μής, Aeolic μεύς, gen. μηνός = Mycenaean *me-no*, Lesbian μῆννος “month” reflects Proto-Greek **mēns*, gen. **mēnsos*. Already in the *Iliad* we can find f. μήνη (**μηνσῶ*) “moon”. The Phrygian gloss Μαζεύς · Ζεύς παρὰ Φρυξί (Hesychius) may reflect Phrygian **mas-deos* < **meH₁ns-d^hḡ₁sos* “moon-god” (Lubotsky, p.c.).

3.1.5. Albanian *muaj* ~ *muej* m. “month” < **mēn-* (Hamp 1983, 381) or < **mēsŋo-* (Orel 1998, 276).

3.1.6. Italic: Latin *mēnsis*, gen.sg. *mēnsis*, gen. pl. *mēnsūm* “month”; Umbrian abl.sg. *menzne* “moon”, Marsian loc./abl.sg. *mesene* “month” < **mēns(e)n-(e)i*; cf. also Latin *intermenstruum* “new moon” = Umbrian gen.pl. *anter:menzaru* (Untermann 2000, 472; 109-10);

3.1.7. Celtic: Old Irish *mí* m., gen.-dat. *mís* “month” < **mēns(s)*, gen. **mēnsés*, Middle Welsh, Old Cornish, Old Breton *mis* id. (Matasović 2009, 272) < Celtic acc. sg. **mīnsan* < **mēns-ŋ*; the Gaulish abbreviation *mid* id. from the Coligny Calendar may reflect **mēnts*^o (= Celtic **mīns*^o) with a specific development of the consonant cluster *-ns-* > *-nts-*, which is known from, for example, the Lepontic language; the grapheme *d* serves here to designate the so called *tau gallicum*, the consonant cluster *-ts/-st-* (Delamarre 2001, 191-92).

3.1.8. Germanic **mēnōn* “moon” > Gothic *mena*, Crimean Gothic *mine*, Old High German, Old Saxon *māno*, Old Frisian, Old English *mōna*, Old Icelandic *máni*; **mēnōþ* “month” > Gothic *menopþ*, Old High German *mānōd*, Old Saxon *mānuth*, Old Frisian *mōnath*, Old English *monaþ*, Old Icelandic *mánaðr* (Lehmann 1986, 251; Kroonen 2013, 365).

3.1.9. Baltic: Lithuanian *mėnuo*, gen. *mėnesio* “moon, month”, Latvian *mēnesis* id., dial. *mēness* “moon”, *mēnesis* “month”, Prussian *menig* “moon” with a change (possibly a scribal error) of the expected *s* for *g*. The Lithuanian nom. sg. is usually derived from **mēnōn*, but Beekes (1982, 54) prefers to consider **mēnōt* to be the original form.

3.1.10. Slavic: Old Church Slavonic *měsěць* “moon, month” reflects early Slavic **mēsinko-*, which is usually derived from the protoform **mēsŋ-ko-* while we assume a dissimilative loss of *n* in the first syllable (as an example, cf. **pěsькъ* “sand” vs. Sanskrit *pāmsú-* id.). Smoczyński (1994) concluded that the protoform **mēsiko-* corresponding to the protoform **sulniko-* “Sun” can be reconstructed by means of metathesis (cf. *ESJS* 8, 469).

3.1.11. Tocharian A *mañ*, B *meñe* “moon, month”; cf. also A *mañ-ñkät* = B *meñ-ñakte* “God of the Moon”. The original may have been a protoform **mēnēC*, where *C* can represent **n*, **t*, **s* (Adams 1999, 468).

{3.1.12.} Note: Even the question of whether some related words can be found in the Anatolian languages remains open. Bedřich Hrozný (1933, 41-42) assumed that the word in the Hieroglyphic Luwian text Karkamish II, §17 which he read as ⁺*mēnulas*, meant “moon”, especially because a sign resembling a crescent preceded it (#265 according to Laroche 1960). He therefore compared it to the Lithuanian diminutive *mėnūlis* “little moon”. Meriggi (1962, 83) read the word as *mi-i-n.-la-s*,

but most scholars today prefer the reading *mi-zi-na-la-sa* (Hawkins 2000, 110-11). It follows from the text that it designates some kind of function. If the sign “crescent moon” represents an ideogram which determines the semantics of the word, Meriggi’s interpretation as “moon priest” seems acceptable. This word would thus be created by combining the word base *mizin-* and a suffix *-ala-* typical of agent nouns. The word base would originate in the protoform **mēnsen-*, which precisely corresponds with the forms from the Osco-Umbrian languages. The development of **ē* > Luwian **ī* is documented by examples such as Luwian *nī / nis* = Hieroglyphic Luwian *ni-(sa)* < **nē* or Cuneiform Luwian *kīsā(i)-* “comb” < **kēs-ā-je/o-* (Melchert 1994, 241). An example for the change **-ns-* > *-z-* can be found in Hieroglyphic Luwian *á-zu-za* “we; us” = Cuneiform Luwian *ānzas* < **ns-* (Melchert 1994, 234, 243). A weak point of this solution – semantics – remains. In this text from Karkamish, dated to the tenth century, there are named specific professions: *sappantaris* “libation-priest”, *mizzinalas* “?”, *tunikkalas* “baker”, and pl. *kukkisadinzi* pl. “combers”. Yakubovich (p.c., Nov 1, 2017) speculates, it could be more probably ‘croissant-maker’ than ‘crescent-priest’, but the exact interpretation remains open.

3.2. Etymology: Most scholars agree on identifying the root **mē-* = **meH₁-* (firstly by Pott). However, interpretations of the rest of the word differ substantially. Therefore, knowledge of further etymologies may be useful (for a detailed overview, see Valčáková, Blažek & Erhart, *ESJS* 8, 1998, 469).

3.2.1. Internal reconstruction in the individual branches leads to a common base **mēn^o* = **meH₁n^o* expanded by **(e)s-* in one portion of the branches in which sometimes **-n-* also appears. The resulting compounded suffix **-sn-* finds a parallel in words of the same semantic determination such as **louk-snā* “heavenly light”, most commonly “moon”, which represents the derivative of the root **leuk-* “to shine”. A similar example can be found in Proto-Greek **selasnā* “moon” > Attic *σελήνη*, and Lesbic *σελάννᾱ*, which was created by expanding the word *σέλας* “glare, light, ray”. In various Indo-European languages the suffix **-sn-* creates abstract nouns from verbs as well as noun bases, e.g. Prussian *waisna* “knowledge” (**waid-snā*) : *waisei* “you know”, *waidimai* “we know”, *biasna* “fear” : *bia-twei* “to be afraid”; Gothic *filusna* “amount” : *filu* “a lot”; Old Saxon *segisna* “sickle, scythe”, Latin *sacēna* “scythe” (**sacesnā*) : *secō*, *secāre* “to cut, chop”; Latin *arānea* “spider” (**aracsnej₁a*), Greek *ἀράχνη* id. (**araksnā*) : *ἄρκυς* “net”; Sanskrit *kṛtsnā-* “whole”: Greek *κράτος* “force” (Brugmann 1906, 264-65, 282).

Heteroclitic names with *-sar/-sn^o* in Hittite correspond to the above-mentioned derivatives with *-sn-*, such Hittite words are verbal abstract nouns: *hattessar*, gen. *hattesnas* “hole, pit”: *hattai* “to dig a hole”; *tethessar*, gen. *tethesnas* “thunder”: *tethai* “it thunders” (Kronasser 1966, 289). The traces of the *r*-stem appear also among derivatives of the base **mēns^o*: Latin *intermenstruum* “new moon” = Umbrian gen. pl. *anter:menzaru* (Untermann 2000, 472; 109-10); also Latin names of months *september*, *november*, *december* < **septm-*, **(H₁)neum-*, **dek̑m-* and **mēnsri-* (Erhart 1998, 65).

3.2.2. Erhart (1998) reconstructed the original heteroclitic paradigm **mēnsōr* : **mēns(e)n^o*. He interprets the base **mēns^o* as a compound of two verbal roots **mē-* (**meH₁-*) “to measure (time)” and **nes-* “to return” (Sanskrit *násate* “to join someone”, Greek *véομαι* “to return home”, Gothic *ga-nisan* “to get healthy, recover” and others; see P 766).

3.2.3. Beekes (1982) formulated an intriguing hypothesis, according to which the word “moon” contains a perfect participle formed by the suffix **(u)ōt-*, and based on this, he reconstructed the following paradigm: nom. **meH₁n-ōt*, acc. **meH₁n-és-ṃ* , gen. **meH₁n-s-és*. In order to explain the alternation of *t-* and *s-*stems, Hamp (1983) modified Beekes’s paradigm: nom. **meH₁nót-s* > **meH₁nóss*, acc. **meH₁nót-ṃ* , gen. **mH₁nt-ós* → **mH₁ṃ s-ós* → **meH₁ṃ s-ós*.

3.2.4. Another possible explanation imagines a compound whose first part is **meH₁n-* “measure” (> Sanskrit *māna-* in the word *mānaskṛ t-* “processor of leather, literally “one that cuts according to measure”). In the second part two synonyms alternate: **uet-(es-)* “year” (Sanskrit *vatsá-* “year”, Sogdian *wtšnyy* “old”; Hittite *witt-*, Cuneiform Luwian *ussa-* “year” < **ut-sa*; Greek *ἔτος*, dial. *πέτος*, Mycenaean *we-to* “year”; Messapic *atavetes* “in the same year”?; Albanian *vit*, pl. *vjet* id.; Latin *vetus*, *-eris* “old”; Old Lithuanian *vetušas* id., Old Church Slavonic *vetъxъ* id.; P 1175) and **sen-* “time of the year; old” (Sanskrit *sána-*, Avestan *hana-* “old”; Armenian *hin* “old”; Greek *ἔτος* “old”, *δίετος* “two-year-old” < **d̑ui-seno-*; Latin *senex*, gen. *senis*, comp. *senior* “old”; Old Irish *sen* “old”, Middle Welsh, Cornish, Breton *hen* id., cf. Gaulish *seno-* in personal nouns like *Seno-gnatus*; Gothic *sinista* “the oldest”; Lithuanian *sėnas* “old”, *sėnis* “old age”; see P 907-08). Except for Greek, the meaning “year” is also preserved in the Anatolian languages: Lycian *kbi-/tri-sññe/i-* “two/three-year-old”; Hittite *zēna-* “autumn” < **(H₁)n-séno-*; see Melchert 1994, 172, 315).

4. Anatolian **(i)arma*

4.1. Anatolian: Hittite **arma-* “moon(god), month”, reconstructed after the derivatives as ^(NINDA)*armanni-* “lunula, crescent; ‘croissant’-bread”, *armuwalae-* “to shine (of the moon)”, *armuwalašḫa(i)-* “waxing of the moon”, Cuneiform Luwian *armannaima/i-* “decorated with lunulae”, Hieroglyphic Luwian LUNA-*ma-* “moon(god)”, Lycian *Arm̃ma* “moon”, *r̃m̃mazata-* “monthly offering”, Lydian *Arm̃ta-* gen. ‘belonging to *Arma* - Moon God’ (Melchert 1994, 297, 315, 375; Kloekhorst 2008, 206).

4.2. Etymology:

4.2.1. Ivanov (1979, 148; 1981, 130-32) proposed an internal reconstruction **i₂r-mH₁o-/-eH₂*, “measuring time”, based on the Old Icelandic kenning *ár-tali* “counting the year” = “month”. This idea is supported by words designating time in the Luwian branch: Cuneiform Luwian *āra/i-*, Hieroglyphic Luwian *ara/i-* “time” (Starke 1990, 116-17, note 339a), besides *yariti* “spreads, expands” (Oettinger 2004, 381-82: (***H₁jeH₁r*^o vs. ***H₁joH₁r-i e-ti*), further perhaps also Lydian *ora** “month”, if it does not represent an adaptation of Greek ὥρᾱ “season, time of the day, correct time” (***H₁j oH₁r-eH₂*).

4.2.2. Alternatively, Van Windekens (1979, 912-13) suggested a comparison with Tocharian A *yärm*, B *yarm* “measure” < *(*H₁*)*erm̃j*, while the Anatolian words would reflect a protoform *(*H₁*)*ormo-*.

5. **louk(e)sno-/-e)snā* “light” < “moon” (P 688-89)

5.1.1. Armenian *lowsin* “moon” < **loukesno-* (or **loukeno-*, see Olsen 1999, 465, and also note 555); cf. also *lowsn* “white of the eye”.

5.1.2. Italic: Latin *lūna* “moon; moon goddess”; the word *Losna* “moon goddess” known from the city of Praeneste goes back to **louksnā*.

5.1.3. Celtic: Old Irish *lúan* m. “light, moon” < **louksno-*; cf. *día lúain* “Monday”.

5.1.4. Baltic: Prussian pl. *lauxnos* “constellation”.

5.1.5. Slavic: Old Church Slavonic *luna* “moon” < **louksnā*.

5.2. Etymology: The base is established on the root **leuk-* “to shine” (Sanskrit *rócate* “to shine, glare”, Hittite *lukk-*, Latin *lūceō*, *-ēre*, Tocharian AB *luk-* “to shine”; in the Slavic branch this base is preserved in **luča* and **lučb* “ray; torch”, which corresponds to Sanskrit *rocí-* “light”, Old Icelandic *leygr* “flame, fire”, and others). An abstract noun **louk-os* is

* Oettinger (2016-17, 256-57) derives Lydian *ora-* from **aura-* < **arua-*, which should be parallel to Anatolian **arma* “moon” (§4).

created by an extension with *-(e)s-, gen. **loṃk-es-os* “light” (Sanskrit *rócas-*, Avestan *raocah-*). The *n*-suffix changes adjectives such as Avestan *raoxšna-* “glaring” into words which served as a basis for substantives like Greek *λύχνος* “light” (**luksnos*), Old High German *liehsen* id. (Germanic **leuhsna-*), and also the word for “moon” (P 687-89).

6. *(s)kend-

6.1.1. Indo-Aryan: Sanskrit *candrá-* “moon”, also attested in the *Manusmriti* as “Moon God”, which was shortened from the compound *candrá-māś-* “moon” < **kendro-*.

6.1.2. Albanian Gheg *hânë*, Tosk *hënë* “moon” < **ska/ond-nā*.

6.1.3. Celtic: Middle Breton *cann* “full moon”, cf. Welsh *cannaid* “shining; Sun, moon” < **kndo-*.

6.2. Etymology: Sanskrit *candati* “it shines, glares”, intensive participle *cāni-ścadat* “shining over everything else”; Greek *κάνδαρος* · *ἀνθραξ* “live coals” (Hesychius); Latin *candeō*, *-ēre* “to glare, shine” (Schrijver 1991, 434 explains the *-a-* developed from **-e-* as a consequence of purely velar *c-* < **k-*); Welsh *cann* “white, light” agrees with the original semantics * “illuminating”.

Other designations of “moon” as “heavenly light” are usually motivated by its shining nature:

7. Greek: Attic *σελήνη*, Lesbic *σελάννᾱ* “moon” < **selasnā* was created by extension of the word *σέλας* n. “glow, light, beam” < **selḡs-*. Its further etymology remains unclear. Indo-European **s-* in front of a vowel regularly changes to **h* in Greek, and this sound then often disappears. The preservation of *σ-* in this position thus requires a special explanation, and indeed two possible reasons have been offered:

7.1. Georgiev (1981, 100, 102) sees here an example of the preservation of an Indo-European substrate, a so-called “Pelagic” lexeme, which would reflect Indo-European **suelos*;

7.2. Bader (1995, 268), on the other hand, derives the Greek word from the protoform **sH₂uel-ḡs*. Bader assumes that the initial **sH₂-* was assimilated to **ss-* and is ultimately preserved in the form *s-*. In this way, she explains the doublets *ῥς* : *σῶς* “pig” < **suH-* : **sHu-*.

7.3. Diakonoff & Starostin (1986, 37) proposed a substratal origin, seeking a source in a hypothetical donor-language related to Urartian, where they mentioned *šél-ardə* ‘Moon-goddess’, plus probably related

forms in North Caucasian: Dargi *šali* n. “light”, Chechen *sa* id.

8. New Greek φεγγάρι “moon”: φέγγος “light, shine, glitter” (Buck 1949, 54-55).

9. Irish *gealach* “moon; light, blaze” vs. *geal* “white”, Old Irish *gel* id. (MacBain 1911, 190-91; Buck 1949, 54-55).

10. Old Irish *ésca* “moon” (Gaelic *easga* id.) is etymologically opaque. If the etymology connecting the word with Latin *idūs* “the middle of a calendar month”, Oscan *eiduis* “idibus” is correct (MacBain 1911, 153; Buck 1949, 54-55), the original motive for naming was “a time period”. Attention should also be given to Sanskrit *indu-* “moon”, originally “a drop” (Walde & Hofmann I, 672).

11. Germanic **tungla-* also does not have a clear etymology. It means in individual languages either “moon” (1) or “star, constellation” (2): Gothic dat. pl. *tugglam* (2), Old Icelandic *tungl* (1), *himin-tungl* (2), Old English *tungol*, Old Saxon (*heban-*)*tungal*, Old High German (*himil-*)*zungal* (2). The Old High German form pl. (*himil-*)*zungun* (2) is attested without the suffix **-lo-*. Other related words cannot be determined with certainty.

11.1. The origin might be a West Germanic root **twink-* “blink (with eyes)” (Old English *twinclian*, English *twinkle*, Old High German *zwincken*). The blinking movement of the eyes might have been transferred to the twinkling light of the stars.

11.2. Another alternative is offered by a Baltic designation for “sky”: Lithuanian *dangùs*, Prussian *dangus* id., which is derived from a verb of the type Lithuanian *deñgti* “to cover” (Lehmann 1986, 348; Kroonen 2013, 526).

III. STAR

12. **H₂stér*, gen. **H₂strós*

12.1.1. Indo-Aryan: Sanskrit *stár-* f.? attested in Ṛgveda only as instr. pl. *stíbhīḥ*, next to forms without *s-* like pl. *tārah*, Pali sg. *tārā-*. The *s-* is preserved, for example, in Ashkun *istá*, Khovar *istari-* “star” (EWAI II, 755).

12.1.2. Iranian: Avestan *star-* (Old Avestan gen. pl. *strəm*, Young

Avestan acc. sg. *stāram*, dat. pl. *stərəbiiō*), cf. further the compounds *stəhr-paēsah*- “decorated with stars”; Khotanese *stāraa*-, Sogdian *’st’r’kt*, *’stry* /(*ə*)*stārē*/, Khwarezmian *’st’rk*, Parthian *’st’rg* /*astārag*/, Middle Persian *’st’rg*^M, *st’lk*^Z /(*i*)*stārag*/, *’str*^M /*astar*/, *stl* /*star*/, Persian *sitāra*, Sangisari *setawre*, Baluchi *istār*, East Baluchi *astār*, Kurdish *stēr(k)*, *steīrk*, Zazaki *āstāra*, Ossetic Iron *st’aly*, Digor (*æ*)*st’alu*, Pashto *stōrai*, Ormuri *starrak*, Parachi *estēč*, Munji *stōriy*, Yidgha *stārē*, Yazghulami *ǰaturag*, Shughni *ǰitērǰ*, Ishkashimi *strūk*, Wakhi *s(ə)tór* “star” (Stebelin-Kamenskij 1999, 324; KEWA III, 512; Blažek & Schwarz 2017, 255, 272, 290, 309).

12.1.3. Anatolian: Hittite *ḫašter(a)*- “star” (Kloekhorst 2008, 326: **H₂ster*-).

12.1.4. Armenian *astl* (**astil*), gen.-dat. *astel* “constellation, star” corresponds to Greek vocal alternation *é* : *e*. The mysterious *l* may be ascribed to the influence of the word “Sun” (Brugmann 1906, 339; Olsen 1999, 159-60), which is perhaps preserved in Old Armenian *owłp* “Sun, shine, glitter” (see § 1.1.3.).

12.1.5. Greek *ἀστήρ*, -ἑρός “star”, coll. *ἄστρα*.

12.1.6. Italic: Latin *stēlla* “star” < **stēr(o)lā*.

12.1.7. Celtic **ster-ā* > Old Irish *ser*, Welsh pl. *ser*, singulative *seren*, Middle Cornish pl. *steyr*, singulative *steren*, Breton pl. *ster*, singulative *sterenn* “star” (Schrijver 1995, 423; Matasović 2009, 355); cf. Gaulish ND *Sirona*, *Dirona* < **stēr-on-ā* (Watkins 1974, 11). The Old Irish word is *hapax* appearing only in one of the poems whose author should be Colmán mac Lénéni (†604):

ó ba mac cléib | caindlech ser | sirt cach n-ainm | ainm gossa fer

“because he was the child of a candle, | a bright star, | over all names | he spread the name “Forces of men” (= Fergus)

12.1.8. Germanic: Gothic *stairno*, Crimean Gothic *stein* [= **stern*], Old High German *stern(o)*, Old Icelandic *stjarna* “star” < Germanic **sternōn* (Lehmann 1986, 322; Kroonen 2013, 478).

12.1.9. ?Baltic: Latvian *stars*, gen. *stara* “ray (of the Sun); branch”.

12.1.10. Tocharian A pl. *šreñ*, B *šcirye* “star” < **ster-jo-* (Adams 1999, 640).

12.2. Etymology:

12.2.1. The most common interpretation is the agent noun (nomen agentis) **H₂s-tér-* (Krogmann 1936, 257f; Scherer 1953, 22; Bomhard 1986, 191). The only root ***H₂e(H₁)s-*, which may be considered, however, meant “hot ashes, fire place” (Sanskrit *āsa-* “ash”, Hittite *ḫāšš-* “ashes; dust; soap”, *ḫāššā-* c. “fire place, hearth”, Cuneiform Luwian *ḫāššaniit(i)*- “hearth”, Oskic *aasai* “on the altar”, i.e. “on the ritual fire

place”, Umbrian *asa*, Old Latin *asa*, Latin *āra* “altar”, Vedic *áśa-* “ashes”, Old Runic *azina*, Old High German *essa* “ash”, and others, P 68; de Vaan 2008, 49; Kloekhorst 2008, 318-19, 321-22).

12.2.2. Schrader & Nehring (1929, 481) derived the word from the Indo-European root **ster-* “to scatter” (P 1029-30), namely “stars” = “stars scattered across the sky”.

12.2.3. Părvulesu (1977, 47) assumed the original meaning of “perennial star” based on the Indo-European stem **ster-* “firm, solid, stiff” (P 1022).

12.2.4. Another possible alternative is the hypothesis (Zimmern 1915, 68; Illič-Svityč 1964, 6-7; Gamkrelidze & Ivanov 1984, 686) based on the assumption that the Semitic designation for “morning star” **šattar-* (*at-*) was adopted. This word appears more commonly as the god or goddess of fertility: Akkadian *ištaru*, later *išartu* “goddess”, *Eštar* “Inanna, goddess of love; the planet Venus”, Eblaite *aš-dar* [*šattar-*] ‘Inanna’, Ugaritic *štr* m., *štrt* f. names of gods which were sometimes interpreted as “morning star” or “evening star”, Phoenician *šštr* “goddess of fertility and war”, Moabite *šštr-kmš*, Hebrew *šašteret* ~ *šašóret* “goddess of Sidonians” [Sd 2.13; 10.6; 1S 7.3n; 12.101Kr 11.5; 2 Kr 23.13], Old Aramaic *štr* “name of deity, Aramaic *šattarsamīn* “god Attar in heavens”. This god was identified by Assyrian people as the deity of the planet Venus *Dilbat*, Syrian *šesterā*, Sabaic *štr* “male deity”. In Sabaic it is often accompanied by the word *šrqn* “east”; in Arabic it occurs only in toponyms like *Iteri*, correctly [*šattari*] from the oasis in western Sirhan, Geez *šastar* “sky” and others (Blažek 1996, 132). The semantic development of “morning star” < “star” has an analogy for example in Belorussian *zora*, Ukrainian *zorja* “star”, in other Slavic languages “morning star”. Some scholars (Đjakonov 1982, 20-21; Starostin, p.c.) suppose that the borrowing occurred in the opposite direction.

13.1. Albanian (*h*)*yll* m., pl. (*h*)*yje* “star”

13.2. Etymology:

The following etymological attempts have been proposed until now:

13.2.1. Meyer (1891, 460) reconstructed **sūli-* or **sulno-*, while Pedersen (1899, 278) **sūlo-* or **sūli-* “sun”. This traditional approach faces obstacles because the proof for the change **s-* > Albanian *h-* is missing.

13.2.2. Hamp (1965, 132-33) tried to solve this problem by putting forth the hypothesis of *s*-mobile (**(s)uH₂l-* “sun”), but even this one lacks in the given example a clear analogy.

13.2.3. Huld (1976, 180-81; 1983, 132) proposed the starting-point **H₁us-li-*, cf. Old Norse *usli* m. "embers", Old English *ysl(e)* f. "spark, ash, ember", Middle Low German *ösele* "hot ashes", Middle High German *usel*, *üsel* f. "embers" (Orel 2003, 436: Germanic **uslōn* m. ~ **usljō* f.), all from the verb **H₁eu s-* "to burn", attested in Greek ἔωω "I burn", Latin *ūrō* id., *ustus* "burnt", Albanian *ethe* "fever", Old Norse *ysja* "fire, blaze", etc. (Pokorny 1959, 347-48; Beekes & Adams, *EIEC* 87; *LIV* 245). Similarly, Demiraj (1994, 60, fn. 8; 1997, 206) who proposes proto-Albanian **ül-* < **H₁uslo-*.

13.2.4. Orel (1998, 518) speculated about pre-Albanian **skijā* from **skijā* > Albanian *hije* "shadow".

13.2.5. A new solution should satisfy the rules of historical phonetics, word formation and semantics. A promising candidate seems to be the verbal root **H_aeus-/*H_aues-* "to dawn" (P 86; *LIV* 292-93) > Old Indic *ucchāti* = Avestan *usaiti* "dawns", Old Indic *uśāh*, acc. *uśāsam* = Avestan *uśā*, acc. *uśāhəm* "dawn", Greek **āuhōs* > Homeric ἥως, Attic ἔως, Doric αῶς "dawn", Latin *aurōra* "dawn" (**ausōsā* or **ausōrā*), Lithuanian *aūšta* "es tagt", Latvian *ausa* "dawn", etc.

The strength of the hypothetical derivative **H_aus-li- ±* "morning-star" can be further verified. There are the derivatives in *-li-* from the root **H_aeu s-/*H_aes-*: Greek ἔωλο "of the morning, of the morrow" < **H_a(e) u os-lo-*; Welsh *gwŷll* "twilight" < **H_aesli o-* (Hamp 1980, 213); 'Sabine' **ausel*, reconstructed by Kretschmer (*Glotta* 13, 1924, 111; *Glotta* 14, 1925, 310; see also Benveniste 1935, 43) on the basis of Hesychius' gloss αὐκίλωσ ἔωσ ὑπὸ Τυρρηνηῶν, corrected in **αὐσηλω*, cf. Etruscan *usil(-s)* "sun", *uslane* "at noon", and the theonym *Usil(-s)*, *Ušil(-s)* "God of Sun" (Bonfante 1983, 146; d'Aversa 1994, 57), probably of Osco-Umbrian origin, and the ethnonym *Auselii* = *Aurelii* by Paul. ex. Fest. 23 (Walde & Hofmann 1938, 86) < **Heusel^o*.

Let us also mention that Albanian *-ll-* is derivable from **-li-* and various clusters, including **-sl-*, cf. Albanian *kollë* "cough" < **k^u āslā* (Huld 1976, 180-81; Orel 1998, 189). Concerning *h-*, cf. Albanian *hypi* "to go up" < **H_aup-jo-* ~ Hittite *up-* "aufgehen (von Gestirnen)", against Albanian *vesh* "ear" ~ Latin *auris* id. < **H_aeusis*; Albanian *hut* "vain, empty" should reflect **H_auto-*, while Greek αὔσιος "empty, vain", Gothic *auPeis* "desert, desolate" are derivable from **H_aeutijo-* (Beekes 1988, 102). The hypothesis about the derivation of the Albanian word for "star" from the root **H_aues-* "to dawn" implies the primary semantics **"morning star"*. The semantic development "dawn" → "morning star" → "star" is quite natural. The same semantic shift occurs e.g. in some of Slavic languages: Common Slavic **zorja* "dawn" continues in Belorussian *zará*, *zórka* and

Ukrainian *zorjá*, *zýrka* "star", while the derivative **zorǫnica* means "morning star" in Bulgarian *zornica*, Macedonian *zornica*, Slovenian *zornica*, Slovak *zornica*, Upper Sorbian *zernička*, archaic Polish *zornica*, Ukrainian *zirnyčja* (ZVSZ 428-29; Schuster-Šewc 1988-89, 1748-49; ESUM 265, 278-81). The same relation can be identified between Turkic **julduř* ~ **-dir* "star" > Turkish, Karaim, Turkmen etc. *jyldyz*, Azeri *ulduz*, Uzbek, Kumyk *julduz*, Chuvash *śǎwldǎw* etc. "star", and Tungusic: Evenki *hil-de-nre*- "to dawn" (EDAL 1155-56).

14.1. Latin *sīdūs*, *-eris* n. "constellation"

14.2. Etymology: The original form can be reconstructed as the *s*-stem **sueǵd^(h)os*, gen. **sueǵd^(h)esos* (Hamp 1975b). This is a derivative of the stem **sueǵd^(h)*- "to shine" which is attested in Avestan *xʷaēna*- "glowing" < Iranian **hʷaǵdna*-, Latin *sūdus* "dry, sunny; clear (about weather)" < **suoǵd^(h)o*-, Lithuanian *svidù*, *-ėti* "to shine", Latvian *svīdu*, *svīst* "to become clear (the beginning of daylight)" (Pokorny 1959, 1042; de Vaan 2008, 596). Neither Latin nor Baltic *-d-* helps decide whether the given dental consonant comes from Indo-European **-d-* or **-d^h-*. Mann (1984-87, 1353) added further examples which should testify in favour of the unaspirated **-d-*: Armenian *kʻtʻit* "flash" < **suidǵstis*; Greek ἴδη "shine, gleam" < **suidā*; Old English *switel*, *sweteotol* "clear".

15.1. Old Irish *rind*, gen. *renda* n. "star"

15.2. Etymology: This is an old *u*-stem, and both Goidelic and Celtic protoform would be **rendu*-. Pedersen (I, 1909, 37) sees here a connection with New Irish *rinn*, gen. *rinne* & *reanna* "a point; the peak of something", and also with Greek *περόνη* "tip, apex", Armenian *heriun* "bradawel", but for example Vendryes, *LEIA*, R-32 does not see here any semantic link.

16.1. Balto-Slavic **ǵ^(h)u oǵsd^(h)ā*

16.1.1. Baltic **žuaizd(i)ā* > Lithuanian *žvaigždė* & *žvaigždė*, archaic and dialectal *žvaizdė* "star", Latvian *zvāigzne*, dialectal *zvāizne* id., ?Prussian acc. *swāigstan* "gleam, light", if these words really belong to this category (see Smoczyński 2001, 99-100 for other solutions).

16.1.2. Slavic **zvězda* next to depalatalized or non-palatalized variant **ǵvězda* < **ǵ^(h)uoǵsd^(h)ā*.

16.2. Etymology: No unambiguous etymology has been presented yet. Therefore only some alternative solutions can be considered:

16.2.1. Rather than the phonetically problematic comparison with Greek φωῖβος “brightly shining” (* $\acute{g}^{uh}ojg^{u}-?$), Irish *gead*, gen. *geide* “white spot on the head of an animal” can serve as an explanation. Hamp (*Eriu* 25, 1974, 279) reconstructed it back to * $\acute{g}^h uisda$.

16.2.2. Buck (1949, 56) pointed out the phonetic proximity of onomatopoeic words such as Lithuanian *žvigti* “to whimper”, Old Church Slavonic *zvizdati*, Polish *gwizdać* “to whistle”. A paradoxical semantic development has a parallel in English flash, which, however, designated “splashing and sound of water” before the 14th century.

16.2.3. If we take Trubačev’s ideas (*ESSJ* 7, 1980, 182-83) as a starting point, we can suppose that the original word was a compound, whose first part would be the protoform * $\acute{g}^{(h)} uojd^{(h)}$ - and the second part one of the verbal roots * $d^h e$ - “lay” or * $stā$ - “stand”. Both of them would express the fact that the light is “constant”. The second possibility is supported by Prussian *swāigstan* “shine, light”. If we try to identify the first component, Irish *gead*, gen. *geide* “white spot on the head of an animal” analyzed by Hamp in §1 could be a suitable candidate, in the case that it is derived from a Celtic protoform * $gidā$ - < * $\acute{g}^h uid-ā$. This may be possible, cf. Irish *beach*, Old Irish *bech* “a bee” < **biko*-; Irish *fear*, Old Irish *fer* “a man” < **uiro*- (MacBain 1911, 31, 168). This hypothetical group of related words can be expanded by Greek φαῖδρός “clear”, φαίδιμος “shining”, which is usually connected with Lithuanian *gaidrūs* “clear (about weather)”. From the perspective of the theory of the Indo-European stem, it is difficult to explain the Greek diphthong *ai*. This difficulty also concerns the difference of Lithuanian *ž* in the word “star” as opposed to *g* in the word “clear”. In this case we can consider regressive assimilation, i.e. * $g uajzdā$ > * $z vaj(g)zda$.

INDIVIDUAL STARS AND CONSTELLATIONS

IV. ORION

17.1. Greek Ὠρίων “Orion” (Homeric), also Ἰαρίων (Callimachus), Ὀαρίων (Pindar), and others. Let us mention what position Orion occupied among the constellations on Achilles’s shield which was made by Hephaestus [Il. XVIII, 483-489]:

⁴⁸³ ἐν μὲν γαῖαν ἔτευξ’, ἐν δ’ οὐρανόν, ἐν δὲ θάλασσαν,

⁴⁸⁴ἠέλιόν τ' ἀκάμαντα σελήνην τε πλήθουσσαν,
⁴⁸⁵ἐν δὲ τὰ τεῖρα πάντα, τὰ τ' οὐρανὸς ἐστεφάνωται,
⁴⁸⁶Πληϊάδας θ' Ὑάδας τε τό τε σθένος Ὠρίωνος
⁴⁸⁷Ἄρκτόν θ', ἦν καὶ Ἄμαξαν ἐπὶ κλησὶν καλέουσιν,
⁴⁸⁸ἢ τ' αὐτοῦ στρέφεται καὶ τ' Ὠρίωνα δοκεύει,
⁴⁸⁹οἷη δ' ἄμμορός ἐστι λοετρῶν Ὠκεανοῖο. [P 1]

“Therein he wrought the earth, therein the heavens therein the sea, and the unwearied sun, and the moon at the full, and therein all the constellations wherewith heaven is crowned – the Pleiades, and the Hyades and the mighty Orion, and the Bear, that men call also the Wain, that circleth ever in her place, and watcheth Orion, and alone hath no part in the baths of Ocean.” [P 2].

17.2. Etymology

17.2.1. Renaud (1996, 2003; cf. also Guglielmino et al. 2017, 172) tried to explain the internal Greek etymology. He proceeded from Homer’s note on the connection of the stars of Orion and Sirius which rises in the summer, i.e. at harvest time, and which is called Orion’s dog [*Iliad* 22.27-29]

ὃς ῥά τ' ὀπώρης εἶσιν, ἀρίζηλοι δέ οἱ αὐγαὶ
 φαίνονται πολλοῖσι μετ' ἀστράσι νυκτὸς ἀμολγῶ,
 ὃν τε κύν' Ὠρίωνος ἐπὶ κλησὶν καλέουσι. [P 3]

“like to the star that cometh forth at harvest-time, and brightly do his rays shine amid the host of stars in the darkness of night, the star that men call by name the Dog of Orion.” [P 4]

Elsewhere [*Iliad* 5.5.] Sirius is directly called ἀστὴρ ὀπωρινός “summer star”:

δαῖε οἱ ἐκ κόρυθός τε καὶ ἀσπίδος ἀκάματον πῦρ
⁵ἀστέρ' ὀπωρινῶ ἐναλίγκιον, ὅς τε μάλιστα
 λαμπρὸν παμφαίνησι λελουμένος ὠκεανοῖο. [P 5]

“She kindled from his helm and shield flame unwearying,
⁵ like to the star of harvesttime that shineth bright above all others
 when he hath bathed him in the stream of Ocean.” [P 6]
 Trans. A.T. Murray (1924)

Renaud concluded that the theonym Ὠαρίων reflects Proto-Greek

**ōhar-īwōn*, which was a derivation of the word **ōhar* “summer”.

17.2.2. The name of the constellation looks exotic at first sight, and therefore a non-Indo-European origin would not be surprising. The source for borrowing may be sought out in a civilization with a good knowledge of astronomy. From this perspective, the hypothesis of Bobrovova and Militarev (1993, 320) seems appealing, namely that the model for the Greek name of the bright constellation could have originated in another bright star (probably a Cassiopeia) of the Sumerian sky called ^{MUL} / ^d*u₅.rī.in*.

V. PLEIADES

18.1. ***k^hrt-*

18.1.1. Indo-Aryan: Vedic *Kṛttikāḥ* “Pleiades” [Atharvaveda] (MW 304);

18.1.2. Anatolian: Hittite *kurtāl* “Pleiades”.

18.2. Etymology:

18.2.1. The origins here can probably be found in the derivatives of the stem **k^hert-* attested in Sanskrit *kart-* “to spin”; Hittite *kurtal(i)-*, *kurtalli-* “wicker container, basket”, Greek *κῤῥτία* “wicker goods”, *κῤῥτη* “sieve, screen” (Puhvel 4[1997], 277-79).

18.2.2. Other names of the Pleiades are motivated similarly:

18.2.2.1. Latin *Vergiliae* : Lithuanian *vārža* “wicker fish trap”.

18.2.2.2. Finnish *seulaset* “Pleiades”: *seula* “sieve”, Estonian *sõel* “Pleiades” = “sieve” (Puhvel 1991, 1243).

18.2.2.3. Meadow Mari (documented by G. F. Müller in the early 18th century): *сокма шудеръ* “Pleiades”, lit. “sieve star” < *sokte* (in the Malmyž dialect that Müller documented, *šokte* in all other Meadow Mari dialects) “sieve” + *šüδâr* “star”.

19.1. ***p_lH_ui-*

19.1.1. Iranian: Young Avestan acc. pl. f. *paoiriiaēiniias(-ca)* “clustering of stars” (Yt. VIII, 12) < **parūjainī-*, Pashto pl. f. *pērūne* “Pleiades” < **parūjān-*, Kurdish *pērū* id., Baluchi *panwar* id., Persian *parv*, pl. *parvīn* “Pleiades” (Bartholomae 1904, 876). The names in question are extended by the suffix **-aina-*, which creates, for example, the Avestan names of colours: *zaranaēna-* “golden”, *tamaṇhaēna-* “dark” (Scherer 1953, 142-

43).

19.1.2. Greek Πλειάδες, Homeric Πληϊάδες “Pleiades”, next to the isolated noun Πλειόνες, first attested by Pindar (Scherer 1953, 144), was reserved by astronomers for the star 28 Tau. Later mythographers specified that their mutual relationship is *Pleióné*, a mother and her seven daughters – the Pleiades, cf. for example Ovid in his *Fasti* [V, 81-84]:

*duxerat Oceanus quondam Titanida Tethyn,
qui terram liquidis, qua patet, ambit aquis,
hinc sata Pleione cum caelifero Atlante
iungitur, ut fama est, Pleiadasque parit.* [P 7]

Tethys, the Titaness, who wedded of old by Ocean, who encompasses the earth, far as it stretches, with his flowing waters. Their daughter Pelione, as report has it, was united to Atlas, who upholds the sky, and she gave birth to the Pleiads. [T 1]
(ed. and trans. Sir James George Frazer, 1933)

The suffix *-αδ-* in the word Πλειάδες would be the same as in the derivatives of numerals like δεκάς, -άδος “grouping of tens”, and others, that is, in the case of the Pleiades it would mean “grouping of many”.

19.2. Etymology: The name was probably derived from the Indo-European root **pelH₁u-* “many” (P 800), as one can conclude according to names of the Pleiades in other languages: Sanskrit *bahulāḥ* “Pleiades” (Pāṇini), literally “numerous”; Gallo-Latin *Massa* “Pleiades”, literally “pile” (Gregory of Tours, *De cursu stellarum* 28, 51); Russian *Kúčki* “Pleiades” : *kúčka* “a small pile” (Scherer 1953, 143). Similarly, even Hebrew *Kīmah* “Pleiades” in the Book of Job [9.9; 38.31] primarily means “pile” (Puhvel 1991, 1242, note 4). Arabic *turayyā* “Pleiades” is probably related to *ʔatra* “rich”, although the semantic motivation may also mediate the meaning *tariyy* (also “rich, numerous”) and *taryān*. The multiplicity of the Pleiades is expressed also in their historically oldest designation: in Sumerian ^dMUL.MUL, which by its reduplication presents one of the ways for expressing the plural, here specifically from the word MUL “star”.

20. The Pleiades constitute a very bright star cluster consisting of approximately 250 stars up to 17th magnitude in size.

20.1. Only ten are visible by the naked eye, but ancient observers

considered only six stars to form the Pleiades, and one “invisible” one, as we can read for example in Ovid’s calendar work *Fasti* for the second of April [IV, 169-78]:

Pleiades incipient humeros relevare paternos,
¹⁷⁰ *quae septem dici, sex tamen esse solent:*
seu quod in amplexum sex hinc venere deorum.
(nam Steropen Marti concubuisse ferunt,
Neptuno Alcyonen et te, formosa Celaeno,
Maian et Electram Taygetemque Iovi),
¹⁷⁵ *septima mortali Merope tibi, Sisypho, nupsit;*
paenitet, et facti sola pudore latet:
sive quod Electra Troiae spectare ruinas
non tulit, ante oculos opposuitque manum [P 8]

the Pleiads will commence to lighten the burden that rests on their father’s shoulders; seven are they usually called, but six they usually are; whether it be that six of the sisters were embraced by gods (for they say that Sterope lay with Mars, Alcyone and fair Celaeno with Neptune, and Maia, Electra, and Taygete with Jupiter); the seventh, Merope, was married to a mortal man, to Sisyphus, and she repents of it, and from shame at the deed she alone of the sisters hides herself; or whether it be that Electra could not brook to behold the fall of Troy, and so covered her eyes with her hand. [T 2]

(ed. and trans. Sir James George Frazer, 1933)

The numeral seven plays a universal role in the designation of the Pleiades both in the Indo-European and non-Indo-European languages.

20.2. Anatolian: Hittite ^DIMIN.IMIN.BI “the deity of seven [stars], i.e. “Pleiades” written in ideograms with Sumerian reading (Tischler 2001, 234).

20.3. Greek: Late Greek ἐπτάστερον, literally “seven stars”. Further the attribute ἐπτάπορος [πλειιάς] (Eurippides, *Iph. Aul.*), which Puhvel (1991, 1244-45) contrary to the traditional interpretation as “seven ways” translated based on the verb παίρω “I stab” as “[sieve] with seven openings”.

20.4. Germanic: Old High German *sibunstirri*, *sipunstirni* (glosses

from the 9th century), German *Siebengestirn*, Middle Dutch *sevensterne*, Old English *sifunsterri*, Old Icelandic *siaustirni*, Icelandic *sjöstirni*, Swedish pl. *sjustjärnor* (Scherer 1953, 145).

The word “Pleiades” is formed similarly in other languages of northern Europe and Asia:

20.5. Uralic: arch. Estonian poet. *seitse tähte taeva sõelas* “seven stars in the celestial sieve”.

20.6. Turkic: Middle Turkic, Chaghatai *jäti-gän* “Pleiades” vs. Middle Turkic *jäti* “7” (Räsänen 1969, 199).

20.7. Mongol *oytarγuin doluyan burqan* “Pleiades”, literally “seven celestial gods” (Ramstedt 1935, 284).

20.8. Japanese *shichiyōsei* : Sino-Japanese *shichi* “seven” and *-sei* “star”.

VI. NORTH STAR

21.1.1. Indo-Aryan: Sanskrit *Dhruvá-* m. (possibly already in RV IX, 86.6; Ṛg̃hyasūtras; Mahābhārata and others). According to Indian religion, the god Viṣṇu installed Dhruva in the center of the sky (Viṣṇu-purāna I, 11). However, in India the North Star can only be seen in the northern part of the sky and even there it does not rise high above the horizon. The North Star’s position is central on the sky only much further to the north. Indo-Aryan people obviously brought this memory from their original homeland, although an influence of their northern neighbours then – Indo-Iranians or most probably Finno-Ugric peoples – cannot be ruled out (Blažek 1993, 34).

21.1.2. Etymology: Literally “standing firmly” (Scherer 1953, 117), cf. Sanskrit *dhruvá-* “solid, standing firmly, remaining, steady” (RV); Young Avestan *druua-* “healthy”, Old Persian *duruva-* “solid, steady”, Parthian *drwd* “health” = Middle Persian *drōd* = Persian *darōd* next to Middle Persian *drust* = Persian *durust* “correct, true, healthy”; the relationship to Slavic **sъ-dorvъ* “healthy” remains ambiguous (EWAI I, 798-99; Klingenschmitt 1982, 247). If we consider the root, we can proceed from the verb attested in Sanskrit *dhar-* “hold firmly”, Avestan *dāraiiat* “holds firmly”, Khotanese *dār-* “to hold”, Ossetic *daryn* “hold firmly”, Hittite *dar-* id., Lithuanian *derù* “I am able” and others, cf. also Latin *firmus* “firm” (EWAI I, 778-79).

21.2. Germanic: Old Norse *leiðarstjarna*, Middle English *lodestar*, Dutch *leidstar*, Middle Low German *leidersterre* (1190), Old High German

leitesterre, Middle High German *leitsterne*, all lit. "guiding star", besides Old English *scip-steorra*, lit. "ship-star" – all these terms are motivated by orientation (Scherer 1953, 129).

VII. SIRIUS

22.1. ***triH₂strij o-*

22.1.1. Indo-Aryan: Sanskrit *Tiṣyà-* metrically had three syllables originally, **Tiṣíya-*, m. "name of a star, probably Sirius". We can conclude that it is a perennial star based on the verse from RV, 54.13 *ná yó yúcchati Tiṣyò yáthā diváh* "the one who does not disappear from the sky such as *Tiṣya*".

22.1.2. Iranian: Young Avestan *Tištīia-* "Sirius", cf. *yeñhā ainikō brāzaiti yaθa Tištīiō.stārahe* "like the face of the star *Tištīia-*" [Yašt X, 143], *Tištīiaēinī-* f. pl. [Yašt VIII, 12; Nyāyišn I, 8] to the non-attested adjective m. **Tištīiaēna-* (Bartholomae 1904, 652). In Yasht VIII, 43.48 it is called *səuuīštō* "the mightiest, the strongest", which is fitting for the brightest perennial star of the night sky (Forssman 1968, 56); and Middle Persian *Tištār*. The Avestan form preserves the assumed Indo-Iranian protoform **tištīia-* almost without any change. The simplification of the initial cluster **tr-* to **t-* finds an analogy in the Indo-Iranian numeral "three", cf. Sanskrit nom.-acc. f. *tisrās*, Avestan nom. f. *tīsrō*, gen. *tīsrqm*, where the development **ti-sr^o* < **tri-sr^o* is expected. The following development in the Indo-Aryan branch led to the dissimilatory elimination of the other *-t-*. The expected result **Tišríya-* would show the cluster *-šr-*, which does not correspond to Indian sound laws. Therefore, if only one sound *-š-* and not *-sr-* replaced it, it cannot be considered to be an accommodation to *púšya-* "flourishing, belonging to flourishing", the attribute of the star *Tiṣyà-*.

22.1.2.1. Indo-Iranian > Fenno-Volgaic **täštä* "star" (*UEW* 793) > Finnish *tähti*, gen. *tähden* "Stern, Star, Blesse, Sternchen", *tähtää-* "zielen", Karelian *tähti*, *tähte-* "Stern, Zeichen, Merkzeichen", Estonian *täht*, gen. *tähe* "Zeichen; Stern" | Saamic **tästē* "star" (Lehtiranta 1989, 132, #1233) > South *daastaa*, Koltta *tä'stt*, Kildin *tä'st*, Ter *täšte* | Mordvinian **täš'tä* (Keresztés 1986, 167) > Erzya *tešče*, *teš'te*, Mokša *täš'tä* "Stern; Zeichen, Merkmal" | Mari **tištâ* (Bereczki 1992, 76) > JT *tište*, MK JO V *tistâ*, CK ČN *tiste*, Č *šiste* "Hausmarke, Hauszeichen, Namenzeichen, Stempel" (see Blažek 2005, 170).

22.1.3. Greek: Σείριος "Sirius" (by Hesiod) may originate in **Sírios*, while the substitution of the long vowel by the diphthong was probably

caused by the similar appearance of the word Σείρηνας “Sirens”. If we proceed from the protoform **tri-H₂strijo-*, later **trīstrijo-* after the disappearance of the laryngeals, we can reconstruct the word’s further development in the following steps: **ūstrijo-* with dissimilative loss of one of the two *-r-*, **ūsrijo-* with dissimilative loss of one of the two *t*, **īhrijo-* after the pan-Greek shift **s > h*, and **sī(h)rijo-* after the assibilation **ti > si* in a part of the Greek dialects (cf. Fischer 1969).

22.2. Etymology: The anticipated original form ***tri-H₂str-ijo-s* means “belonging to three stars”. The primary compound denoting “three stars” should have the form ***tri-H₂stro-m*. “Three stars” probably refer to the the waist of Orion, as the three stars δεζ of the constellation Orion are traditionally counted (their Arabic names *Mintaka*, *Alnilam*, *Alnitak* mean “waist”, “chain of pearls”, and “belt” respectively). We should add that in India the waist of Orion is called *Iṣus trikāṇḍā* “arrow with three nodes” (the “nodes” of bamboo are meant here, cf. Forssman 1969, 58- 59).

The brightest perennial star of the night sky, Sirius (α Canis Maior), and also the whole constellation of Canis Maior can appear on the northern hemisphere as an extension of the waist of Orion. This was true for the past going back at least 4000 years ago, as computed by the German astronomer Wolfgang Strohmeier.

Hamp (1974, 1048) presented an alternative hypothesis as he speculated that these “three stars” denoted an almost equilateral triangle whose three vertexes were three distinct stars of the winter sky: Sirius from the constellation of Canis Maior, Procyon from Canis Minor and red Betelgeuse from Orion. The connection of Sirius representing the constellation of Canis Major with Orion was already documented by Homer in the *Iliad*, although Homer does not directly mention the name of the star [*Il.* XXII, 26-29]:

παμφαίνονθ' ὥς τ' ἀστέρ' ἐπεσσύμενον πεδίοιο, ὃς ῥά τ' ὀπώρης
εἶσιν, ἀρίζηλοι δέ οἱ ἀύγαι φαίνονται πολλοῖσι μετ' ἀστράσι
νυκτὸς ἀμολγῶ, ὃν τε κύν' Ὠρίωνος ἐπὶ κλησιν καλέουσι. [P 9]

like to the star that cometh forth at harvest-time, and brightly do
his rays shine amid the host of stars in the darkness of night, the
star that men call by name the Dog of Orion. [P 10]

(trans. A.T. Murray, 1924)

VIII. BIG DIPPER

23.1. *septm-st(e)rj̥o-

23.1.1. Italic: Latin *septentriōnēs* “Big Dipper” < *septm-(s)trj̥o(n)-

23.1.2. Celtic: Old Irish *sechtarét* gloss ‘arctus’ (reshaped according to *rét* “star”) < *sechtarenn < *sektadderion- < *sektan-terion- < *septm-(s)ter-ion- (Hamp 1974, 1051; the author assumed that a similar compound caused the presence of *s-* in the Brythonic numeral “7”, where *h-* is normally expected).

23.2. Etymology: This word literally means “consisting of seven stars”.

24. “Bear”

24.1.1. Vedic *īkṣa-* “bear” (1 x RV; ŚB). However, already in the Rigveda the plural *īkṣāḥ* denoted also the constellation of Ursa Major, also called the Big Dipper, cf. RV I, 24.10:

*amī yā īkṣā nihitāsa uccā nāktam dādṛṣre kūha cid dīveyuh
ādabdhāni Vāruṇasya vratāni vicākaṣac candrāmā nāktam eti*

Yonder Bears [= stars of Ursa Major], set on high, are visible at night; they have gone somewhere else by day. The commandments of Vāruṇa cannot be cheated: the moon goes at night, earnestly looking around.

(trans. Stephanie W. Jamison & Joel P. Brereton, 2013).

24.1.2. Greek ἄρκτος mean primarily “bear” or rather “she-bear”. In the *Iliad* Homer clearly states that the constellation of Ursa Major and the Big Dipper are the same [XVIII, 487-88]:

⁴⁸⁶Πληϊάδας θ' Ἰάδας τε τό τε σθένος Ὠρίωνος
⁴⁸⁷Ἀρκτόν θ', ἦν καὶ Ἄμαξαν ἐπίκλησιν καλέουσιν,
⁴⁸⁸ἦ τ' αὐτοῦ στρέφεται καὶ τ' Ὠρίωνα δοκεύει,
⁴⁸⁹οἷη δ' ἄμμορός ἐστι λοετρῶν Ὠκεανοῖο. [P 11]

... The Pleiades, and the Hyades and the mighty Orion, and the Bear, that men call also the Wain, that circleth ever in her place, and watcheth Orion, and alone hath no part in the baths of Ocean.
[P 12]

(trans. A.T. Murray, 1924)

24.2. Etymology: The mystery of why a constellation reminding one of a wagon or dipper at first sight was called a bear or she-bear is best explained by the hypothesis first presented by Schrader & Nehring (1929, 481) and later again by Szemerényi (1962, 190-91). These authors proceed from the Akkadian name of the constellation “Ursa Maior” *ereqqu(m)*, or rather from its feminine form **ereqtu*, which is attested in pl. *e-re-qá-tim*. Its primary meaning, however, is “(freight) wagon”, similarly Sumerian ^{GIS}MAR.GÍD.DA “wagon” and ^{MUL}MAR.GÍD.DA “Ursa Major” (cf. also Akkadian *ereqqu šamê* and Sumerian ^{MUL}MAR.GÍD.DA.AN.NA “Litter Dipper = Ursa Minor”, literally “sky wagon”; see von Soden 1965, 238). According to the historical phonology of Akkadian, the original form might have been m. **HarVqq-u(m)*, f. **HarVqt-u(m)* for *H = *ʕ, *ɣ, *h*, and *V = *a*, possibly **i*. In the event that the vowel of the second syllable was **i*, the shift **a > *e* in the first syllable occurred even if **ʔ*, or **w* was in the anlaut position. An external comparison with Ugaritic *ʕrq* “wagon, cart” (Olmo Lete & Sanmartín 2003, 184), in a form which was unknown to Schrader & Nehring, as well as to Szemerényi, unambiguously confirms a reconstruction of the Semitic protoform m. **ʕar[a]qq-u* / f. **ʕarqat-u*.

The hypothetical original form **ʕara/iqt-* or **ʕariqt-* could have been adopted by the Greeks from West Semitic or Hurrian and identified with the acoustically most similar word ἄρκτος. Probably an independent loanword from Mesopotamia is the Vedic designation of the same constellation for which we also have to assume a similar scenario, i.e. identification with the acoustically close word *ʕkša-* “bear”. Szemerényi (1962, 191) explained in a similar way the Avestan designation for the constellation of the Big Dipper, *haptō-irīnga-*, and its Persian adaptation *haftōrang*. The traditional etymology assumes a relationship between the second part of the Iranian compound and Sanskrit *liṅga-* “sign”, thus “seven signs”. According to Szemerényi, two different words were mixed here: the Indo-European designation for a constellation consisting of “seven stars” (cf. Latin *septentriōnēs*) and the Akkadian base *ereqq-* denoting the constellation evoking a “wagon”.

24.3. Note: The verse Ἄρκτόν θ', ἦν καὶ Ἄμαξαν ἐπὶ κλήσιν καλέουσιν

[II. XVIII, 487] demonstrates that already for the Homeric tradition it was natural to designate the constellation of Ursa maior as “wagon”. The same has been proposed for Phrygian, where Hesychius’ gloss κίκλην τήν ἄρκτον τὸ ἄστρον. Φρύγες has been explained as the word with an original meaning “(wheeled) wagon”, cf. Greek κύκλος “circle” (Scherer 1953, 138). The designation of Ursa maior motivated by “wagon” is known e.g. in the Germanic traditions too, cf. Old Norse *vagn a himnum* “wagon on heavens”, Old High German *vagan in himile* [Rhabanus], Middle High German *himmelwagen* [Konrad von Megeberg], besides *woenswaghen*, lit. “Wodan’s wagon” or East Swedish *kvällvagnen*, lit. “evening-wagon” etc.

PLANETS

In the Ṛgveda it is not possible to differentiate between the planets and the fixed stars. According to some indologists (Leumann 1928, 4f.) the term *ādityāh* attested in Atharvaveda 8.2.15, representing a *vyddhi* derivation from *aditi-* “exuberance, freedom”, denoted “planets” as literally “sons of freedom”. However, others suggest that the term *aditi-* meant primarily only “to be freed from debt” (Oldenberg). In later Sanskrit (Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad; Mahābhārata) the word *graha-* is used most commonly and it literally means “one who catches”. This word was first attested in Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (IV 6,5,1.5), although it means “Sun” there. It is a derivative of the verb *grbhñāti* “catches” (~ Old Church Slavonic *grabiti* “to rob, steal”), cf. *grāhāh* “one who catches; a predatory animal, snake”. In Greek history, an unambiguous designation for planets appeared in Xenophon (*Mem.*) in connection with *πλάνητες ἀστέρες* “stray stars”, similarly *ἄστρα πλανητά* and Plato (*Leg.*), and in *ἀστέρες πλανῆται* next to *οἱ πλάνητες* in Aristotle (*Meteorologica*), mostly authors living in the fourth century BCE. The Greek model was adopted by Latin: *tellae errāticae* (Varro apud Gell.), *stellae errantes* (Cicero); and German *Irrstern* was also created according to this pattern (Erasmus Francisci 1676). A calque or a parallel semantic construction is presented by Old Icelandic *villistiarna* (around 1200), literally also “stray star”.

The ancient world knew only five planets besides the Earth. Sometimes the moon was also included.

Here is the comparison of planet names in Old Indian, Greek and the ancient Near East (see Scherer 1953; Eilers 1976; abbreviations: IE Indo-European, ^M Manichaeon, RV Ṛ gveda, ^Z Zoroastrian):

Planet	Mercury	Venus	Mars	Jupiter	Saturn
India	<p>jña- wise</p> <p>indu-putra-/ja- son of the moon [= of drops]</p> <p>śaśija- son of the moon [= of a hare]</p> <p>candrin- belonging to the moon</p> <p>pañcarcis five rays</p>	<p>śukrá- clear f. śveto graha- white planet</p> <p>Bhr̥gu-ja-/ putra-/sūnu- Bhr̥gu's son</p> <p>ṣodaśāṃsu- sixteen rays</p>	<p>aṅgāra- coal lohita- red lohitādhipa- red chieftain bhūmi-putra-/ja- son of the Earth lohitāṅga- with red limbs vakra- running back maṅgala- happiness, a good sign lohitārcis- with red rays</p>	<p>Bṛhas-pati- the lord of magic power (sura-)guru- teacher (of gods) vāk-pati- the lord of the speech sūri- wise man</p>	<p>asita- black kāla- black śani- slow śanaīścara- slowly moving manda- slow</p> <p>sūrya-putra- son of the Sun</p> <p>Yama- god of death</p> <p>saptārcis seven rays</p>
Iranian (Avesta) (Middle Persian) (New Persian)	<p>Tīra-</p> <p>Tīr Failak (: pēlak arrow?)</p> <p>tīr-i-bāzū-i-čarx arrow/arm of the sky</p>	<p>Anāhitā-</p> <p>Nāhīd</p>	<p>(Vərəθraγna-)</p> <p>Varhrām god of fire Bahrām</p>	<p>Ahura-mazda-</p> <p>Hurmuzd</p>	<p>Zurvān</p>

Armenia	Tiowr P'ailacou cf. p'ail glare	Arowseak < Middle Iranian arūs white Lowsaber torch-bearer	Hrat , cf. howr , gen. hroy fire	Lowsnt'ag crown of light (halo)	Erewak cf. erewal be visible
Greek	Στίλβων cf. στίλβω I shine Ἑρμῆς	Φωσφόρος torch-bearer Ἐωσφόρος the one who brings morning Ἑσπερος evening star Ἀφροδίτη	Πυρόεις fiery Ἄρης	Φαέθων shining, bright Ζεὺς	Φαίνων cf. φαίνω make visible Κρόνος
Old Testament		Malkat haššamayim queen of the sky			Kēwān Kiyydn (Amos 5:26)
Babylon	šāhiṭu jumper ᵀ ¹ Nabû god of wisdom	ᵀ¹Ištar	šalbatānu cf. šalāpu be evil Simut (Elam.), cf. Babylonian sīmūtu redness ᵀ ¹ Nergal god of underworld	dapīnu wild ᵀ ¹ Marduk (Bēl)	kayyamānu permanent ᵀ ¹ Ninurta
Sumer	^{MUL} GUD	ᵀ ¹ NIN.DAR. AN.NA lady of the sky shining ^{MUL} DIL.BAT < acc. diliptum sleeplessness		^{MUL} U ¹ .BABBAR white star ^{MUL} ud-al-tar wild storm	^{MUL} MI black storm ^{MUL} SAĜ.UŠ permanent

CONCLUSION

The present overview summarizes and analyzes the astronomical knowledge of Indo-Europeans from the point of view of distribution, etymology and semantic motivation of the studied terms. Only one astronomical term, ***H₂ster-* “star”, is known in both the Anatolian and non-Anatolian branches, explicitly confirming the protolanguage age. Paradoxically, this is also the only word that seems to be borrowed from Semitic **ʕattar-(at-)* “morning star”.

The common designation of “sun” or its derivatives is attested practically in all non-Anatolian branches, while in Anatolian, namely in best-known Hittite, a hypothetical trace might be identified in the theonym *Šuwaliyaz*. The promising external relatives in Nostratic perspective confirm the protolanguage status of this term.

The designation of “moon” also differs in non-Anatolian and Anatolian, but it probably expresses the common idea of “time-measurer”.

There are several common models in the nomenclature of some considerable stars or constellations: Sirius = “(belonging to) three stars”, Pleiades = “basket or sieve”, “numerous” or “seven stars”. The last pattern, based on the numeral “seven,” appears also in designations of Big Dipper, besides the similarity with “wagon”.

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P 8 <<http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:latinLit:phi0959.phi007.perseus-lat1:4>>

P 9 <<http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0012.tlg001.perseus-grc1:22.1-22.37>>

P 10 <<http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0012.tlg001.perseus-eng1:22.1-22.37>>

P 11 <<http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0012.tlg001.perseus-grc1:18.462-18.489>>

P 12 <<http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0012.tlg001.perseus-eng1:18.462-18.489>>

T 1 <<http://www.theoi.com/Text/OvidFasti5.html>>

T 2 <<http://www.theoi.com/Text/OvidFasti4.html>>

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Masked Before the Lord: On the Shamanistic Origin of Tefillin.

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abSTRACT. The injunctions Judaism has interpreted for millennia as requiring binding phylacteries or small boxes on arm and forehead for prayer are introduced ambiguously in the Bible. The term Totaphot used has long posed difficulties for interpreters. This essay argues, from the term, the context, and the religious historical background of early Israel, that originally these passages referred to partial masks, used in the context of shamanism.

KeyWords: Tefillin, Phylacteries, Totaphot, Masks, Shamanism, Judaism, Old Testament

Therefore, take these words of mine into your heart and soul. Bind them on your arm as a sign, and let them be as a pendant on your forehead. Teach them to your children, speaking of them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up, and write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates, so that, as long as the heavens are above the earth, you and your children may live on in the land which the Lord swore to your ancestors he would give them.

For centuries, observant Jews have read these words of Deuteronomy 11 (and Exodus) both literally and figuratively. During the weekday morning service, and for some at other times as well, small black leather boxes called Tefillin, containing scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses from the Torah, are placed above the forehead and on the upper arm, a strap wrapped around the arm, hand, and fingers. What is done physically is meant to remind one to do internally: the external symbol reminds the Jew to keep the words of the Torah in mind and at the forefront of actions.

Several quandaries accompany this practice, however. The use of physical Tefillin can be verified back to the first centuries BCE. But were

the injunctions originally intended figuratively, and the symbolic physical interpretation followed? Or were the injunctions intended literally, and a pious homiletic interpretation was later added? Moreover, it is not entirely clear *what* the injunctions mandate, as we will see from a closer examination of the passages. This essay is not an exploration of the history of Tefillin, nor will it discuss the development of the practice; rather, it seeks the earliest purpose of the earliest of these biblical instructions. I intend to show that this origin bears almost no resemblance to practice in the past millennium and is instead situated in an early Israelite world of shamanism.

Exodus 13 is the first text related to what become Tefillin. Clearly, it is first canonically. But it can be argued that Exodus 13 is one of the many parts of the book of Exodus that is earlier than, and reinterpreted in, the book of Deuteronomy. Exodus 13:1 explains that the first-born of all animals and people must be dedicated to God. Then verses 5-7 turn the context to the observance of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Verse 9 says, “It will be a sign on your hand and a memorial between your eyes so that the Torah is in your mouth”. Grammatically, there is no clear antecedent for “it”. The words that follow provide two results of wearing this sign: “that God’s Torah shall be in your mouth; that with a strong hand God brought you out of Egypt”. Jewish tradition has read the second as the true point of verse 9: a sign to remember the Exodus (Lookstein 1961, 73). Verse 10 clearly shows that the context is somehow still the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This is therefore not a practice mandated for daily use, but a part of the observance of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Verses 11-15, however, return to the discussion of dedicating the firstborn, before another injunction about the “sign” in verse 16: a “sign on the hand” (never “arm”) and “*Toṭaphot* between the eyes”. We shall return to this key term shortly. Then there is another result clause, repeating the Exodus result clause of verses 9-10.

Scholars debate what the “it” in verse 9 refers to, under the assumption that this is key to understanding the initial procedure of these instructions (Bosman 2013, 6-7). How, for example, can the offering of the firstborn be a sign on the head? asks Cohn (2008, 41). Or, perhaps, “it” is the eating of unleavened bread, suggests Baentsch (1903, 111). However, weight cannot be placed on this question since the Hebrew here, *hayah*, may not be “It is” or “It will be” at all, but a simple existential verb—an “it” with no antecedent—like the French “*Il y a*” or German “*Es gibt*” (Barr 1961, 59; Van Hecke 2013, 97). We can translate, “There will be

a sign”.

Deuteronomy 6 treats the same institution. Following the *Shema*, the holiest “creed” of Judaism (“Hear, O Israel...”), and instructions in Deut 6:7 to teach the *Shema*, verse 8 instructs Israelites to bind it as a sign on the hand and as between the eyes. Here the spelling of this term differs only in the defective spelling of the first vowel. The text goes on to require its posting on the doorposts. The “it” here must be the *Shema* itself or the entirety of the Law it condenses.

Deuteronomy 11, quoted above, instructs Israelites to place the “words”, explicitly, on their hearts, their *nefesh* or self, and “bind them as a sign on the hand and as *Totaphot* between the eyes”. It then continues to call for teaching the words, writing them on the doorposts, etc.

The texts in Deuteronomy are unquestionably about something people are required to do with words. The words of the *Shema* or words of Torah are to be bound on hand, between the eyes, and on doorposts. And we could debate via various means whether this was intended literally or not. Wünsche, Bühl, Moran, Von Rad, Freedman, Tigay, and Houtman thought the physical interpretation was later, some time in the Second Temple Period. Tigay, for example, notes the ubiquity of metaphoric expressions of “seals on arms” and “justice like a girdle” (Prov 1:9; Isa 11:5; 62:3; Jer 2:32; 13:11; 22:24; Job 29:14; also found in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* 11.164-5; and even in the Vassal Treaties of the Assyrian king Esarhaddon [Tigay 1982, 327]). Weinfeld, Keel, and Cohn argue the instructions were always meant to be followed both literally and spiritually (Cohn 2008, 44-5). Lundbom (2013, 314) is not sure. Certainly the both/ and understanding was present in the Second Temple period, since we have physical Tefillin from the Qumran community of the Dead Sea Scrolls and in Matt 23:5, while the post-biblical *Letter of Aristeas* 159 and Josephus, *Antiquities* 4.213, take it metaphorically. Resolving this question is not the purpose of this essay, because, I argue, Deuteronomy is already a re-interpretation of Exodus.

Admittedly, the verses in Exodus 13 are typically considered to come from the so-called Deuteronomistic Source (D), dated at the earliest to the late 7th century, with Deuteronomistic idioms like the command to “remember” (13:3; cf. Deut 5:15; 7:18; 9:7; 15:15; 16:3, 12; etc.), “house of slavery” (13:3, 14; cf. Deut 5:6; 7:8; 13:6, 11; etc.), and the exact duplicate of 13:5 and Deut 7:13 (“swore to your fathers to give you”) (Bosman 2013, 4). Martin Noth and Brevard Childs, however, thought they were written D but coming from older traditions (Dozeman 2009, 293). Norbert Lohfink thought they were D in language but proto-Deuteronomistic in source (Dozeman 2009, 293). Even if Exodus 13 is D,

however, Deuteronomy 6 and 11 are regularly excluded from the so-called Ur-Deuteronomy and assigned to later revisions of Deuteronomy (Veijola 1996, 243-4, 257; Davies 1997, 415; Campbell and O'Brien 2000, 58). So, regardless of the absolute dating of Exodus 13 and Deuteronomy 6 and 11, the latter must be a revision of the former. I argue that Deuteronomy is attempting to connect to Torah something that has nothing to do with Torah. Neither Torah nor *Shema* are mentioned in Exodus 13. This is why some scholars sought to see Exodus 13 as a sign of the firstborn offering or unleavened bread, neither of which interpretations have any support. The sign is explicitly related to the recollection of the Exodus, but we must go at Exodus 13 another way to figure out just what sign is intended.

There is also a possibility that Exodus 12-13 has even later Priestly Writer ("P", 5th century) reworking (Bosman 2013, 2), although that in itself does not negate the possibility of the specific instruction being earlier than that in Deuteronomy. The short speech in Exod 13:1-2 about the firstborn is artificially joined to the longer speech about the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and (again) the firstborn in verses 3-16. The short speech, in particular, is central to P's historical narrative; thus P's gloss, that provides a hermeneutical lens for verses 3-16, with its non-Priestly language (Bosman 2013, 2).

Many scholars have tried to come to the problem via the rare term *Ṭoṭaphot*. The early Greek translation of the Bible, known as the Septuagint, replaces the term entirely with *asaleuton*, "something immovable", as does the Latin, *appensum quid*. The Samaritan Pentateuch has *tāṭāpōt* for the Hebrew *tōṭāpōt*, preserving the defective orthography of the final vowel, in spite of SamP's preference for full orthography (Tigay 1982, 322). The Targum, an early Jewish Aramaic translation, replaces all the following with *Ṭoṭaphot*: the Hebrew *eš 'ādāh* "bracelet" of 2 Sam 1:10; the *pē'ēr* "turban" of Ezek 24:17, 23; and the *āteret* "crown" of Esth 8:15; even though it replaces *Ṭoṭaphot* in the Torah with "Tefillin".

Rabbi Akiva (in *m. Sanhedrin* 4b; d. 135 ad) and Rashi (d. 1105) claimed that the origin of the term was a supposed Coptic word *ṭaṭ*, "two" (later scholars added, in cognate with Latin *totas*), plus a Phrygian word *pat*, also meaning "two" (cognate, said others, to Gk *bathos* and Gothic *bothe*) (cf. Shemot 13:16). How these two distant languages combined is explained by Chaim of Friedberg in the 16th century: these words originated before the Tower of Babel, and after the dispersion, they remained and were used by those two nations (*Beer Mayim Hayim*). The 10th-century Menahem ben Saruq considers *Ṭoṭaphot* to "speak", citing

the imperatives *haṭēp* “speak” in Ezek 21:2 and Mic 2:6, not realizing that those derive from the meaning “to drip” (see below) (*Mahberet Menahem*, 99). Maimonides explicitly rejected this, distinguishing the prophetic verb as coming from the trilateral root *NṬP* but *Ṭoṭaphot* from *ṬṬP*.

It is not clear what the root of *Ṭoṭaphot* is. The Samaritan Targum replaces the word with *ṭpyn*, “drops”, and this is a common definition (Tigay 1982, 331). Hoffman takes the root of *Ṭoṭaphot* to be *ṬWP* (Hoffman 1969, 83), with a meaning related to droplets (see below); thus, the Arabic cognate *ṭwf*, “overflow”, which, however, is also cognate to the Hebrew *ṭōp*, loaned from Aramaic with the meaning “overflowing” in Deut 11:4 and 2 Kgs 6:6 (*KB*³, 949-50). The derived root II-*ṬP(T)* appears in Gen 47:12, and in the personal name Tabitha (1 Kgs 4:11).

Some lexicons (*KB*³) suggest the same meaning, but from the root *NṬP* (so, too, Jacob Myers, Wellhausen; Tigay 1982, 322-3; *KB*, 357). The meaning derived for our *ṭoṭaphot*, for most of these scholars, is ‘jewelry in the form of drops’; ‘ink drops’ (i.e. tattooing) is suggested by A. Habermann and H. Y. Abramowitz (tattoos are called *’ot* in Isa 44:5; 49:16) (Tigay 1982, 331).

However, *KB*³ also suggests the meaning “headdress”, as Clines (2009) has “amulet, headband” (also Gesenius, Luzzatto, Dillmann). This is following the derivation by Driver (and by the lexicon *BDB*) from a verb *ṬṬP* “to encircle”. Bauer and Leander suggested this meaning, in comparison with Arabic *ṭaṭṭaf*.

Still others have suggested the root *NṬP*, but from the verb “to strike”, meaning a reminder “mark” or “incision” (Stade, Siegfried, Nowak, Gottlieb Klein) (Reicke and Rost 1979). For Klein and Stade, this marking was tattooing; body marring, in place of sacrifice of firstborn, for Klein; totemic tattooing for Stade. The Syriac Peshitta translation replaces *Ṭoṭaphot* in Deuteronomy with *rwšmh*, “mark” (Tigay 1982, 331).

The last syllable is written defectively; spelled without a *mater lectionis* consonant to indicate the vowel, meaning that a singular was probably intended, confirmed by the parallel singular *zikaron* in Exod 13:19 (Tigay 1982, 321). The plural vocalization and plural verb in Deuteronomy are later interpretations (Speiser 1957, 210). Speiser argues that disregarding the final vowel leaves **ṭōṭap*, which analogously to *kōkab* “star” < **kabkab*, ought to lead back to **ṭaṭṭaf*, with the initial *holem* acquired through dissimilation of the first labial (Speiser 1957, 211). Rather than discussing the Arabic *ṭaṭṭaf*, Speiser looks for an Akkadian **taptappu*, and (since no such Akkadian word exists), through convoluted reasoning, he gives it the meaning of a two-headed apotropaic figurine (Speiser

1957, 213). This seems no sounder than attempted derivations from Egyptian *ddf-t*, “uraeus”. which he rightly dismisses (Speiser 1957, 210).

Tigay agrees with Speiser on the origin in **taftaf*, adding the postbiblical example of another softening of a labial second consonant to *w* in *lwlb* < *lbb*, but sees this as a quadrilateral root developed from an original middle-weak root, akin to *šāšar* (Tigay 1982, 325). This leaves us with *TWP* as the original root. Tigay believes *Ṭoṭaphot* were headbands, like those seen in Ancient Near Eastern artistic depictions of Syro-Palestinian people, although, as pointed out earlier, their meaning here (he believes) would be entirely metaphorically (Tigay 1982, 328-9).

However, Akkadian *naṭāpum* is “to uproot” or “tear out”, *not* “mark” (Black, George, and Postgate 2012, 247). Akk. *ṭāpum* is “to twist, wind” (Black, George, and Postgate 2012, 413); *ṭapāpu* is “to be satiated” (Black, George, and Postgate 2012, 413). In fact, the range of possible etymologies for *Ṭoṭaphot* is simply too large and varied for us to base an understanding of the original intent of Exodus 13 on this term.

Let us return to the verses themselves, and ask what elements are most obvious, what catches the eye when the curtain rises on this practice. If we translate without presuming to know what the verses mean, we are told there is a “sign”. But the nuances of *’ot* are far from the English “sign”. An *’ot* is more often a wonder, a marvel; ‘nearby’, as in Exod 10:1-2 (also Exod 4:8-9; Deut 4:34; 7:19; 13:2-3; Num 14:11, 22; Jer 10:2; Isa 20:3; Harari 2019, 143; Cohn 2008, 38). Just as easily, we could translate “sign on your hand”, *’ot* followed by *’al*+“your hand”. We could translate “marvel”+ *’al-yad* “you”. The expression *’al-yad* is a fixed idiom, meaning “alongside” (Josh 15:46; 2 Sam 15:2). Thus, not “a sign on your hand” but “a marvel alongside you”. Admittedly, this use of *’al-yad* is uncommon. But *yad* regularly means “power” or “authority”, rather than “hand”. Since the preposition *’al* can variously mean “at” (Gen 24:43), “at” (*passim*), “over” (Ps 95:3), or “for” (2 Chron 30:18; Van Der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze 2017, 371-3), the line could mean “a marvel for your control” or “a marvel beyond your power”.

So we might arrive at, “There will be a marvel alongside you and a memorial between your eyes” — or “There is a marvel beyond your control / a memorial between your eyes” — followed by “A marvel beyond your control / *Ṭoṭaphot* between your eyes”; understanding *Ṭoṭaphot* as anything from a band, to droplet jewels, to ink markings. Somehow it commemorates the Exodus. Admittedly, much is still quite opaque, but a key point is that *none* of these translations involves hands. We must consider the possibility that the instructions are *only* about something on the face, specifically between the eyes: not the forehead,

mēšaḥ (Exod 28:38), and not “on” the hand or arm. “Marvel” is perhaps not certain, since in the few places where *’ot* appears with *zikaron*, it is a “symbol” or “sign”; Exod 12:13-14; Josh 4:6-7; cf. Isa 55:13) (Bosman 2013, 5-6).

SUMMATION

So we are left with something on bridge of the nose, either a physical symbol or a marvel, designated by the enigmatic term *Ṭoṭaphot*. What it may represent symbolically could be related to the dedication of the firstborn to God, or the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or both of these, or neither. Recall the Akk. *ṭāpum*, “to twist, wind”, from the root *ṭ-weak-p* (Black, George, and Postgate 2012, xxiv). Tigay (1982, 325) provides solid evidence that this is indeed the root behind *Ṭoṭaphot*. Good reason exists, then, for considering this as something bound or tied between the eyes.

Apotropaic qualities are attached to Tefillin from an early point. The Greek term “phylacteries” — provided for Tefillin already in Matt 23:5 and Justin Martyr’s *Dialogue with Trypho* 46.5 — conveys the meaning of an amulet or other protective object (Diodorus Siculus, *Library*, 17.50; Polybius, *Histories*, 8.15; Josephus, *Ant.*, 15.249) (Kosior 2015, 144). The Mishnah records several deviant practices done with Tefillin, some of which it explicitly states were forbidden (*m. Megillah* 4.9). The Talmud speaks of the ability of Tefillin to repel demons (*b. Berakhot* 23a-b) and extend life (*b. Menahot* 36b, 44a-b; *b. Shabbat* 13a-b). Nearly a dozen times, Tefillin are connected to Deut 28:10’s statement that the nations will fear Israel when they see the Divine Name upon them (e.g., *b. Berakhot* 56a; also *Tg. Ps-Jonathan* and *Midrash Rabbah*) (Kosior 2015, 143, 146-7). Although it is impossible to discern an apotropaic function earlier than the point at which we know the Tefillin were textual — and interpreted metaphorically — the abundance of amulets and similar talismans in the Ancient Near East makes such a function likely.

The Hebrew Bible uses various terms for amulets. Clines (2009, 194) suggests *leḥāšim* (Isa 3:20) may be made of conch shells, with a name suggestive of “whispering” (Sir 12:18; Isa 26:16; 2 Sam 12:19; Ps 41:8), but also snake charming, presumably by whispering to the snake (Ps 58:6; Jer 8:17). The Post-Biblical term *qāmia* (*m. Sanhedrin* 22a.15; *Tosefta Demai* 2.18, where it is worn on the arm) is from a root meaning “to bind”, like *Ṭoṭaphot* (Kosior 2015, 144 n.3; Blau 1898, 87, 92).

When Cohn (2008, 49-50) maintains that the original injunction was

meant literally, he envisions textual amulets, akin to a silver plaque found at the archaeological site of Ketef Himmon in Jerusalem. If we are working strictly with Exodus, however, there is no reason to believe *text* to be part of the “sign” or *Toṭaphot* at all. Clearly, Tefillin were textual amulets; that is not in question. And later Judaism knew other textual amulets, e.g. Num 6:24-26, worn as an amulet against the evil eye (*Pesikta Rabbah* 5; Harari 2019, 160; Blau 1898, 91). Textual amulets are common throughout the world, although Old World examples are rare before the Middle Ages (Lyavdansky 2011, 15-6; Tsonkova 2011, 50; Herjulfsdotter 2011, 139). “Magic”-like practices in Tob 8:1-3 and Josephus (*Ant.* 8.45-49) describe potions, talismans, and incantations, but none of them are textual (Harari 2019, 153). We cannot assume that this thing that was bound between the eyes had writing on it.

PROPOSAL

I suggest here that the non-textual apotropaic symbol tied across the bridge of the nose is a mask. We have archaeological remains of masks from the First Temple period and earlier Israel. Elsewhere, I have argued for the rôle of these masks in shamanistic praxis (Miller II 2011, 309-42; Miller II 2014, 21-58; Miller II 2016). The postulate of Israelite shamanism has been picked up more recently by Erhard Gerstenberger (2017).

What is striking about the corpus of masks from Iron I and Iron II Israel is the predominance of fragments preserving only the eyes and nose: an Iron I or II mask from the cultic “high place” of the Northern Israelite site of Tel Dan (Berlejung 2018a, fig. 38), two 10th-century masks from Stratum 14 “City of David” Jerusalem (Berlejung 2018a, figs. 41-42), a 9th-century example from Tel Sera’ (possibly Ziklag) Stratum 7 (Berlejung 2018a, fig. 44), an 8th-century mask from Hazor Stratum 5 (Berlejung 2018a, fig. 53), and a 7th-century mask from the Shu’fat neighborhood of modern Jerusalem (Berlejung 2018a, fig. 57). While there are some Israelite fragments that preserve mouths and chins—including one from Early Iron Age Beth Shemesh, and an 8th-century mask from Beersheba (Berlejung 2018a, figs. 31, 58)—these are rare; much rarer, in fact, than whole-face masks, preserved complete: witness the half-dozen from Phoenician Achziv (Berlejung 2018a, figs. 47-51). In other words, it is likely that many of the extant mask fragments we have from Israel and Judah never covered entire faces, but merely the eyes and nose, perhaps the ears. These so-called domino masks are literally

“across the bridge of the nose” and bound to the head.

Yet, if there were masks in ancient Israel, where are they mentioned in the Hebrew Bible (Orsingher 2019)? Berlejung considers the three terms proposed by scholars for masks: *teraphim*, *masekot*, and *masveh* (Berlejung 2018b, 141). Gressmann and Von Rad, and more recently Silvia Schroer and Wolfgang Zwickel, suggested that *teraphim* could have been masks (Berlejung 2018b, 142; Miller II 2011, 326-7). *Teraphim*, however, are never worn or attached to the body (Berlejung 2018b, 142). Raz Kletter and others have suggested the *masekah* of Exodus 32 and Judges 17-18 could have been masks (Berlejung 2018b, 144). Berlejung discusses this possibility, but concludes that, at most, the term might refer to a metal coating of a statue’s face; more likely to a solid cast metal image, certainly not a worn mask (Berlejung 2018b, 145). Brian Schmidt (1995, 94) suggested that the *masveh* of Moses, usually translated “veil”, was a mask worn to symbolise God’s presence. This is interesting, yet the plain reading of the text is that the veil *blocks* the splendour of God, interrupting the presence rather than symbolising it (Berlejung 2018b, 150-1).

This passage may nevertheless be relevant. In Exodus 34, Moses' own glowing nature, or “horns” or “crown” if the Vulgate is not a mistranslation, is what necessitates the veil, which he removes when he speaks directly with God. The episode thus connects covering the face, the presence of God, the Exodus, and the giving of the Torah. I am grateful to Eric Trinko for this insight, and the suggestion that *Ṭoṭaphot* becoming Tefillin has to do with protecting oneself from the radiance of God's presence/Torah, while also recognising that humans are empowered in a new way by Torah-centred living.

The ubiquitous Iron II Israelite masks are designated by the Hebrew term *Ṭoṭaphot*. They were bound across the bridge of the nose, covering the eyes and nose, as well as the temples. They may have somehow represented the dedication of the firstborn, or the Exodus, or the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or all or none of those. Masks enable the presence of the person they image, and so their function is always cultic, in a sense, and also psychical (Filitz 2018, 5). The mask-figure could be a deity, a spirit, or an ancestor (Filitz 2018, 11; Wyatt 1994, 103, 116-8). If we suspend our understanding of Yahwistic orthodoxy, it is easy to see how such ritual representation could recall the ancestors' Exodus, the Feast of Unleavened Bread (whether or not it had any initial connection with the Exodus; Prosic 2004, 32, 39; Audirsch 2014, 110), or the dedication of firstborn to Yahweh, and/or the child's transition from his predestined birth-state of sacredness, his firstborn mandate to serve as a

priest (Exod 13:13-15) (Fortis 2013, 100-1). The original “event of the mask” is beyond our power to reconstruct definitively (Filitz 2018, 13, 15), though the find-spot of one mask, at the cultic location of Tel Dan, is thought-provoking. Among the Xhosa of South Africa, for instance, shamans used masks in thanksgiving for the rice harvest, they also ministered infants with incense, eight days after birth, to foster closer relations with the ancestors (Mabona 2004, 119, 192, 220, 379).

ADDENDUM

Scholars are increasingly seeing continuity between 2nd and 1st-millennium BC Mesopotamian “magic”, medical discussion in the Talmud, and Mandaean charms and rituals. Terminology from Akkadian (and Sumerian!) cuneiform magic and anti-witchcraft texts reappears in Talmudic medicine, — in the apocryphal Jewish magic book *The Sword of Moses*, on Aramaic Jewish incantation bowls, and Mandaean grimoires — often with close but slightly “shifted” meanings (Geller 2020). While there do not appear to be any Akkadian *īpūm* magic or anti-witchcraft terms, cognate Mandaic terms repeatedly refer to the brilliance of the divine presence (of the supreme formless entity, saviour spirits, or sacraments). The canonical Mandaean prayer book *Qolusta* says, “We were enveloped [*tpainia*] in the radiance of the Mighty” (367.2). *Ṭapia* and related verbal forms for “radiating” or “waxing” (*Left Ginza* 90.23; *Right Ginza* 231.7; *Scroll of Exalted Kingship* 493; *Thousand and Twelve Questions*, 2.164; cf. Drower 1960, 246) and nominal *atpia* for “brilliance” (*Right Ginza* 270.14) abound in Mandaic sacred texts. The reference is always metaphorical, never to literal masks or other coverings. Yet continuity from the earliest Israelite concept of *Ṭotaphot* as masks representing numinous divinity seems possible.

A century ago, Freud’s student Theodor Reik already suggested that the *Ṭotaphot* were masks, though the basis of his argument consisted largely of bad philology and a mistaken theory that medieval Tefillin looked like animals (Reik 1964, 103-35), perhaps aided by the Kabbalistic reading of God’s provision of garments of skin for Adam and Eve in Gen 3:21 as the first Tefillin (e.g., the 13th-century Menahem Recanati; Recanati 2008, 483). Reik (1964, 145) tied the masks not to shamanism but to totemism; in this view, Israelites would wear their totems physically. Reik was on the right track, however, to suspect that something lay behind Tefillin other than the form we know, something tied to aspects of Yahwism later deemed heterodox. He was also correct that the *Ṭotaphot* were used

in soul accompaniment, in liminal transitions; redemption of the firstborn's holy state, dependent anamnesis of the ancestors, or relationship with God. *Totaphot* were masks for Israel's contact with Yahweh.

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A Myth with a History: the “Baal Cycle” from Ugarit

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abSTRACT. *Developing an earlier article (Wyatt 2017a), this discussion provides additional evidence for the theory that the so-called Baal Cycle of myths from Ugarit, which can be dated to ca 1210 bce, is a poetic account of a tsunami, which caused the destruction of the temple of Baal in Ugarit in ca 1250 bce, and of the subsequent reconstruction and reinauguration of the temple cult. The tsunami and its aftermath is the theme of the combat between Baal, the storm god and patron of the city, and Yam, the sea god. During the course of composition the reigning king, Niqmaddu IV, died in 1210. This was the occasion for the composition of the final episodes of the Cycle, Baal’s encounter with, and eventual triumph over, Mot, the god of death.*

KEYWORDS: *Ammurapi, Baal Cycle, Chaokampf, Earthquake, Ilimilku, Myth, Niqmaddu IV, Tsunami, Ugarit*

Joshua's "Long Day", the Solar Eclipse of 1207 BCE and Ancient Near Eastern chronology: An Alternative View

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abSTRACT. *The biblical miracle of Joshua's "Long Day" could not have been caused by an eclipse in 1207 BC, which proves to be irrelevant to Egyptian chronology, though this has been claimed. The story needs to be considered both in its full biblical and correct archaeological contexts and another astronomical cause for the "miracle" considered.*

KeyWords. *Hebrew Bible, Levantine archaeology, Israelite Conquest, earthquake, fall of stones, prolonged daylight, miracle, catastrophism*

The book of Joshua relates the story of what has sometimes been described as the most spectacular of Hebrew Bible miracles – nothing less than the Sun stopping in its course at Joshua's behest. It forms part of the narrative of the Israelite Conquest of Canaan, falling after the crossing of the River Jordan, the capture of the cities of Ai and Jericho, and the submission of the people of Gibeon. When the Gibeonites were attacked by a coalition of Amorite kings they appealed to Joshua who drove the aggressors back from Gibeon and through the pass of Beth-horon. The account in Joshua (10:12-14) reads as follows:

¹² On the day when the LORD gave the Amorites over to the Israelites, Joshua spoke to the LORD; and he said in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand still (Hebrew *dôm*) at Gibeon, and Moon, in the valley of Aijalon."¹³ And the sun stood still (*wayyidôm*), and the moon stopped (*'amad*), until the nation took vengeance on their enemies.

Is this not written in the Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in midheaven, and did not hurry to set for about a whole day.

¹⁴ There has been no day like it before or since, when the LORD heeded a human voice; for the LORD fought for Israel. (New

Revised Standard Version)

In 2017 Cambridge physicist Colin Humphreys and astrophysicist Graeme Waddington published an article in *Astronomy & Geophysics* with the somewhat sensational title “*Solar Eclipse of 1207 BC Helps to Date Pharaohs*”. It begins with the claim to have identified in the story of Joshua’s “Long Day” the earliest calculatable eclipse in history – an annular eclipse seen over southern Palestine on 30 October 1207 BC. They then used this, through a chain of connections, to attempt a refinement of Egyptian chronology. *The article provoked a number of responses and the authors replied to a selection (Humphreys and Waddington 2018a). It also transpired that exactly the same eclipse date had recently been argued by an interdisciplinary Israeli team, first in Hebrew, and then in a more detailed English version (Vainstub, Yizhaq and Avner 2020).* Given the expertise of both teams, there can be little doubt that an annular eclipse was visible from Gibeon on 30 October 1207 BC. But we have to question the relevance of any such eclipse calculations to the story of Joshua’s “Long Day”. The arguments presented by both teams involve a series of flawed arguments.

First, and most glaring, is the counter-intuitive idea that an eclipse could give the illusion of a prolonged day. Clearly the purpose of the biblical account in using the words “The Sun did not hurry to set for about whole day” (Joshua 10:13) was to stress the lengthening of daylight which allowed the Israelites to achieve victory over the Amorites – the complete opposite of the brief cessation of light that would happen during an eclipse. The purpose of Joshua’s invocation is clear: “Sun, stand still at Gibeon, and Moon, in the valley of Aijalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the nation took vengeance on their enemies.” Vainstub, Yizhaq and Avner (2019, 4) refer to a parallel *topos* in Homer’s *Iliad* (2. 412-8). Over a sacrifice, Agamemnon leader of the Greeks at the siege of Troy, prays that Zeus might “grant that the sun set not, neither darkness come upon us...”, until Agamemnon had defeated his Trojan enemies and destroyed their city. His prayer went unanswered but the parallel to that of Joshua is clear – both war leaders needed more daylight in order to complete the slaughter of their foes.

Humphreys and Waddington (2017, 41) offer this explanation as to how the Israelites could have paradoxically experienced the illusion of a prolonged day from a darkened sun:

What the Israelites would have witnessed was a double dusk. To

the awe-inspired Israelites of 1207 BC, the amazing spectacle in the sky would have appeared to be long and drawn out; the reaction to such events tends to be exaggerated, particularly with regard to perceived duration. For example, the solar eclipse of 18 July AD 1860 was observed in Sudan by Mahmoud Bey who reported: "To everyone the two minutes of the eclipse were like two hours ... Several people whom I questioned after the eclipse regarding the duration of totality replied that it had lasted for two hours".

But the two hours mentioned in this modern parallel was for the duration of darkness and not the illusion of extended daylight. As to the role of the Moon in the phenomenon, Humphreys and Waddington argue that: "As the Moon is in conjunction at the time of a solar eclipse it is effectively absent from the sky for a couple of days (it has 'stopped shining')". But the biblical text does not say that the Moon disappeared from the sky – to the contrary, that it had apparently stopped in its motion but was still providing light.

A second major flaw in the eclipse interpretation is the fact that both teams take the "Long Day" miracle completely out of context from the wider narrative of Joshua's early conquests. Whether parts of the narrative were composed by different hands or not, what has come down to us is a continuous story of interlinked episodes which should be considered together when attempting to offer scientific explanations in terms of natural phenomena. We return to this point below.

While many scholars would date the book of Joshua no earlier than the 7th century BC, Richard Hess (1996, 26-31; 1997) has identified several features of the book which are best explained by tracing their origins back to the second millennium BC. Whatever the date of its final composition, it is entirely plausible to suggest that the Conquest narrative of Joshua 2-11 reflects real historical memories and – as will be shown below – there is good evidence from geology and archaeology that it does.

A focal point of discussion here has always been the walls of Jericho. Early excavators uncovered there massive fortification walls (Jericho City IV in J. Garstang's terminology) which they dated to an early phase of the Late Bronze Age. The walls provided a good match with the biblical tradition of the Canaanite cities being "fortified and very large" (Num. 13:28) or "great and fortified up to heaven" (Deut. 1:28; 9:1), and there was evidence for the shaking of the walls and a massive fire (Joshua

6:24 refers to the thorough burning of the city after its capture). In the words of excavator John Garstang (1937, 1222):

... in all material details and in date the fall of Jericho took place as described in the Biblical narrative. Our demonstration is limited, however, to material observations: the walls fell, shaken apparently by earthquake, and the city was destroyed by fire, about 1400 B.C. These are the basic facts resulting from our investigations. The link with Joshua and the Israelites is only circumstantial but it seems to be solid and without a flaw.

The archaeological date of *c.* 1400 BC seemed to match that for the Conquest as calculated from chronological data in the Hebrew Bible. But Garstang's conclusions caused considerable controversy, so he asked Kathleen Kenyon to check his analysis of the pottery and undertake further excavation. Her work at Jericho in the 1950s led to a sea change in opinion. Kenyon found that Garstang had misattributed walls from the Early Bronze Age to City IV, but her finds confirmed that the true walls of City IV had collapsed and that the city had been thoroughly razed. However, she also demonstrated that Jericho City IV had fallen at the end of the Middle Bronze Age, *c.* 1550 BC, far too early for the Conquest date of *c.* 1400 BC calculated from the Bible. During the LBA Jericho had limited occupation and remained unfortified – there were no walls to come tumbling down at the trumpet blast of Joshua's priests. Writers of the "minimalist" school of thought in Levantine archaeology such as Finkelstein and Silberman (2001: 81-83; see review James 2002) have dined out on this fact ever since. No walls, no Conquest, is the implication. A typically cynical remark was made by archaeologist Eric Cline (2007, 120): "It would seem that the only mystery still remaining about the story of Joshua and the Battle of Jericho is how it came to be written in the first place."

The case for associating the Israelite Conquest with the end of the LBA *c.* 1200 BC was always weak and can now safely be said to have fallen through, prompting even more scepticism. But does that mean that a Conquest did not happen at all? All depends on the chronology, a topic which is at the core of the paper by Humphreys and Waddington. While they accept a late 13th-century BC date for the Conquest, they refer to no archaeology to support that position. They seem to be unaware that there is now persuasive evidence from an Egyptian inscription for the existence of Israel in Canaan before the end of the LBA (van der Veen,

Theis and Görg 2010; van der Veen 2012; Zwickel and van der Veen 2017), and also evidence in topographical lists from the 18th and early 19th dynasties for the existence of three Israelite tribes in Canaan (van der Veen 2022). Furthermore, some years ago a much better match was found between the biblical Conquest narrative and the fall of Jericho and other Canaanite cities at the end of the Middle Bronze Age (Bimson 1981; 2018; Bimson and Livingston 1987). The similarity between the description of the well-fortified Canaanite cities at the time of Joshua and those of the Middle Bronze Age (over and against those of the Late Bronze Age) was highlighted by Aaron Burke (2008, xiii) who remarked:

It is curious, therefore, that the biblical tradition regarding fortified Canaanite cities finds what superficially appears to be its historical antecedent in the walled cities of Middle Bronze Age Canaan. It was for this reason that Yigael Yadin surmised that the wall of Jericho, which was reportedly brought down by Yahweh before the Israelites, might be identified with the Middle Bronze Age fortifications discovered at the site.

This needs to be considered with another “miracle” which occurs in the biblical account shortly before the attack on Jericho. En route to Ai and Jericho, the Israelites are said to have crossed the River Jordan on dry land near the town known as Adam (Joshua 3:15-17), modern Damiya, 17 miles upstream from Jericho. There is no shortage of modern parallels to this incident, as noted by the predecessors of Kenyon at Jericho (Garstang and Garstang 1948, 139-40) – the most notable resulting from the earthquake of 11 July 1927, when a landslide at Damiya stopped the flow of water for 21.5 hours, during which several people crossed the bed of the river on foot. This and the subsequent collapse of Jericho's walls therefore fit a pattern of earthquake activity affecting the length of the rift valley (Bimson 1981, 123-4). The valley of the Jordan forms the eastern edge of the Sinai subplate, and tectonic activity involving that subplate would logically affect both the watercourse itself and nearby Jericho, causing the earthquake there when the Israelites arrived. The idea is commonplace – see the remarks of geophysicist Amos Nur, who also notes that Middle Bronze Age Jericho fits well with the biblical story (Nur & Burgess 2008, 62-4, 195-7).

Given the parallels between the MBA archaeology and the account in Joshua, we either have to assume that the latter embedded traditions from a much earlier period or we must redate the end of the MBA to the time

of the Conquest, irrespective of the absolute date one assigns to the latter, which is a highly complex subject involving the niceties of biblical chronology, Egyptian evidence, archaeology and much more. But one thing is clear – it should no longer be placed at the end of the LBA.

In short, Humphreys and Waddington make assumptions based on the now redundant model of an Israelite Conquest at the end of the LBA, and specifically on what was once thought to be the earliest known reference to Israel in the famous stela of Pharaoh Merenptah, the successor of Ramesses II. The authors seem to be unaware that there is now good evidence against both these assumptions. They go on to argue that this “enables us to revise by a few years the mainstream Egyptian chronology”, on the (correct) assumption that the Hebrew conquest of Canaan must have taken place before the year 5 of Pharaoh Merenptah. They calculate that his reign would have lasted between 1210 BC and 1200 BC (with ± 1 year in each case): “The dates of the previous and subsequent pharaohs can be similarly adjusted; for example, the reign-dates of Ramesses II (Ramesses the Great) would be 1276–1210 BC ± 1 year.” All this speculation, which was widely reported in the press, depends on whether an eclipse was involved in the events of Joshua 10 in the first place, besides showing a poor grasp of the complexities of Egyptian chronology. The chain of assumptions involved is actually very hard to follow and tenuous to say the least.

But the phenomena reported in Joshua also need to be taken together rather than in a piecemeal fashion, as they form a connected narrative. Is there a possible connection between the apparent seismic activity in the Joshua narrative and the “Long Day”? Although Humphreys (2003, 15–27) had earlier employed the geophysical evidence to support the idea that the crossing of the Jordan on dry land was a real event, neither the British nor the Israeli scientists in their eclipse papers refer to this or the related case of the shaking of Jericho’s walls. And quite extraordinarily, given the importance of context in any textual analysis, they omit any reference to the immediately preceding verses in Joshua which describe another extraordinary event at the battle of Beth-horon just before the prolongation of the day. This was the rain of “huge stones” that fell down on the Amorites at the pass of Beth-horon. Here is the full context describing the battle and the first of its two attendant “miracles”:

¹⁰And the Lord threw them into a panic before Israel, who inflicted a great slaughter on them at Gibeon, chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah

and Makkedah.¹¹ As they fled before Israel, while they were going down the slope of Beth-horon, the Lord threw down huge stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died; there were more who died because of the hailstones than the Israelites killed with the sword. (NRSV)

Put very simply, eclipses do not rain stones, and the eclipse theorists are only treating *half of the evidence from the tradition about the Beth-horon battle*. And although rare instances of ordinary icy hailstones being fatal are known, it is curious that astronomers should overlook the possibility that the stones from heaven capable of ravaging an enemy army were something else entirely, i.e. meteorites from a fragmenting comet.

Is there anything to connect all the phenomena in the story – earth tremors (the fall of Jericho's walls and a landslide blocking the Jordan), a prolonged day and a fall of apparent meteorites? A plausible explanation was in fact discovered many years ago by Levantine archaeologist W. J. Phythian-Adams (1946). He personally witnessed a phenomenon now known as noctiluminescence, in a prolonged day over England. This, we now know, was an outcome of the explosion of a large meteoroid over Tunguska in Russia on 30 June 1908, an event now well known to astronomers. When the Tunguska fireball fell, Phythian-Adams was still a young man, on a cycling holiday with a friend in southwest England. He later recorded the extraordinary phenomenon he saw and could never forget:

The weather was very fine and hot, and feeling disinclined for sleep, we strolled for a considerable time about the town. It was then that we noticed that the night was strangely light. It was near midsummer, but this fact could not account for the illumination. At 11.30 P.M. one was able to read the print of a newspaper by it without any difficulty; and it was clear to both of us that the situation was abnormal. We thought at first, naturally, that it must be due to an aurora, but there was no sign of the flickering which is a feature of the Northern Lights. There was, rather, one steady diffused radiance suggestive of a sunset afterglow or the light from an invisible full-moon.

Note the comparison with both the light of the Sun and Moon. Phythian-

Adams was not exaggerating what he saw. Thousands of reports were made that night (in diaries, newspapers, and police records) of the incredibly bright sky. In England, people not only read (outdoors!) but played cricket until after midnight. In Scotland and Sweden, photographs were taken at midnight or later, with exposures of only a minute. It was as if the whole of western Europe had become suddenly floodlit. It was, in effect, a prolonged day.

It was not until 1945, when Phythian-Adams read about the research of Soviet scientist L. A. Kulik into the Tunguska impact, that he realised what had happened the night he had been on that memorable cycling holiday. Having been an eyewitness to the effects of Tunguska, he could immediately join the dots, between what he had seen with his own eyes in England and the miraculous lengthening of daylight described in the book of Joshua. He also drew a comparison, with fair logic, between a Tunguska-like fall and the shower of stones that fell over Beth-horon. With some exceptions (Ben-Menahem 1992; Bimson 1994, 37-40; James and Thorpe 1999, 147-53), Phythian-Adams' insight has been largely overlooked for over seventy years. Perhaps, despite Kulik's reports from his expedition in 1927, the real nature of the Tunguska event remained obscure until the late 1970s, when interest in the West was reawoken by an article in *Nature* (Brown and Hughes 1977).

At the time he produced it, Phythian-Adams' theory might have seemed like a weak attempt to explain one mystery with another. And without the sanction of scientists, it seems that ancient historians took no heed of the strange event that had happened in Siberia in 1908. Phythian-Adams also cited the fall of a bolide at Apasas recorded in the annals of the Hittite king Mursili II (late 14th century BC) and echoed in Acts 19:35 as the fall of a stone "from heaven" at Ephesus. Garstang attempted to link this with the events at Beth-horon and Jericho, but it was still mistakenly assumed then (pre-Kenyon) that the walls of the latter had fallen c. 1400 BC. It also seems likely that his idea was sidelined because ancient historians were, and still remain, notoriously conservative about "extraterrestrial" matters.

Advances in astronomy over the last few decades, in particular the development of the school of "coherent catastrophism" (Asher, Clube, Napier and Steel 1994), mean that Phythian-Adams' suggestion can now come into its own. There is mounting evidence from astronomical retrocalculations for the existence of fragmenting comets on earth-crossing orbits as late as the Bronze Age (Napier 2010; see further James and van der Sluijs 2016), which could have given rise to "one or more brief meteor 'hurricanes' with intensities far beyond modern experience"

(Napier 2019, 1827). If the Earth passed through a stream of cometary debris in the time of Joshua, some impacts could have caused widespread earth tremors; a "rain" of smaller stones could have fallen over southern Palestine; and the impact of a larger, Tunguska-type object, wherever it exploded (perhaps over the central Asian landmass as in the case of the Tunguska bolide) could have lit up the sky and given the illusion of a prolonged day.

Evidence for just such an event has recently been presented for the demise of Middle Bronze Age Tall el-Hammam in central Jordan, some 13.7 miles southeast of Jericho. Although the excavators identify the site with biblical Sodom (Collins and Scott 2013) – an equation with which we disagree for both geographical and chronological reasons – its destruction coincided approximately with the fall of MBA Jericho. Bunch *et al.* (2021) argue that a "Tunguska-like cosmic airburst" caused the destruction and abandonment of Tall el-Hammam, literally melting mudbricks and pottery and leaving "a city-wide ~1.5-m-thick carbon-ash- rich destruction layer" at the site. Their theory has been contested (Boslough 2022), however, and it needs to be seen if their interpretation of the evidence will stand scrutiny.

The Tall el-Hammam controversy aside, the idea that the writers of the Hebrew Bible were able to associate so many phenomena (i.e. two earthquake episodes, a rain of stones falling from the sky and a prolongation of light) that could have a single physical cause, without being aware of the kind of event that modern science can deduce, is impossible. And their linkage in the Joshua narrative is surely due to far more than coincidence, especially as there is now a single plausible explanation for all these phenomena in terms of natural science. The Sun and Moon did not "stand still" in the sky, but to Joshua's army they may well have seemed to. The phenomenon certainly has nothing to do with an eclipse, and the date of the battle at Beth Horon cannot be determined by astronomical retrocalculations.

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Wetting' the Mothers' Mounds in Egils Saga?

ARE-Reading of a *lausavísa* by Egill Skallagrímsson that Offers Evidence for the *Dísir* Cult in Pre-Christian Norway

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abSTRACT. *Dísir* are accepted by many scholars to represent dead ancestor figures who were widely known and celebrated in Scandinavia. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that the activities revolving around them were at least initially linked to gravemounds. Written evidence confirming that the rituals dedicated to the *dísir* actually took place at gravemounds has, however, hitherto been lacking. This article suggests a reinterpretation of a *lausavísa* contained in *Egils saga*, which arguably supplies a small but significant piece of such written evidence. A man who dutifully organises a *disablót* in the saga appears to be called a worshipper of gravemounds. This is expressed in a phrase which is rendered *kumbla brjótr* ('breaker of cairns', i.e. 'grave-plunderer') in existing editions of the stanza. It is argued that this form of the text – used in modern editions and translations of *Egils saga*, going back to *Den Norsk-Islandske Skjaldediktning B* collection – represents only one possible reading of the manuscript sources. Examination of the surviving manuscripts containing the stanza demonstrates that in the majority of them the word *brjótr* does not occur. Instead, the word that is used alongside *kumbl* is *bljótr*, which might be related to the verb *blóta* 'to worship with sacrifice' and which, albeit rare, might be connected to similar forms that occur elsewhere. The indication is thus that the name used by Egill is not a reference to a grave-breaker, but to a grave-worshipper.

KeyWords: *dísir*, ancestor cult, *blót*, *Egils saga*, grave-breaking, libations, *kumbla bljótr*

There is general scholarly consensus that the *dísir* were dominant characters in ancient Scandinavian (and perhaps Germanic) belief and ritual life (e.g. Mundal 1990; Gunnell 2000; Kaplan 2000; Simek 2002; McKinnell 2005, 197–200; Bek-Pedersen 2011, 41–48; Murphy 2022).¹ The fact that they crop up in many different contexts and different literary genres – from early skaldic poems to the considerably later *Íslendingasögur* and even later folklore – suggests that they represent a widespread category

of supernatural beings.² Their less frequent appearance in the mythological sources – suggesting that they may have been perceived as more ‘realistic’ and contemporary at the time of recording than other entities (e.g. *nornir*, *fylgjur*, *valkyrjur*) – their regular association with death and the landscape, and the fact only they were definitely objects of cult (Simek 2002, 116),³ has led to the general scholarly consensus that the *disir* might represent beings that were at least initially modelled upon the concept of ancestors (e.g. Turville-Petre 1963, 201; Mundal 1990, 310; Gunnell 2000; Simek 2002; McKinnell 2005, 200; Bek-Pedersen 2011, 42; Laidoner 2020, 163).⁴ However, despite several mentions of *disablót* ‘sacrifice to the *disir*’ in the literature, there is very little evidence as to the nature of their cult. The present work suggests a tentative re-reading of a skaldic *lausavísa*⁵ – preserved in its earliest form in 14th century manuscripts but supposedly composed in the pre-Christian period. If accepted, this re-reading would provide hitherto lacking evidence about *dis*-related rituals on gravemounds.

DÍSIR AS ANCESTOR FIGURES

The *disir* feature characteristics that in many ways overlap with a variety of other female supernatural beings in the Old Norse sources. However, they seem to be most inclusive of them all, in the sense that often the title *dis* seems to apply to women generally, whereas others (e.g. *valkyrjur*, *fylgjur*) have more restricted functions. What makes the *disir* different to groups of figures is their relatively scant appearance in mythological sources, and that only they are generally considered to have been objects of actual cult that seems to be intimately attached to specific places and households (e.g. Gunnell 2000, 130; Simek 2002, 116). This means that it might derive from the conviction that the *disir* were thought of as once-living humans, that is, the dead members of the families living in those places (e.g. Tolkien 1960, 66–7, n. 5).⁶ As such, the *disir* are viable candidates for ancestor status, suggesting that the *disablót* events might have been part of a general and widespread ancestor cult in pre-Christian Scandinavia.

The mention of actual *disablót*, however, is rare in Old Norse literature and almost nothing is known specifically about the location of their cults. One exception to this is the mention of a *disarsalr* ‘hall of a *dis*’ in *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks konungs* (Guðni Jónsson 1954, 30) and

Ynglinga saga (Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 2002a, 58), which seems to refer to a specific cult-house. The word form used there is that of an individual *dis*, suggesting that in this case, we are perhaps dealing with a more prominent form of the cult as it is conceivable that the ancestors of the most prominent lineages were worshipped by wider communities and in purpose-built structures as part of a *superior ancestor* cult (Laidoner 2020, 57–62). This, however, does not shed light on the domestic *disir* cults of the common people, the existence of which we can infer from the copious allusions to the *disir* in literature, where they usually appear as collective beings and are attached to many different individuals and groups. The widespread cultic importance of *disir* in pre-Christian Scandinavia could be seen also in place-names containing the *-dis* element, even though many of these might be late and lack a direct link to a pagan *disir* cult (Vikstrand 2001; Sundqvist & Vikstrand 2014). Olaus Magnus (1996-1998, 138) writes in his *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* from the 16th century that the *Dyisting* market held in Sweden was named after a Queen Dysæ known from a contemporary folktale; this folktale however has strong Old Norse flavour – which is most obvious in the involvement of Óðinn and Freyr, as well as in the connection to Uppsala – suggesting that it could be rooted in much earlier *disir* traditions.⁷

As studies by Terry Gunnell (2000) and Andreas Nordberg (2006, 2009) have demonstrated, the *disir* celebrations were ‘movable’ in terms of their precise timing that was likely determined in relation to the equinoxes. In Norway, offerings to the *disir* seem to occur at the onset of winter, during the *vetrnætr* ‘winter-nights’, while in Sweden the *disir* celebrations were held early in the Gregorian calendar year. In Sweden, the tradition is usually discussed in the context of the *Dyisting* meeting that survived the conversion to Christianity in the form of a market, but probably has roots in the pagan *disablót* held in Gamla Uppsala (Ström 1954, 54). Only three sources – one which is concerned with the festival in Sweden (*Ynglinga saga*, Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 2002a, ch. 29) and two that describe those taking place in Norway (*Víga-Glúms saga*, Jónas Kristjánsson 1956, ch. 6; *Egils saga*, Nordal 1933, ch. 43-44) – actually refer to the event as *disablót*, although there are a few other, mostly sketchy, descriptions of seemingly the same celebration, like those found in *Ynglinga saga* (Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 2002a, 63-4) and *Gesta Hammaburgensis* (Tschan 2002, 207-8), albeit sometimes failing to mention the *disir* entirely.⁸ This could be a consequence of the gradual centralisation of power in the hands of a few strong rulers towards the

end of the Viking Age that contributed to a more male-centred worldview and society, nudging the *dísir* out of public religious processes and replacing them with male (ancestor?) gods (Ström 1954, 54).⁹

If we accept the role of the *dísir* to be that of dead ancestors or ancestor-like beings and that they were the subjects of a widespread cult, we can also assume that the focal space for their cult was the gravemound and that the cult of *dísir* was effectively an ancestor cult, something which is actually never mentioned in the written sources. This article suggests a reinterpretation of a *lausavísa* contained in *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar* (Nordal 1933, ch. 44) that arguably supplies a piece of such evidence in written form. This is expressed in a phrase which is rendered *kumbla brjótr* ('breaker of sacrificial mounds', i.e. grave-plunderer) in existing editions of the stanza. It is argued that this form of the text – used in modern editions and translations of *Egils saga* and going back to Finnur Jónsson's adapted version of the stanza in *Den Norsk-Islandske Skjaldediktning B* – represents only one possible reading of the manuscript sources. If the stanza is considered genuine (meaning to have derived from Egill's utterance), then it must have been transmitted orally, and if the hypotheses presented here is correct, it has encapsulated information about pre-Christian ritual practices in a form of folklore.

DÍSABLÓT IN EGILS SAGA

Egils saga contains a description of a *dísablót* held on an island off the coast of Norway some time in the 10th century (Nordal 1933, ch. 43-44). According to this saga, a great feast with large amounts of ale was prepared, many commemorations were held, and toasts drunk for each commemoration. The feast is organised at a farm owned by king Eiríkr and looked after by his steward Bárðr who is in charge of preparing the *veizla* for the time of arrival of the farm's owner. When Egill arrives on the island on an errand with a few companions we are told that he is left uninformed of the coming event – the indication being that the *vetrnætr* was not held at a set date known far and wide to everyone – and that they are offered curd to drink on account of no ale being available. After the arrival of Eiríkr and the queen, the ale is brought out. Outraged by the previous lie, Egill speaks a verse to the host: *segðuð sverri flagða | sumbleklu ér, kumbla, | því telk, brjótr, þars blétuð, | bragðvísan þik, dísir* (Nordal 1933, 108) 'you told the trollwomen's foe [i.e. Egill] you

were short of feast-drink when appeasing goddesses [i.e. *disir*]: you deceived us, despoiler of graves’ (Scudder 1997, 81). As emotions run high and the dispute escalates, Egill kills Bárðr. Allusions to offerings to the *disir* in the verse are obvious and considering that the stanza supposedly dates from around the 10th century, it is a valuable source for a pre-Christian *disir*-cult.

THE MANUSCRIPTS

The phrase *kumbla brjótr* consists of *kumbl* ‘cairn’ – a word found often on memorial runestones – and *brjótr* deriving from *brjóta* ‘to break’; in the translation provided above, as in existing editions of the verse, it is commonly understood as a reference to a person who violates graves or shows a disrespectful attitude toward pagan practice.¹⁰ The profusion of offensive word-play in skaldic poetry is notorious and the generally hostile resonance in this episode makes it plausible that Egill’s choice of words in the poem is simply meant to be an insult. The phrase *kumbla brjótr* appears also in one other *lausavísa* by the 10th century Icelandic poet Kormákr Egmundarson contained only in *Möðruvallabók* (Finnur Jónsson 1912–1915, A1, 83; B1, 74; *Kormáks saga*, Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1958, ch. 7) and references to grave plunder are found also in other written sources, like *Bárðar saga* (Þórhallur Vilmundarson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsen 1991, ch. 20) and *Grettis saga* (Guðni Jónsson 1940, ch. 18). The problem with the phrase in *Egils saga*, however, is that in two out of the three main redactions of the saga that provide the main text and that contain this stanza, *Möðruvallabók* (AM 132 fol.) and *Wolfenbüttelbuch* (WolfAug 9 10 4^o) – both dated to the middle of the 14th century – the phrase used by the scribe is not *kumbla brjótr*, but *kumbla bljótr*.¹¹ In the third, a 17th century paper copy known as *Ketilsbók*, by the Icelander Ketill Jörundarson, the word in question is abbreviated to *b^ort^z*, and an analogous abbreviation occurs also in another 17th century paper copy (AM 462 4^o), written originally by the same hand (Sigurður Nordal 1933, xcvi; Chesnutt 2006, lx). In addition to these, there are some earlier fragments and various later paper copies which are based on these three manuscripts. In the earliest fragment containing this stanza – AM 162 A δ fol from about 1300 (Sigurður Nordal 1933, xcv) – the word is unclear due to damage. The manuscript nevertheless contains pieces of text that are very similar to *Wolfenbüttelbuch* (Bjarni Einarsson 2003, xvi), which reads *bljótr*. If *Wolfenbüttelbuch* is at least partly copied from AM 162 A δ fol. we might assume that the word in the older version is the same as in the

copy, and this suspicion is strengthened by the fact that *Möðruvallabók* also has *bljótr*.¹² The three remaining 17th century manuscripts – AM 458 4°, AM 461 4° and AM 463 4° – all contain *bljótr*.

We thus have five manuscripts which consistently use *kumbla bljótr* – two of these being the oldest copies – plus one early manuscript which is unclear, but which is believed to have been used as the main source for the other two oldest copies. Since a superscript o used as an abbreviation is, as a rule, preceded by *r* (Driscoll 2009, 15–6), the exception here is *Ketilsbók* which seems to read something that might be interpreted ‘breaker’, alongside the other late copy by the same person that has an identical abbreviation.¹³ Although *Ketilsbók* is valuable in that it contains pieces of text that have not survived elsewhere, we must take into account that the text was written three centuries later than the other two main redactions. Ketill is believed to have followed a vellum manuscript (AM 162 A ε fol.) from about 1400 of which only a few folios are extant today, but his copies display parallels also to *Möðruvallabók* and *Wolfenbüttelbuch*, which suggests that also he followed them in part.¹⁴ The part in AM 162 A ε fol. which is relevant for the present discussion has not survived, so we cannot check whether or not Ketill’s reading of the word – perhaps from an earlier abbreviation or a badly preserved sample – could be inaccurate. This possibility seems to have been taken into account by Árni Magnússon, Ketill’s grandson who corrected the word in the manuscript to *bljótr*. The evidence thus speaks in favour of *bljótr* being the more consistent variant in the stanza, leaving the meaning of the phrase open to a different interpretation.

Scholars working before the time of Finnur Jónsson’s *Skjaldedigtning* assumed a connection between the *bljótr* found in the manuscripts and the well attested Old Norse strong verb *blóta* ‘to sacrifice’ or the related *blætr* ‘worshipped’, which both occur in poetry, for example, in *Háleygjatal* (Whaley 2012, 199) and in a *lausavísa* contained in *Vælsa þátr* (Whaley 2012, 1095). For example, Jacob Grimm (1835, 226) rendered the expression as ‘sacrificing to the entombed goddesses’ and William Green who published the first English translation of *Egils saga* in the year 1893, translated the word as ‘wizard-worshipper of cairns’ (Green 1893, 75).¹⁵ Green based his translation of the phrase on Richard Cleasby and Guðbrandur Vigfússon’s *Icelandic-English Dictionary* (1874,

358) from about twenty years earlier, which is about forty years before the appearance of *Skjaldedigtning*, where this exact expression is used. The authors suggested further that the *kumbla brjótr* in *Kormáks saga*, too, must be an earlier misreading (Cleasby and Vígfússon 1874, 358, 772). The context of the saga is indeed curious in that a close kinsman of the person alluded to as *kumbla brjótr* – or *bljótr* according to the authors who assign the meaning ‘to sacrifice’ to the word – makes a blood sacrifice to the *álfar* dwelling inside a *hóll* ‘knoll’ in a following episode. While references to *dísablót* in Old Norse literature are scarce, the assumption that the *álfar* were honoured with *blót* rests to a great degree on this description, and on another brief comment found in *Austrfararvísur* (st. 5), a skaldic poem dated to the 11th century; *Austrfararvísur* was presumably to some degree a prototype for *Kormáks saga* and reports that various farms around Västergötland denied entry to a travelling skald on the account of the ongoing *álfablót* (Whaley 2012, 590). The suggestion posited by Cleasby and Guðbrandr Vígfússon, however, must remain a conjecture since the only surviving manuscript containing Kormákr’s verse – *Möðruvallabók* – clearly reads *brjótr* and there is no obvious reason (apart from the blood offering to *álfar*) to believe that the offensive ‘grave-breaker’ could not have been intended; it is used to describe a man who has previously been portrayed as an ‘impetuous and foolish man, and given to boasting, for all the pettiness of his character’ (McTurk 1997, 184). The interpretation ‘sacrificer’ may fit into the wider context in *Kormáks saga*, and the same can be said about *Egils saga* where the person addressed as *kumbla bljótr* is holding a commemorative celebration at least formally dedicated to the *dísir*.

BLJÓTR AND BRJÓTR

Making the connection between *blóta* and *bljótr* is etymologically problematic: to support the ‘worshipper’ reading of the stanza, we would need to posit the existence of an unattested variant of *blóta*, namely *bljóta*. The discrepancy between the two words *blóta* and *bljóta* must have been noticed by Finnur Jónsson who published an edition of *Egils saga* in 1886-1888 and the *Skjaldedigtning* collection of skaldic poems in 1912-1915 that has until quite recently been the standard edition of skaldic poetry followed by most editors and translators. Subsequently he prioritised the variant possibly documented by Ketill which contains

‘breaker’, that is if Ketill’s copies along with the earlier-mentioned transcription can be trusted. Finnur’s decision was probably influenced also by the generally more common occurrence of *brjótr*, for example, the previously mentioned *kumbla brjótr* in Kormákr’s poem, *haugabryótr* ‘grave-breaker’ in *Landnámabók* (Jakob Benediktsson 1986, 340) or *hergbryótr* ‘breaker of *hergs*’ in *Óláfsdrápa* (Whaley 2012, 392).¹⁶ In Finnur’s edition the stanza that is under scrutiny at present thus reads as follows: *sęđđuð, sverriflagða, sumbleklu, herkumbla því telk brjótr, þars blétuð bragðvisan þik disir* (Finnur Jónsson 1912–1915, B1, 42–43; Finnur Jónsson 1886–1888, 134). In addition to converting the *bljótr* into *brjótr*, he also converted *ér, kumbla* into *herkumbla*, which is a kenning found in other texts possibly with reference to helmets or wounds (e.g. *Óláfs saga helga*, Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 2002b, 355; *Ásmundar saga kappabana*, Guðni Jónsson 1954, 408). Although Finnur’s tendency to emend texts to make sense of obscure passages from their context has been replaced by a somewhat more conservative approach in more recent scholarship, the editions and translations of *Egils saga* that have been published after *Skjaldedigtning* have faithfully followed his adaptation of the stanza. While Eric Eddison (1930, 82) omitted this dubious phrase altogether from his translation from the year 1930,¹⁷ Guðni Jónsson (1945, 238, n. 8) notes that it is a kenning for someone who is ‘despised/unremarkable’, and in the edition by Bergljót Kristjánsdóttir and Svanhildr Óskarsdóttir (1992, 85) the phrase is explained as a demeaning kenning for a person who breaks into cairns or graves. In Christine Fell and John Lucas’ (1975, 184, n. 44) translation it is ‘breaker of burial mounds’ and in the one by Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edwards (1976, 100) ‘grave-breaker’. Bernard Scudder (1997, 81) translates it as ‘despoiler of graves’ and Bjarni Einarsson (2003, 58) as ‘desecrator of graves’. The alternative interpretation – that the ‘breaker’ could be a reference to a person who opens *kumbl* for ritual purposes – has so far not been reviewed; in any case, the manuscript evidence does not support such a contention.¹⁸ Since *bljótr* is otherwise unattested, it is not included in dictionaries published since *Skjaldedigtning* (e.g. de Vries 2000; Orel 2003; Zoëga 2004). The fact remains though that five out of the eight relevant manuscripts use *kumbla bljótr* consistently – two of these being the oldest copies – and that in the remaining three manuscripts the line is either unreadable or abbreviated. Based on this data we need to assume the existence of a strong masculine noun *bljótr* at the time of writing, the meaning of which remains unknown.

BLÓTA AND BLJÓTA

Since there is little phonological difference between *blóta* and *bljóta* – and the fact that the *dísir* are in the same stanza said to be *blétuð* (past plural indicative of *blóta*; i.e. ‘worshipped with blood sacrifice’) – we could assume a connection between the two alliterating words. The etymology of the Old Norse *blóta* is uncertain and disputed. It is believed to derive from the Proto-Germanic strong verb **blōtanan* ‘to sacrifice, to worship’ and is connected to the Proto-Germanic noun **blōtan* ‘sacrifice, worship’ whose descendant in Old Norse is *blót*.¹⁹ One often-cited theory, initially developed by Sophus Bugge (1879, 98), links **blōtanan* to Latin *flāmen* ‘sacrificial priest’, from an older **flādmēn*, possibly deriving from the Proto-Indo-European stem **bhlād-* ‘to mumble, to murmur’, which provides an interesting link to the Finnish *luote* and Sámi *luotte* ‘magic singing’, ‘sorcery’ (de Vries 2000, 45). **blōtanan* has also been linked to the Proto-Germanic **blōðan* ‘blood’ (Old Norse *blóð*), which is tempting considering that blood seems to be involved in the *blót* activities, for example, in *Hákonar saga góða* (Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 2002a, 171-2), although a linguistic connection is contested within the academic community.²⁰ It has further been linked to the Indo-Germanic **bhlād* ‘to make strong’, and by extension to **bhel* ‘to blow, swell’ (Loewenthal 1919, 231). The etymologies are controversial, but a number of linguists agree that **blōtanan* is probably related to **blōanan* ‘to bloom, to blossom’ (see Orel 2003, 50-1). Based on the above-mentioned hypotheses we could tentatively attribute the meaning of a ritualistic activity that involves the ‘strengthening’ of something or making something ‘bloom’ to **blōtanan* and to the Old Norse *blóta*. A process that intuitively comes to mind is making the earth strong and fertile by ‘wetting’ it – perhaps with blood or a ritual drink – an expected act in ritual performance and mentioned also in Old Norse literature, for example, in connection with the previously mentioned sacrifice to the *álfar* in *Kormáks saga* whose mound is soaked with blood in exchange for their anticipated help. The collective nature of the *álfar* and their frequent association with fertility support their loose identification as earlier ancestor beings and the description of the cult in *Kormáks saga*, as suggested by Terry Gunnell (2007a, 118-21), probably represents an early stage in the transition of the active ancestor cult to later folkloric ‘elf’ belief, which continued in Scandinavia in the form of ‘farm guardians’ (e.g. *haugbonde*, *haugkall*, *gardvord*) into the 20th century (Gunnell 2014). The *hóll* is an ambiguous locality that in the Icelandic landscape is often inhabited by *vættir* ‘spirits’ of sorts, but an earlier association

with gravemounds is likely to be present.

BLAUTR

If we accept this contention – that the meaning of Old Norse *blót* is historically linked to the ritualistic act of ‘wetting’ the earth to make it ‘bloom’ – we need to look at another related word, the Old Norse *blautr* which, as suggested below, offers a potential interpretation for the word *bljótr* found in the manuscripts of *Egils saga*.²¹ A more common meaning of *blautr* is ‘soft, weak, fearful’, possibly derived from Proto-Germanic **blautaz/*blauþas*, which according to Vladimir Orel (2003, 48) denote ‘petty, paltry, soft’, and also ‘flabby’.²² As Jan de Vries (2000, 43) points out, this word also has the meaning ‘wet, soaked, drenched’ that the derivative words in all the modern Nordic languages have retained (i.e. Icelandic *blautur*, Faroese *bleytur*, Norwegian *bløt*, Swedish *blöt*, Danish *blød*). Jan de Vries reckons that *blautr* was not used in this sense in the Old Norse language since there are no early attestations available. This, however, is not necessarily the case.

Even though Old Norse had started to develop into different North Germanic languages around the mid-14th century, there are some attestations that appear already in the beginning of the 14th century and whose origins are believed to go back much further in time. The reason for not taking these examples into account might be due to their occurrence in dubious contexts where either meaning – ‘wet’ or ‘soft’ – could be applied, although the latter is sometimes given preference. Among the earliest of these is another one of Egill’s poetic creations composed towards the end of his life in the late 10th century and documented in its earliest surviving version in the beginning of the 14th century, which contains the line *blautrum bergis fótur borr* (Finnur Jónsson 1912–1915, A1, 59; B1, 52). According to Carl Phelpstead (2007, 425–6), the literal translation of the kenning *bergis fótur borr* is ‘borer | drill of the hill of the leg | foot’, which could refer to Egill’s tongue that has become soft or weak with age and means that Egill feels unable to create poetry as skilfully as before. However, there is no obvious reason why *blautr* could not be interpreted to have the meaning ‘wet’, or ‘dribbly’ in this context.²³ A somewhat less convincing although possible double meaning of *blautr* appears also in *Gylfaginning* (Faulkes 2005, 28) whose earliest manuscripts are dated to the first half of the 14th century and according to which

fjǫturinn varð slétt ok blautr sem silkiræma. This sentence is commonly rendered into English as something akin to ‘the fetter became smooth and soft like a silk ribbon’, even though silk feels not only soft, but is also famous for its qualities such as ‘cool’ and ‘slippery’, so in many ways like water. Other texts, dated to the 14th century and later, record *blautr* also with a dubious meaning, although here the interpretation ‘wet’ seems to be favoured by translators. For example, *Egils saga* (Nordal 1933, 217) contains the sentence *þar váru vellir blautir, því at regn hefðu verit mikil* ‘it had been raining heavily and the fields were wet’ (Scudder 1997, 136) and in *Eyrbyggja saga* we find: *þar fengu þeir keldur blautar mjök [...var bæði hregg og allmikið regn]* ‘they came to very wet boggy ground [...there was very heavy rain]’ (Quinn 1997, 198). It seems that the inferences ‘wet’ and ‘soft’ for the adjective *blautr* are not necessarily to be kept apart in terms of their historical and narrative contexts. For example, when earth becomes wet, it obviously also softens. Based on such examples we are justified in believing that *blautr* was used already by the speakers of Old Norse who could have rendered it as either ‘soft’ or ‘wet’ or both. The survival of the latter sense in all the modern Nordic languages could also support its widespread application already among the speakers of Old Norse, as does the adopted meaning in various other languages of geographically adjacent groups who were in close contact with the Norsemen during the Viking Age, for example, the Orcadian *blooter* where it has the more specific meaning ‘wet mass’, and in Sámi *lāuhtas*, *lāktas* ‘damp, soft’ and *lāutas* ‘wet’ (de Vries 2000, 43).

Blautr and *Bljótr*?

If we accept the form found in the manuscript of *Egils saga* as *bljótr* and accept that a meaning of ‘one who wets’ is reasonable in this context, as well as that the Old Norse *blautr* was used with the meaning ‘wet’ we can relate it to the adjective *blautr* by the alternations of this ablaut class. The patterns of vowel alternation with their roots in proto-Indo-European known as ablaut are clearly seen in Germanic/Old Norse strong verb paradigms (*kjósa-kaus*) but are also exploited in Germanic/Old Norse for the purpose of word formation. For example, nouns and adjectives are related to verbs via ablaut as shown here for two grades of a single ablaut class:

eu-grade (jó)			a-grade (au)	
verb	noun	adj.	noun	adj.
brjóta	brjótr		braut	
rjóða		rjóðr		rauðr
hljóta			hlaut	
þrjóta	þrjótr		þraut	
*bljóta	?bljótr			blautr

A weakness of this reading is that *bljótr* is according to our present state of knowledge otherwise unattested; what makes it even weaker is that the existence of the related items *bljótr* and *blautr* presupposes the existence also of a strong verb *bljóta* ‘to wet’ which is unattested and would have the same meaning as the related verb *bleyta*. Etymologically related words with similar or identical meanings, however, are not uncommon, as is the case with *rjóðr* and *rauðr* ‘red’ above. *Rjóðr* is a very rarely occurring variant of *rauðr* and served the specific function of expressing the colour of human faces, while the verb *rjóða* was used to designate the ‘reddening’ of something specifically with blood (Crawford 2014). *Bljóta* could be a rare relation of *bleyta*, bearing the specific semantic connotation ‘to wet’ – with blood or drink – during a sacrificial ritual or *blót*.

The proposed meaning ‘one who wets’, i.e. pours libations on graves, for *kumbla bljótr* found in the manuscripts has its limitations; however, it fits well into the wider context of the chapter in *Egils saga*. It cannot be ruled out that the word was invented by the scribes of *Egils saga* rather than originating with Egill himself, to have a particular notional or aesthetic effect. However, the saga’s context makes it unlikely that the intended designation for the person conducting a celebration for the *disir* who are in the same stanza reported to have been *blétuð* by him was that of ‘grave-breaker’. If the hypothesis presented here is accepted the skaldic stanza – put into writing in the 14th century – holds concrete and

previously unacknowledged information on pre-Christian ritual practices, supporting the logical yet undocumented connection between *dísir* and cultic activities at graves, consequently also supporting the *dísir*'s posited identity as ancestral mothers in gravemounds.

MANUSCRIPTS

Möðruvallabók (AM 132 fol)

Wolfenbüttelbuch (WolfAug 9 10 4°)

Ketilsbók (AM 453 4°)

AM 162 A δ fol.

AM 162 A ε fol.

AM 458 4°

AM 461 4°

AM 462 4°

AM 463 4°

My thanks go to Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir at the Árni Magnússon Institute in Reykjavík for providing me with a transcription of AM 458 4° and to Jeffrey Love at the Arnamagnean Institute in Copenhagen for sending me a scan of AM 461 4°. All other manuscripts consulted in this article were accessed via the following digital databases:

<https://handrit.is>

<https://skaldic.abdn.ac.uk/db.php>

<https://onp.ku.dk>

NOTES

- 1 E.g. links have been drawn between *dísir* and the *idisi* who are mentioned, for example, in the *First Merseburg Charm* (Jeep 2001, 112) found in a 9th or 10th century manuscript and possibly in Tacitus' (1931, 406-7) *Annales* from the 1st century AD, the *matres/matronae* cults in Germany, and the *Modranicht* mentioned by Bede (1999, 53) in *De temporum ratione*. See further e.g. Simek 2002; Shaw 2011.
- 2 See Murphy 2022.

- 3 See Gunnell 2000; Nordberg 2006.
- 4 Cf. Ström 1954, 96, 102; Murphy 2022.
- 5 English: “loose verse”, i.e. stanza or stanzas unconnected by narrative or thematic continuity.
- 6 See Gunnell 2007b: 368–9.
- 7 The story was adapted by Johannes Messenius in his drama performance *Disa*, played at the *Disting* market in 1611 (Messenius 1648).
- 8 According to the *Svensk diplomatarium* (Silfverstolpe 1875, 566) one half of the Uppsala fair was *Disting* and the late 13th century *Uplandslagen* (Schlyter 1834, 274-5) reports that the peace of *Disaþing* came into force on the day of *Disaþing* and was between two *köptings* that started and ended the peace (see Nordberg 2006, 86-99; 2009, 290-1). Olaus Magnus writes (1996-1998, 138-9) that an ancient and well-known *nundinas glaciales* ‘ice fair’ which had retained its original name *Disting* and was held in early January was well-known and in full progress even in the 16th century.
- 9 The great sacrifice held at Gamla Uppsala, for example, which appears to have been a gathering of local farmers to honour the king and which was according to some sources dedicated to Þórr (Tschan 2002, 207; *Óláfs saga helga*, Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 2002b, ch. 77; *Ynglinga saga*, Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 2002a, ch. 34) may initially have been a celebration of the *dísir*, even though the later authors fail to mention them. See also Gunnell (2007, 353-4).
- 10 See entries in de Vries 2000.
- 11 An alternative reading of the word in *Möðruvallabók* is *bliott* which lacks an explanation at the present state of research.
- 12 The first part of AM 458 4^o is very similar to AM 162 A δ fol which is the oldest fragment of the saga (c. 1250) and in its extant form does not contain the *lausavísa* but is otherwise very similar to *Möðruvallabók*. It is possible that this part was copied from a now lost manuscript. AM 461 4^o is believed to derive mainly from *Wolfenbüttelbuch* or *Möðruvallabók*; AM 463 4^o begins like *Möðruvallabók*, but is closely related also to *Wolfenbüttelbuch*, which means that it could have been copied from either or both of these. Regarding manuscript history, see

the introductory remarks in the editions of *Egils saga* by Sigurður Nordal 1933 and Bjarni Einarsson 2003.

- 13 Similar abbreviations occur elsewhere in the same manuscript (AM 453 4^o) and the omitted letter represents an *r*.
- 14 See Sigurður Nordal 1933, xcvi; Bjarni Einarsson 2003, xvi; Chesnutt 2006, lviii-lxiv.
- 15 ‘Wizard-worshipper of cairns! Want of ale thou couldst allege, Here at spirits’ holy feast. False deceiver thee I find’.
- 16 *Haugr*, like *kumbl*, designates a grave or a cairn (de Vries 2000, 213-4) – in episodes that depict grave-plunder the protagonist usually attempts to extract valuables from a grave and encounters its residents that are accordingly called *haugbúar* (e.g. *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar*, Guðni Jónsson 1940, ch. 18) and *kumblbúar* ‘mound-dwellers’ (e.g. *Kumlbúa þáttr*, Þórhallur Vilmundarson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson 1991). The meaning of *hergr* is less certain, however, it is again often mentioned in conjunction with gravemounds, offering a tentative parallel to *kumbla brjótr*, for instance, in the early medieval *Den ældre Gulathings-Lov* and in *Kong Sverrers Christenret* (Keyser and Munch 1846–49, 18, 430). For further discussion about *hergr*, see Olsen 1966; Sundqvist 2009, 2015; Heide 2014.
- 17 ‘Said you swig was lacking, Shatt’rer of helm-bane ogress? where ye held feast of goddesses? Master of cheats I call thee!’
- 18 Further on ritual grave-breaking, see e.g. Brøgger 1945; Klevnäs 2016.
- 19 Etymological connections mentioned in this paragraph rely on de Vries 2000 and Orel 2003, unless stated otherwise.
- 20 See Orel 2003, 50-51 for references.
- 21 I would like to thank Stefan Brink who first brought this possible connection to my attention.
- 22 See references cited in Orel 2003, 48.
- 23 According to another interpretation, the ‘hill of the leg’ refers to Egill’s penis (see Phelpstead 2007, 425-6). For example, Somerville & McDonald (2014, 332) translate this as ‘my pointless prick is moist and soft’ and Scudder (1997, 174) as ‘my middle leg both droops and drips’.

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Part 2

Reviews

Reviews

“Whoops, I Dropped It!” An Account of the Lives, Actions, and Performances of Archaeological Materials Before We Find Them.

Review: Richard Bradley. *A Geography of Offerings: Deposits of Valuables in the Landscape of Ancient Europe* (Oxbow Books: Oxford, 2017)

Review by Daniel Leyland

An object is not determined by its outward form alone. It has had a life, a biography. It has (and hides) qualities, some of which are invisible, but which can be determined by a review of its life and social context. Properties and qualities have been distinguished alternately as values which, on the one hand, describe the concrete likeness of an object, and which, on the other, describe its meaning relationally (Cummings 2011). Material culture is produced by certain people in a particular environment; we now recognise that it also produces that environment, as it helps to shape the people therein (McGuire 2002). And yet, time and again, archaeologists have been preoccupied with outward form. Richard Bradley writes, for example, that most accounts of stone artefacts have assumed that their forms were directly related to their function (Bradley, 110). Dialectics of style have played a part in this. These include potentially unhelpful definitions and dichotomies attributed to object function, such as ‘utilitarian / non-utilitarian’. Concepts of style, the aesthetic bedfellow of object-function, have been part of the very mechanism of looking at variability in the archaeological record (McGuire 1981). Labels of style, therefore, with their acultural associations, are hard to shrug off.

The variability of the archaeological record has been a primary component in past studies of offerings. In this book, an overview of current thinking on the phenomenon of offerings, Bradley determines to keep a ‘scientific’, synthesising, bean-counting approach at a certain distance (3). He does this by maintaining a brisk, nuanced attention to materiality, object biographies, and, of course, topography and landscape.

A chapter entitled ‘Proportional Representation’ (53) deals with the

problem of variability; looking at offerings found in different times and spaces, with a view to what might have been lost after differential pickings in dodgy-diggings, or differential decomposition (60-61). Unsurprisingly, the conclusion seems to be that there is no definitive rule. This directive is held over diverse case studies, e.g. Hindbygarden, Oberdorla, Flag Fen, and the Broadward Hoard. A most valuable, analogous case study is of the burying of personal possessions of Estonian refugees following the Soviet invasion in the 20C (Burström, in Bradley, 150). Many of the materials left behind were not particularly rare or valuable; they were domestic, communal, and social objects, such as pots and pans, which together were loaded with memory and meaning. Many of these would not survive for hundreds of years, and many others would have been overlooked through the preferences of detectorists, for example. Different archaeological schools, led at times by scientific sub-specialisms, have narrowed their interpretations to include, individually, bone material, or clay, or wood, or stone, or metals (79). Scholars have been equally divided in their foci on regions and time periods; thus, the Scandinavian Iron Age, which continued for a much longer period than elsewhere in Europe, has not been properly reviewed as a related environment for comparison. These factors constitute ‘self-imposed limitations of schools in the present’ (31). This has been a short-sighted and unambitious approach, and represents a point of departure for Bradley’s study, which consistently rejects boundaries - ‘fault lines’ - created by such specialisms. There has been too much emphasis placed on body parts, or metals, as separate materials, without favouring the whole package of materials in combination; human remains especially are singled out for special treatment (Bradley, 79, 153, 157). But it is important to extend our understanding of material culture so that it encompasses the human body as well (Sofaer 2006). When materials, pottery usually, are fragmented, we must consider that actions such as destruction may be part of the same system of embodied meaning as that presented when we find a fragmented body. In the same way, it is important to extend our understanding of personhood, to fix it relationally, and to consider that ‘some artefacts might be features of a person, or persons in their own right’ (Fowler 2005, 4). Bradley takes this into account, for example, when he avers that objects ‘imbued with life’ could have been sacrificed in place of persons (154).

Research carried out as part of Project Jade found that the jade in the majority of a group of distinctive jade axes distributed across Western Europe, had been originally sourced from a quarry high above the cloud line on Mount Viso in the Cottian Alps (Pétrequin, in Bradley, 99, 114). People in prehistory evidently deliberately collected and used materials



[Fig 1] Offerings left at Wayland's Smithy by visitors, Oxfordshire. Included coin, feather, and foliage. Picture taken by the author 8/10/2018.

from 'difficult sources' like mountains, offshore islands, and fissures (104). These materials clearly maintained distinct qualities beyond their surface properties. Cummings has proposed that something 'made of fire' would have had very different connotations to something made by sticking an antler pick into a fault in a quarry face (Cummings 2011). Objects with similar outward appearances act differently (Hodder 1982).

Today it is not hard for us to imagine that a profoundly different interactivity with the material world is possible. We attach padlocks to bridges in our famous cities. We toss coins into fountains. We carry rocks to the hilltop to add to the cairn. At Cloutie wells in Scotland, people tie

strips of material to the branches of trees. At sites of known antiquity - local burial chambers and the like - visitors frequently leave feathers, coins, flowers, wheat sheafs, and tobacco [fig 1]. These strange, contemporary urges mean different things in different places. These actions cannot offer much insight into the belief systems of ancient people, but they do exemplify how we conceptualise what the past means for us in the present. As they always have done, objects today give meaning to people's lives (Hassan 220).

We are sensitive to the way objects act in time because we are ourselves objects. Our bodies are themselves material culture. Some materials, such as gold or platinum, do not decay, do not seem to notice the passing of time. Others are more ephemeral, and so have disappeared from the record entirely. As in the example mentioned earlier, when Estonian families in a state of change and transit left behind buried possessions, it is the materiality of items left in the ground which is significant.

Objects of the past, including monuments and landscapes (Hassan 2006), become loci of memory for persons in the present. Persons whose anxiety and sense of displacement is pervasive in industrial and post-industrial society find refuge in the stability of a deep past and a community of shared origins. Such institutions of the collective memory are necessarily sacralised, and simplified (Butler & Rowlands 2006). Remembering is an active thing, it is happening all the time. Cultural systems, and historical narratives, create people, and also shape the way they remember. As art theorist Anke Bangma comments 'experience and memory... are simultaneously constructed and personally lived' (Bangma 2012). The emphatic truth of this is evident in the interplay of experience, performance, and re-enactment in the heritage environment, wherein the past can become 'customized' via an 'industry' of memory (Rushton, in Bangma 2012). Clearly, certain 'special' places were used again and again for the act of giving offerings over many centuries, often periodically, with large stretches of time where there was no activity at all (Bradley, 168, 56). Broadward is a good example, with activity evidenced from the Early Bronze Age right up to the post-medieval period, where we find objects probably associated with witchcraft (60). Some of these sites were locations with unusual topographical features: places of transition, or liminality; places which commanded an immense panoramic of landscape (160-79). The enterprising Romans built temples at some of these locations, later still, Christian churches sprung up in their place (46). The result was sometimes a creolisation of Romano-Celtic gods (Webster 2010). Other spaces were more hidden, and 'left no trace on

the landscape': rivers, bogs, and lakes, for example (Bradley, 46). Why were certain sites picked out to be used again and again for offerings? When sites are the location of sustained activity over long periods of time, it does not necessarily mean they were significant in the same way to the different peoples who used them. Bradley's suggestion is good, that the very association these places had with the past may have been the reason for their interest in the present. Taking this further, I propose that leaving offerings, and so interacting in a focused way with objects of the past, was a contemporary, actualising act of remembering that replenished meaning and reconfigured memory. To assume that these places held a fixed identity over time, in relation to a fixed, unchanging people, would be a mistake. This would be to conceive of the past, as Webster puts it, as moving at a 'glacial pace' (Webster 2010, 114).

We have discussed Bradley's study of the significance, for prehistoric people, of the materiality of offerings, an ontology grounded in association and negotiation with the material world, which conceives of the world, and objects, as living thing(s). Here Bradley employs the well-known anthropological account from Mauss of gift-giving, suggesting that, to put something in the ground or in water, to take it out of worldly circulation, could have worked as a 'gift' (147). A premise of Mauss' account is that gift exchanges are socially employed to incur benefits of power to the giver, when the gift cannot be returned equally. Gregory argues that an offering to the gods could have expected no return and would therefore enhance the giver with benefits of prestige and power (Gregory, in Bradley, 155). This is easy to imagine in a conspicuous social environment, an arena of competitive power units. The assumption, perhaps, is that the exchange was one-sided, but, I suggest, the expected 'return' of the gift could have been an impulse of the magical kind. Any such acts of magic, however, would leave little trace in the archaeological record. Swords had names, personalities, memories and lineages. Bradley gives the example of Frankish swords, which may have been loaned to vassals from stockpiles of ancient weapons (148). Such objects, charged with memories of past deeds, would have validated power (Hassan 220); the exchange of such items was 'essential for the reproduction of an aristocratic lineage' (Theuvs and Alkemade, in Bradley 148).

In a handbook of archaeology for undergraduates, Gamble describes a new kind of archaeologist for whom 'the end product of archaeology was not interpretations but rather generalisations concerning how cultural systems operated' (Gamble 2008, 88). Bradley is very much one of these

new archaeologists. To summarise, what Bradley is looking at in this book are the different complex systems of action and belief which produced offerings.

In a rather enigmatic lecture, titled 'Is the universe sentient, and what implications might that have for archaeology?', professors Gosden and Pollard muse on the possibility that, when we are creating objects, we are creating time (2016). They consider objects which appear to us to be inanimate, such as a stone circle in the Papua New Guinean highlands: why do local people believe these stones are alive? Their answer reflects the ontological approaches detailed above. It is within such general systems of meaning(s), grounded in an animate world, that some actions, originating in impulses anywhere on a scale from urges to beliefs, took the form of offerings. We cannot say that these things appear to us in the ground, discovered sometimes by metal detectorists and sometimes by more considered excavation, simply because - 'whoops' - they happened to be dropped there at some point in prehistory (e.g. Périn, in Bradley 42).

Giving an offering is an act. It can usefully be said to be the last event of a greater, more complex chain of performances. But what happened to these offerings before we found them? From Bradley's careful examples we get snapshots of a thing's life. In the Netherlands in the Late Neolithic, for example, stone axes were carefully wrapped in cloth, taken out on occasion, and probably painted with ochre (Wentink, in Bradley 111).

Evidently, objects were perceived to exist in a performative balance. Bradley considers the ritual/non-ritual dichotomy put forward by archaeologists. Clearly, actions in the past were not so clearly divided (30). Some deposits, perhaps, were intended to be recovered, though Bradley warns against exaggerating this possibility (28-9).

Some materials were evidently prepared for their 'death', in a way that mirrors the particularity of their 'birth' (e.g. by fire or antler pick, see above). Some materials were protected before being deposited, in fabric, boxes, pouches, or bags (129). Some swords were deliberately, and with great effort, broken from their hilts (130). In the Bronze Age, in the Alpine lake areas, materials like personal ornaments were burned before deposition (131). In the late Bronze Age, cremation practices reportedly 'reached a new importance' (132). Often many bodies were burned, but only a small number of fragments of their charred remains were then buried. Perhaps they had remained out of the ground for a

long time before being buried (132). Bradley presents Kaliff's idea that a burned corpse, whose remains were fragmented, could allow the spirit to escape so that the dead person can be regenerated, but he seems to criticise this supposition on the grounds of the Indo-European linguistic origins of the argument (Kaliff in Bradley 133). The process of fragmentation, which occurs widely in material culture, can be situated alongside ethnoarchaeological accounts of the divisibility of the soul (Fowler 2005). Bradley's aversion to linguistic and etymological reasoning is surprising when one considers the author's own diachronic use of literary, historical sources. He cites Caesar's account of Gallic barbarian traditions, for example, to colour the imagined formation of Anglo-Saxon hoards in the 7C CE, without tempering the evidence in light of its colonial nature (Webster, 2010). Bradley also uses, variously, the Mabinogion, and, extensively, Beowulf. Both are essentially Christian sources (e.g., 28).

In a chapter titled, 'The Hoard as Still Life', Bradley studies 17C Dutch still life paintings as a rather ingenious vehicle for understanding, first, patterns of collection and display of offerings, and, second, to put forward the concept of display as part of an offering's or hoard's 'social life' (81, 86).

In a proto-globalised market, such paintings displayed collected, or accumulated exotic objects. The painted materials represented different time frames, physical properties, functions, and symbolic meanings, just as we would find them in the materials of a complex hoard, or offerings deposit. For example, artefacts deposited in the Hoen hoard in 9C CE Norway, 'span a period of time which could have been as long as 500 years', with origins which appear to be 'Scandinavian, Byzantine, Frankish, Arab, Merovingian, Carolingian and English' (85). To me, this recalls the accumulation of bodies in the middle Neolithic mound deposition at Duggleby Howe in North Yorkshire (Gibson et al., 2014), where DNA isotope analysis has shown that none of the many persons buried there had lived in the surrounding chalk countryside; they came from much further afield to be buried: so they were accumulated, or they accumulated themselves. Some of the bodies had suffered serious trauma, and some graves were richly furnished. The mound included many different kinds of bodies, adults and children.

In the Dutch paintings, objects were represented in paint for the purpose of public display; even, perhaps, for 'conspicuous consumption'

(Schama, in Bradley 81). Extending the analogy, Bradley invokes recorded historical events, like hedonistic Viking feasts, and triumph displays, in which war booty became part of a performance (103). Here it seems

artefacts were displayed before being buried. Martin Carver's evocative statement of the Sutton Hoo burial complex further charges the idea's potential: 'Mound 1 burial is a composition, a poem, a statement...' (Carver in Bradley 102). At Duggleby Howe, it seems further that some bodies were not 'buried immediately after death' (Gibson, et al. 2014).

The element of performance in an object's biography, including accumulation, display, and destruction, cannot be over-exaggerated. According to Bradley, it is possible that representations in stone of artefacts, as those we find on petroglyphs, had a certain display function. Monumental orthostats from Neolithic Brittany depicted stone axe heads; in one location, there were up to eight separate panels of these images. Petroglyphs also depicted metalwork, commonly life-sized and without the hafts. Stonehenge records 3 daggers and 115 axes depicted in stone, carved long after the monument was constructed (90). Axe heads without shafts could have depicted units of valuable material (92). In Iberia, petroglyphs are composed strikingly like spoils, often confronting the viewer on steep stone faces. In the Alps, monumental rock art of this kind also displays bodies alongside objects represented in nearby deposits (93). Too much attention has been paid to the final piece in studies of offerings than to the social processes through which the materials must have come. This has echoes in the act of drawing in archaeology

practice, where the 'final conventional drawings... carry more weight than the drawing process itself' (Gant & Reilly 2017), even though it is accepted that these final drawings carry only a part-truth: they represent a stylised scene of a wider narrative. Mark-making in drawing is rehearsed, is part of a 'habitus': Gant and Reilly describe the smell of the paper in drawing, as well as the sound the archaeologist's trowel makes on a surface. With cave art, we now think that the act of drawing itself may have been 'the really important rite associated with it' (Hutton 2014, 20), and it is easy to see how this may also be true of petroglyphs, particularly when representations were repeated over a long period of time, necessarily by different persons. Jones has looked at Wandjina rock art in what is now Western Australia, where paintings were retouched in order to 'renew the spiritual power of the image' (Jones 2006, 112). Objects were handled, touched, smelt, and drawn on to the rock.

As we have seen, remembering can be considered as a collective

performance, by which we moderate memory with experience (Butler, and Rowlands, 2006; Bangma 2012). Performances of collective display, related to the deposition of bodies or objects, could come under this jurisdiction.

In anthropology, a recent generation have attended closely to concepts of performance, action, and doing. Cecilia Busby (2000), whose work builds on that of Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, and Judith Butler, goes beyond a textual and linguistic stance (the materialising power of discourse), with an approach resembling that of Sofaer (2006, 67), to espouse a concrete materiality, to allow for ‘fluid bodies’, which make real interventions in the world: ‘Performances... producing not an appearance but a reality... Performances, practices, constitute the body not simply through representation or understanding but in very real and material ways’ (Busby 2000, 18).

The act of giving offerings can be seen to exist within a system of acts and embodied dispositions. Dispositions are learned through the body, and are fully material. There is a relation, then, between the character of offerings and their display, and the social conventions, impulses, and dispositions generative of these acts; ‘The archaeologist can only work with object remains that are the consequence of actions’ (Renfrew 1985, in Fogelin 2007, 59). We can take this further. The body is learned through action. It is ‘materially altered by its history’ (Busby 2000, 18). Learning through action takes place in the material world, through objects. Our attitudes to different materials, different objects, are also learned, and altered, by history.

Using ethnographic sources, Bradley describes how, in some societies, the forge is a living being (Bradley, 118-123). In a lecture for the Society of Antiquaries, Scotland, Tom Rees wonders whether the changing architecture of an enclosure used as a forge might have reflected changing attitudes to metal production. Bronze casting happens in a kind of alchemical secrecy, while working with iron is an altogether more obvious, and open process (Rees 2016). Rees is wise enough to limit such conjectures to the realm of guesswork, but it is guesswork grounded within sound ethnoarchaeological inquiry. It allows us to ask helpful questions. Since the dawn of archaeology as a science in the West, archaeologists have been preoccupied with notions of technological progress (Hassan 2006, 222), and the semantics associated with material culture evidence this. Thus, places where stone tools were shaped in

prehistory are called ‘factories’ (Bradley 107). Even the word ‘tool’ is too narrow. Metallurgy is a technological process, indeed, but it has also been a mystical process within particular, and shifting, social contexts. This is reflected in the particular ways in which both metal objects and human bodies were arranged together in burials. During the early Bronze Age, at Leubingen for example, Bradley describes one context in which, ‘just as the child or adolescent was positioned at right angles to the remains of the man, a halberd with its staff was superimposed on one of the metal blades’ (97). In another example, ‘a series of early Bronze Age axe heads were placed in a circle on a hollow rock by a stream. All their blades faced outwards. They enclosed a deposit of deer bones and ash and were covered by a slab’ (99).

To conclude, I would like to draw on an unexpected source. Using phylogenetic comparative methods, Silva and Tehrani have traced back the folk tale of ‘the smith and the devil’ to its apparent Bronze Age Indo-European roots (Silva and Tehrani 2016). Linking their findings to the Kurgan hypothesis, they ground their conclusions in the comparative tradition of culture history. This kind of linguistic evidence should, however, encourage us to ask whether persons in the past who worked metal were defined relationally in purely technological and economic terms. Was the body of a person who worked metal not materially altered by history? And was metal not also shaped and learned in this way? Crossing faultlines and breaking boundaries, Bradley pushes this agenda throughout his book. No stone is left unturned, for us to examine only its appearance, and obvious function. By bringing to bear ideas of commemoration and performativity, my hope is to forward his excellent agendas, and help to ask further questions, both about the lives of objects taken out of circulation, and the meaning of such acts; when persons in the past decided to leave offerings.

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Reviews

The Witch – A History of Fear from Ancient Times to the Present, Ronald Hutton. Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2017. Paperback published in 2018. 360 + xv pages. ISBN 9780300229042 (hardback). ISBN 9780300238679 (paperback).

This is a splendid book for anyone with any degree of interest in witches, witchcraft or the witch hunts of Early Modern Europe and I can only recommend it. It is very legible, highly informative, thorough and honest. The book is packed full of well-considered and well-presented information, sufficiently focused to keep everything relevant, but at the same time taking a sufficiently broad approach to seemingly leave no stone unturned. Whatever facet of the witch, magic or witchcraft holds your interest, Hutton's book will be relevant – as long as you are prepared to change your mind about what you thought you knew about witches! Having read this book, I feel enlightened in terms of the theme, as well as impressed with the author's ability to present his perspective and argument as exactly that; there is no sense of definitiveness or of having said the last word with regard to any aspects of the topic. Instead, Hutton presents his findings and conclusions with an openness towards the idea that he is partaking in ongoing scholarly discussions. This is one of the many strengths of the book.

The book is divided into three parts, of which Part 1: Deep Perspectives, contains three chapters treating the global, the ancient and the shamanic contexts, respectively. Part 2: Continental Perspectives, contains four chapters; on ceremonial magic, the hosts of the night, how the witch-figure developed during the Middle Ages and what Early Modern times made of it. Finally, Part 3: British Perspectives, contains three chapters wherein the relationship between witches and fairies, witches and Celtic traditions and witches and animals are in focus. The book also contains an author's note, introduction, conclusion, an appendix listing extra literature, extensive endnotes and, blissfully, an index. The notes contain mainly references and function also as bibliography. There are, moreover, 16 black-and-white illustrations, which in the paperback are gathered on glossy paper in the middle of the book.

In his brief note, the author explains what he means by fundamental

terms such as ‘witch’ and ‘magic’ and it is useful for the reader to start here. The author clarifies that the ‘witch’ concerned in his book is a ‘worker of harmful magic’ and that, although he is perfectly aware of other valid uses of the term, these will not be discussed. In the equally brief introduction, the author sets out his ambitions for the research presented here, which is to combine the British academic approach to the study of witches – where scholars often focus on structures of social and political power – with the academic approach prevalent on the European continent – where scholars commonly show a strong interest in the ancient roots of beliefs linked to witches. Thus equipped, the reader is ready to embark on the main discussions.

Chapter 1 opens the section on ‘Deep Perspectives’. It presents the global context as well as the scholarly discussion to which the book seeks to contribute. The close cooperation, between anthropologists, working on witchcraft in extra-European societies, and historians, working on witch trials in Early Modern Europe, that was dominant in the mid-twentieth century has since fallen out of fashion. Hutton’s aim here is to re-establish the link by showing that the main characteristics of a ‘witch’ actually do apply globally, and he manages to do this in an entirely convincing manner. He includes comparative material from the five other inhabited continents in order to show that the European concept of the witch does, indeed, have currency worldwide, while at the same time pointing out a great many local variations. The picture that emerges is extremely rich and nuanced and is brought fully up to date by the inclusion of material stemming from the 21st century. There is also a wealth of research history to be found here for the reader interested in that aspect.

Chapter 2 provides a broad comparative survey of attitudes to and conceptions of witchcraft across the ancient Mediterranean and Middle Eastern worlds. Here also, the importance of local variation is given due attention. Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece and Rome are explored in turn, with a view to discovering in how each contributed to the Early Modern European conception of the witch. While each of these sections is fairly short and general, they still manage to provide information on developments through time, nuances within each culture, similarities as well as distinctive features. The impression is that the details and aspects discussed are reliably representative; anyone with even a remote interest in witch-like beings, be they human or supernatural, will find relevant material here. The chapter moreover includes a section on night-demonesses, which also provides important parts of the foundation on which the Early Modern European witch was constructed.

In chapter 3, Hutton considers the cultural practices generally known

as ‘shamanism’ in relation to notions of what a witch is and does, the difficulty here being the broad and varied use (and thus meaning) of the term ‘shamanism’. An apparent overlap between the figure of the Siberian shaman and European witchcraft has been perceived, in that the shaman is able to leave his or her body while in trance in order to communicate with or act within the spirit-world. This has been seen by some as similar to certain European traditions about people who travel in their dreams and fight against witches while asleep. Hutton sees similarities as well as differences, and the chapter is dedicated to exploring these. One of the (to me) most interesting parts of this chapter is the tracing of the essentially European scholarly term ‘shamanism’ in order to discover its history and original usage within Europe (as a term describing Siberian religious practices) – and the revelation that the ability to send out a spirit from a human body is, in fact, *not* part of the Siberian traditions. At all, even. Interestingly, Old Norse traditions about magical practices appear to constitute a sort of hybrid between ‘classical’ Siberian shamanism and European conceptions of witchcraft.

Chapter 4 opens the section on ‘Continental Perspectives’ and begins with a discussion of the distinction between ‘witchcraft’, which entails entering a pact with and serving the Devil, and ‘ceremonial magic’, which refers to rites and materials normally learned from written texts, employed to achieve magical ends. The author then explores how Egyptian tradition, which did not distinguish between magic and religion, dealt with the transition to Roman tradition, which did distinguish, once Egypt became part of the Roman Empire. The Greek magical papyri are central here; they reveal an attempt during Late Antiquity to apply religious forms to magic that apparently began in Greco-Roman Egypt and diffused from there across the empire. It is possible to establish a continuous transmission of this lore from the ancient eastern Mediterranean to Early Modern Europe, since the European medieval tradition of ceremonial magic that arose in the 12th century apparently owes much to late antique Egypt, with contributions also coming from Judaic, Christian and Islamic magical traditions.

Chapter 5 begins by noting that the formerly widespread idea that witchcraft was essentially a coherent, pagan fertility cult, a sort of rival religion, can safely be discarded. Instead, the fundamental ideas underpinning the Early Modern persecution of alleged witches lie in, on the one hand, the tradition of accusing groups or individuals out-with the norm of evil and antisocial activities and, on the other hand, a belief in night-roaming beings. The author then goes on to focus on medieval traditions of nocturnal hosts of spirits, the beliefs from which they derive,

as well as the exact nature of these traditions themselves. Hutton's approach is extremely conscientious and also highly fact-orientated and, yet again, leads to the rejection of some flourishing stereotypes. This highly commendable method lends clarity to his discussion and, in turn, authority to his conclusions.

Chapter 6 tackles the figure of the witch during the Middle Ages, and seeks in the process to respond to three questions: What difference did Christianity make to the attitudes to witchcraft, how seriously was witchcraft treated, and how did the stereotype of satanic religion that underpinned the Early Modern witchcraft trials evolve? While other scholars have noted that Christianity, being monotheistic, was inherently prone to persecute anyone who deviated from its norms at any given time, Hutton explores the intriguing question of why it took Christianity so long to embark on large-scale persecution of witches. Having become the established religion within the Roman Empire already in the 4th century, witch-hunts per se did not begin until the 16th century. It is, I find, a very good question to ask. By sifting through a great deal of material, he goes on to show that witches were, indeed, executed for the crime of witchcraft throughout the Early and High Middle Ages, but that witchcraft at this point was not linked to Devil-worship. The concept of the satanic witch only appeared in the early 15th century in Southern Europe. The crucial step was that the Church decided to regard ceremonial magic as heresy, and thus as Devil-worship. With this, witchcraft and heresy were combined and the satanic witch was born.

In chapter 7, Hutton makes it clear that, although there were many regional and local variations that shaped the Early Modern witch trials, the one feature shared across the board is the notion of the satanic witch: a remarkably stable conception across Europe during the three centuries that the witch hunting lasted, from 1424 till 1782. The aim in this chapter is to explore the role of folkloric beliefs in determining the incidences of witch-hunting, the images expressed in it, and the identity of the victims. While local traditions and beliefs did colour proceedings everywhere – even to the extent of greatly influencing whether people were executed for witchcraft or more mildly punished – the most powerful factor everywhere was the newly developed stereotype of satanic witchcraft. The chapter ends with an interesting discussion of whether there actually were any (would-be) satanic witches around in Early Modern times.

Chapter 8 leads into the third part, which is on 'British Perspectives'. Here, Hutton explores the link between witches and fairies, since it appears to be a common British trait – in particular a Scottish one – that

people skilled in magic claimed to have learned their craft from the ‘good neighbours’. This results in interesting insights and, yet again, in the sounding of cautionary notes with regard to applying generalizing terminology in scholarship when treating the topic of witchcraft. One of Hutton’s great achievements is that he manages to clear up some of the terminological mess created by previous scholars; an admirable feat indeed. The chapter subsequently traces the history of British fairies back in history, as a descriptive term, but also as a class of beings.

Chapter 9 seeks an explanation for the significant discrepancy between the high numbers of Early Modern witchcraft trials in England and (especially) Lowland Scotland, and the virtual lack of any in the Scottish Highlands, the Western Isles, Wales, Ireland and the Isle of Man. What emerges is that these societies shared the habit of blaming the types of problems elsewhere attributed to witches on malignant otherworld beings instead. This may thus be taken as proof that ancient and medieval tradition could, on a local level, matter greatly to the issue of whether witches were persecuted or not.

Finally, chapter 10 concerns the different ways in which witches – initially presenting a worldwide survey before moving on to an emphasis on English tradition – have been associated with animals. The version that evolved and dominated in England was that of the animal familiar; a demon in animal shape. Interestingly, no such idea developed in neighbouring Scotland.

In the conclusion, Hutton gives a very fine summary of the findings presented in the preceding chapters while also encouraging scholars to use this work as a stepping-stone for further research. Again, the eagerness to discuss, exchange ideas and perspectives and continue to explore further seem to constitute the driving force behind Hutton’s endeavours.

As a final comment, I take the liberty to mention the one thing I have against this book, which is the fact that it (at least the paperback version of it) is visually not very appealing. Even to the extent that I found it hard to start reading it, entirely unjustifiably! But the text is set in a rather small font size, presented on the pages as substantial blocks of text with very few paragraph breaks. Having said that, the text – once you start reading – carries you along by being easily accessible and highly engaging. And you will not regret it; this book *will* make you wiser.

Karen Bek-Pedersen

Celtic Cosmology and the Otherworld – Mythic Origins, Sovereignty and Liminality, Sharon Paice MacLeod. McFarland & Company, Jefferson, North Carolina, 2018. 285 pp. ISBN 9781476669076.

This book falls in three sections of three chapters each – nine chapters in total – including an introduction and a useful index. The notes are endnotes and consist of references, sometimes with extensive extra discussions. The three sections of the book are: Mythic Origins, with chapters on cosmology, creation and time; Sovereignty, with chapters on Danu, Findabair and Gwenhwyfar, and *Táin Bó Flidais*; and Liminality, with chapters on the number nine, the druid Mug Roith and bodies of water linked to sacred knowledge. The book has a decidedly female slant, which is not reflected in the title; indeed, the title suggests a more focused discussion than what the book contains. ‘Aspects of Celtic Cosmology and the Otherworld’ would have been more appropriate.

Chapter 1, about pre-Christian Celtic cosmogonic traditions, attempts to present aspects such as time, vertical and horizontal orientation, floods and shape-shifting sages in a systematic and coherent manner. There is a huge scope to juggle here and the reader needs to concentrate in order to follow the line of thought. The discussion of the vertical cosmos seems succinct and tight.

Chapter 2 is an attempt to clarify what aspects of a native cosmogonic narrative might be recovered from the extant sources. The discussion on the nature of the written sources seems good and nuanced, although brief. The impression here is that the author is careful and perceptive in her approach. The disentanglement of native names from Biblical names results in a long, very detailed list that makes for rather dense reading.

Chapter 3 deals with cosmological significance lodged in annual festivals and the seasons. A great deal of late-recorded folk traditions is brought in seemingly as a matter of course. It is plausible that similar rituals and activities may have taken place during pre-Christian times, but the argument is not clearly made and the reader is asked to take 18th and 19th-century customs as evidence of ancient cosmological beliefs.

Chapter 4 explores the possible derivations of the goddess-name Danu and discusses whether Anu and Danu were originally the same. It is exciting to see so many possible interpretations laid out together, but to the reader who is not already familiar with Celtic myth it may well confuse as much as enlighten.

In chapter 5, the author compares the Irish *Táin Bó Fróech* and episodes from Arthurian material on Gwenhwyfar (Guinevere), convincingly establishing the argument that Findabair and Gwenhwyfar (whose names are etymological cognates) are both manifestations of Lady Sovereignty who has, in later tradition, come to be regarded as a mortal woman. This is one of the most successful chapters of the book.

In chapter 6, the author presents a translation of *Táin Bó Flidais* and a convincing interpretation of the main female character, Flidais, as a manifestation of Lady Sovereignty. She then explores Flidais' links to cattle and to wild animals. The chapter constitutes a detailed investigation of a figure normally considered minor, which makes for interesting and fresh reading, although the array of sources referred to may well seem bewildering.

Chapter 7 opens the book's third and least successful section. Linking 17th-century witch-trials in Guernsey to Iron Age burials in the same island requires more justification than the author gives it. Also the interpretation of the Larzac inscription comes across as speculative.

Chapter 8 concerns the druid Mug Roith. A long summary of the tale *Forbhais Droma Dámhghaire* leads into an analysis of the roles of Mug Roith and his daughter Tlachtga. The chapter draws on an overwhelming amount of literature, folklore and archaeology covering a truly extensive period of time. There is much that is good about this; but unfortunately it comes at the cost of a clear focus.

Chapter 9 concerns bodies of water linked to sacred knowledge. It appears to be a survey more than anything else.

Generally, literary sources are referred to without much discussion of their provenance or the circumstances of their making. Plutarch, Plato and Isidore of Seville appear alongside *Lebor Gabála Érenn*, Egerton 92 and the Yellow Book of Lecan as sources whose familiarity to the reader is taken for granted. The same goes for a whole range of Early Irish narratives. There is inconsistency in the language of citations which may appear in the original as well as in English translation or only in English translation - but they may also appear only in Irish. In chapters 1 and 4, the notes fall out of kilter so that the correct note is one number ahead or behind the numbering.

The overall impression is that the book is partially successful in presenting some rather fresh ideas, but is also lacking in focus and reader-orientation. The author shows much willingness to speculate that does not often lead beyond asking 'what if?' A worrying aspect is the author's willingness to rely on secondary source materials; e.g. the discussion of Nerthus (p. 156) does not refer directly to an edition of Tacitus' text

(which is not difficult to access), but to a general and somewhat outdated introduction to Norse mythology. Although the introduction suggests that the aim is to reach both the academic and the general reader, my impression is that this is clearly for readers already well versed in Celtic traditions and thus able to decode the range of tacit assumptions that run through the book. There is fresh, useful thinking to be found here, but it requires a critical eye to remove some packaging.

Karen Bek-Pedersen

Obituary:

Dean A. Miller (1931-2019)

EMILY LYLE AND LOUISE S. MILNE

Dean A. Miller, born 29 July 1931, died at his home in Chicago 28 January 2019. He will be much missed from our conferences.

A specialist in Byzantine history, his first contribution was “Byzantine Sovereignty and Feminine Potencies”, a paper presented at the *Women and Sovereignty* conference held at St Andrews in 1990; on which occasion he was accompanied by his wife, Martha Swift, who shared with him his enjoyment of visits to Scotland.

After retiring from his post as Professor of History at the University of Rochester in 1993, Dean continued a very active life of scholarship with a special focus on the work of Georges Dumézil on tripartition, and he even contributed a paper, “Trisecting Trifunctionality: Multiplying and Dividing Dumézil”, to one of the society’s conferences. This was later published in *Shadow* (Vol. 9, 1992).

He was a valuable part of the *Cosmos* journal. His 1990 St Andrews paper was included in the conference’s proceedings, published in the *Women and Sovereignty* issue (Vol. 7, 1992). This paper was followed over the years by a number of subsequent contributions: “Architectural Idolatry: Royal Control of Space, Time and Sacrality” (Vol 12, No.2, 1996); “Mysteries of Duality” (Vol 14, No.1, 1998); “King and Warrior-Hero in Ritual Time” (Vol 18, 2002); “The Mórríoghán and Her Indo-European War-Goddess Cohorts” (Vol 28, 2012, *Emily Lyle 80th Birthday Tribute Issue*). Most recently, he contributed a piece titled “Slave and Hero: Unexpected Congruences in Familial and Sexual Relations” (Vol. 31, 2015) in which he discusses the structural convergence of the Hero and Slave figures in Indo-European stories, specifically Classical, Irish, and Norse.

He was also a contributor to *Jahrbucher fuer Geschichte Osteuropas*, *Byzantinoslavice*, *Greek Orthodox Review*, *Annales*, *ESC*, and *Byzantion*. He contributed reviews to *American Historical Review*, *Slavic Review*, and *Social Studies*.

When the Traditional Cosmology Society held a joint conference with the International Association for Comparative Mythology at Edinburgh in 2007, Dean prepared a selection of the contributions for the *Journal of Indo-European Studies*, of which he was an editor. He was one of the

small group of scholars who held a Cosmos Fellowship, and we were fortunate to have his friendly presence and warm support over many years. Among his fine contributions to scholarship was a major study entitled *The Epic Hero* (2000). His life's work was celebrated in a Festschrift that appeared in volume 34 of the journal *Ollodagos* (2019).

About Cosmos

Cosmos is the journal of The Traditional Cosmology Society and is published annually in Edinburgh.

The annual subscription is £20 or the equivalent in other currencies (or £15 for subscribers within the UK). Particulars about payment may be found on the website: www.tradcos.co.uk/ or at www.facebook.com/TradCos/

The website also carries information about back issues of the journal and about related conferences.

Cosmos is concerned with exploring myth, religion and cosmology across cultural and disciplinary boundaries and with increasing understanding of world views in the past and present. We welcome all academic papers that contribute to our better knowledge about mythology, folk beliefs and legends, folktales, rituals, music, art and crafts etc. from all over the world, and our better understanding of their underlying symbolic meanings, applying any method, from comparative, structural researches to presentations of fieldwork, research discoveries, and so on.

Papers are invited from all disciplines including, but not limited to, ethnology, anthropology, folklore studies, history, art history, archaeology, philology, literature, theology, medicine, psychology, musicology etc. While papers on any part of the world's mythological issues are welcomed, we would especially like to encourage more authors dealing with European mythology and worldview to submit their papers. This information is also on our website: www.tradcos.co.uk. Submissions to the journal should be in English and will be peer reviewed. Please send your submission in Word document, with minimal formatting:

either by email attachment to admin@tradcos.co.uk

or on a CD to Dr Louise S Milne, School of Art, Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh, Lauriston Place, Edinburgh, EH3 9DF, Scotland, United Kingdom.

For instructions to the author, see the inside back cover of the issue, as well as the website.

Notes for Contributors

Unless otherwise agreed with the editor, manuscripts should approximate 30,000 to 45,000 characters or 4000 to 7000 words, including endnotes and bibliography. Please add an abstract (1000-1500 characters), keywords (5-10) and a brief biographical note (your name and surname, institutional affiliation, and a contact address (optional). Reviews should ordinarily be around 800-1000 words unless otherwise arranged with the review editor.

Papers are accepted in any word-processing format such as MS Word. Only texts containing specific letters, not common in Times New Roman (letters or words in Greek, Cyrillic, Arabic etc.), should be accompanied by a hard copy or scan of the manuscript.

Please send us a text proof-edited by a native English speaker as the editor will have limited resources for proof-reading. Spelling and punctuation should follow British English conventions.

Please remove all styling and formatting except italics. Paragraphs should be separated by a single return, no hard tabs should be included. Any additional formatting required can be indicated in-text, e.g. <quote>.

Regarding illustrations, it is the responsibility of the individual author to ensure that they have permission to use the relevant material.

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The references should be set out as in the following examples. For more sample citations and specific cases, please refer to the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition, section 14.

Journal articles:

Dillon, Myles. 1947. "The Archaism of Irish Tradition." *Proceedings of the British Academy* 33 (1): 245-64.

Articles or chapters in edited volumes:

MacCana, Proinsias. 1995. "Mythology and the Oral Tradition: Ireland." In *The Celtic World*, edited by Miranda Jane Green, 779-84. London: Routledge.

Edited books:

Needham, Rodney, ed. 1973. *Right & Left: Essays on Dual Symbolic Classification*. Chicago and London: Chicago University Press.

Books by one author:

Turner, Victor. 1967. *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Books by more authors:

McNeill, John T. and Helena M. Gamer. 1990. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance: a translation of the principal "libri poenitentialis" and selections from related documents*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Internet sources (where available, use a stable URL):

McDonald's Corporation. 2008. "McDonald's Happy Meal Toy Safety Facts." Accessed July 19. <http://www.mcdonalds.com/corp/about/factsheets.html>.

Primary sources (refer to standard verses/chapters/books etc):

O v i d , *A m o r e s* 1 . 7 . 2 7 .
Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 3.2.996b5--8; Plato, *Republic* 360e--361b.

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