

PERSIAN TRADITIONS IN SPAIN

by

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PREFACE

First let me introduce myself. People who know me very well say that I have a mentality which is medieval and not modern, rural and not urban, that I am an "incurable romantic and idealist", and that I have a "peasant mindset". To all of the above I plead guilty, and as the Spanish say, *y a mucha honra*, in other words, I am proud of it.

When one speaks of relations between Spain and Persia or of Persian influences in Spain, most people immediately think of elements which entered the Iberian Peninsula during the long period of Muslim dominance. This theme has been subject of many studies, by Hussein Munis and E. Levi-Provençal among others. For the above reasons, in the present study I am devoting much space to relations or influences which either predate the Muslim Conquest of Spain, which entered independently of said conquest, or, though they may have first entered with the Crescent of Islam, remained long after said Crescent had waned and set. To do a really complete and thorough study of this topic would require a great deal more time and money than I at present have at my disposal. In particular, it would require a long journey through Portugal, Aragon, Catalunya and Valencia, not to mention Iran. I have chosen to devote much time to Toledo, which was capital of Spain in Visigothic times and which is really a synthesis of all cultures, religions and artistic styles which form the threads of the multicolored fabric, part Celtic tartan, part Oriental carpet,

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which is the history of Spain. I have also concentrated to a great degree on Asturias and Galicia. These regions were perhaps the least affected of all by the Muslim Conquest. Indeed, were it not for historical records there would be nothing to indicate that said conquest even took place in this Northwest corner of Spain. Yet, in the fields of art and architecture Sassanian influences were very strong indeed. Old Castile and Leon, lacerated for so long by endless border wars and border raids (of the men of Leon and Old Castile one might say what Sir Walter Scott said of the Vikings: "They had a breastplate for a cradle and were fed from a blade.") were unable to develop their own artistic and architectural styles. The art and architecture of Leon and Old Castile in the Middle Ages is simply one aspect of the European Romanesque and Gothic styles, lightly touched by Mozarab, Muslim and Mudejar influences. In the field of literature I have concentrated on epic poetry simply because in the field of lyric verse it is practically impossible to determine what may be of Persian derivation and what is of Celtic and/or Provencal inspiration. Nevertheless, as we shall see, I have not completely neglected the lyric.

The Arabic language has no epic tradition, and therefore neither the Arabs nor their language could be considered as likely intermediaries between the epic traditions of Iran and Old Castile. I hope to demonstrate that one is really on quite firm ground when speaking of Iranian elements in the Castilian epic tradition. Although here one encounters the problem of how to

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distinguish between what is the result of Iranian influences and what proceeds from the strong Celtic substratum of Old Castile, I believe that it can be shown that there are a number of elements which the Castilian Epic shares only and exclusively with the Persian Epic.

I wish to thank all my friends in Galicia, Asturias, Andalusia, Extremadura, Old Castile and Leon for all the help and kindness which I received, and also to thank the Illustrious Mozarabic Community of Toledo for the kindness and hospitality which I received during the 1st International Congress of Mozarabic Studies, during which I was able to obtain photos of Toledo and its environs which help to illustrate this study. I also wish to thank the Southwestern College of Business of Middletown, Ohio and the Middletown Branch of Miami University (Ohio) for their kindness in allowing me to use their personal computers.

I also wish to dedicate this book to the memory of the late Walter Havighurst, my professor of creative writing at the University of Miami of Ohio. It was Professor Havighurst who really taught me the art of composition in English. In particular, it was Professor Havighurst's favorite motto, ***Do not tell, show,*** which has guided me in my compositions, both fiction and non-fiction, as I recall several times in the present work.

CHAPTER I - GENERAL

Many people have noted the parallels and similarities between Persia and Spain. Wilfrid Blunt (1) says that the Persians are the Spaniards of the Middle East and that both Spaniards and Persians are proud, hospitable and procrastinating. Sr. Eugenio Montes, in an article in the Madrid newspaper ABC in honor of the 2500th anniversary of the founding of the Persian Empire, says: "Persia is the Spain of Asia, Spain is the Persia of the West." Reading this, one friend commented that it is no coincidence that Eugenio Montes is a Gallego, i.e., from Galicia. We will have more to say of this later.

What, one may ask, would cause such distinguished gentlemen as Mr. Blunt and Sr. Montes to affirm such close relations between two countries so distant one from the other? There are many reasons, some of which neither of these two distinguished men of letters seem to be aware.

The geographical similarities between the Iberian Peninsula and the Iranian Plateau are obvious, though of course the Iranian Plateau is on a much larger scale. Both are very largely cut off from the continents of which they form a part by high, rugged mountain ranges; both have a high, cold and somewhat barren central plateau, broken in places by mountains. In the province of Mazanderan one has the Iranian equivalent of the lush, green Cantabrian Coast (even the typical barns of Mazanderan resemble those of Asturias and Santander) in Persian Azerbaijan the

equivalent of the wheat plains of Leon. In the Persian Gulf Coast one has the equivalent of the Southern Mediterranean Coast of Spain. The resemblances are not purely geographical; there are also profound ethnic and historical parallels and similarities.

Spain has a very strong Celtic heritage. At one time or another the Celts penetrated the entire Peninsula and strongly occupied its Western 75 per cent. The Celts were of course never expelled and in spite of Roman, Germanic and Semitic superstrata left a rich heritage to their descendants. In Spain Celtic influences are visible in physical types (particularly in Asturias, Leon and Old Castile), music, artistic and literary forms, festivals, folklore, spiritual values, temperament and general character traits. As we shall see, in Medieval Spain, both Christian and Muslim, poets composed verse using versification forms of Celtic origin, though writing in Latin, Romance (by "Romance" I refer to the language called in Arabic *Lisan al-Ajjam*, i.e., "the non-Arabic Language"), Classical Arabic, Vulgar Arabic, Hebrew, Catalan, Gallego-Portuguese, Aragonese and Castilian, and sang them to melodies based on Celtic musical modes. No one who has any knowledge of Celtic Studies has the slightest doubt as to the truth of what I am saying, not anyone who has any first-hand knowledge of Spain on the one hand and Celtic countries such as Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Brittany on the other. Celtic elements are present in the phonetics, grammar and vocabulary of all the Romance languages of the Peninsula. So powerful is the Celtic element in Spain that many

Spaniards of my acquaintance feel that Spain should be considered as one of the Celtic countries along with Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Brittany, arguing that a Spaniard does not cease to be a Celt because he speaks a Romance language any more than an Irishman ceases to be a Celt because he speaks English. It should never be forgotten that Spain is a land of heather as well as olive trees, a land of bagpipes as well as guitars, and that this is true of Muslim Spain as well as Christian Spain.

Before we go any further, some things need to be clarified. In this work I will use the term "Aryan" with a certain frequency, so let us define our terms, Firstly, remember your Aristotle; all Aryans are Indo-Europeans, but not all Indo-Europeans are Aryans. The term "Aryan" in reality can be accurately applied to three, and only three Indo-European peoples, i.e., the Indo-Aryans, the Iranians, and the Celts. The word *Arya* or *Aryan* is Sanskrit. The name *Iran* means "Land of the Aryans", as does *Erinn*, the native Celtic word for "Ireland" (the name *Ireland* is a Viking word), and name "Aryan" is found in numerous ancient Celtic place names and tribal names, as we shall demonstrate. Finally, as we shall also demonstrate, the Indo-Aryans, Iranians and Celts have so many special affinities in common to warrant lumping them together as a sub-grouping within the larger Indo-European context. When I use the word or name "Aryan", I refer only to the Indo-Aryans, Iranians and Celts, never to the Germanic peoples. The ancient Germanic peoples did not know the name or word "Aryan", and never called themselves

by this name.

Hitler was both an ignoramus and a congenital liar, who claimed that the Germanic peoples are "pure Aryans", when, in reality, they are not Aryans at all; the Germanic peoples are no more "pure Aryans" than they are "pure Albanians" (Albanians are Indo-Europeans, but not Aryans). Many people who proclaim themselves to be "intellectuals" use the word "Aryan" as a synonym for the Germanic peoples, as did Hitler; in this they are showing themselves to be "pseudo-intellectuals". Immediately some of these pseudo-intellectuals will try to defend themselves by saying that they are not knowledgeable in Indo-European studies, that it is not their field. Now, there is a word for people who try to pontificate on that of which they know nothing: that word is "fool". There is a Cajun expression for people of this sort: "alligators". Why? Because an alligator has an enormous mouth and a very tiny brain. Finally, as we shall see, the living language closest to the original Indo-European language is Lithuanian, while the country with the largest percentage of natural blondes is Lithuania; but the Lithuanians are not Germanic. So, from every possible point of view, Hitler's claim that the Germanic peoples are "pure Aryans", or even "Aryans" at all, is arrant nonsense, the ravings of a liar and an ignorant fool.

Those self-proclaimed "intellectuals" who continue to use the word "Aryan" in the sense in which it was used by Hitler not only show themselves to be ignorant louts, but also give Hitler

credit for an intellectual acumen which he totally lacked. Perhaps this is not surprising.

Hitler was very much a "progressive", a man of the extreme left, a true son of the so-called "Enlightenment". One could hardly find a more "leftist" or "progressive" name than "National Socialist German Workers' Party". Yes, Hitler was very much a socialist; he repeatedly said "I am a fanatical socialist", and praised the advantages of a command economy in contrast to private enterprise. Hitler was also anti-Catholic, anti-aristocratic, anti-monarchist, and was very big indeed on "separation of church and state". By at least indirectly attributing to Hitler an intellectual acumen of which he was totally lacking, these "progressive" pseudo-intellectuals also reveal their secret love and admiration for Hitler.

In summary, whenever I use the word "Aryan", I refer only to the Indo-Aryans, the Iranians and the Celts, never to the Germanic peoples.

There is a song about Ireland, commercial, not traditional, whose last strophe says:

So they (the angels) sprinkled it with stardust
Just to make the shamrocks grow
'Tis the only place you'll find them
No matter where you go
Then they sprinkled it with silver
Just to make the lakes so grand
And when they had it finished
Sure they called it Ireland.

Now, as we said above, the native Celtic name of Ireland is **Erinn**, more modern Gaelic **Erin**, while the name "Ireland" is a

Viking word. Now, to a true Aryan, Celtic son of the ancient Erin, the idea that the angels would give a Viking name to the Holy Emerald Isle is simply intolerable, as is anything which could conceivably seem to suggest that the Vikings were angels. So, the above song should be boycotted by all sons of the ancient Erin, as well as all Celts and those sympathetic to the Celts, who consider themselves to be at least partly Celtic by blood and heritage, which includes the majority of the Spanish and Portuguese, as well as a great many Frenchmen. The angels are not Vikings, nor would they give a Viking name to the ancient Erin, the Land of the Aryans. And the Vikings, being Germanic, were NOT Aryans.

One of the great enigmas of Indo-European studies is the precise nature of the relation between the Celts and the Indo-Iranian peoples. Specialists in the fields of religion, art, customs and literary forms tend to consider the Celts as an Eastern Aryan people migrated to the West, while those whose specialty is more strictly linguistic tend to affirm that the Celts are a Western people akin to the Italic peoples. There are excellent reasons to question this.

For many years it has been generally believed in scholarly circles that the Celtic languages are most closely related to the Italic languages. This has now been put into grave doubt, in fact it now appears to be almost certainly in error. We shall deal with

this at some length, as it is of crucial importance to our study.

Crucial to our thesis are the Illyrians, who, together with the Thracians and Dacians, form the "bedrock" of the population of the northern part of the Balkan Peninsula and present day Rumania.

Says Hans Krahe:

"The Illyrian languages, which at one time were spoken in a vast area from the Baltic Sea to the Mediterranean and from Western Europe to Asia Minor, something which has been proven by a study of place names. The Illyrian languages achieved such a vast extension thanks to a great movement which began in the 13th century BC, and which is commonly referred to as the "Aegean migration", and whose principal impulse was that of the Illyrians themselves. The linguistic remains of the Illyrian language which have come down to us are meagre, compared with that which one might expect from its ancient diffusion. Of the two Illyrian dialects spoken in the Appenine Peninsula (Italy), i.e., Messapian in Apulia and Calabria and Venetic in northeastern Italy (from whence comes the name *Venezia*, i.e., "Venice"), several hundred inscriptions of each have come down to us. To these must be added one brief inscription, the only example of the Illyrian language spoken in the (northwestern) Balkan Peninsula. In addition, there survive a great many place names and personal names, and numerous glosses." (2)

Some affirm that the present day Rumanian language, though a Romance language with a Slavic admixture, contains many elements from the Illyrian language and also Dacian or Thracian. Some also believe that the Bulgarian language, though most certainly Slavic - indeed, Old Bulgarian is the basis of Church Slavonic, the most prestigious of all Slavic languages, see Chapter 8 - contains Thracian elements. After all, the Illyrians and Dacians or Thracians are the genetic bedrock of the peoples of the northern

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part of the Balkan Peninsula and present day Rumania.

Hans Krahe continues:

"The Italic languages form the principal linguistic group of the Appenine Peninsula (Italy). These languages are divided into two branches, which differ somewhat among themselves: the Latino-Faliscan branch and the Osco-Umbrian branch. By far the most important language of the Latino-Faliscan branch is, beyond a doubt, Latin, a language initially spoken only in Rome; but which was extended, step by step, along with the advance of Roman power, until it became a universal language. Latin (as is also true of its near relative, Faliscan, ancient language of Falerii, a city of southeastern Etruria) is known to us beginning in the 6th century BC, first in inscriptions,, and later in the extensive Latin literature. ...

The Osco-Umbrian branch, known only from inscriptions, includes the dialect of the Oscans (who lived mainly in Samnia and Comperia), and that of the Umbrians (Umbria), of the Volscians in the southern part of Lazio, as well as the "Sabelican" peoples (Sabines, Pelignians, Marsians, etcetera. This whole group of Osco-Umbrian languages disappeared in antiquity, obliterated by the expansive force of Latin. It very probable, on the other hand, that these two major divisions of the so-called "Italic" languages represent two Indo-European languages originally independent, whose common features were developed en the Appenine Peninsula because of geographic proximity." (3)

We continue with Hans Krahe:

"We may speak of an ancient linguistic unity Italo-Celtic, but today we see that this thesis is doubtful in many respects. ...

Today we cannot compare the Italic family or linguistic trunk with the Celtic without certain reservations.: the Latino-Faliscan branch of the Italic languages has connections with Old Irish or Old Gaelic and Manx (i.e., Celtic languages of the "Q"), while the Osco-Umbrian branch of the Italic languages has connections with the Britannic branch of the Celtic languages (i.e., Gaulish, Welsh, Breton and Cornish, which are Celtic languages of the "P"). Also, there exists the strong possibility that these relations between the different Italic languages and the Celtic languages are the result, NOT of mutual affinities, mainly geneological, but rather to the influence of the

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Illyrian languages, which influence is common to both the Italic family and the Celtic family." (4)

As we have said above, anyone with the most superficial knowledge of Indo-European linguistics knows of the famous distinction between *centum* and *satem*, *centum* being the word for one hundred in Latin, *satem* being the word for one hundred in Avestan, *satam* in Vedic Sanskrit. This division into *centum* and *satem* or *satam* has come under attack on several points as being arbitrary, based on too scanty data.

Now, as Hans Krahe has noted, both the Celts and the various Italic peoples were linguistically influenced by close and prolonged contact with the Illyrians. As was noted above, the Illyrians once occupied large parts of the Italian Peninsula. Some believe that the Etruscan language was Illyrian, and therefore Indo-European. Though the present knowledge of the Etruscan language is insufficient to prove or disprove this assertion, it is far more plausible than the currently fashionable theory according to which the Etruscans were some mysterious non-Indo-European people who spoke a language unrelated to any other, somehow inserted into a place where they were encircled on all sides by Indo-European peoples.

Henri Hubert defined the Celts thusly:

"Aryan tribesmen who crossed half the world."

Now, the Celts in their long migrations were in close and prolonged contact with the Illyrians, Thracians and Dacians in the northern part of the Balkan Peninsula and in modern day Rumania.

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The Celtic tradition affirms this. Also Celtic place names are abundant in the northern Balkan Peninsula and Rumania. In

historic times there were tribes in said area of mixed Celtic-Illyrian origin, and Celtic cultural elements - for example, in reference to music and artistic motifs - which survive in said area to this day. We know enough about the Illyrian and Dacian or Thracian languages to know that they were Indo-European languages of the *centum* branch. There is the enigma that the Celtic languages appear to be of the *centum* branch of the Indo-European languages, but in other respects the Celts appear to be most closely kin to peoples of the *satem* or *satam* branch, i.e., Iranians, Indo-Aryans, Slavs and Balts. Indeed, as we shall demonstrate, there is are excellent reasons to lump the Indo-Aryans, Iranians and Celts into a special division of within the larger Indo-European group called "Aryans". Not only is this due to certain clearly Aryan place names and tribal names among the ancient Celts, but also to a multitude of special affinities between Indo-Aryans, Iranians and Celts, which we shall demonstrate in the present work.

Hans Krahe just may have given the key to this enigma; the Celtic languages were originally of the *satem* or *satam* branch of the Indo-European languages, but due to prolonged contact with Illyrians, Thracians and Dacians and acquired enough *centum* elements so that the *satem* or *satam* origin of their languages became obscured, though by no means completely hidden or obliterated. After all, the *satem-centum* division involves

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exclusively a few phonetic elements, which has caused some people to conclude that said division is much too arbitrary, based on too

scanty data, too narrow a basis.

This is, of course, only an opinion, and people whom I like and respect very much hold different points of view on this topic, although one person accused me of suffering from something called "Ukrainian alcoholic psychosis, the result of imbibing quantities of *horlika* and *slivovitz*", but, as we shall see in the following pages, my theory concerning special affinities and relationships between the Celts on the one hand and the Iranian peoples on the other has a rock-solid basis, and that my theory that the Celtic languages were originally of the *satem* or *centum* division of the Indo-European languages, but that this became obscured though not completely hidden or obliterated by prolonged contact with the Illyrians, the Dacians and Thracians in the northern part of the Balkan Peninsula, whose languages were of the *centum* division of the Indo-European languages would seem to receive support from Christopher I. Beckwith.

In the following pages I will be obliged to use the term *Aryan*. Until the time of Hitler, "Aryan" was a perfectly honorable word, though at times misused. Hitler was a buffoon. Charlie Chaplin tried to satirize Hitler in the film "The Great Dictator", but it was not a success for the following reason. Charlie Chaplin's film failed in its objective for a simple reason: it is not possible to satirize someone who is already a caricature. Hitler was an ignorant lout, a muddleheaded gasbag

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and a congenital liar.

Firstly, many people consider the terms "Indo-European" and

"Aryan" to be synonymous and interchangeable; this is simply not true. Remember Aristotle when he said: "All Greeks are men, but not all men are Greeks". In the same manner, "Indo-European" is a much broader term than "Aryan"; all Aryans are Indo-Europeans, but not all Indo-Europeans are Aryans. In fact, **three, and only three Indo-European peoples ever referred to themselves as "Aryans", i.e., the Indo-Aryans, the Iranians and the Celts.** The Germanic languages did not even have a word for "Aryan" until they borrowed the word from Sanskrit in the 19th century. Therefore, as we have noted above, the Germanic peoples, though Indo-Europeans, are not Aryans at all, or, to put it another way, **THE TERM "ARYAN" HAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH THE GERMANIC PEOPLES.** Also, the living language closest to the original Indo-European language is Lithuanian, and the country with the highest percentage of natural blonds is Lithuania, but the Lithuanians are not Germanic. So, from every possible point of view, for Hitler to say that the Germanic peoples are "pure Aryans" is sheer idiocy, as the Germanic peoples are not Aryans at all. For Hitler to refer to the Germanic peoples as "pure Aryans" is the purest ignorance and idiocy, sheer buffoonery, as the Germanic peoples are not Aryans at all. Yet, as we have seen, it is surprising how many people, including some who consider themselves to be "sophisticated" or "learned", have accepted Hitler's definition of the word "Aryan", and thus shown themselves to be as ignorant

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and muddleheaded as Hitler, and, in a certain sense, a follower of his. Obviously, such self-proclaimed "intellectuals" are really

pseudo-intellectuals, betraying their ignorance. They may say that Indo-European philology is not their field, but there is a word for those who try to pontificate on that of which they know nothing: that word is "fool". "Aryan" is a perfectly honorable word, and the idiocies of a buffoon and a muddleheaded gasbag do not change this, except in the case of those so weak-minded as to be influenced by the words of Hitler. By so doing, said pseudo-intellectuals give Hitler credit for learning which he did not possess. Paradoxically, those who accuse me of being a National Socialist (call Nazi'ism by its correct name) because I use the word "Aryan" as it should be used, are proclaiming themselves to be followers of Hitler, to be as ignorant and muddleheaded as he was.

Perhaps this is not so strange. After all, Hitler was very much a leftist, a "progressive", a true son of the so-called "Enlightenment". One could hardly find a name more leftist than "National Socialist German Workers' Party", which is the real name of the Nazi party, "Nazi" being a sort of shorthand. Hitler repeatedly said: "I am a fanatical socialist", he never tired of expounding on the advantages of a command economy over private enterprise. Hitler was anti-Catholic, anti-aristocrat, anti-monarchist, and, like Lenin, he was very big indeed on separation of church and state. So, it is no surprise that "progressive" so-called "intellectuals" should betray a secret love for

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Hitler, their fellow leftist, and give him credit for learning which he did not merit.

What no one questions is that there does indeed exist some sort of special relationship between the Celts and the Indo-Iranian peoples. The controversy is in reference to the precise nature of this relation, not as to its existence.

A detailed study of the relation between the Celts and the Indo-Iranian peoples would lead us too far astray from our main topic. Nevertheless, I feel it necessary to at least touch on this particular point, due to its importance to our main study.

The name "Ireland" is not the real name of the Emerald Isle, whose native, Celtic name is **Erinn**, which, like "Iran", means "land of the Aryans". Also, the name "Aryan" appears in a great many ancient Celtic place names and tribal names, as we shall see. In addition, as we shall also see, Indo-Aryans, Iranians and Celts have so many special affinities as to warrant lumping them together into a special division of the Indo-European peoples, which would, of course, be "the Aryans".

There is a song, commercial, not an authentic Irish traditional song, whose last strophe says:

Then they (the angels) sprinkled it with stardust
Just to make the shamrocks grow
'Tis the only place you'll find them
No matter where you go
Then they sprinkled it with silver
Just to make the lakes so grand
And when they had it finished,
Sure they called it "Ireland".

Now, as we said above, the true native, Celtic name for

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Ireland is **Erinn**, or, in more modern Gaelic **Erin**; "Ireland" is a Viking word. Now, to any Aryan, Celtic son of the ancient Erinn,

to say that the angels gave the Holy Emerald Isle by a Viking name is enough to give him apoplexy, not to mention to even remotely insinuate that the Vikings were angels is enough to rouse him to fury. Not only every Irishman, but every Celt and indeed everyone who is sympathetic towards the Celts and/or thinks of himself as being partly Celtic by Blood and heritage - as do the majority of Spaniards and Portuguese and a great number of Frenchmen - should boycott the above-mentioned song as an insult and an offense.

Recently there has appeared a book by Christopher I. Beckwith titled: Empires of the Silk Road. One of the first topics dealt with by said book is the origin and dispersion of the Indo-European peoples. When we first encounter the Indo-European peoples, they are chariot riders or chariot warriors. The Irish epics leave no doubt that the Celts were chariot warriors, and, as anyone who has read the works of Roman historians, including Julius Caesar, the Celts continued to use chariots in war even as late as their wars against the Romans. We shall open with a tribute to the chariot warriors found in the Rig Veda. Below is a dialogue of the god Indra with his friends, the *Marut* chariot warriors. *Ahi* is the snake-demon enemy, the dragon of many Central Eurasian epics:

Indra speaks:

Where, o Maruts, was that custom with you, when you left
me alone in the killing of Ahi? I indeed am
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terrible, powerful, strong; I escaped from the blows of
every enemy

The Maruts speak:

Thou hast achieved much with us as companions. With equal valor, o hero! Let us achieve then many things, o thou most powerful, o Indra! Whatever we, o Maruts, wish with our mind.

[Indra boasts and complains some more. The Maruts then praise him.]

Indra speaks:

O Maruts, now your praise has pleased me, the glorious hymn which you have made for me, ye men - for me, for Indra, for the joyful hero, as friends for a friend. (5)

We continue with the Maruts, the chariot warriors of the Rig

Veda:

Harness the red mares to the chariot!
Harness to the chariots the ruddy ones!
Harness the two fast yellow ones to the chariot pole,
Fasten the best at pulling the pole, to draw it.
And was this thundering red charger
Put here just to be admired?
Don't let him cause you any dely, o Maruts
In your chariots! Spur him on! (6)

Give those called *Maruts* a Celtic name, and the above could be a quotation from the Irish epics.

Christopher I. Beckwith says:

THE FIRST CENTRAL EURASIANS

"The Central Eurasian Culture Complex, which dominated much of Eurasia for nearly four millennia, developed among a people known only from historical linguistics: the Proto-Indo-Europeans. Because the precise location of their homeland is not known for certain, scholars working in various areas of cultural history have attempted to develop a model of the Indo-European homeland and of Indo-European culture based on information derived from historical linguistics. The words shared by the languages and cultures of Indo-European peoples in distant areas of Eurasia constitute evidence that the things they refer to are the shared

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inheritance of their Proto-Indo-European ancestors. Based on words referring to flora, fauna, and other things, as well as on archaeology and historical sources, it has been concluded that the Proto-Indo-European homeland was in Central Eurasia, specifically in the mixed steppe-forest zone between the southern

Ural Mountains, the North Caucasus, and the Black Sea." (7)

It should be obvious that those who say that Central Europe is the original homeland of the Indo-European peoples are badly mistaken, while those who insist on Northern Europe as the original homeland of the Indo-European peoples are, consciously or not, influenced by Hitler and his National Socialism.

While in India, I made the acquaintance of certain Hindu scholars who insisted that North India, particularly the Punjab, is the true original homeland of the Indo-European peoples. Sadly for said Hindu scholars, their theory lacks any proofs of any kind, and totally lacks objectivity: like the theory of Hitler and his National Socialists which places the original homeland of the Indo-European peoples in Northern Europe, perhaps Scandinavia, the theory of the above-mentioned Hindu scholars is tendentious and ideological rather than objective.

Christopher I. Beckwith continues:

"About four thousand years ago Indo-European-speaking peoples began migrating from that homeland. They spread across most of the Eurasian continent during the second millennium BC and developed into the historically attested Indo-European peoples by dominating and mixing with the native peoples of the lands into which they migrated.

Their migration out of Central Eurasia proper appears to have taken place in three distinct stages. The initial movement or first wave occurred at the very end of the third millennium, and the third wave late in the second millennium or beginning of the first

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millennium BC, but the most important was the second wave, around the seventeenth century BC, in which Indo-European-speaking peoples established themselves in parts of Europe, the Near East, India, and (even) China, as well as within Central Eurasia itself. The migrations were not organized and consisted not of mass movements of people but of individual clan groups or, perhaps more

likely, warrior bands. They seem first to have fought for their neighbors as mercenaries and only later took over. The Indo-Europeans spoke more or less the same language, but in settling in their new homes they took local wives who spoke non-Indo-European languages; within a generation or two the local *creoles* they developed became new Indo-European daughter languages.

By the beginning of the first millennium BC much of Eurasia had already been Indo-Europeanized, and most of the rest of it had come under very heavy Indo-European cultural and linguistic influence. The millennium-long movement constitutes the First Central Eurasian Conquest of Eurasia. (8)

I must confess that I am greatly puzzled by Mr. Beckwith's use of the term *creole*. Said word, which is *creole* in French and *criollo* in Spanish, originally meant a white person born in the Western Hemisphere; both the French version, *creole*, and the Spanish version *criollo* are still used in exactly this sense in southern U.S.A., while the Spanish version, *criollo*, is still used in exactly this sense wherever Spanish is spoken, and whenever I use either the French or Spanish version, that is exactly what I mean, never anything else. I cannot help but suspect that people of Northern U.S.A., or *Yankees*, began the misuse of the word *creole* or *criollo* in an attempt to cast aspersions on white Southerners. What Mr. Beckwith means when he uses the word *creole* (I have never seen him use the Spanish version) I really do not know. Note that I am not insinuating that Mr. Beckwith is attempting to cast aspersions on white Southerners, as did those

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who, well over a century and a half ago, who began this abuse of language with very bad intentions; to accuse Mr. Beckwith of this would be a gross anachronism.

The Russian word for "creole" is *kreol*, obviously a

transcription of the French word, while the name for mix bloods or half-castes is *metis*.

In Alaska during the Russian colonial period, there were many people whose fathers were Russian or Ukrainian and whose mothers were Alaska natives, Aleuts, Inuits or Amerindians, especially Tlingit, a large, coastal tribe who speak a language of the Athabaskan or Na Dene family. The officials of the Tsar during the Russian period in Alaska inaccurately designated these people as *kreoli*, which caused confusion as the same word was also used to designate people born in Alaska of pure Russian or Ukrainian parentage. The Tsar and his officials were well aware that referring to people of mixed blood as *kreoli* was not accurate. However, in many languages, including English and Spanish, the word for mix bloods or half-castes has a certain pejorative connotation, even though the intention in using said term is purely descriptive, with no derogatory connotation. So, the Tsar and his officials used the *kreol* to refer not only to people of pure Russian or Ukrainian parentage born in Alaska, but also to people whose fathers were Russian or Ukainian, but whose mothers were Alaska natives, whether Aleut, Inuit or Amerindian, in order to indicate that said people of mixed blood were the social equals of people of pure Russian or Ukrainian parentage, *kreoli* in the

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exact meaning of the word. Of course, on an unofficial level, *kreoli* was used to refer to people of pure Russian or Ukrainian blood, while those of mixed Russian-Alaskan Native parentage were called *metis*. This was not necessarily with any pejorative

intent, but merely for the sake of precision, to avoid confusion.

During the Russian period, the Russians had an important trading post at Nulato in the Yukon valley. Today many visitors to the Nulato area comment on how strange it seems that so many of the local Amerindians have fiery, flaming red hair and curiously Caucasian features. If I remember correctly, several decades ago "Miss Alaska" was an Amerindian girl from the Nulato area; she was a strikingly beautiful girl with almost totally Slavic features.

Mr. Beckwith continues:

THE INDO-EUROPEAN DIASPORA

"Proto-Indo-European, when still a unified language, was necessarily spoken in a small region with few or no significant dialect differences. There seems to be no linguistically acceptable reason to posit the breakup of the language any earlier than shortly before the first Indo-European daughter languages and their speakers are attested in the historical record about four thousand years ago. The traditional idea, still generally believed, has the breakup occurring due to glacially slow internal change over time from a unity some six or seven millennia ago. "In view of the great divergence among the languages of our earliest materials, we can scarcely place the community of speakers of Proto-Indo-European later than the early part of the fourth millennium BC." This would make Indo-European typologically unique among all the many thousands of known languages in the world. The idea must be rejected. By contrast, the view of the early Indo-Europeanists, who suggested a period around four millennia ago, is supported by the available data,

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including typology, and also corresponds to the younger end of the dating ranges suggested by several proposals of Indo-Europeanist scholars.

At the time of the Indo-Europeans' departure from their original homeland, it seems that there were still only minor dialect differences among the different tribal groups. Their diaspora, or migrations away from the vicinity of their Central Eurasian homeland, can to some extent be reconstructed on the basis of the linguistic and cultural features they acquired along the

way, also taking into account legendary material, such as Old Indic and Old Iranian textual references to the conquest of foreign peoples and each other, as well as early historical data from the ancient Near East and the typology of ethnolinguistic change in Central Eurasia and vicinity in historically known periods. The following reconstruction represents an attempt to reconcile the linguistic facts with other data.

First of all, the Indo-European speakers spread, from somewhat further north, up to the Caucasus and Black Sea regions, which were already occupied by non-Indo-European peoples. Those who continued on, going much further than the others, are the ancestors of the Tokharians and Anatolians, who share the Group A features and constitute the only known members from what may be called the first wave of emigrants out of Central Eurasia. They are attested in the eastern Tarim Basin and Anatolian Plateau regions at the very end of the third or beginning of the second millennium BC and in the nineteenth century BC, respectively. The Proto-Indo-Europeans are known to have had wagons, but the first wave seems to have left the proximal homeland either before the war chariot per se was developed, or before the Indo-Europeans had learned how to use chariots for war.

Although the Indo-Europeans settled in new lands, in some cases (such as Greece) evidently by conquest, they did not always dominate the local people in the beginning. Instead, they often served the local peoples as mercenary warriors, or came under their domination in general. In either case, the Indo-European migrants - who were mostly men - married local women and, by mixing with them, developed their distinctive creole dialect features. The most influential of the new dialects was Proto-Indo-Iranian, the speakers of which appear to have been influenced linguistically by a non-Indo-European people from whom the Indo-Iranians borrowed their distinctive religious beliefs and practices. The locus of this convergence is increasingly thought to have been the area of the advanced, non-Indo-European-speaking Bactria-Margiana

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Culture centered in what is now northwestern Afghanistan and southern Turkmenistan. The other Indo-Europeans developed different dialects and beliefs under the influence of other non-Indo-European languages and cultures.

After the Proto-Indo-Iranian dialect and culture had formed, the Greek, Italic, Germanic, and Armenian (but NOT Celtic) dialect speakers and some of the Indo-Iranians came under the influence of a non-Indo-European language with a significantly different phonological

system, which introduced the highly distinctive Group B features, as well as the particular features that characterize Proto-Indic and distinguish it from Proto-Iranian. When a long enough period had passed for the Group B linguistic features to have taken hold, the Indians and Iranians seem to have become enemies. The Indo-Europeans of Group B also either acquired the chariot or learned how to use their existing chariot-like vehicles for warfare, as did the Group A Hittites, whose home city, Kanesh, has the earliest archaeological (pictorial) evidence for a chariot-like vehicle in the ancient Near East. This weapon gave the Indo-European peoples a technological edge over their neighbors.

The Iranians subsequently defeated the Indians and chased them to the extremities of Central Eurasia. The second wave of migrations out of the steppe zone and its vicinity then began. It included the peoples who spoke the Group B dialects - Indic, Greek, Italic, Germanic, and Armenian (but, once again, NOT Celtic). The Indo-Europeans of this group did have the war chariot, and when they moved into the areas of the peripheral civilizations in the mid-second millennium BC they had a revolutionary cultural and ethnolinguistic impact on them. They settled in their newly conquered lands and took local wives, whose non-Indo-European languages and cultures had an equally revolutionary impact on the Indo-Europeans, again producing new Indo-European creoles. With the second wave, two more Indo-European peoples - the Old Indic speakers of Mitanni and the Mycenaean Greeks - enter actual recorded history. The second wave had a much greater impact on the Eurasian world than the first wave.

Old Indic and Mycenaean Greek are both first attested in their earliest locations - upper Mesopotamia and the Greek Aegean, respectively - in the middle of the second millennium BC, in similar historical circumstances. The Old Indic linguistic materials are distinctively Indic, not Indo-Iranian,

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while the Shaft Grave culture of Greece, which appears precisely at this time, has been identified with the appearance of the Mycenaean Greeks. The particular closeness of Greek and Indic in certain respects as compared to other Group B languages suggests they may have remained together as a subgroup until shortly before they settled in their respective destinations, but Group B had broken up by this date.

The second-wave period ended with the Iranians dominating all of the Central Eurasian steppe zone and with the Germanic peoples in temperate-zone Central Europe. Because the Germanic peoples largely retained the Central Eurasian Culture Complex, they effectively

enlarged the Central Eurasian cultural area.

*Finally the third wave, or Group C, migrated. It consisted of the Celtic, Baltic (or Lithuanian), Slavic, Albanian, and Iranian peoples, who had remained in the area of the homeland in Central Eurasia proper outside the region inhabited by the Group B peoples. **The Celtic, Albanian, Slavic, and Baltic (or Lithuanian) peoples moved westward, northwestward, and northward away from the Iranians, who nevertheless continued to expand and to dominate them, MOST STRONGLY THE CELTS AND SLAVS.***

At the same time, the Iranians apparently pursued the Indians across the Near East to the Levant (the lands of the eastern Mediterranean littoral), across Iran into India, and perhaps across Eastern Central Asia into China.

The traditional theory that Indo-European developed into its attested daughter languages over many millennia in the Proto-Indo-European homeland is essentially impossible typologically. It has recently been contested, and a more likely "big-bang" type of split proposed instead, such as the one historically attested later for the spread of Turkic and Mongolic. The old theory is essentially disproved also by the fact that, if the Indo-European daughter languages had already been fully developed before the migrations, there would be evidence of early Greek, for example, in Iran, or Russia.; evidence of Germanic in India or Italy; evidence of Tokharian in Greece or Iran, and so on. But there is no such evidence. Leaving aside much later, historically attested migrations, Anatolian is known only from Anatolia, Greek only from Greece, Tokharian only from East Turkistan, Germanic only from northwestern Europe, Armenian only from Armenia, and so

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on. The only possible exception is Old Indic, which is attested first in upper Mesopotamia and the Levant, and later in India. Although it is assumed that the Iranian expansion into Persia is responsible for splitting the Old Indic-speaking people into two attested branches, even in this case there is no evidence for Indic ever having been spoken in Europe, say, or northern Eurasia. Proto-Indo-European was spoken in the Central Eurasian homeland, while the attested daughter languages were spoken in their attested homelands outside it, where they developed as creoles almost instantaneously after their introduction there. The scenario presented here thus accords with typology, the recorded history of language development and spread, and with the actual

attested situation of the Indo-European daughter languages." (9)

So my belief in the special affinities and relationship between the Celts on the one hand and the Iranian peoples on the other was not the result of something called "Ukrainian alcoholic psychosis", but has a rock-solid basis. I stand vindicated. Few things are sweeter than vindication; it is sweeter than orange blossom honey, sweeter than marjoram honey, sweeter than rosemary honey.

Since, thanks to Mr. Beckwith, we have demonstrated that my ideas concerning the special affinities and relationships between the Celts on the one hand and the Iranian peoples on the other have a rock-solid basis, we may now proceed to examine the details of said special affinities and relationships. Also, note that the common observation concerning special affinities between Celts and Slavs has a firm basis. Indo-Aryans, Iranians and Celts (but **NOT**, repeat **NOT** the Germanic peoples) together form the Aryans, a subdivision within the larger Indo-European context.

The goddess known as *Danu, Dana, Danaan, Don, Ana, Anann,*

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Anu, or, in Asturias, *Xana* (pronounced "Shana") is the Celtic mother goddess *par excellence*. (10) She has an obvious affinities with the Iranian goddess *Anahita*, to whom we shall turn presently, and to the Vedic goddess *Danu*, goddess of flowing rivers, of whom we shall have more to say in a different context.

That a mother goddess should also be an aquatic goddess is certainly no surprise. Both the Celtic goddess *Danu, Ana*, etcetera and the Iranian *Anahita* are both mother goddesses and aquatic

goddesses. The ancient Celts had a penchant for naming rivers after goddesses; the various rivers in northern Spain named *Deva* bear a name which is a generic word for "goddess"; the Sanskrit word *Deva*, with a long "e", is the generic word for "goddess", the same also being true of the river Dee in Scotland. Dr. Anne Ross notes:

"The names of such rivers as the Dee (*Deva*), the Clyde (Gaulish *Clutoida*), the Severn (*Sabrina*) and perhaps the Wharfe (*Verbeia*?) as well as the Braint o Anglesly and the Bren of Middlesex (From *Brigantia*), would apparently reflect the same association of a river with a goddess as is attested for Gaul, and in the case of Ireland this suggestion is strongly supported by textual material. Not only do rivers have goddess names, but Irish cult legends occur which purport to account for the naming of such rivers."(11)

The name of the river Seine is derived from the name of the Celtic goddess *Sequana*, (12) while the name of the river Shannon is derived from the name of the goddess *Sionann*. (13)

John A. MacCulloch has noted:

"...there is little doubt that the Celts, in their onward progress, named river after river by the name of the same divinity, believing that each new river was a part of his or her kingdom ... The mother-river was
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that which watered a whole region, just as in the Hindu sacred books the waters are mothers, sources of fertility ... the Celts regarded rivers as bestowers of life, health, and plenty, and offered them rich gifts and sacrifices."(14)

As to the divinity or whom the Celts "named river after river", there is really only one candidate, which would be the goddess variously called Danu, Dana, Danaan, Don, Ana, Anu, Anann, et cetera. We encounter her name in rivers from the Don in south Russia to the Don in Scotland, passing for the Donetz, Dniepr, Dniestr, Danube, and Rhone (*Rhodanus*: in Spanish, the river Rhone

is known as *Rodano*).

It is said of the city of Aberdeen in Scotland: "...between the Don and the Dee". In south-central Spain is the river *Guadiana*, in which we find the name of our goddess in the form *Ana* with the Arabic word *wadi* which means "river" prefixed.

Danu, Don, Danaan, Ana, Anu, Anann, etcetera is also remembered in connection with a veritable multitude of sacred springs and wells in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, northern and western England, France, Spain and Portugal.

In Santiago de Compostela the largest bonfire of St. John's Eve is beside a strong spring of very good water on the outskirts of Santiago de Compostela. Very near said spring is a tiny Romanesque chapel known as *A Nosa Senora da Fonte*, i.e., "Our Lady of the Spring".

In Asturias is a large cave in a rocky mountain face which contains a strong spring, and which plays an important part in the history of Spain. Said cave is known, in Asturian *Bable* as

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Covadonga, *cova* meaning "cave", while *Donga* is evidently the name of the goddess *Danu* or *Don*, with an "a" added to indicate feminine gender. *La Virgen de Covadonga*, i.e., "The Virgin of Covadonga", or *Nuestra Senora de Covadonga*, "Our Lady of Covadonga", is the patroness of Asturias, and many Asturian girls are named "Covadonga".

The patroness of Murcia is *La Virgen de la Fuensanta*, i.e., "The Virgin of the Holy Spring", or *Nuestra Senora de la Fuensanta*. i.e., "Our Lady of the Holy Spring". There is a

Murciano song; *Madre Mia de la Fuensanta*, i.e., "My Mother of the Holy Spring". In Murcia, many girls are named "Fuensanta".

At the mouth of the river Guadalquivir in western Andalusia are *Las Marismas de Donana* or "The Marshes of Donana", or, simply, *Donana*, pronounced *Donyana*, due to the *tilde* or "wavy line" over the first "n". The name *Donana* is obviously a combination of two forms of the goddess *Danu*, *Don*, *Ana* or *Anu*, combining "Don" and "Ana". Donana is the site of the shrine of *La Virgen del Rocio*, i.e., "The Virgin of the Mist", or *Nuestra Senora del Rocio*, i.e., "Our Lady of the Mist". Many girls in western Andalusia are named *Rocio*, and Donana is by far the most popular and important pilgrimage site in all Andalusia. There is an Andalusian song: *Camino de Rocio*, i.e., "The Pilgrims' Road to the Shrine of Our Lady del Rocio". Who was it who said: "Not only is he past not dead, it is not even past"?

Those who deny the Celtic heritage of Spain, or at least claim that nothing of it could have survived the Roman occupation,

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are guilty of making uninformed, *a priori* judgements, a capital sin in the world of scholarship. Their ignorance of Celtic studies is total; I have heard some of them confuse the Celts with the Vikings, and use the nonsensical expression "Celto-Germanic", which is like saying "felino-canine". In other words, they above mentioned people have no arguments save their own ignorance and wilfull blindness.

We will now speak of the Iranian goddess *Anahita* (Avestan: *hita* = "Pure", so we have "Ana the Pure"), whose name is obviously

cognate with the Celtic Danu, Danaan, Don, Ana, Anu, Anann, et cetera, as well as the Vedic *Danu*.

Below is hymn to Anahita collected in Iran by the folklorist Dick Eney:

*Mighty Anahita with splendor will shine
Manifesting herself as a maiden divine*

*Girded with Power, in fair robes dight
Her beauty shines forth like Heaven's light*

*A free-born virgin with healing hand
Chastely loving, with Mithra to stand*

*Clad in her cloak enriched with gold
The Goddess Anahita we shall behold (15)*

Says Payam Nabarz:

"According to some sources, Mithra's partner and virgin mother is the angel-goddess Anahita. (In farsim Mithra and Anahita are also called *Mehr* and *Aban*). In Persian mythology, Anahita is the goddess of all the waters upon the earth and the source of the cosmic ocean; she drives a chariot pulled by four horses: wind, rain, cloud, and sleet; her symbol is the eight-rayed star. She is regarded as the source of life, purifying the seed of all males and the wombs of all females, also cleansing the milk in the breasts of all mothers. Because of her connection with life, warriors

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in battle prayed to her for survival and victory. Before calling on Mithra (fiery sun), a prayer was offered to the sea goddess Anahita. In the Avesta she is described as:

A maid, fair of body, most strong, tall-formed, high-girded, pure. ... wearing a mantle fully embroidered with gold; ever holding the baresma [sacred plant] in her hand, ... she wears square golden earrings on her ears ... a golden necklace around her beautiful neck, ... Upon her head ... a golden crown, with a hundred stars, with eight rays ... with fillets streaming down.

To expand upon the mystical and poetic possibilities, she might be further envisioned as follows: A large silver throne; on either side of it sits a lion with eyes of blue flame. On the throne sits

a Lady in silver and gold garments, proud and tall, an awe-inspiring warrior-woman, as terrifying as she is beautiful. Tall and statuesque she sits, her noble origins evident in her appearance, her haughty authority made clear and commanding through a pair of flashing eyes. A crown of shining gold rings her royal temples; bejeweled with eight sunrays and one hundred stars, it holds her lustrous hair back from her beautiful face. Her marble - like white arms reflect moonlight, and glisten with moisture. She is clothed with a garment made of thirty beavers, and it shines with the full sheen of silver and gold. She is prayed to at dawn and dusk. The dove and peacock are said to be her sacred creatures. The planet Venus is occasionally associated with Anahita. ...

The official entry on Anahita by the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Ottawa, Canada, reads:

1.)

Nearly every ancient religion has preserved the memory of the mother goddess in whose person people venerated the very principle of existence. It was a symbol of fertility and abundance, which the naïve image represented. These were represented, in varying degrees of crudity, in a female personage; and they are found on a great number of archaeological sites in the Iranian Plateau. The decorative repertory of the pottery of the fourth millennium is made up of such elements as the horns of a bull or an ibex, a bird's wing, a lion's head, and the foot of some wading

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birds, to mention but a few examples. Her cult was subsequently replaced by that of male deities, of whom she remained both wife and mother

2.)

In the pre-Zoroastrian Iran, Anahita was the goddess for water, rain, abundance, blessing, fertility, marriage, love, motherhood, birth, and victory. The goddess was the manifestation of women's perfection. Ancient kings were crowned by their queens in Anahita's temple in order to gain her protection and support. Anahita's blessings would bring fertility and abundance to the country.

If the number of children named after her is anything to go by, Anahita's influence is still felt strongly in modern Iran. She was recently depicted in an

Iranian war movie in her role as the protector of children.

One can still find Anahita's shrines in the following places:

The temple of Anahita at Kangavar near Kermanshah was built by the Achaemenian Emperor Ardeshir II (Artaxerxes II), 404-359 BC.

The Pre-Islamic Zoroastrian shrine of *Pir-e-Sabz*, or *Chek Chek* (Drip drip", the sound of water dripping), is in the mountains of Yazd. This is still a functional temple and the holiest site for present-day Zoroastrians living in Iran, who take their annual pilgrimage to *Pir-e-Sabz*, "the green saint", at the beginning of summer. *Pir* means "elder", and it can also mean "fire". The title of *Pir* connotes a sufi master. *Sabz* means "green". *Pir-e-Banoo* Pars (elder Lady of Persia) and *Pir-e-Naraki* are located near Yazd. (The dates are unclear.) The *Pir Banoo* temple is in an area that has a number of valleys; the name of the place is Hapt Ador, which means Seven Fires."

The temple of Anahita in Bishapur was built during the Sassanian era (241-635 AD). The temple is believed to have been built by some of the estimated seventy thousand Roman

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soldiers and engineers who were captured by the Persian king Shapur (241-272 AD), who also captured three Roman emperors: Gordian III, Philip, and Valerian. The design of the temple is very interesting: water from the river Shapur is channeled into an underground canal to the temple and actually goes under and all around the temple, giving the impression of an island. The fire altar would have been in the middle of the temple, with the water going undergrounds all around it. One might interpret this as a union of water - Anahita - with fire - Mithra.

In addition, the 1100-year-old shrine of Bibi Shahr Banoo, the Islamic female saint, near the 5000-year-old town of Rey (south of Tehran) with its waterfall is believed by some to have been an Anahita shrine at one time. It is also close to the Cheshmeh Ali Hill (Spring of Ali Hill), which is dated to

5000 years ago. Perhaps an echo of Mithra-Anahita shrines being close to each other and then becoming linked to Islamic saints, a process seen frequently in Christianize Europe too (**see above**); for example, sites sacred to the (Celtic) goddess Brigit became sites (dedicated to) Ste. Brigit (of Ireland).

As this story by the Iranian writer Jalil Nozari demonstrates, the tradition of Anahita is very much alive.

Tomorrow (21/08/03), I will take part in a ceremony to commemorate a very poor, old woman, a relative of mine, who died recently. Her name was Kaneez. The name in modern Farsi has negative connotations, meaning a "female servant". But, in Pahlavi, the language spoken in central Iran before the coming of Islam, it meant "a maiden", a Virgin, unmarried girl. Indeed, it has both meanings of the English "maid". Anahita, too [**at least the component HITA**] means virgin, literally not defiled. But this is not the end of the story. When I was a child, there was a place in Ramhormoz, my hometown, that now is under a city road. In it, there was a small, single-room building with a small drain pipe hanging from it. Women in their

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ninth month and close to delivery time stood under this pipe and someone poured water through it. There was the belief that getting wet under the drain would assure a safe delivery of the baby. The building was devoted to Khezer (the green one). Yet, the cult is very old and clearly one of Anahita's. The role of water and safe child delivery are both parts of the Anahita cult. My deceased aunt, our Kaneez, was a servant of this building. The building was demolished years ago to build a road, and Kaneez is no more. I wonder how we will reconstruct those eras, so close to us in time yet so far from our present conditions. It is also of interest that there exist remains of a castle, or better to say a fort, in Ramhormoz that is called "Mother and Daughter". It belongs to the Sassanian era. "Daughter", signifying virginity, directs the mind toward Anahita. There are other shrines named after sacred women, mostly located beside springs

of water. These all make the grounds for believing that Ramhormoz was one of the oldest places for Anahita worshippers.

It has been suggested by some that many of the sacred sites and wells of Anahita were rededicated to Islamic female saints after the arrival of Islam in Persia. On his web site on sacred sites, Martin Gray writes:

From those (Yazd) holy places only two, Pir-e-Sabz and Naraki, have waterfalls at the present time. ... Waterfalls and springs within such places had functioned as the holy places of Anahita, probably earlier than the Zoroastrian period, under Mithraism's effects. ... A clue for this idea is that most of these holy places are initiated in relation to the women rather than the men. For example, **Banoo** in Pir-e-Banoo means "lady" or "gentlewoman". Another example is Pir-e-Sabz, which is related to Hayat Banoo, a holy woman, although with an inverted Arabic name (*Hayat* is an Arabic word, while *Banoo* or *Banu* is Persian) There is also a similar story for the initiation of Pir-e-Naraki in relation to a holy lady. All
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of these relationships together, according to this theory, could be originated by the effect of Izad Anahita, which then converted to the more acceptable story of Yazdegerd's daughters and later on, due to necessity, converted to the story of those holy ladies with Arabic names.

Furthermore, according to Susan Gaviri in Anahita in Iranian Mythology (1993):

"...it must not be forgotten that many of the famous fire temples in Iran were, in the beginning, Anahita temples. Examples of these fire temples are seen in some parts of Iran, especially in Yazd, where we find that after the Muslim victory these were converted to Mosques.

The higher social status of women in Iranian society compared to its Arab neighbors has been suggested by some to be due to its long respect for Lady

Anahita and Hazrat Fatima (peace be to her). Indeed, the first woman Muslim to win a Nobel Peace Prize (2003) was from Iran; and Iran is one of the few Islamic countries to have numerous female senators and members of parliament.

According to some academics, in the same way that there are parallels to be drawn between Anahita and Hazrat Fatima (peace be to her), similar parallels can be drawn between their respective husbands, Mithra and Hazrat Ali (peace be on him). Here we see another example of the importance of pre-Islamic Iran to the study of religious history. Though the heart of Sufism is rooted in Islam, the cultural influence of Persia can be mined for its rich veins of influence leading back into antiquity. After all, both "Sofreh" and "Deeg Jush" Sufi ceremonies potentially have their precursor in Zoroastrianism.

According to some, the path of Lord Mithra can be viewed as the red path and the path of Lady Anahita as the green path, and that these two paths must be in balance. ...

And don't forget (that) there is another interesting observation on relationships of mystical significance, concerning Mehr and Aban. (We already know that Mehr and Aban are the modern Persian names for Mithra and Anahita.) The autumn equinox marks the beginning of the Persian month of Mehr, and the start of the festival of *Mihrajan* (Avestan) *Mithrakana*). The

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month of the sun god Mithra is followed by the month of the goddess Anahita (according to ancient sources both partner and mother of Mithra). The month of the sun thus leads to the month of the sea. The sun sets into the ocean. Sunset over the ocean is one of the most beautiful sights there is; as the sun unites with the ocean, the light is reflected upon the water.

Mehr (or Mithra), coming together with Aban (Anahita), gives rise to a third word: *Mehraban*, which translates as "kindness", or "one who is kind". Thus, this metaphorical child of light that comes out of the marriage between Sun and Sea is *kindness*. The child of light is the Inner Light, which is in everyone. ...

The Sun (light of God) and the Sea (divine Ocean) united within each person, create perhaps the most important spiritual quality - that of human kindness." (16)

Below is the oldest surviving document which concerns Anahita, dating from around 500 BC, though some parts are no doubt much older: it is Yasht 5 of the Avesta generally known as

The Avestan Hymn to Anahita:

May Ahura Mazda be rejoiced! ...

Ashem Vohu: Holiness is the best of all good. ...

*I confess myself a worshipper of Mazda, a follower of Zarathushtra [**Zoroaster**], one who hates the Daevas (demons) and obeys the laws of Ahura:*

*For sacrifice, prayer, propitiation, and glorification unto [**Havani**],*

The holy and master of holiness. ...

Unto the good Waters, made by Mazda, unto the holy water-spring

ARDVI ANAHITA: *unto all waters, made by Mazda; unto all*

Plants, made by Mazda,

Be propitiation, with sacrifice, prayer, propitiation, and Glorification.

Yatha ahu vairyo: *The will of the Lord is the law of holiness. ...*

I.

1.)

Ahura Mazda spake unto Spitama Zarathushtra, saying: "Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathustra! Unto this spring of mine. Ardvi Anahita, the wide-expanding and health-giving, who hates the Daevas and obeys the laws of Ahura, who is

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worthy of sacrifice in the material world, worthy of prayer in the material world; the life-increasing and holy, the herd-increasing and holy, the fold-increasing and holy, the wealth-increasing and holy, the c ountry-increasing and holy.

2.)

"Who makes the seed of all males pure, who makes the womb of all females pure for bringing forth, who makes all females bring forth in safety, who puts milk into the breasts of all females in the right measure and the right quality.

3.)

"The large river, known afar, that is as large as the whole of the waters that run along the earth; that runs powerfully from the height Hukairya down to the sea Vouru-Kasha.

4.)

"All the shores of the sea Vouru-Kasha are boiling over, all the middle of it is boiling over, when she runs down there, when she streams down there, she, Ardvi Sura Anahita, who has a thousand cells and a thousand channels: the extent of each of these cells, of each of those channels is as much as a man can ride in forty days, riding on a good horse.

5.)

"From this river of mine alone flow all the waters that spread all over the seven Karshvares; this river of mine

alone goes on bringing waters, both in summer and in winter. This river of mine purifies the seed in males, the womb in females, the milk in females' breasts.

6.)

"I, Ahura Mazda, brought it down with mighty vigor, for the increase of the house, of the borough, of the town, of the country, to keep them, to maintain them, to look over them, to keep and maintain them close.

7.)

"Then Ardivia Sura ANahita, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Proceeded forth from the Maker Mazda. Beautiful were her white arms, thick as a horse's shoulder or still thicker; beautiful was her ..., and thus came she, strong, with thick arms, thinking thus in her heart:

8.)

"Who will praise me? Who will offer me a sacrifice, with libations cleanly prepared and well-strained, together with Haoma and meat? To whom shall I cleave, who cleaves unto me, and thinks with me, and bestows gifts upon me, and is of good will unto me?

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9.)

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice worth being heard; I will offer up unto the holy Ardivi Sura Anahita a good sacrifice with a offering of libations; thus may you advise us when you are appealed to! May you be most fully worshipped, O Ardivi Sura Anahita! With Haoma and meat, with the baresma, with the wisdom of the tongue, with the holy spells, with the words, with the deeds, with the libations, and with the rightly spoken words.

"Yenhe hatam: All those beings of whom Ahura Mazda ...

II.

10.)

(Repeat verse number 1.)

11.)

"Who drives forward on her chariot, holding the reins of the chariot. She goes, driving, on this chariot, longing for men and thinking thus in her heart: "Who will praise me? Who will offer me a sacrifice, with libations cleanly prepared and well strained, together with the Haoma and meat? To whom shall I cleave, who cleaves unto me, and thinks with me, and bestows gifts unto me, and is of good will unto me?

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice, worth being heard. ...

III.

12.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

13.)

"Whom four horses carry, all white, of one and the same color, of the same blood, tall, crushing down the hates of all haters, of the Daevas and men, of the **Yatus** and **Pairika-s** (Avestan: **pairika** = Persian: **peri**, = "fairy"), of the oppressors, of the blind and of the deaf.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

...

IV.

14.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita.

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15.)

"Strong and bright tall and beautiful of form, who sends down by day and by night a flow of motherly waters as large as the whole of the waters that run along the earth, and who runs powerfully.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

...

V.

16.) "Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita.

17.)

"To her did maker Ahura Mazda offer up a sacrifice to the **Airyana Vaejah [homeland of the Aryans]**, by the good river Daitya; with the Haoma and meat, with the baresma, with the wisdom of the tongue, with the holy spells, with the words, with the deeds, with the libations, and with the rightly-spoken words.

18.)

"He begged of her a boon, saying, 'Grant me this, O good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may bring the son of Pourushaspa, the holy Zarathushtra, to think after my law, to speak after my law, to do after my law!'

19.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and begging that she would grant him the boon.
For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.
...

VI.

20.)
"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

21.)
"To her did Haoshyangha (Persian: **Hushang**), the Paradhata, offer up a sacrifice on the enclosure of the Hara, with a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, and ten thousand lambs.

22.)
"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, O good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita, that I may become the sovereign lord of all countries, of the Daevas and men, of
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the Yatus and Pairikas, of the oppressors, the blind and the deaf; and that I may smite down two thirds of the Daevas of Mazana and of the fiends of Varena.'

23.)
"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering libations, giving gifts, sacrificing and entreating that she would grant him that boon.
"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.
...

VII.

24.)
"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

25.)
"To her did Yima Khshaeta, the good shepherd, offer up a sacrifice from the height Hukairya, with a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs.

26.)
"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, O good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may become the sovereign lord of all countries, of the Daevas and men, of the Yatus and Pairikas, of the oppressors, the blind and the deaf; and that I may take from the Daevas both riches and welfare, both fatness and flocks, both weal and Glory.'

27.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon as he was offering libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that she would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

...

VIII.

28.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,

Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

29.)

"To her did Azi Dahaka, the three-mouthed, offer up a sacrifice in the land of Bawri, with a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, and ten thousand lambs.

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30.)

"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this boon O good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may make all seven Karshvares of the earth empty of men.'

31.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita did not grant him that boon, although he was offering libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating her that she would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

...

IX.

32.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

33.)

"To her did Thraetaona, the heir of the valiant Athwya clan, offer up a sacrifice of the four-cornered Varena, with a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs.

34.)

"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may overcome Azi Dahaka, the three-mouthed, the three-headed, the six-eyed, who has a thousand senses, that most powerful, fiendish Druj, that demon, baleful to the world, the strongest Druj that Angra Mainyu created against the material world, to destroy the world of the good principle; and that I may deliver his two wives, Savanghavach and Erenavach, who are the fairest of

body among women, and the most wonderful creatures in the world.'

35.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that she would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.
...

36.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

37.) "To her did Keresaspa, the mighty-hearted offer up a sacrifice behind the Vairi Pisanah, with a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs.

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38.)

"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may overcome the golden-heeled Gandarewa, though all the shores of the sea Vouru-Kasha are boiling over; and that I may run up to the stronghold of the fiend on the wide, round earth, whose ends lie afar.'

39.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that she would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

XI.

40.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

41.)

To her did the Turanian murderer, Franggrasyan (Persian: **Afrasiyab**), offer up a sacrifice in his cave under the earth, with a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs.

42.)

"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant this, o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may seize hold of that Glory, that is waving in the middle of the sea Vouru-Kasha and that belongs to the **Aryan** people, to those born and to those not yet born, and to the holy Zarathushtra.'

43.)

Árdvi Sura Anahita did not grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice
...

44.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this
spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita.

45.)

"To her did the great, wise Kavi Usa offer up a sacrifice
from Mount Erezifya, with a hundred male horses, a thousand
oxen, ten thousand lambs.

46.)

"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, o good,
most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may become the
(45)

sovereign lord of all countries, of the Daevas and men, of
the Yatus and Pairikas, of the oppressors, the blind and the
deaf.'

47.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering
libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that she
would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.
...

XIII.

48.)

"offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this
spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita.

49.)

"To her did the gallant Husravah (Persian: **Khusrau**), he who
united the **Aryan** nations into one kingdom, offer up a
sacrifice behind the Chaechasta lake, the deep lake, of salt
waters, with a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten
thousand lambs.

50.)

"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, o good,
most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may become the
sovereign lord of all countries of Daevas and men, of the
Yatus and Pairikas, of the oppressors the blind and the
deaf; and that I may have the lead in front of all the teams
and that he may not pass through the forest, he, the
murderer, who now is fiercely striving against me on

horseback.'

51.)

Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering libations giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that she would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

...

52.)

"Offer up a sacrifice O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine.

Ardvi Sura Anahita.

53.)

"to her did the valliant warrior Tusa offer worship on the back of his horse, begging swiftness for his teams, health for his own body, and that he might watch with full success

(46)

those who hated him, smite down his foes, and destroy at one stroke his adversaries, his enemies, and those who hated him.

54.)

"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may overcome the gallant sons of Vaesaka, by the castle Khshathro-saoka, that stands high up on the lofty, holy Kangha; that I may smite of the Turanian people their fifties and their hundreds, their hundreds and their thousands, their thousands and their tens of thousands, their tens of thousands and their myriads of myriads.'

55.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that she would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

...

XV.

56.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, o Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,

Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

57.) o her did the gallant sons of Vaesaka offer up a sacrifice in the castle Khshathro-saoka, that stands high up on the lofty, holy Kangha, with a hundred male horses, a thousands oxen, ten thousand lambs.

58.)

"they begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant us this, o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That we may overcome the

valiant warrior Tusam and that we may smite of the **Aryan** people their fifties and their hundreds, their hundreds and their thousands, their thousands, their thou=sands and their tens of thousands and their myriads of myriads.'

59.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita did not grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

XVI.

60.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, o Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

(47)

61.)

"The old Vafra Navaza worshipped her when the strong fiend-smiter, Thraetaona, flung him up in the air in the shape of a bird, of a vulture.

62.)

"He went on flying, for three days and three nights, towards his own house; but he could not, he could not turn down. At the end of the third night, when the beneficent dawn came dawning up, then he prayed unto Ardvi Sura Anahita, saying:

63.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita! Do you quickly hasten helpfully and bring me assistance at once. I will offer you a thousand libations, cleanly prepared and well strained, along with Haoma and meat, by the brink of the river Rangha, if I reach alive the earth made by Ahura and my own house.'

64.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita hastened unto him in the shape of a maid, fair of body, most strong, tall-formed, high-girdled, pure, nobly born of a glorious race, wearing shoes up to the ankle, wearing a golden..., and radiant.

65.)

"She seized him by the arm: quickly was it done, nor was it long till, speeding, he arrived at the earth made by Mazda and at his own house, safe, unhurt, unwounded, just as he was before.

66.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering up libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, entreating that she would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

...

67.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, o Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita.

68.)

"To her did Jamaspa offer up a sacrifice, with a hundred horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs, when he saw the army of the wicked, of the worshippers of the Daevas, coming from afar in battle array.

(48)

69.)

"He asked of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may be as constantly victorious as any one of the **Aryans.**'

70.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering up libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that she would grant him that boon.
"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

...

XVIII.

71.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, o Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

72.)

"To her did Ashavazdah, the son of Pouru-dhakshti, and Ashavazdah and Thruta, the sons of Sayuzdhri, offer up a sacrifice, with a hundred horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs, by Apam Napat, the tall lord, the lord of the females, the bright and swift-horsed.

73.)

"They begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant us this, o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That we may overcome the assemblers of the Turanian Danus, Kara Asabana, and Vara Asabana, and the most mighty Duraekaeta, in the battles of this world.'

74.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted them that boon, as they were offering up libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and

entreating that she would grant them that boon.
"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.
...

75.)
"Offer up a sacrifice, o Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this
spring of mine, Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

76.)
"Vistauru, the son of Naotara, worshipped her by the brink of
the river Vitanghuhaiti, with well-spoken words, speaking
thus:

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77.)
"This is truly spoken, that I have smitten as many of the
worshippers of the Daevas as the hairs I bear on my head. Do
thou then, o Ardvi Sura Anahita! Leave me a dry passage, to
pass over the good Vitanghuhaiti.'

78.)
"Ardvi Sura Anahita hastened unto him in the shape of a maid,
fair of body, most strong, tall-formed, high-girded, pure,
nobly born of a glorious race, wearing shoes up to the ankle,
with all sorts of ornaments and radiant. A part of the waters
she made still, a part of the waters she made flow forward,
and she left him a dry passage to pass over the good
Vitanghuhaiti.

79.)
"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering
up libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that
she would grant him that boon.
"For her brightness and glory I will offer her a sacrifice.
...

XX.

80.)
"Offer up a sacrifice, o Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this
spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

81.)
"To her did Yoishtha, one of the Fryanas, offer up a sacrifice
with a hundred horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs on
the Pedvaepa of the Rangha.

82.)
"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, o good,
most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may overcome the
evil-doing Akhtya, the offspring of darkness and that I may
answer the ninety-nine hard riddles that he asks me

maliciously, the evil-doing Akhtya, the offspring of darkness.'

83.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering up libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that she would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

XXI.

84.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, o Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita.

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85.)

"Whom Ahura Mazda the merciful ordered thus, saying: 'Come o Ardvi Sura Anahita, come from those stars down to the earth made by Ahura, that the great lords may worship you, the masters of the countries, and their sons.

86.)

"The men of strength will beg of you swift horses and supremacy of Glory.

"The Athravans who read and the pupils of the Athravans will beg of you knowledge and prosperity, the Victory made by Ahura, and the crushing ascendant.

87.)

"The maids of barren womb, longing for a lord, will beg of you a strong husband;

"Women on the point of bringing forth, will beg of you a good delivery.

"All this will you grant unto them, as it lies in your power, o Ardvi Sura Anahita!"

88.)

"Then Ardvi Sura Anahita came forth, o Zarathushtra! Down from those stars to the earth made by Mazda; and Ardvi Sura Anahita spoke thus:

89.)

"O pure Zarathushtra! Ahura Mazda has established you as the master of the material world: Ahura Mazda has established me to keep the whole of the holy creation.

"Through my brightness and glory flocks and herds and two-legged men go on, upon the earth: I, forsooth, keep all good things, made by Mazda, the offspring of the holy principle, just as a shepherd keeps his flock"

90.)

"Zarathushtra asked Ardvi Sura Anahita: 'O Ardvi Sura Anahita! With what manner of sacrifice shall I worship you?"

With what manner of sacrifice shall I worship and forward you? So that Mazda may make you run down (to the earth), that he may not make you run up into the heavens, above the sun; and that the Serpent may not injure you with. ..., with. ..., and..., poisons.'

91.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita answered: "O pure, holy Spitama! This is the sacrifice wherewith thou shall worship me; this is the sacrifice wherewith thou shall worship and forward me, from the time when the sun is rising to the time when the sun is setting.

(51)

"Of the libation of mine then shall drink, then who are an Athravan, who have asked and learned the revealed law, who are wise, clever and the Word incarnate.

92.)

"Of this libation of mine let no foe drink, no man fever-sick, no liar, no coward, no jralous one, no woman, no unfaithful one who does not sing the Gathas, no leper to be confined.

93.)

"I do not accept those libations that are drunk in my honor by the blind, by the deaf, by the wicked, by the destroyers, by the niggards, by the ... nor any of those stamped with those characters which have no strength for the holy Word. "Let no one drink of these my libations who is hump-backed or bulged forward, no fiend with decayed teeth."

94.)

"Then Zarathustra asked Ardvi Sura Anahita: O Ardvi Sura Anahita, What becomes of those libations which the wicked worshippers of the Daevas bring unto these after the sun has set?"

95.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita answered: O pure. Holy Spitama Zarathushtra! Howling, clapping, hopping and shouting, six hundred and a thousand Daevas, who ought not to receive that sacrifice, receive those libations that men bring unto me after [the sun has set].

96.)

"I will worship the height Hukairya, of the deep precipices, made of gold, wherefrom this mine Ardvi Sura Anahita leaps, from a hundred times the height of a man, while she is possessed of as much Glory as the whole of the waters that run along the earth, and she runs powerfully. "For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

XXII.

97.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine, Ardvi Sura Anahita.

98.)

"Before whom the worshippers of Mazda stand with baresma in their hands: the Hvovas did worship her; the Nantaros did worship her, the Hvovas asked for riches, the Nantaros asked for swift horses. Quickly was Hvova blessed with riches and full prosperity, quickly became Vishtaspa, the Nantaros, the lord of the swiftest horses in these countries.

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99.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted them that boon, as they were offering up libations, giving gifts, sacrificing and entreating that she would grant them that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

XVIII.

100.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathustra! Unto this spring of mine, Ardvi Sura Anahita.

101.)

"Who has a thousand cells and a thousand channels, the extent of each of those cells, of each of those channels, is as much as a man can ride in forty days, riding on a good horse. In each channel there stands a palace, well founded, shining with a hundred windows, with a thousand columns, well built, with ten thousand balconies, and mighty.

102.)

"In each of these palaces there lies a well-laid, well-scented bed, covered with pillows, and Ardvi Sura Anahita, O Zarathushtra, runs down there from a thousand times the height of a man, and she is possessed of as much Glory as the whole of the waters that run along the earth, and she runs powerfully.

103.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

104.)

"Unto her did the holy Zarathushtra offer up a sacrifice in the *Airyana Vaejah* (traditional homeland of the Aryans), by the good river Daitya; with the Haoma and meat, with the *baresman*, with the wisdom of the tongue, with the holy spells, with the speech, with the deeds, with the libations, and with the rightly-spoken words.

105.)

"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may bring the son of Aurvat-aspaspa, the valiant Kavi Vishtaspa, to think according to the law, to speak according to the law, to do according to the'

106.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering up libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and

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entreating that she would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

...

XXV.

107.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine, Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

108.)

"Unto her did the tall Kavi Vishtaspa offer up a sacrifice behind Lake Frazdanava, with a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs.

109.)

"He begged of her a boon, saying: 'Grant me this, o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! That I may overcome Tathravant, of the bad law, and Peshana, the worshipper of the Daevas and the wicked Arejat-aspaspa, in the battles of this world!"

110.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering up libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that she would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

...

111.)

"offer up a sacrifice, o Spitama Zarathushtra! Unto this spring of mine, Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

112.)

"unto her Zairi-vairi, who fought on horseback, offer up a sacrifice behind the river Daitya, with a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs.

113.)

"He begged of her a boon, saying, 'Grant me this, o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita that I may overcome Pesho-

Changa the corpse-burier, Hamayaka the worshipper of the
Daevas, and the wicked Arejat-aspa, in the battles of this
world.'

114.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita granted him that boon, as he was offering
up libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that
she would grant him that boon.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

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XXVII.

115.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, o Spitama Zarathushtra unto this
spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

116.)

"Unto her did Arejat-aspa and Vandaremaini offer up a
sacrifice by the sea Vouru-Kasha, with a hundred male horses,
a thousand oxen, ten thousand lambs.

117.)

"They begged of her a boon, saying, 'Grant us this, o good,
most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita that we may conquer the
valiant Kavi Vishtaspa and Zairi-vairi who fights on
horseback, and that we may smite of the Aryan people their
fifties and their hundreds, their hundreds and their
thousands, their thousands and their tens of thousands and
their myriads of myriads.'

118.)

"Ardvi Sura Anahita did not grant yhem that favor, though
they were offering up libations, giving gifts, sacrificing,
and entreating that she should grant them that favor.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

...

119.)

"Offer up a sacrifice, o Spitama Zarathushtra unto this
spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

120.)

"For whom Ahura Mazda has made four horses - the wind, the
rain, the cloud, and the sleet - and thus ever upon the earth
it is raining, snowing, hailing and sleeting, and whose
armies are so many and numbered by nine-hundreds and
thousands.

121.)

"I will worship the height Hukairya, of the deep precipices,

made of gold, wherefrom this mine Ardvi Sura Anahita leaps, from a hundred times the height of a man, while she is possessed of as much Glory as the whole of the waters that run along the earth, and she runs powerfully.
"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.
...

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XXIX.

122.)
"Offer up a sacrifice, o Spitama Zarathushtra unto this spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita. ...

123.)
"She stands, the good Ardvi Sura Anahita. Wearing a golden mantle, waiting for a man who shall offer her libations and prayers. And thinking thus in her heart:

124.)
"Who will praise me? Who will offer me a sacrifice, with libations cleanly prepared and well-strained, together with the Haoma and meat? To whom shall I cleave, who cleaves unto me, and thinks with me, and bestows gifts upon me, and is of good will unto me?
"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.
...

XXX.

125.)
Offer up a sacrifice, O Spitama Zarathushtra unto thi spring of mine,
Ardvi Sura Anahita.

126.)
"Ardvi Sura Anahita, who stands carried forth in the shape of a maid, fair of body, most strong, tall-formed, high girded, pure, nobly born of a glorious race, wearing along her ... a mantle fully embroidered with gold.

127.)
"Ever holding the maresman in her hand, according to the rules, she wears square golden earrings on her ears pierced, and a golden necklace around her beautiful neck, she, the nobly born Ardvi Sura Anahita, and she girded her waist tightly, so that her breasts may be well-shaped, that they may be tightly pressed.

128.)
"Upon her head Ardvi Sura Anahita bound a golden crown, with a hundred stars, a fine ..., a well-made crown, in the shape of a ..., with fillets streaming down.

129.)

"She is clothed with garments of beaver, Ardvi Sura Anahita; with the skin of thirty beavers of those that bear four young ones, that are the finest kind of beavers; for the skin of the beaver that lives in water is the finest-colored of all skins, and when worked at the right time it shines to the eye with full sheen of silver and gold.

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130.)

"Here o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! I beg of you this favor: that I, fully blessed, may conquer large kingdoms, rich in horses, with high tributes, with sonorting horses, sounding chariots, flashing swords, rich in aliments, with stores of food, with well-scented beds; that I may have at my wish the fullness of the good things of life and whatever makes a kingdom thrive.

131.)

"Here, o good, most beneficent Ardvi Sura Anahita! I beg of you two gallant companions, one two-lwgged and one four-legged, who can quickly turn towards either wing of the host with a wide front, towards the right wing or the left, towards the left wing or the right.

132.)

"Through the strength of his sacrifice, of this invocation, o Ardvi Sura Anahita! come down from those stars, towards the earth made by Ahura, towards the sacrificing priest, towards the full boiling [milk]; come to help him who is offering up libations, giving gifts, sacrificing, and entreating that you would grant him your favors; that all those gallant warriors may be strong, like king Vishtaspa.

"For her brightness and glory, I will offer her a sacrifice.

133.)

"Yatha ahu vairya; the will of the Lord is the law of holiness. ...

"I bless the sacrifice and prayer, and the strength and vigor of the holy water-spring Anahita.

"*Ashem Vohu*: Holiness is the best of all good. ...

"[Give] unto that man brightness and glory, ... give him the bright, all-happy, blissful abode of the Holy Ones!"(17)

Perhaps the most universally venerated of all Celtic deities was the god known as *Lugh*, *Lug*, *Lugus*, *Lleu*, *Lus*, etcetera. We shall have much to say concerning him in various aspects and contexts. The name "Lugh" in all its variants is obviously derived from the Indo-European stem meaning "light", and indeed he is the

god of light, of the sun, of fire, and of the lightning. Also, the magic cauldron of Lugh is something to which we shall return when speaking of the Holy Grail.

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In addition to being the god of light and all things related to it, Lugh, in all the variants of his name, was also the god of oaths and contracts. Says Anne Ross:

"It is of especially great interest to consider the text of the Chamalieres tablet. In 1971 a lead tablet with a Gaulish magico-religious text of some sixty words in Italic writing was found at the Source-des-Roches de Chamalieres, Puy-de-Dome, France. It has been dated to the early first century BC, an important period for pagan Celtic religion and rites. It is in the nature of a *defixio* (meaning 'bewitch', 'curse'), and is an important document for information on Celtic deities and magical formulae (Lejeune and Marichal, 1977). The god Maponus is invoked as well as the Arvernian Maponus, and Lugus, the most widely venerated and important of all Celtic deities, would seem to be present in the context of an oath, which is a kind of magical restraint, and had great powers in the early Celtic world. Perhaps the most striking feature is the magical formula for swearing by a god, which, in Ireland, occurs as *tongu do dhia tonges mo thuath*, 'I swear by the god by whom my people swear.' The Old Irish word for oath is *lugae, luige*; and Sayers, in his important article on enchantment (1990) states: 'More attractive is the hypothesis ... that Old Irish *lugae, luige*, 'oath', and the theonym *Lug* are related, with the latter possibly a tutelary divinity of contractual bonds. There is a similar formula in Early Welsh, and the word for oath in Welsh is *llw*. In the Chamalieres *defixio* we are in the very presence of active druidic ritual, and we are also able to envisage some small fragment of the myth of the pan-Celtic god *Lugus*.'" (18)

Proof of the pan-Celtic nature of Lugh is the fact that place names derived from his name are found all over Western Europe, and in great abundance, from Ireland to Lugano in southern Switzerland. Indeed, in northwestern Spain place names derived from the name "Lugh" are literally everywhere.

Fairly abundant also are Celtic tribal names derived from the name Lugh, from *Lugians* of central Europe to the *Lusitanos* of Spain and Portugal. I also firmly believe that the name

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"Andalus" or "Alandalus" is derived from the name of Lugh.

At least in Ireland, Wales, and Brittany, personal names derived from the name of the god Lugh are quite abundant. Though it may come as a surprise to many people, the name of Sir Lancelot, one of King Arthur's knights, is, by way of Welsh, Breton, and finally French, ultimately derived from the name of the god Lugh, and this is solidly documented. No, Sir Lancelot is **NOT** a late French intruder in the Arthurian Cycle. We shall deal with this in detail shortly.

There are even a few family names derived from the name of the god Lugh, *Lusignan*, the family name of the Counts of Anjou and of the Angevin or Plantagenet dynasty being the most famous example. As was said above, we will have much more to say of the god Lugh in other contexts.

We now turn to the Iranian deity Mithra, of whom we have already spoken.

THE PERSIAN MITHRA

Mithra - the Lord of vast green pastures - we do praise
*To "First Celestial God our voices raise.
Before the sun shines from hilltops, indeed,
The everlasting sun, Mithra will proceed.*

*It (the sun) is the first being with ornaments of gold,
That from the mountaintops the earth does behold.*

*And from there, the powerful Mithra will
Watch the abode of the Magi calm and still.*(19)

Says Ilya Gershevitch concerning Mithra:

"The Avestan hymn (*Yast*) to Mithra, to be dated approximately in the second half of the fifth century (59)

B.C., is the one extensive ancient literary record we have of the attributes, habits, equipment, companions and cult of the Iranian god whose worship (in the form of the western *Mithras*) was destined to spread into Europe as far as Britain some five to six hundred years after the hymn was composed. In the Avesta itself, besides the hymn, there are a few more references to Mithra which help to complete the picture. Outside the Avesta ancient Iranian evidence on the god, contemporaneous with, or earlier than the hymn, is confined to the appearance of the name in Old Persian inscriptions of Artaxerxes II (405-359) and Artaxerxes III (359-338), and as a component of Iranian personal names attested in Old Persian, Greek, Aramaic, Akkadian and Elamite sources. The earliest Greek reference to Mithra is found in Herodotus (I, 131), who apparently confused him with the goddess Anahita. The Iranian Manichaean texts composed from the third century A.D. onwards allow us a glimpse of the evolution which Old Iranian Mithra had undergone in the mythology of various Iranian nations, but here, too, the information is scanty. The Zoroastrian books written in Pahlavi in the ninth century A.D. take comparatively little interest in Mithra, and add little to what is known of him from older sources.

The documentation of the prehistory of the Iranian Mithra is scarce, but it does make clear that the god was worshipped by Indo-Iranian tribes not less than ten centuries before the Avestan hymn was composed. In Western Asia his bare name appears in a list of five gods by whom a treaty with the Hittite king Shuppiluliumash was sworn in the early fourteenth century B.C. by Mattiwaza, an Indo-Iranian ruler of the Hurrian kingdom of Mitanni in Western Mesopotamia. The five divinities are Mitra, Varuna, Indra, and the two Nasatya, all of whom figure prominently in the Rig Veda, the earliest literary product of the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-Iranian group of tribes. Even assuming that the first Rigvedic hymns are not earlier than the Mitanni treaty, we may say that the cult of Mitra was by then so well established among Indo-Iranian tribes that it had very likely been in existence for a long period before.

In the Rigvedic hymns, whose composition extended over many centuries, Mitra is mentioned more than two hundred times, yet the information the texts offer on the god is exasperatingly meagre. This appears to be due mainly to the predilection of Rigvedic poets for

invoking Mitra together with Varuna in a compound *mitra-varuna* (meaning 'Mitra and Varuna') of the type grammarians call *dvandva*. What the poets say of
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miravaruna does not substantially differ from the view they take of Varuna. Consequently it is not easy to distinguish Mitra's share in the association of the two gods. A.A. Macdonell (*A Vedic Reader*, pp. 118 sq., 134 sq.) has so conveniently arrayed the main Vedic facts concerning *mitravaruna* on the one hand, Varuna on the other, that we cannot do better than quote him *in extensor*, printing in italics certain details to which we shall return:

Mitravaruna. This is the pair most frequently mentioned next to Heaven and Earth. The hymns in which they are conjointly invoked are much more numerous than those in which they are separately addressed. As Mitra (III, 59) is distinguished by hardly any individual traits, the two together have practically the same attributes and functions as Varuna alone. They are conceived as young. Their eye is the sun. Reaching out they drive with the rays of the sun as with arms. They wear glistening garments. They mount their car in the highest heaven. Their abode is golden and is located in heaven; it is great, very lofty, firm, with a thousand columns and a thousand doors. *They have spies* that are wise and cannot be deceived. They are kings and universal monarchs. *They are also called Asuras*, who wield dominion by means of *maya* 'occult power', a term mainly connected with them. By that power they send the dawns, make the sun traverse the sky, and obscure it with cloud and rain. They are rulers and *guardians of the whole world*. They support heaven, and earth, and air.

They are lords of rivers, and they are the gods most frequently thought of and prayed to as *bestowers of rain*. They have kine yielding refreshment, and streams flowing with honey. They control the rainy skies and the streaming waters. They bedew the pastures with ghee (=rain) and the spaces with honey. They send rain and refreshment from the sky. Rain abounding in heavenly water comes from them. One entire hymn dwells on their powers of bestowing rain.

Their ordinances are fixed and cannot be obstructed even by the immortal gods. They are *upholders and cherishers of order* (read 'Truth'). They are *barriers against falsehood, which they dispel, hate, and punish*. *They afflict with disease* those who neglect their worship.

Varuna. Beside Indra (II,12) Varuna is the greatest of the gods of the Rig Veda, though the number of the hymns

in which he is celebrated alone (apart from Mitra) is small, numbering hardly a dozen.

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His face, eye, arms, hands, and feet are mentioned. He moves his arms, walks, drives, sits, eats, and drinks. His eye with which he observes mankind is the sun. He is far-sighted and *thousand-eyed*. He treads down wiles with shining foot. He sits on the strewn grass at the sacrifice. He wears a golden mantle and puts on a shining robe. *His car*, which is often mentioned, shines like the sun, and *is drawn by well-yoked steeds*. Varuna sits in his mansions looking on all deeds. The Fathers behold him in the highest heaven. *The spies of Varuna are sometimes referred to*: they sit down around him; they observe the two worlds; they stimulate prayer. By the golden-winged messenger of Varuna the sun is meant. Varuna is often called a king, but especially a universal monarch (*samraj*). The attribute of sovereignty (*kshatra*) and the term *Asura* are *predominantly applicable to him*. His divine dominion is often alluded to by the word *maya* 'occult power'; the epithet *mayin* 'crafty' is accordingly used chiefly of him.

Varuna is mainly lauded as upholder of physical and moral order. He is a great lord of the laws of nature. He established heaven and earth, and by his law heaven and earth are held apart. He made the hoden swing (the sun) to shine in heaven; he has made a wide path for the sun; he placed fire in the waters, the sun in the sky, Soma on the rock. The wind which resounds through the air is Varuna's breath. By his ordinances the moon shining brightly moves at night, and the stars placed up on high are seen at night, but disappear by day. Thus Varuna is lord of light both by day and by night. He is also a *regulator of the waters*. He caused the rivrs to flow; by his occult power they pour swiftly into the ocean without filling it. It is, however, with the aerial waters that he is usually connected. Thus he makes the inverted cask (the cloud) to pour its waters on heaven, earth, and air, and to moisten the ground.

Varuna's ordinances being constantly said to be fixed, he is preeminently called *dhrtvdvrata* 'whose laws are established'. The gods themselves follow his ordinances. His power is so great that neither the birds as they fly nor the rivers as they flow can reach the limits of his dominion. He embraces the universe, and the abodes of all beings. *He is all-knowing*, and his omniscience is typical. He knows the flight of the travelling wind, beholding all the secret things that have been or shall be done, *he witnesses men's truth and falsehood*. No creature can even wink without his knowledge.

As a moral governor Varuna stands far above any

other deity. *His wrath is aroused by sin, the infringement of his ordinances, which he severely punishes.* The fetters (*pashas*) with which he binds sinners are often mentioned, and are characteristic of him. On the other hand, Varuna is gracious to the penitent. He removes sin as if untying a rope. He releases even from the sin committed by men's fathers. He spares him who dialy transgresses his laws when a suppliant, and is gracious to those who have broken his laws by thoughtlessness. There is in fact no hymn to Varuna in which the prayer for forgiveness of guilt does not occur. Varuna is on a footing of friendship with his worshipper, who communes with him in his celestial abode, and sometimes sees him with the mental eye. The righteous hope to behold in the next world Varuna and Yama, the two kings who reign in bliss.

On Varuna we now have the first volume of an important work by Luders, which is being published posthumously. Although so far only part of Luders' detailed argumentation is available, his main conclusion is anticipated in the Introduction to the first volume. It is that Varuna is essentially the god in charge of *rta* 'Truth'. One of Luders' merits consists in the conclusive proof he has offered that the meaning of *rta* is indeed 'Truth'. For *asha-*, the Avestan etymological equivalent of the Vedic *rta*, this meaning was long ago established by Andreas and maintained by Lommel, but most scholars chose to perpetuate the old translation of *asha-* by '(cosmic) order', assuming that this was the meaning of the Vedic *rta*. It is thus not only to Vedic but also to Avestic studies that Luders has rendered a great service. For obviously no true understanding of Indo-Iranian religious thought is possible unless it is realized that its key conception, expressed by *rta/asha*, means 'Truth'.

Luders' clear-sighted insistence on what had previously been understood only perfunctorily, the dominant role of Truth in Indo-Iranian religion, has enabled him to present Varuna in a new and immediately convincing perspective. Because transcendental Truth is situated in a primordial spring inside the highest heaven, water everywhere is the 'womb of Truth'. This is why also Varuna, the guardian of Truth, is to be found in the waters. Accordingly the ancient Indo-Aryans swore their oaths by water, invoking Varuna, who was present in the water to guard Truth and witness the validity of the oath. Thus Luders was able to penetrate to the essential definition of Varuna as the god of oath, which provides the clue to his character of an

avenger of falsehood, and to the spies and thousand eyes by which he detects the infringers of Truth. In addition, as Varuna had his seat in the waters, where Truth is situated, he was bound to take charge of them; in the naturalistic interpretation of the Vedic pantheon he thus became a water-god.

The Vedic Mitra is so closely connected with Varuna that, as Luders remarks he must be homogenous with him. The characteristics of *mitravaruna* quoted above from Macdonell show that Mitra is closely associated with Varuna in the task of punishing falsehood after detecting it by means of spies, as well as controlling the waters. However, as Luders remarked, Mitra's seat is not in water, but apparently in fire, since pacts were presumably concluded in front of a blazing fire. This is the only trait which makes a palpable difference between Mitra and Varuna. In addition, the unusual qualification *yatayajjana* is applied not only to Mitra and Varuna as a pair, but also to Mitra alone. The verb *yatayati*, which is also found with Mitra as subject, means, according to Luders, 'to call to account', cf. *rnam yatayati* 'to settle a debt'; hence *yatayajjana* is defined by Luders as either 'he who calls people to account', or 'he who causes them to settle their due'. Both the compound and the finite form *yatayati* occur in the one and only Rigvedic hymn which is dedicated to Mitra (III, 59)." (20)

We now turn to the Iranian Mithra, as distinct, though obviously closely kin, to the Rigvedic **Mitra**.

"The Avestan common noun *mithra-*, which is formally indistinguishable from the name of the god, means 'contract'. It is repeatedly found in the Mithra yast, in which Mithra is primarily the god of contract. The contract which Mithra supervise with his thousand perceptions, thousand ears, ten thousand eyes, and ten thousand spies, punishing its infringement and rewarding its observance, must be taken to include all forms that exist in society, not only of agreed but also of involuntary relationship, such as that which obtains between brothers or father and son. Even engagements undertaken with 'owners of false hood', who are sure to break their part of the bargain, must be honored. The partners of contractual relation are graded in a curious scale. In it the contract marked 'thousand', the 'thousandfold contract between two countries', reflects the most interesting aspect of Mithra's function as guardian of contract. He is the

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guarantor of orderly international relations, the god

of the international treaty. A ruler, says the text, according as he honors or fails to honor the treaty will appease through Mithra the mind of a ruler he has antagonized or incense even a ruler he has not antagonized. Mithra protects or destroys the countries according as they respect Mithra - representative of the covenant - or are 'defiant'. 'Defiance' on the part of a country earns it Mithra's implacable revenge. No doubt, too, the 'anti-mithrian' countries which are made to feel Mithra's club had been guilty of violating the treaty. Mithra's epithet *karsho.razah-* 'director of (boundary) lines', if this is the correct interpretation, also pertains to his tutelage of international relations.

The first condition for a country to be able to honor its treaties is that its internal affairs should be well regulated, the authorities obeyed, revolutions averted. ...

...The appearance in this connection of the Grandson of the Waters will occupy us again below. Here we may note that Mithra's 'pacification' of countries in turmoil is connected with the world-wide spread of the (Zoroastrian) Religion, which requires conditions of peace. We shall find below that it is very likely Mithra's furtherance of peace and political and social order which constitutes the subject of a pledge he appears to have given to the (Zoroastrian) Religion. It looks as if the god of contract is himself bound by the 'contract of the Mazdayasnian (Zoroastrian) Religion', which receives the highest mark ('ten thousand') of all contracts.

The question now to consider is whether the Avestan Mithra's association with the contract is a secondary development due to a fortuitous identity of his name with a word for 'contract', or represents a, or the, primary function of the god. Theoretically the first alternative is quite possible. There are several bases **mi-* in Indo-European, to say if which the suffix *-tro-* could be added, and a further homonym could result from the addition of the suffix *-ro-* to a base **mit-*. But obviously, unless the study of all ancient sources on Mithra/Mitra reveals that the god's primary function cannot have been the guardianship of contract, or/and that another function of Mithra's might be the primary one, it would be unreasonable to reject as not genuine the equation Mithra=contract, which the Avesta repeatedly states in terms which could not be clearer. Let us survey the four ancient sources, namely (1) the Mitanni reference to Mitra, (2) the Rigvedic evidence, (3) the Roman Mithras, and (4) the evidence relating to

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the Iranian Mithra, with a view to finding an answer to this question.

(1) Shows us Mitra as guarantor of the treaty, but in the company of other gods; there is no way of telling whether the Mitanni did not see in him primarily a god in charge of something else. (3) Is inconclusive in the opposite sense. Figurative art is not a reliable means of expressing abstract notions, and one would not care to deduce from Mithras' handshake with the Sun (cf. Franz Cumont, Textes et monuments figures relatifs aux mysteres de Mithras, 2 volumes, 1896-1899, Volume I, p. 173), that he was connected with the contracts. On the whole, one would think, custodianship of contract was at most a secondary function of the Roman Mithras. His chief function apparently was one which he shared with the Avestan Mithra, that of a giver of light and life. Let us call this function *B*, and the guardianship of contract *A*. There is no logical development which might lead from *B* to *A*, but we shall presently see that by a simple argument Iranian worshippers of Mithra could have extracted *B* from *A*. As the Roman Mithras is derived from the Iranian Mithra, it would seem that he greatly developed the latter's function *B*, which in the Avesta is at the incipient stage, and reduced, or altogether shed, function *A*. If it is denied that function *B* was developed from *A*, the only alternative is to hold both as pertaining to Mithra from the beginning. Such an assumption, however, is worth maintaining only if the Rigvedic evidence supports it. This we shall see is not the case. The conclusion is that though the Roman Mithras cannot be shown to have

(2) held function *A*, he cannot be used to disprove that this was the original function of his Iranian forbear.

With regard to (2) the situation is that, if we did not have the Avestan evidence, no more could be said of the Rigvedic Mitra than that he 'calls people to account' and is somehow homogenous with Varunam the god of oath. But as soon as the Avestan identification of Mithra with the contract is taken into consideration, it becomes clear that the contract is also the Rigvedic Mitra's domain. One understands at once not only why he 'calls people to account', an occupation in which the Iranian Mithra is constantly engaged in the Avestan Mithra Yast, but also why his personality is all but merged in Varuna's. Both Varuna, the greater of the two, and Mitra watch over the observance of Truth, one in respect of the oath, the other in respect of the contract. Accordingly it is their joint task to detect and combat Truth-infringers;

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this is why Mitra-Varuna, like the Avestan Mithra, 'have spies, ... are guardians of the whole world, ... are barriers against falsehood, which they ... punish, ... afflict with disease those who neglect their worship'.

Once Mitra was associated with Varuna in the perpetual watch over Truth against those who fail to honor it, he naturally began to share some of Varuna's other attributes. Hence both the Avestan Mithra and the Rigvedic *Miravaruna* are 'bestowers of water', and a link is seen between the Avestan Mithra's omniscience and possession of ten thousand eyes, and Varuna's 'all-knowing' and 'thousand eyed', as well as between Mithra's chariot drawn by four coursers and Varuna's car 'drawn by well-yoked steeds'.

It is true that rather confusingly the Vedic language has a common noun *mitra* 'friend', which is formally indistinguishable from the name of the god. But the circumstances suggest that this is a case of accidental homonymity. For although in a few Rigvedic and Avestan passages Mitra/Mithra is friendly enough to men, the same can be said of most gods. The one defining Rigvedic epithet of Mitra, *yatayajjana*, has scarcely anything to do with 'friendship', and to say that the Avestan Mithra, who is 'both wicked and very good to men' represents 'the Friend' and not, as the text persistently suggests, the contract, means to replace, on mere etymological grounds, a vivid and unmistakably characteristic identification of a god by a colorless description that would fit almost any Avestan divinity except the Fiendish Spirit and the daevas. In any case, to counterbalance the bias to which the noun *mitra* 'friend' might incline us, there is evidence of the existence of a Rigvedic noun *mitra* 'contract', etymologically identical with the Avestan noun *mithra* quoted above. It is then tempting to accept Luders' opinion that while Varuna as god of oath watched over Truth in water, Mitra as god of contract did the same in fire, Indo-Aryan contracts being for this reason concluded in front of blazing fire, as oaths were sworn in the presence of water.

Having satisfied ourselves that the Rig Veda, despite its reticence on Mitra, does support the theory that the god's original function was to watch over the contract, we may return to the Iranian evidence, our source (4). In discussing (3) we said that a simple argument could have led from Mithra's function A to B. Let us now pursue its links. As guardian of the covenant and watcher of the contract-breakers Mithra is said in the initial formula of each *karde* of the Mithra Yast to be sleepless and everwaking; elsewhere he 'watches in darkness', that is at night, and is

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described as 'the caretaker who without falling asleep protects and observes the creatures of Mazda'. It is clear, then, that Mithra is not only up and about all day but also all night. Consequently in the morning he is up before anybody else, including the sun, that

proverbially early riser. Such early habits may well have suggested to Mithra's worshippers, who would understandably have wanted to see Mithra in some natural phenomenon, that he was the light of daybreak, which precedes the appearance of the sun. That this is the case would seem to be stated in st. 142, where Mithra 'in the morning brings into evidence the many shapes, the creatures of the Incremental Spirit, as he lights up his bodym being endowed with own light light like the moon'. As, however, the words printed in Italics are not certainly a correct translation of the Avestan text the passage can only be used as corroboration of other evidence. But we may note in passing that Mithra's epithet *hvaraoxshna*- 'endowed with own light' is not necessarily an *ad hoc* invention of the poet to explain how Mithra could appear in the form of light: the epithet may be an ancient relic, a spark, as it were, of the fire in whichm according to Luders, Mithra once resided.

The kind of light Mithra represents is luckily defined in unambiguous terms in *Vendidad* 9.28, a passage discussed below: 'The flashing, shining dawn of the third night flares up; Mithra, the keeper of good watch, approaches the mountains where Truth breathes freely; the sun rises.' One can hardly complain that this statement lacks precision in the timing of Mithra's appearance. The oft-quoted Stanza 13, in which Mithra is 'the first...to approach across the Hara, in front of the ... sun, ... the first... to seize the gold-painted mountain-tops', represents thus merely a ttranslation of Mithra's time-table into terms of space: because he is the light that appears *earlier* than the sun, he travels *in front* of the sun. It is a plausible guess that in Western Mithraism the same situation received the opposite interpretation; the light of daybreak is *past* by the time the sun rises; hence on Mithraic reliefs Mithras stands on the sun's chariot *behind* the sun.

Once the light-giving part of function B is explained, its life-giving part easily follows from what has been said. In the Avesta Mithra is defined as a life-giver by his epithet *Puthro.da*- 'bestower of sons' (stanza 65), *uxshyat.urvara*- 'making plants grow' (stanza 61), and *gayo.da*- 'bestower of life' (stanza 65). Now, seen from the practical point of view of the Iranians, the granting of sons is on the same level as

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the dispensation of fat and herds (stanza 65), the provision of wide pastures (stanza 112), or the appointment of richly furnished and well-staffed huses (stanza 30). In stanza 108 riches and fortune health and 'property that affords much comfort' are thought of in association with 'noble progeny hereafter'. The

provision of material comfort and of sons must be viewed as part and parcel of Mithra's care for the nation's welfare and prosperity, which create conditions of internal stability, thus leading to treaty-abiding international relations. The epithet *puthro.da-* is accordingly a by-product of Mithra's concern for the stability of contractual relations, which in the case of long-term stipulations anyway depends on the availability of sons to carry out their father's obligations. The epithet *uxshyat.urvara-* can be traced indirectly to the same source, if the history of Mira/Mithra is borne in mind. The ability to make plants grow obviously results from Mithra's function of 'replenisher of waters' and 'rain-pourer' (stanza 61), which in its turn is due to his Truth-watching association with Varuna, who had become a water-god. Ultimately, then, even the growing of plants requires Mithra no more than guardianship of the covenant as original function. Once *puthro.da-* and *uxshyat.urvara-* are accounted for, *gayo-da-* presents no difficulty. A god who bestows progeny, brings down rain and raise vegetation, and is moreover identified with the first light of the morning which brings back to life the sleeping *oikoumenei*, would almost inevitably be considered a 'giver of life.'

Once it is admitted that function *B*, which may be the only one of the Roman Mithras, but is ancillary to *A* in the Avesta, can be comfortably derived from *A*, there is no point in denying what all appearances combine to suggest: that Mithra's original function is to watch over the contract, and nothing else. For what may be considered a third function of the Avestan Mithra, that of a war-lord, cannot seriously be held to be an original trait of this god. On the one hand martial demeanor is conspicuously absent in the Rigvedic Mitra; on the other hand the Avestan Mithra, in his capacity as 'punisher of wrong' (stanza 35), including the wrong perpetrated by 'defiant' countries, could hardly help resorting to war as a means of mass punishment. This need not have turned him into a god of war, but it happened to do so. To infer, as is often done, that the Avestan Mithra, in addition to representing the Vedic Mitra, is also the heir of the Vedic war-god Indra, means to open the door wide to a reckless identification of gods that never had anything

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to do with each other, thus spelling the confusion, instead of the clarification, of Indo-Iranian religious history. If Mithra is called Mithra, and not Indra, whose name, moreover, duly occurs in Avestan as Indra, then the only possible excuse for grafting the Rigvedic Indra on the Avestan Mithra would be an association in Rigvedic hymns of Mitra with Indra as close as that with

Varuna. Of such association there is no trace. Inevitably once by secondary process the Iranian Mithra had become a god of war, he would in this respect resemble Indra. Ancient Indo-Iranian martial epithets and items of equipment - such as the thunderbolt/mace (Vedic *vajr*/Avestan *vazra*-) - which Indra has in the Vedas, would be attributed to Mithra in his new capacity; the two gods might even share suitable lines borrowed from traditional epic poems. This need not mean and, on the available evidence, definitely does not mean that 'the warlike character of Mithra ... derives from the dominating aspect of Indra'.

To round off the arguments which point to Mithra's original function as having been the guardianship of Truth in the form of contract, we may briefly consider the two pieces of non-Avestan evidence relating to two opposite ends of Iran. One is the oft-quoted Persian habit of swearing *ma ton Mithran, om vuri doi ton Mithran* (Xenophon), *na ton Mithran* (Plutarch) (cf Franz Cumont Textes et monuments figures relatifs aux mysteres de Mithras, Volume 1, p. 229, n. 2). The other is found in a Buddhist Sogdian text discovered in Central Asia, the Sogdian version of the Vessantara Jataka (ed. E. Benveniste). It contains the only reference to Mithra found so far ascertained in Buddhist Sogdian literature. In Manichaean Sogdian texts *myshyy Buyy* (from *Mithrah bagah*) is often found as the names of the sun-god and the Manichaean Tertius Legatus. That Buddhist Sogdians also thought of Mithra as a sun-god is very likely, but proof is lacking. All the more interesting is the VJ reference to Mithra as god of contract. Prince Sudashan, determined to obtain Buddhahood (*Bodhisattva*), has renounced all his possessions: his royal home, his chariot and equipment, even his children; eventually he is left with only his wife Mandri in a mountain forest. To test him the Supreme God takes on the appearance of an aged Brahmin, and begs to be given Mandri. The prince agrees. The Supreme God is satisfied with Sudashan's spirit of sacrifice. Still disguised as a Brahmin he hands him back Mandri, but pretends to do so provisionally: Sudashan is to keep his wife *in trust*, until the Brahmin comes back to reclaim her. The intention of the god is to prevent Sudashan from giving her away again

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to the next Brahmin that comes along:

And now, O Ananda, the Brahmin did not go far; he turned back, reached the hut, and spoke thus to Sudashan: 'I shall be going to another land, and will leave the woman in your trust (*lit.* with you in trust) *in the presence of Mithra, the Judge of Creation,*

together with the mountain spirits, the forest spirit, and the spirit of the source, provided (*lit.* for so but) you do not give her away to anybody. Thereupon Sudashan took over Mandri in trust.

Here a proper contract takes place, of which Mithra is witness. Mandri is given in trust to Sudashan in the presence of Mithra, on condition that he will not again part with her.

We may now consider Mithra's original function as settled, and turn to what has so long obscured it, namely the Iranian, *but not Avestan*, notion of Mithra as sun-god, which has often been said to be of pre-Iranian origin, perhaps pertaining to him from the beginning. What encouraged this view was the mistaken idea that already the Avestan Mithra, though in general clearly distinguished from the sun, is on two occasions confused with him. One occasion is claimed to be the description of Mithra's chariot as being 'the sun-god's', *hu...xshaetai*. It will be seen from our commentary that actually *hu...xshaetai* is not in apposition to Mithra, but refers to the sun in his own rights. The other occasion, insisted on by Lommel, *Paideuma*, III, 1949, p. 210, occurs in stanza 136, where Mithra's chariot is described as having one wheel. This could at a stretch serve as confirmation of other proof that Mithra is a sun-god in the Avesta. Even then it would be awkward for the sun to be represented by the wheel of Mithra's chariot. Since, however, there is not a shred of evidence that the Avestan Mithra is a sun-god, the assertion that he is rest solely on this one wheel. Now, it is a fallacy to think that only the sun can have a one-wheeled chariot. This prejudice is disproved by the Rabelaisian Avestan episode of young Snavidka, which it will suffice for our purpose to quote in translation:

...Karasaspa..., who killed the leaden-jawed Snavidka, whose hands were of stone. Thus was his challenge: 'I am a minor, not yet of age. If I become of age I shall use the earth as a wheel, I shall make the sky the body of my

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chariot. I shall fetch down Spenta Mainyu from Prardise, and raise Angra Mainyu from disgusting Hell. Both shall pull my chariot, the Incremantal Spirit and the Fiendish, provided heroic-minded Karasaspa does not kill me.' He was killed by heroic-minded Karasaspa towards (=just before reaching) the height of his life, at the rising of his vitality.

Clearly Snavidka was not the one to shrink from the thought of making the sun or the moon his second wheel. If he was content with one wheel, the reason must be that Avestan authors considered one wheel sufficient in the case of mythical chariots. Even if originally the one-wheeled chariot was an exclusive characteristic of the sun, by Avestan times such a limitation evidently no longer applied. Accordingly we gather from stanza 136 not that Mithra is the sun, but that his chariot is unusual, as may be expected of one that was built by the Incremental Spirit himself (stanza 143).

There is yet another prejudice which has prompted some scholars to think that the Avestan Mithra was a sun-god, namely that he is a god of the sky, in Nyberg's opinion not only of the diurnal, but mainly even of the nocturnal sky. In support of this view, apart from Mithra's 'star-decked' chariot, which proves no more that its owner is a sky-god than Haoma's 'star-decked' girdle proves such a thing of Haoma. ...

...We are exceptionally fortunate with Mithra in that he is the subject of a long Avestan hymn that is packed with information. We are thus in a position to sort out the strands of a character who at first sight presents a bewildering variety of sides: contract, war, first morning light, source of life, sun; and there are more. Without the Avestan hymn it would be impossible to disentangle the later accretions from what is original. We have so far seen that Mithra's original function is the guardianship of contract, and have considered three accretions, two, war and morning light, fully grown at the Avestan stage, the third, the giving of life, only hinted at in the Avesta, but due, together with the bringing of light, to become the chief discernible characteristic of the Roman Mithras. It remains now to inquire whether the Iranian identification of Mithra with the sun, which is firmly attested in the Christian era, and may have begun earlier, can also be derived from the stage at which Mithra is met with in the Avesta. Luckily in this case, too, the author of the Avestan hymn is sufficiently explicit. Although he in no way identifies Mithra with

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the sun, his description of the god's movements provides the essential elements out of which, looking back, one may say a sun-worship almost had to develop. For the Avestan Mithra is not only the light which shortly after its appearance is merged in the sun's, but it can be shown that day and night he closely follows, or rather precedes, the sun.

...Emil Sieg has shown that the Vedic sun, the one wheel of whose chariot is luminous on one side only, turns round on reaching the West, so that the dark side of the wheel faces the earth; he is thus able to rejoin

the East unseen by men, though travelling over their heads. It is a credit to Darmesteter's perspicacity that long before Sieg's articles appeared he had contemplated the possibility, in view of the Vedic sun's behavior, that beginning in stanza 95 Mithra 'retraces in the inverse sense the journey of the day, returning once again to the East'. Of course, Of course, there can here be no question of a wheel, luminous on one side only showing its dark side after sunset. If such a wheel exists at all in Iranian mythology (it has not been noticed), one would require solid proof before attributing it not only to the sun's chariot, but also to Mithra's. In any case Mithra does not require such a device, as he is 'endowed with his own light', which he switches on in the morning (stanza 142) and presumably turns off at night.

There is, however, evidence that as in day-time Mithra flies in front of the sun (stanza 13) from East to West (stanza 67), so once he reaches the West he turns round, as Darmesteter had expected. No sooner has the poet informed us in stanza 95 that after sunset Mithra 'goes along the whole width of the earth', than we are told in stanza 100 that Rashnu flies on his left. But when Mithra starts off from Paradise on his reconnoitering expedition (stanza 124) Rashnu is on his right (stanza 126). It seems only logical to infer, from the reciprocal change of position, that the two gods had reversed the direction of their joint flight. For if Rashnu was travelling on Mithra's right on their westward journey, and each of the two turned round on himself on reaching the West, the return journey would find Rashnu on Mithra's left. Mithra's itinerary and time-table can accordingly be outlined as follows: starting off at, or after midnight(?) from Paradise (which is situated above Mount Hara), with Rashnu on his right, Mithra arrives in the East (that is, a point east of Mount Hara) at daybreak, whose light is due to him (Stanza 142). From the East he crosses the Hara (stanza 95) and approaches *Xvaniratha*, the central clime (stanza 67); thence, though this is not stated,

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he continues to the West. There, at sunset (stanza 95) he turns round (as shown by Rashnu's now being on his left), and reconnoiters the whole earth. Finally, probably towards midnight, he returns to Paradise, taking with him the libations he had been offered.

It does not take a wild imagination to see that the god who at the earlier, the Avestan stage, is the first light of the morning, travels west by day, and returns overnight to the East, in time to be visible at daybreak, had a good chance of being identified with the sun at a later stage. The sceptic who may wonder how it is that the Avestan Mithra travels west by day and east

by night if he is *not* the sun, any be reminded that Mithra, as never-sleeping wathcher of the covenant and its infringers, has to tour the earth incessantly. In actual fact he is simultaneously present everywhere. This would not, and evidently did not, deter his worshippers from mapping out for him a route and a time-table, which in any case would tend to be linked with the movement of the sun, the most prominent and regular hoverer over the earth. The only daring step to take was the one which translated the relation of Mithra and the sun from time to time into space. Once the *earlier* Mithra had come to be placed *in front* of the sun, he would be assigned the sun's route and further time-table out of sheer mental inertia. ...

...This distribution was convincingly explained by Henning, who discovered it as reflecting the different developments Mithra, and incidentally Nairyo.sangha, had undergone in the mythology of the three Iranian nations (i.e., Persians, Parthians and Sogdians). The fact that the Sogdians and Parthians chose Mithra to represent the Tertius Legatus, who is a sun-god, shows that to them Mithra was a sun-god. As if to confirm this, Sogdian Manichaeans actually use the expression *myshyy Buyy* to denote the astronomical sun, and the Parthian word *myhr* (pronounced *mihhr*) not only means 'sun', but penetrated with this meaning as a loanword into New Persian (where it must be distinguished from its homonym *mihhr*, 'friend' cf. Russian '**Milii**'). Conversely, if the Persians chose Mithra to represent the Manichaeian *Spiritus Vivens*, who is a *demiurgos*. This at any rate was Henning's impression, who referred to the oft-quoted *tou kosaoi ov o Mithra edemiourgase* of Porphyrius, De antro nymph 6, at the same time ightly protesting that the Avestan Mithra was in no way a *demioupgos*. The bold assertions to the contrary, we have tried to refute, but we shall see that as the Avestan Mithra contained the seed of the future sun-god, so his veiled and somewhat heretical-looking association with the 'fashioner' or 'creator' Spenta

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Mainyu may have given rise in later times to the belief that in addition to everything else Mithra was a *demiurgos*. At any rate, as the Persian Manichees did not assign the role of the sun-god Tertius Legatus to Mithra, there is reason to think that the development of non-solar Mithra as attested in the Avesta into a son-god originated in Eastern Iran (in Yidya, an Eastern Iranian dialect, the word for 'sun' is *mira*, from *Mithra*). If in late classical and even later Oriental sources the *Persian* Mithra is described as a sun-god, this will be due, like so much else in Persian culture, to Parthian influence. It will be remembered that from the second century BC to the second century AD Parthia

was the political and cultural leader of Iran. ...

...what has been omitted seems to be either (a) derived, sometimes (b) indirectly derived, from one or another of the above functions, or (c) deduced from certain ancient epithets of the god, or (d) due to his association with Ahura Mazda, which will presently occupy us. Under (a) we should put Mithra's important function, originally shared with Ahura, of Judge of the world of creation, which it is reasonable to derive from his position as arbiter of contract. ... Under (b) can be quoted Mithra's political chieftainship, which may be a cross between his derivative function of Judge of the world and his supremacy in war; in its turn political chieftainship, combined with supervision of the covenant, may be the source of the authority Mithra has to confer, consolidate, and undo the ruling power of men. To (c) may belong his concern for the cow, extracted from his epithet *vouru.gaoyaoiti*- 'having, or bestowing wide pastures', in which *gaoyaoiti*- literally means 'cattle-pasture'. This epithet itself may originally have accrued to him as a bestower of water, on which pastures thrive, and of wealth. **[Here we wish the note the reverence for the cow typical of all Aryan peoples, of which there is very abundant evidence among both Indo-Aryans and Celts; this alone would seem to me to be sufficient to account for Mithra's concern for the cow.]** Similarly Mithra's concern for learning and knowledge (stanza 33) may be traced to his epithet *bayanam ash.xrathwastema*- 'having the greatest insight among the gods' (stanza 41), which he probably had of old as detector of breaches of contract. Finally under (d) we should name Mithra's mysterious 'purification of the Religion', a task he shares with Zarathushtra, and generally anything that lends Mithra a Zarathushtrian flavor.

Of course the interpretation of epithets and functions of so complex a god as the Avestan Mithra

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must not degenerate into hair-splitting. Many epithets he probably bears simply because he is a god. Others he may have acquired casually in the course of the ten centuries which preceded the composition of the Avestan hymn, for reasons we can never hope to discover. Theoretically any of Mithra's numerous Avestan epithets may contain an important clue without our being aware of it. Thus one would not pay much attention to the epithet *gayo.da*- 'giver of life', if it were not for the Roman Mithras, with whom the giving of life seems to be an essential function. But the lesson to be drawn is not that all epithets must be considered as equally essential, in case any of them might one day turn out to be unexpectedly important. For even *gayo.da*-, though significant in view of the post-Avestan development of

the god, sheds only indirect light on the prehistory of the Avestan Mithra." (21)

We now turn to something which has already been quote a great deal:

THE AVESTAN HYMN TO MITHRA (*MIHR YAST (YAST X)*)

1.)

Said Ahura Mazda to Zarathushtra the Spitamid:

'When I created grass-land magnate Mithra, O Spitamid, I made him such in worthiness to be worshipped and prayed to as myself, Ahura Mazda.

2.)

The knave who is false to the teaty, O Spitamid, wrecks the whole country, hitting as he does the Truth-owners as hard as would a hundred obscurantists. Never break a contract, o Spitamid, whether you conclude it with an owner of Falsehood, or a Truthowning follower of the good Religion; for the contract applies to both, the owner of Falsehood and him who owns Truth.

3.)

To those who are not false to the contract grass-land Mithra grants (possession of) fast horses, while Fire (, the son) of Ahura Mazda, grants them the straightest path, and the good, strong, incremental **Fravashis [Of whom we shall have a great deal to say in Chapter 2]** of the owners of Truth give them noble progeny.

4.)

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On account of his splendor and fortune I will audibly worship grass-land magnate Mithra with libations. Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship, since it is he who bestows peaceful and comfortable dwellings on the Iranian countries.

5.)

May he join us for assistance, may he join us for (the granting of) spaciousness, may he join us for support, may he join us for mercy, may he join us for therapy, may he join us for ability to defeat the opponent, may he join us for a comfortable existence, may he join us for ownership of Truth, he who is strong and victorious, he whom the whole material world must needs worship, pray to, and refrain from deceiving, grass-land magnate Mithra.

6.)

This powerful strong god Mithra, strongest in the (world of) creatures, I will worship with libations. I will cultivate him with praise and reverence, worship him with audible prayer, with libations Mithra the grass-land magnate.

We worship grass-land magnate Mithra with Haoma-containing milk and Barsman twigs, with skill of tongue and magic word, with speech and action and libations, and with correctly uttered words.

We worship the male and female Entities in the worship of whom Ahura Mazda knows (there is [or; consists] what is) best (literally, better) according to Truth.

SECTION 2

7.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship, whose words are correct, who is challenging, has a thousand ears, is well built, has ten thousand eyes, is tall, has a wide outlook, is strong, sleepless, (ever-)waking,

8.)

Whom the heads of countries worship as they go to the battlefield against the blood-thirsty enemy armies, towards those who, (in the area lying) between two countries at war, join their (respective) regiments.

9.)

Whichever of the two countries is the first to worship him believingly with fore-knowing thought and trusting mind, to that one (Literally: there) turns grass-land magnate Mithra, together with the Likeness of Ahura's creature **(Here repeat 4-6)**

SECTION 3

10-11.) Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship ... (=7) ..., whom
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the warriors worship at)=bending down close to) the manes of their hores, requesting strength for their teams, health for themselves, much watchfulness against antagonists, ability to strike back at enemies, ability to rout lawless, hostile opponents. **(Here repeat 4-6)**

SECTION 4

12-13.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7) who is the first supernatural god to approach across the Hara, in front of the immortal swift-horsed sun; who is the first to seize the beautiful gold-painted mountain tops; from there the most mighty surveys the whole land inhabited by Iranians,

14.)

Where gallanet rulers organize many attacks, where high, sheltering mountains with ample pasture provide solicitous for cattle; where deep lakes stand with surging waves; where navigable rivers rush wide with a swell towards Parutian Ishkata, Haraivian Margu, Sogdian Gava, and Chorasmia.

15.)

(The seven climes of the earth, which are) Arezahi, Savahia, Fradadafshu, Vidadafshu, Vouru.bareshti, Vouru.jareshti, and that splendid clime which is Xvaniratha, the land of settled dwelling and healthy village colonization, (all this area) strong Mithra surveys,

16.)

The supernatural god who flies over all climes bestowing good fortune, the supernatural god who flies over all climes bestowing power; victoriousness he increases in those who are) trained by their knowledge of Truth (to) worship him with libations. **(Here repeat 4-6)**

SECTION 5

17.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., to whom nobody may be false, neither the head of the house who presides over the house, nor the head of the clan who presides over the clan, nor the head of the tribe who presides over the tribe, nor the head of the country who presides over the country.

18.)

If the head of the house who presides over the house, or the head of the clan who presides over the clan, or the head of the tribe who presides over the tribe, or the head of the country who presides over the country, are false to him,

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Mithra enraged and provoked comes forth to smash the house, the clan, the tribe, the country, the heads of houses of the houses who preside over the houses, the heads of the clans who preside over the clans, the heads of the tribes who preside over the tribes, the heads of the countries who preside over the countries, and the councils of premiers of the countries.

19.)

The direction in which Mithra enraged and provoked will sally forth is that in respect of which the contract-breaker is least (literally: not at all) on his guard in his mind.

20.)

Even the horses of those who are false to the contract are loath to be mounted (Literally: loaded): they perform the motion of running (literally: they run), but do not stir from their places (Literally: do not go away), they bear

(their riders) yet do not convey (them) forward; they (begin to) drive (the chariot), but do not persevere.

Back flies the spear which he Antimithra throws, because of the evil spells which the Antimithra performs;

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21.)

Even if he (=the Antimithra) throws a good throw, even if he attains somebody (with his spear), he does (literally: they do) not injure him, as a result of the evil spells which Antimithra performs: the wind carries (off) the spear which the Antimithra throws, because of the evil spells which the Antimithra performs. **(Here repeat 4-6)**

SECTION 6

22.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7)..., who (if) not treated with false hood removes a man from anxiety, removes him from danger.

23.)

May you, o Mithra, not having been treated with falsehood (by us), remove us from anxiety, remove us from anxieties!

This is how you induce fear for their own persons in men who are false to the contract: (they know that) when enraged you can carry off the vigor of their arms, the strength of their feet, the light of their eyes, the hearing of their ears.

24.)

One does not get hit with thrusts of well-sharpened spears, nor with thrusts of far-flying arrows, the one to whose assistance comes with fore-knowing mind Mithra the strong, whose spies are ten thousand, who knows everything and cannot
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be deceived. *(Here repeat 4 -6.)*

SECTION 7

25.)

Grass land magnate Mithra we worship ... (=7)..., the profound, strong lord, the profit-bestowing champion, the exalted gratifier of prayers, the much-talented personification of the divine word, the warrior endowed with strength of arm,

26.) the head-smasher of evil gods, punisher of men false to the contract with an even worse punishment, the engager of witches; who, if not treated with falsehood, will lead a country to superior strength; who, if not treated with falsehood, will lead a country to superior vigor;

27.)

Who carries off the straightest paths of the defiant country, diverts its chances, removes its victoriousness; he pursues

them (=the countries, or rather the inhabitants) defenceless, deals out ten thousand blows, he who has ten thousand spies, is strong, all-knowing, undeceivable. (Here repeat 4-6.)

SECTION 8

28.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7)..., who arranges the columns of the high-pillared house, builds the strong (or makes strong the) gate-posts; herds of cattle and (teams of) slaves he bestows on the house in which he is propitiated; the others, in which he is provoked, he smashes.

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29.)

You, Mithra, are both wicked and very good to the countries, you, Mithra, are both wicked and very good to men; you, Mithra, control peace and strife of the countries.

30.)

It is you who provide the great houses with bustling women and fast chariots, with spread-out rugs and piled-up cushion-heaps; it is you who provide with bustling women and fast chariots, with spread-out rugs and piled-up cushion-heaps the high pillared house of the Truth-owning man who regularly mentions you by name in his spoken prayer, offering libations.

31.)

Mentioning you regularly by name in my spoken prayer, o strong one, I worship you, Mithra, with libations; mentioning
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you regularly by name in my spoken prayer o strongest one, I worship you, Mithra, with libations; mentioning you regularly by name in my spoken prayer o undeceivable one, I worship you, Mithra, with libations!

32.)

Listen, o Mithra, to our prayer, satisfy, o Mithra, our prayer, condescend to our prayer! Approach our libations, approach them as they are sacrificed, collect them for consumption, deposit them in Paradise!

33.)

Give us the following boons for which we ask you, o strong one, by virtue of the stipulation of the given promises (*lit.* words): riches, strength, and victoriousness, comfortable existence and ownership of Truth, good reputation and peace of soul, learning, increment, and knowledge, Ahura-created victoriousness, the conquering superiority of (+deriving from) Truth which is what is best, and the interpretation of the incremental divine word,

34.)

So that we, being in good spirit, cheerful, joyful, and optimistic, may overcome all opponents, so that we, being in good spirit, cheerful, joyful, and optimistic, may overcome all hostilities of evil gods and men, sorcerers and witches, tyrants, hymn-mongers, and mumblers. (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 9

35.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7)..., the punisher of wrong, the levier of armies, whose perception is thousandfold, who rules as an all-knowing potentate;

36.)

Who sets the battle in motion, who takes his stand in the battle, who, having taken his stand in the battle, smashes the regiments: all the flanks are surging of the battle-tossed regiments, the center of the blodd-thirsty army is quaking;

37.)

Well may he (*lit.* he will be able to) bring them terror and fear: off he throws the evil heads of the men that are false to the treaty, off fly the evil heads of the men that are false to the treaty;

38.)

He sweeps away the crumbling dwelling, the no longer inhabitable abodes in which (used to) live the owners of Falsehood who are false to the treaty and strike at what

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virtually owns Truth: the cow, accustomed to pastures, is driven along the dusty road of captivity, dragged forward in the clutches of treaty-infringing men as their draught-animal, choking with tears they (=cows) stand, slobbering at the mouth (*lit.* a flow [being] along the mouth).

39.)

Their eagle-winged arrows, though propelled in their flight from a well-stretched bow by the bow-string, pierce no wound, since grass-land magnate Mithra, enraged and provoked, is hostile, not having been acknowledge.

Their well-sharpened, pointed, long-shafted spears take off in flight from their arms, but pierce no wounds, since grass-land magnate Mithra, enraged and provoked, is hostile, not having been acknowledged.

Their sling-stones, too, takes off in flight from their arms, but perice no wounds, since grass-land magnate Mithra, enraged and provoked, is hostile, not having been acknowledged.

40.)

Well-discharged are their knives when thrown at the heads of men; yet they strike no wounds, since grass-land magnate Mithra, enraged and provoked, is hostile, not having been acknowledged.

So, too, their maces are well brandished when swung on the heads of men; yet they strike no wounds, since grass-land magnate Mithra, enraged and provoked, is hostile, not having been acknowledged.

41.)

Mithra drives the frightened regiments hither, Rashnu drives them thither, Sraosha, the friend of Ashi, chases them everywhere: their protective gods desert them, as grass-land magnate Mithra, enraged and provoked, is hostile, not having been acknowledged.

42.)

Thus they (=regiments) cry (*lit. speak*) to grass-land magnate Mithra: 'Ah grass-land magnate Mithra! It is to (*lit. before*) Mithra these fast horses are taking us! These strong-armed (*vis. Mithra, Rashnu, Sraosha*), o Mithra, are destroying us with the knife!'

43.)

Thereupon he knocks them down, Mithra the grass-land magnate with one hundred killings for each blow (aimed) at fifty, with one thousand for each blow aimed at a hundred, with ten thousand killings for each blow aimed at a thousand, with countless killings for each blow aimed at ten thousand; for he is enraged and provoked, Mithra the grass-land magnate.

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(Here repeat 4-6.)

SECTION 10

44.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7)..., whose abode is set in the material world as far as the earth extends, unrestricted in size, shining, reaching widely abroad;

45.)

For whom on every height, in every watchpost, eight servants sit as watchers of the contract, watching the contract-breakers; they see them, they notice them, as soon as they begin to be false to the contract, and they guard the paths of those who seek out the owners of Falsehood who are false to the contract and strike at what virtually owns Truth.

46.)

To whose assistance comes Mithra with fore-knowing thought, the strong, all-knowing, undeceivable grass-land magnate, is ready to help and protect, protecting behind, protecting in front, a watcher and observer all around. (Here repeat 4-6.)

SECTION 11

47.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., whom notorious in his anger the broad-hooved (horses) drive against the blood-thirsty enemy armies, towards those who (in the area lying) between two countries at war, join their (respective) regiments.

48.)

When Mithra comes driving against the blood-thirsty enemy armies, towards those who (in the area lying) between two countries at war join their (respective) regiments, (and having arrived) there, fetters behind the evil hands of men false to the treaty, switches off their eyesight, deafens their ears: (then) one no longer disjoins the feet, one has no strength to counter: the lands and the men (*lit.* opponents) he treats as (he treats) those who treat (him) badly, Mithra the grass-land magnate (*Here repeat 6-6.*)

SECTION 12

49-50.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we airship...(=7)..., for whom Ahura Mazda, the creator, fashioned an abode above the much-twisting, shining Hara the high, where (there) is no night or darkness, no wind cold or hot, no deadly illness, no defilement produced by evil gods - neither do mists rise from
(83)

Hara thye high:

51.)

Which (abode) the incremental Immortals built, all in harmony with the sun, believably, with fore-knowing though and trusting mind; who (= Mithra) from Hara the high surveys the whole material world.

52.)

When fast-stepped the evil-doing malingerer hastens to the fore, grass-land magnate Mithra yokes his fast chariot - likewise strong Sraosha, the friend of Ashi, and delightful Nairyō, sangha 0 -: he slays him (in any case, so that he is) slain, be it that he stays with his regiment, be it that he ventures out to attack. (*Here repeat 4-6*)

53.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., who at times complains to Ahura Mazda with out-stretched hands, as follows:

54.)

'I am the beneficent protector of all creatures, I am the

beneficent guardian of all creatures; yet men do not worship me by mentioning my name in their prayers, as other gods are worshipped with prayers in which their names are mentioned.

55.)

If indeed men were to worship me by mentioning my name in their prayers, as other gods are worshipped with prayers with prayers in which their names are mentioned, I should hold forth to men who own the Truth, for the duration of a limited time; interrupting my own radiant immortal life I should come.

56.)

Mentioning you regularly by name in his spoken prayer, the owner of Truth worships you offering libations. Mentioning you regularly by name in my spoken prayer, o strong one, I worship you, Mithra, with libations; mentioning... (=31)...libations.

57-59.)

(=32-34+4-6)

SECTION 14

60.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7)..., who has good reputation, good appearance, good renown; who grants favors at will, who grants grass-land at will, *ataurvayo ida fshuyantam vastrim vaso.yaonai intam*, the benign; who has ten thousand spies, is strong, all-knowing, undeceivable. (Here repeat 4-6.)

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SECTION 15

61.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7)..., who stands watchful with upright shanks, the strong challenging watcher, the replenisher of waters who listens to the call, thanks to whom water (=rain) falls and plants grow, the challenging director of (boundary) lines, the creator's perceptive, undeceivable creature, endowed with much perception;

62.)

Who to no man false to the contract gives vigor or strength, who allows no fortune or payment to any man false to the contract.

63.)

When enraged you can carry off... (=23-24)..., cannot be deceived. (Here repeat 4-6.)

64.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7)...in whose soul (there is) a great, powerful pledge to the beautiful far-spreading Religion, according to which (pledge) its (=the Religion's) seed (or family) is distributed over all seven climes;

65.)

Who is among the fast, loyal among the loyal, strong among the strong, a champion among champions; who grants the entreaty, who dispenses fat and herds, who gives power and sons, who bestows life and comfortable existence, who ensures ownership of Truth;

66.)

Whose escorts is good Ashi, Bounty, in her fast carriage, strong manly valor, the strong Kavyan Fortune, the strong Firmament which obeys its own law, the strong Likeness of Ahura's creature, the strong **Fravishis** (about whom we shall speak at length in Chapter 2) of the owners of Truth, and he (viz. Nairyō.sangha) who shares place and time with many Truth-owning worshippers of Mazda. (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 17

67.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., who comes driving in a supernaturally fashioned, high-wheeled chariot, from the (eastern) continent Arazahi to (us in) the splendid continent Xvaniratha, equipped with prompt energy, Mazda-created fortune, and Ahura-created victoriousness;

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68.)

Tall good Ashi guides his chariot; the Mazdayasnian Religion paves its paths for good travel; it is driven by supernatural, white, radiant, transparent, incremental, intelligent, shademess coursers that hail from supernature, as often as the Likeness of Ahura's creature launches it well-launched.

Wherefore all supernatural evil gods, as well as the concupiscent owners of Falsehood, are moved by fear.

69.)

'Let us not meet here the charge of the wrathful lord who comes with a thousand batterings (*lit.* whose thousand batterings come) to the opponent, the strong, all-knowing, undeceivable master of ten thousand spies.' (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 18

70.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., in front of whom flies Ahura-created Verethagna in the shape of a wild, aggressive male boar with sharp fangs and sharp tusks, a boar that kills at one blow, is unapproachable, grim, speckle-faced, and strong, has iron hind feet, iron fore-feet, iron

tendons, and iron tail, and iron jaws;

71.)

As he (=Verethagna=boar) catches up with the opponents, beset by passion - simultaneously by manly valor -, he knocks them (*lit.* the opponents) down with a toss (of his head): he does not even think he has struck, nor has he the impression he is hitting anybody, until he has smashed even the vertebrae, the springs of vitality;

72.)

He cuts to pieces everything at once, mingling (*lit.* he who mingles) together on the ground the bones, the hair, the brains, and the blood of men false to the contract. (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 19

73.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., who at (other) times joyfully raises his voice to Ahura Mazda, speaking with outstretched hands as follows: 'O Truth-owning Ahura Mazda, most incremental spirit, creator of the materials world!

74.)

If indeed men were to worship me by mentioning my name in
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their prayers, as other gods are worshipped with prayers in which their names are mentioned, I should go forth to men who own Truth, for the duration of a limited time; interrupting my own radiant immortal life I should come.'

75.)

May we become such as are capable of protecting the homesteads, may we become such as do not need to abandon either homestead, or house, or clan, or tribe, or country, or what(ever else) the strong-armed (=Mithra) shall guard for us from the enemies!

76.)

It is you who destroy the enmities of the enemies, it is you who destroy the enmities of the inimical: do destroy the slayers of Truth-owning men!

You have good horses and a good chariot-driver: strong, you bring profit when invoked.

77.)

I invoke you for assistance: 'May he join us for assistance, (moved) by abundant and good sacrifice of libations, by abundant and good offering of libations!', so that through you we may inhabit with long dwelling a welcome dwelling good to dwell in.

78.)

You protect the countries in the same measure in which they strive (*lit.* it strives) to take care of grass-land magnate Mithra; you destroy the countries to the same extent to which they are defiant.

I invoke you for assistance: 'May he join us for assistance, Mithra the strong, victorious, splendid master of countries, worthy to be worshipped, worthy to be prayed to!' (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 20

79.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7)..., the judge who makes the sbode gain prominence, (for that man) to whom Rashnu has given (it) for long succession.

80.)

You are the protector, the defender, of the abode of those who reject falsehood; you are the guardian of the community of those who reject falsehood; you are as master it (=the community) obtains the most excellent succession and Ahura-created victoriousness, (because) in it (*lit.* in which [community]) the many men false to that contract are floored (*lit.* lie), struck at the divinatory trial. (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

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SECTION 21

81.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7)..., the judge who makes the abode gain prominence, (for that man) to whom Rashnu has given (it) for long succession;

82.)

On whom Ahura Mazdah has conferred a thousand perceptions, (and) ten thousand eyes for seeing all-around; thanks to these eyes and perceptions he spots the infringer of the contract and the man false to the contract; thanks to these eyes and perceptions Mithra cannot be deceived, he who has ten thousand spies, is strong, all-knowing, undeceivable. (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 22

83.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7)..., whom invoke for assistance, with outstretched hands, sometimes the head of the country who presides over the country, sometimes the head of the tribe who presides over the tribe,

84.)

Sometimes the head of the clan who presides over the clan, sometimes the head of the house who presides over the house, sometimes she (*viz.* the cow) who longs to be milked as she feels (*lit.* is with) the pain of swelling, sometimes also the

pauper who follows the doctrine of Truth but is deprived of his rights;

85.) the lamenting voice of the latter, even though he raises his voice reverently, reaches up to the (heavenly) lights, makes the round of the earth, pervades the seven climes; so does the voice of the cow (*lit.* as [that] of the cow, too, [does]),

86.)

Who, being led away captive, calls at times for assistance with outstretched hands, longing for the herd: 'When will grass-land magnate Mithra, the hero, driving from behind, make us reach the herd, when will he divert to the path of Truth us who are (*lit.* is) being driven to the estate of Falsehood.

87.)

Then grass-land Mithra comes to the assistance of that (invoker) by whom he has been propitiated; but of him who has antagonized grass-land magnate Mithra he destroys

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(repectively) the house, the clan, the tribe, the country, and the empire (*lit.* command of countries). (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 23

88.)

Grass-land Mithra we worship... (=7)..., whom glowing Haoma the healer, beautiful, majestic, and golden-eyed, worshipped on the highest peak of Hara the high, which is called Hukairya by name; the immaculate (worshipped) the immaculate with immaculate Barsman twigs, immaculate libation, immaculate words;

89.)

Whom (=Haoma) Truth-owning Ahura Mazda installed as promptly-sacrificing, loud-chanting priest: as Ahura Mazda's promptly-sacrificing, loud-chanting priest, as the oriest of the incremental Immortals, he, the priest, sacrificed (chanting) with loud voice; his voice reached up to the (heavenly) lights, made the round of the earth, pervaded all seven climes;

90.)

Who (=Haoma) was the first mortar-priest to elevate the star-decked, supernaturally fashioned Haoma-stalks on the high Hara; (even) Ahura Mazda praised (his) well-grown body which the incremental Immortals were praising; whom (=Haoma) from afar the swift-horsed sun causes to perceive his reverence.

91.)

Homage to grass-land magnate Mithra who has a thousand ears (and) ten thousand eyes! Worthy of worship and prayer you are; may you go on being (held) worthy of worship and prayer in the houses of men! Hail to that man who at various times will worship you, firewood, barsman-twigs, milk, pestle and mortar, in hand, having washed his hands, washed pestle and mortar, spread out the Barsman-twigs, elevated the Haoma-stalk, recited the Ahuna Vairya prayer!

92.)

This Religion Truth-owning Ahura Mazda professed; out of desire for the Religion (also) Good Mind, Truth is which is what is best, Power to be chosen, incremental Devotion, Wholeness and Life professed (it); to it generous Mazda gave the jurisdiction over the living beings, so did (*lit.* to it) the incremental Immortals, who consider you(=Mithra) the temporal and religious judge of living beings in the (world of) creatures, the one who purifies the best (religion) for the creatures.

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93.)

Now then, in both lives, o grass-land magnate Mithra, in both - this material existence, and the one which is spiritual - do protect us from Death and Wrath, the two owners of Falsehood, from the evil armies of the owners of Falsehood who raise a gruesome banner, from the onslaughts of Wrath, which are run by Wrath the malignant with (the co-operation of) the Disintegrator (of the body) whom the evil gods created!

94.)

Now then, grass-land magnate Mithra, give strength to our teams, health to ourselves, much watchfulness against antagonists, ability to strike back at enemies, ability to rout lawless, hostile, opponents! (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 24

95.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., who goes along the whole width of the earth after the setting of the glow of the sun, sweeping across both edges of this wide, round earth whose limits are far apart: everything he surveys between heaven and earth,

96.)

Holding his mace in his hand; with its hundred bosses and hundred blades (it is) a feller of men as its swings forward;

strongest of weapons, most valiant of weapons, it is cast in strong yellow, gilded iron;

97.)

From whom the Fiendish Spirit, very deadly, recoils in fear, from whom malignant Wrathm his body forfeited, recoils in fear, from whom the long-handed Procrastination recoils in fear, from whom all supernatural evil gods, and the concupiscent owners of Falsehood, recoil in fear(, saying):

98.)

'May we not meet with the onslaught of grass-land magnate Mithra in his rage (*lit.* enraged)! May you not strike us in your rage (*lit.* enraged), grass-land magnate Mithra!'

(Thus) he who is the mightiest of gods, the strongest of gods, the most mobile of gods, the fastest of gods, the most victorious of gods, comes forth on this earth, grass-land magnate Mithra. (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

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SECTION 25

99.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., from whom all supernatural evil gods, and the concupiscent owners of Falsehood, recoil in fear. Along flies grass-land magnate Mithra, master of countries, over the right-hand (=southern) border of this wide, round earth whose limits are far apart;

100.)

On his right flies good Sraosha, the friend of Ashia; on his left flies tall Rashnu the strong; all around him fly the waters and plants, and the **Fravashis** (of whom we shall speak at length in Chapter 2) of the owners of Truth;

101.)

He knows how (*lit.* he is able) to supply *them* regularly with eagle-winged arrows; but when in his flight he arrives where the countries are anti-Mithrian, it is *he* who first strikes his club at horse and man, (who) striking at horse and man frightens both with sudden fright. (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 26

102.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., the skillful warrior who has white horses and pointed spears with long shafts, who shoots afar with swift arrows;

103.)

Whom Ahura Mazda appointed inspector and supervisor of the promotion of the whole world, who is the inspector and supervisor of the promotion of the whole world, the caretaker who without falling asleep, watchfully protects the creatures of Mazda, the caretaker who without falling asleep, watchfully observes the creatures of Mazda. (Here repeat 4-6.)

SECTION 27

104.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., whose long arms reach out to catch the violators of the contract: if (the violator is) by the eastern river he is caught, if (he is) at the source of the Rangha, whether (he is) in the middle of the earth,

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105.)

Mithra (will be) seizing him still, reaching around (him) with his two arms. The ill-fated, having forfeited the straightest (path), is miserable in mind:

'So - thinks the ill-fated - '(it is) not (true that) all this ill-doing, Mithra does not see *all*, when his face is not turned to Man's) trickery!'

106.)

But I (=the worshipper) think in my mind: 'There is no material man in existence who thinks evil thoughts to (so) great an extent as supernatural Mithra thinks good thoughts; there is no material man in existence who speaks evil words to (so) great an extent as supernatural Mithra speaks good words; there is no material man in existence who commits evil deeds to (so) great an extent as supernatural Mithra performs good deeds;

107.)

No material man in existence is endowed with (*lit.* followed by) greater insight than that which supernatural Mithra is endowed with; no material man in existence hears with his two ears as much as supernatural Mithra, who has listening ears and a thousand perceptions, sees, (namely) *all* perpetrators of falsehood.'

Forceful(ly) Mithra comes forth, strong in (*lit.* of) power he flies, with a beautiful far-shining glance he looks (around) with his eyes:

108.)

'Who is he that worships me, who is he that is false to me? Who is he that thinks I am to be worshipped with good sacrifice, who is he that thinks I am to be worshipped with bad sacrifice? On whom may I bestow riches and fortune, on whom health of body, on whom property that affords much comfort? For whom shall I raise noble progeny hereafter?

109.)

On whom shall I bestow against his expectation an excellent (*vahishtem*) powerful kingdom, beautifully strong thanks to a numerous army? (Once he rules) he appeases through Mithra, by honoring the treaty, even the mind of an antagonized, unreconciled conqueror (*vanato*) unconquerable, who gallant(ly) strikes the evil head of even an equally powerful tyrant, who orders the execution of punishment, (and) as soon as it is ordered it is executed at his angry bidding (*lit.* if he, angry, orders).

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110.)

On whom may I bestow illness and death, on whom poverty that brings misery? Whose noble progeny shall I slay with one blow?

111.)

From whom shall I carry off against his expectation an excellent powerful kingdom, beautifully strong thanks to a numerous army? (While he rules) he incenses through Mithra, by not honoring the treaty, even the mind of a reconciled, not antagonized conqueror unconquerable, who gallant(ly) strikes the evil head of even an equally powerful tyrant, who orders the execution of punishment, (and) as soon as it is ordered it is executed at his angry bidding.' (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 28

112.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship... (=7)..., whose pike is of silver, whose armor of gold, who drives with the whip, the powerful, strong, broad-shouldered warrior. The clans dear to Mithra - when he visits the(ir) country - he treats as (he treats) those who treat (him) well; the(ir) valleys (are) wide for pasture, and their own cattle and slaves go about at will;

113.)

May he therefore come to our assistance, O exalted Mithra and Ahura! When loudly resound the whip and the neighing of horses, when the whips are tossing, the bow-strings twanging(?), the sharp arrows darting, then the evil sons of those who have offered viscid (*lit.* heavy) libations (=libations of blood), having been struck, will go down

writhing.

114.)

And so, grass-land magnate Mithra, may you give us strength for our teams, health for ourselves, much watchfulness against antagonists, ability to strike back at enemies, ability to rout lawless, hostile opponents! (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 29

115.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7).... O you, grass-land magnate Mithra, (who are simultaneously) the religious chief (of the house, called) Nmanya, the religious chief (of the clan, called) Visya, the religious chief (of the tribe, called) Zantuma, the religious chief (of the country, called) Dahyuma, the religious (supreme) chief (called) Zarathushtrotema!

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116.)

Twentyfold is the contract between two friends shouldering (mutual) obligations, thirtyfold between two fellow-citizens, fortyfold between two partners, fiftyfold between husband and wife, sixtyfold between two fellow-students, seventyfold between disciple and teacher, eightfold between son-in-law and father-in-law, ninetyfold between two brothers,

117.)

Hundredfold between father and son, thousandfold between two countries; ten-thousandfold is the contract of the Mazdayasnian Religion: thereby follow days of strength, thus there will be (days) of victory!

118.)

'I shall come (- said Mithra -) amidst the homage of the lowly and the exalted; as yonder sun goes forth to cross Hara the high in his flight, so I, too, O Spitamid, shall come forward to cross the pleasure of the Falsehood-owning Fiendish Spirit, amidst the homage of the lowly and the exalted.' (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

SECTION 30

119.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7).... 'Worship Mithra, O Spitamid (=said Ahura Mazdah-) reveal him to the disciples! You (, Mithra) the worshippers of Mazdah shall worship, together with the small and large cattle, together with the birds and fowls that fly on wings!

120.)

Mithra (is) the furtherer and guardian of all the Truth-owning

worshippers of Mazda: these shall (therefore) dedicate and sacrifice (the libations of) which consecrated and dedicated Haoma is the pourer, (and) the Truth-owning man shall drink a purified libation, to bring it about that grass-land magnate Mithra whom he worships shall be propitiated, not antagonized!

121.)

Zarathushtra asked him: '(Tell me,) Ahura Mazda, how shall a Truth-owning man drink the purified libation, to bring it about that grass-land magnate Mithra whom he worships shall be propitiated, not antagonized?'

122.)

Ahura Mazda said: 'Let them wash their bodies for three days and three nights, let them undergo a penance of thirty inflictions (=strokes of the whip), (be)for(e) worshipping and praying to grass-land magnate Mithra; let them wash their
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bodies for two days and two nights, let them undergo a penance of twenty inflictions, (be)for(e) worshipping and praying to grass-land magnate Mithra; let no one drink of these libations unless he is (*lit.* in so far as (he is)not) experienced in the (section called) "All Chiefs" of the (liturgy called) "Prayers of praise". (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

123.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., whom (even) Ahura Mazda worshipped in Paradise,

124.)

Raising his arms towards the indestructible; from Paradise grass-land magnate Mithra drives out his beautiful, golden, all-adorned chariot, which is easy to drive and runs evenly.

125.)

Four coursers pull at (*lit.* on) his chariot: all of the same whiteness, they are immortal, having been reared on supernatural food; their front-hooves are shod with gold, their hind-hooves with silver; all are harnessed to the yoke - as well as to the yoke pin(s) and yoke strap(s), which (=yoke) is connected to a solid, well-made shaft by means of a metal hook.

126.)

On his right flies Rashnu, very straight, most incremental, and extremely tall; on his left flies the libation-bearing, Truth-owning (goddess) Razishta Chista, white, dressed in white garments, the Likeness of the Mazdayasnian Religion;

127.)

Flying behind (*lit.* up to) (him) comes the strong Likeness of Ahura's creature, in the shape of a wild, aggressive, male boar with sharp fangs and sharp tusks, a boar that kills at one blow, is unapproachable, grim, speckle-faced, and strong, dexterous as it leaps about; in front of him (=Mithra) flies the blazing Fire which (is) the strong Kavyan Fortune.

128.)

There on grass-land magnate Mithra's chariot, are in readiness a thousand well-made vulture-feathered arrows, golden-mouthed, each having as barbs two (small) horns - that is two sprouts made of bone -; hailing from supernature they fly, hailing from supernature they fall, on to the evil head(s) of the evil gods.

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130.)

There, on grass-land magnate Mithra's chariot, are in readiness a thousand well-made spears, sharp at the blade; hailing from supernature they fly, hailing from supernature they fall, on to the evil head(s) of the evil gods.

There, on grass-land magnate Mithra's chariot, are in readiness a thousand well-made two-edged knives; hailing from supernature they fly, hailing from supernature they fall, on to the evil head(s) of the evil gods.

131.)

There, on grass-land magnate Mithra's chariot, are in readiness a thousand well-made two-edged knives; hailing from supernature they fly, hailing from supernature they fall, on to the evil head(s) of the evil gods.

There, on grass-land magnate Mithra's chariot, are in readiness a thousand well-made iron clubs; hailing from supernature they fly, hailing from supernature they fall, on to the evil head(s) of the evil gods.

132.)

There, on grass-land magnate Mithra's chariot, is in readiness his beautiful, easily brandished mace; with its hundred bosses and hundred blades (it is) a feller of men as it swings forward; strongest of weapons, most valiant of weapons, it is cast in strong, yellow, gilded iron; hailing from supernature it flies (*it.* They fly), hailing from supernature it (*lit.* they) fall(s), on to the evil head(s) of evil gods.

133.)

After the smiting of evil gods, after the slaying of men false to the contract, grass-land magnate Mithra comes flying across Arezahi, Savahi, Fradathafsshu, Vidadafshu, Vouru.bareshti, Vouru.Jareshti, and that splendid clime which is Xvaniartha:

134.)

Now is the fiendish Spirit, very deadly, who recoils in fear, now malignant Wrath, his body forfeited, now long-handed Procrastination; now recoil in fear all supernatural evil gods and the concupiscent owners of Falsehood (, all of them crying):

135.)

'May we not meet with the onslaught of grass-land magnate Mithra in his rage (*lit.* enraged)! May you not strike us in your rage *lit.* enraged), grass-land magnate Mithra!

Thus he who is the mightiest of gods, the strongest of gods, the most mobile of gods, the fastest of gods, the most victorious of gods, come forth on this earth, grass-land magnate Mithra. (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

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SECTION 32

136.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)..., for whom white coursers, yoked to his one-wheeled, golden chariot which is all-glittering with (precious) stones, pull (it), when he takes his libations to his abode.

137.)

'Hail to the authoritative man - said Ahura Mazda -, 'O Truth-owning Zarathushtra, on whose behalf a priest who is an owner of Truth, has experience of the world, and personifies the divine word, having spread out the Barsman-twigs, offers sacrifice with utterance of (the name of) Mithra! Straightway Mithra visits the residence of this authoritative man, if as a result of his (=the man's) favor (shown to the priest), it (=the utterance of Mithra's name) is in accordance with the prescription for recitation, in accordance with the prescription for thinking (=the prescriptions for praying orally and mentally).

138.)

'Woe to the authoritative man' - said Ahura Mazda -, 'O Truth-owning Zarathushtra, on whose behalf a priest who is no owner of Truth, has no experience, and does not personify the divine word, takes his stand behind the Brasman-twigs, even if he spreads them out fully, even if he performs a long sacrifice!'

139.)

Neither Ahura Mazda, nor the other incremental Immortals, nor grass-land magnate Mithra, are propitiated by him who thinks overbearingly of Mazda, the other incremental Immortals, grass-land magnate Mithra, the Law, Rashnu, or world-furthering, world-promoting Justice. (*Here repeat 4-6.*)

140.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7).... 'I will worship Mithra, O Spitamid' (-said Ahura Mazda-), 'who is good, strong, supernatural, foremost, merciful, incomparable, high-dwelling, a mighty strong warrior.

141.)

Valiant, he is equipped with a well-fashioned weapon, he who watches in darkness, the undeceivable. He is what (is) mightiest among the very mighty, he is what (is) strongest among the very strong; he has by far the greatest insight among the gods. Fortune attends him, the valiant, who with his thousand ears and ten thousand eyes is the strong, all-knowing, undeceivable master of ten thousand spies.' (Here repeat 4-6.)

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SECTION 34

142.)

Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship...(=7)...., the well-created, very great god who in the morning brings into evidence the many shapes, the creatures of the Incremental Spirit, as he lights up his body, being endowed with (his) own light like the moon;

143.)

Whose face blazes like (that) as the star Sirius.
'(Him) I will worship, O Spitamid (-said Ahura Mazda-) of whom frequently she, the undeceiving - who shines like the majestic sun's most beautiful creature (viz. daylight) - guides the star-decked, supernaturally fashioned chariot built (by him) who is the creative Incremental Spirit! (Him I will worship,) the strong, all-knowing, undeceivable master of ten thousand spies! (Here repeat 4-6.)

SECTION 35

144.) Grass-land magnate Mithra, we worship...(=7)....

We worship Mithra when he faces the country, we worship Mithra when he is between (two) countries, we worship Mithra when he is inside the country, we worship Mithra when he is above the country, we worship Mithra when he is below the country, we worship when he makes the round of the country, we worship Mithra when he is behind the country.

145.)

(Standing) by the Barsman plant we worship Mithra and Ahura - the two exalted owners of Truth that are removed from danger -, as well as the stars, the moon, and the sun. We worship Mithra, who in (literally of) all countries is the head of the country. (Here repeat 4-6.) (22)

Obviously we now come to the problem of the relation of

Anahita and Mithra to Zoroastrianism. Says Payam Nabarz:

"Zoroaster (or *Zarathushtra*) is said to have lived in northeastern Iran sometime in the 6th or 5th century BC, though some scholars believe it could have been as early as 1200 BC. Zoroaster is said to have had a miraculous birth: his mother, Dughdova, was a virgin who conceived him after being visited by a shaft of light. Zoroaster's teachings led to the world's first monotheistic religion, in which Ahura Mazda, the "Wise Lord" of the sky, was the ultimate creator. In this reformation Mithra, like the rest of the gods and goddesses of the Persian pantheon, was stripped of his

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sovereignty and powers and his attributes were bestowed upon Ahura Mazda.

The Avesta is the Zoroastrian holy book. It is a collection of holy texts, which include the *gatha-s*, the songs and hymns of the prophet Zoroaster, and the *yasht-s*, the ancient liturgical poems and hymns that scholars believe predated Zoroaster and were modified to reflect his reformation. It also contains rituals, precepts for daily life, and rites of passage for birth, marriage, and death. Because of the Avesta, the Zoroastrians were the first of the *ahl al-kitab* (people of the book). *Avesta* probably means "authoritative utterance."

Some of the *yashts* are hymns to ancient Persian deities, who in Zoroastrianism are demoted to the ranks of archangels or angels, with Ahura Mazda at the top of the hierarchy. In this new format, Ahura Mazda has seven immortal aspects - the Amshaspends or Amesha Spentas - each of whom rules over a particular realm. These are *Vohu Mano* (good thought, realm of animals), *Asha Vahishta* (righteousness, realm of fire), *Spenta Armaiti* (devotion, realm of earth), *Khshathra Vairya* (dominion, realm of sun and the heavens), and *Spenta Mainyu*, who is identified with Ahura Mazda (realm of humanity). There are also seven *Yazata-s*, the protective spirits: *Anahita* (water, fertility), *Atar* (fire), *Haoma* (healing plant), *Sraosha* (obedience, hearer of prayers), *Rashnu* (judgement), *Mithra* (truth), *Tishrya* (the Dog Star [*Sirius*]/source of rain).

The new religion was, as mentioned, monotheistic, with a strong dualism whereby Ahura Mazda's Amesha Spenta-s and Yazata-s, the forces of light, are faced with the forces of darkness of the *Angra Mainyu*, or *Ahriman*. Ahriman - whose symbol is the snake - is called the Great Lie (Persian: *durug*). He and his demons create drought, harsh weather, sickness, disease, poverty, and all forms of suffering. ...

In this Zoroastrian eternal battle of light and darkness, Mithra is the great warrior who, according to his hymn (*yasht* 10), carries the hundred-knotted mace or

club with a hundred edges, "the strongest of all weapons, the most victorious of all weapons, from whom Angra Mainyu, who is all death, flees away with fear". (Today, Zoroastrian priests still carry the mace of Mithra, which is given to them at their ordination as a symbol of fighting evil.) Even though the old gods were stripped of their power, Mithra had such wide popularity and importance that the Zoroastrians adapted the stories concerning him and gave him a prominent place in their religion. The Zoroastrian fire temple (*atashgade*), whose great ceremonies take place, is
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called *Dar-e Mehr*, which means "Courth of Mithra".

Interestingly, "Mithra", it has been suggested in sources from the Sassanian era, is the figure responsible for "mediating" between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu, which gives Mithra a unique position within the Persian cosmology as one who stands between light and darkness. ... Mithra is seen as almost equal to Ahura Mazda in Yasht 10, when Ahura Mazda says to Zoroaster: "Truly, when I created Mithra, the grass-land magnate. I created him as worthy of sacrifice, as worthy of prayer as myself, Ahura Mazda." Perhaps this is why he can mediate - because he is as worthy as Ahura Mazda and is also feared by Angra Mainyu.

Due to her popularity, another deity who retained a good deal of her importance in the new religion was the water goddess Anahita, who is sometimes referred to as Mithra's virgin mother or as his partner."(23)

Obviously, the question of the absorption of Mithra, Anahita, etcetera into monotheistic Zoroastrianism is a complex question; certainly, this absorption did not occur at once, but proceeded by stages. Richard N. Frye gives a clear and concise overview:

"One problem has been the difficulty of accommodating the "religion" of the *Younger Avesta*, which is more or less a continuation of the old Aryan beliefs, with the *Gatha-s* of Zoroaster. Why and how could the followers of the Prophet (Zoroaster) accept the worship of Mithra, Anahita and other deities in their religion? This has perplexed many scholars but, in my opinion, the question has not been properly put. The question is not the integration of old Aryan beliefs into the religion of Zoroaster, but the reverse, the acceptance of the teachings of a little known priest in a small principality in eastern Iran by the majority who followed the priests of the old Aryan pantheon. The Magi accepted Zoroaster probably as they had absorbed other teachings, but Zoroaster became the founder and prophet

of the new syncretic religion which we call Zoroastrianism for all Iranians." (24)

Note that in Yasht 10, quoted above, Ahura Mazda, and only Ahura Mazda, is referred to as "creator", while Mithra is several times referred to as "created".

Note that Mithra, like *Lugh*, *Lug*, *Lugus*, *Lus*, *Lleu*, etcetera,

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is a god of light and also a god of contracts. The names "Mithra" and "Lugh" are totally dissimilar, but this is natural; the name "Mithra" refers to the function as god of contracts, while "Lugh" is obviously derived from the Indo-European stem meaning "light". Thus, the names "Mithra" and "Lugh" are totally different, because each refers to one of their two functions; a name combining said two functions would have been somewhat unwieldy and probably uneuphonious; combinations such as this, e.g., *Mitravaruna*, at time appear in the Rig Veda, but not in Iranian scriptures.

Payam Nabarz gives his view of the relation between Lugh and Mithra:

"Another name for Lammas is *Lughasadh* (commemoration of Lugh). Lugh is a Celtic god of sun and light and is often shown as Lugh, Lord of the Shining Hand of Light. The name Lugh itself comes from the same (Indo-European) root as the Latin *lux*, meaning "light".

Lugh, like Christ and (the Roman) Mithras, follows the sacrificial sun god cycle: he dies (is sacrificed) for his people, and gets reborn or resurrected. Lugh carries a magic spear, which is unstoppable in battle. His spear was obtained for him by the "Celtic Argonauts". Lugh had set them a number of tasks, one of which was to obtain for him a certain magic spear. "the poisoned spear of Pisear, King of Persia; it is irresistible in battle; it is so fiery that the blade must always be held under water, lest it destroy the city in which it is kept." The Celtic Argonauts use a magic apple, kill the king, and bring the spear from Persia to Erin (Ireland) for Lugh.

The story, as told by Charles Squires in his

Mythology of the Celtic People, goes like this:

"The three brothers rested for a while after that, and then they said they would go and look for some other part of the fine. 'We will go to Pisear, King of Persia", said Brian, "and ask him for the spear."

So they went into their boat and they left the
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blue streams of the coast of Greece, and they said: 'We are well on when we have the apples and the skin.' And they stopped nowhere till they came to the borders of Persia.

'Let us go to the court with the appearance of poets,' said Brian, 'the same as we went to the King of Greece.' 'We are content to do that,' said the others, 'as all turned out so well the last time we took to poetry; not that it is easy for us to take a calling that does not belong to us.'

So they put the poet's tie on their hair, and they were as well treated as they were at the other court; and when the time came for poems Brian rose up, and this is what he said:

'It is little any spear looks to Pisear; the battle of enemies are broken, it is not too much for Pisear to wound every one of them.

"A yew, the most beautiful of the wood, it is called a king, it is not bulky.

May the spear drive on the whole crowd to their wounds of death.'

'That is a good reason', said the king, 'but I do not understand why my own spear is brought into it, O man of Poetry from Ireland.'

'It is because it is that spear of your own I would wish to get as the reward of my poem', said Brian.

'It is little sense you have to be asking that of me,' said the king; 'and the people of my court never showed greater respect for poetry than now, when they did not put you to death on the spot.'

When Brian heard that talk from the king, he thought of the apple that was in his hand, and he made a straight cast and hit him in the forehead, so that his brains were put out at the back of his head, and he bared the sword and made an attack on the people about him.

And the other two did not fail to do the same, and they gave him their help bravely till they had made an end of all they met of the people of the court. And then they found the spear, and its head in a cauldron of water, they way it would not set fire to the place.' (25)

It is unclear what, if any, historical aspects there are to this story. Nevertheless, the very existence of the story is

interesting: that Lugh, a solar fire warrior god - like Mithra - obtains his greatest weapon - the spear of fire - from Persia.

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The connections among the Indo-Europeans, the sharing of similar myths and pantheon structure, is also evident when we look at their languages, for example, *Erinn* in Old Irish Gaelic or Modern Irish Gaelic *Eirean*. In fact, "Ireland" is a Viking word: "Ireland" is NOT the native Celtic name for Ireland, which is *Eireann* in Old Irish Gaelic, *Eirean* in both Modern Irish and modern Scottish Gaelic. Note that the **-EI-** in *Eirinn* is a diphthong, pronounced like the diphthong **-EI-** in Romanian, Gallego and Portuguese; its nearest English equivalent is the "ai" in the English word "air", but the Gaelic, Romanian, Gallego and Portuguese diphthong **-EI-** is longer and far more lilting and melodious than the English -ai- in the word "air". Gaelic, whether Irish or Scottish, is a marvelous, sweet, sonorous, euphonious and poetic language. Gaelic, the beautiful and beloved language; it is more my mother tongue than English, that Saxon hog-language, could ever be.

Lithuanian is generally considered to be the most archaic of all living Indo-European languages:

"Lithuanian is one of the oldest living Indo-European languages, and it has retained many archaic linguistic features that are also characteristic of Latin and Sanskrit. **It has preserved its ancient system of sounds** and most of its grammatical features and continues to use a significant number of old words. That is why linguists interested in Indo-European languages want to learn it. Lithuanian is one of two Baltic languages of the Indo-European family, the other being Latvian." (26)

The term **Balt** refers to speakers of the languages of the

Baltic branch of the Indo-European family; hence, all Lithuanians

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are Balts, but not all Balts are Lithuanians.

We continue:

"In Lithuania people still speak an ancient language that is similar to Latin and Sanskrit. Antoine Meillet, who was one of the most distinguished French linguists of the 20th century, once said:

'If you want to listen to how ancient Indo-Europeans spoke, then you should visit a Lithuanian village and listen to the language of Lithuanian peasants.'

Lithuanian is indeed a very archaic language, especially its grammar and vocabulary". (27)

The Lithuanian diphthong **EI**, has the same lilting, melodious sound of the diphthong **EI** in Gallego, Portuguese, Irish Gaelic and Scottish Gaelic. The Lithuanian letter "E" with a dot [.] over it is not usually considered to be a diphthong; however, before the consonants "L" and "R" it has the lilting, melodious sound of the diphthong "EI" in Gallego, Portuguese, Irish Gaelic and Scottish Gaelic.

English is a drab and banal Anglo-Saxon hog language: it is vinegar on my Celtic tongue, and pains my Celtic vocal cords; at least I am bilingual English-Spanish. *Erinn*, *Erin*, or *Eirinn* as well as *Iran* all mean "Land of the Aryans" [besides *Erinn*, *Erin*, or *Eirinn*, the root word "Aryan" appears in numerous other Celtic place names and tribal names, as we shall discuss later in this chapter.]

As we said above, Lithuanian is generally considered to be the most archaic of all living Indo-European languages. In

Lithuanian, the word for "Ireland" is *Airiya*, pronounced *I-ree-*

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ya, or, in more standard phonetics, *ai-rii-ya*, which is virtually identical to *Airyā*, the Avestan word for *Aryan*.

Note that Payam Nabarz does not include the fact that Mithra and Lugh are both gods of contracts as well as gods of light.

Obviously, a detailed account of the Roman mystery religion called "Mithraism" is not very relevant to our main topic. However, we shall have various occasions to refer to the Western or Roman Mithraism, so we shall give brief accounts of the relation of the Roman or Western Mithras to the Iranian Mithra. Below is the account given by Payam Nabarz:

THE ROMAN MITHRAS

Fertile Earth Pales who procreates everything.
Rockbound spring that fed the twin brothers with nectar.
The young bull which he carried on his golden shoulders
according to his ways.
And after which I have received it I have borne on my
shoulders the greatest things of the gods.
Sweet are the livers of the birds, but care reigns.
That which is piously reborn and created by sweet things.
You must conduct the rite through clouded times together.
And here as the first Ram runs exactly on its course.
And you saved us after shedding the eternal blood.
Accept, O holy Father, accept the incense-burning Lions,
through whom we offer the incense, through whom we ourselves
are consumed.
Hail the lions for many and new years.

MITHRAIC INSCRIPTION AT SANTA PRISCA MITHRAEUM IN ROME,
BASED ON HANS DIETER BETZ'S TRANSLATION
IN PROFESSOR MARVIN MEYER'S The Ancient Mysteries:

"Are the Persian Mithra, Indian Mitra, and Roman Mithras the same deity, or independent of one another? Or are they culturally modified versions of the same deity? The field is still split and uncertain on the exact origins of the Roman cult of Mithras. There is almost no written formal documentation of the Western style of Mithraic worship, and this makes any study of

the connection between the Eastern (Persian Mithra) and
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Western (Roman Mithras) forms very difficult. The academic community has been debating for decades and is divided between the "out of Persia" camp, which claims a tradition straight from Persia to Rome, and the "independent Roman" camp, which claims the Roman Mithras began independently of the Persian Mithra and only later incorporated some Persian magical lore. There are also other camps in the middle of the two - all of which means that there is no unifying hypothesis about the origin of the Roman Mithras.

In this book, I avoid entanglement in this contentious issue. When speaking of Persian material and sources I will refer to "Mithra", and when speaking of Roman sources I will refer to "Mithras" [as I also do], the Roman form of the name. This will have the added advantage of helping the reader to distinguish the sources. ...

As Mithraism was truly a mystery religion, the exact answers will probably continue to remain occult and hidden. I find myself in agreement with Professor Turcan as he puts it in The Cults of the Roman Empire, Oxford, 2004, p. 195:

"The story of Mithras is remarkable and paradoxical. It is remarkable, because this god, who was alien to the pantheon of the Greeks and Romans, had not been so to their distant Indo-European ancestors. When they welcomed a god of foreign appearance, with Persian trousers and a Phrygian cap, the sons of the she-wolf [Romans] were in fact linking up again, at least partly, with a very ancient religious genetic inheritance; but the cult of Mithras, as it was received by the Latin West, had also incorporated a share of Greek culture. Although the god kept his Asiatic costume, his myth and surroundings of symbolic images, he had taken his place in the syncretic pantheon of the Hellenized Near East. At the same time, the paradox lay in the destiny of this god who, honored in the first instance by Rome's enemies, became (with others) an idol of Roman Legionaries. After inspiring and embodying resistance to the ruling power of Asia Minor, Mithraism two centuries later was to sustain and legitimize certain values of "Roman-ness". But vast shadowy areas surround this story and fragment the vision we have of it today, after over a century of remarkable research and discoveries. In particular, the passage

of the Iranian god into the Greek world and the many mutations he must have undergone, both in rituals and in the conception of his worshippers, before becoming the mainspring of a mystery cult, for the present almost entirely elude us. A hiatus of two thousand years separates the Vedic Mitra [and the Iranian Mithra] from the first known representations of Mithras the bull-slayer."

Though the exact origins of Roman Mithraism and its development might remain a mystery, the next passage, written around 350 AD by Firmicus Maternus (in his The Error of Pagan Religions), speaks volumes about how much the Roman Mithras was perceived in Rome to have Persian roots and connections. Maternus was a recent convert to Christianity at the time of writing.

"The Persians and all the Magi who dwell in the confines of the Persian land give their preference to fire and think it ought to be ranked above all other elements. So they divide fire into potencies, relating its nature to the potency of the two sexes, and attributing the substance of fire to the image of a man and the image of a woman. The woman they represent with triform countenance, and entwine her with snaky monsters. ... The male they worship is a cattle rustler, and his cult they relate to the potency of fire, as his prophet handed down the lore to us, saying: *mysta booklopies, syndexie patros agamou* (initiate of cattle-rustling, companion by handclasp of an illustrious father). Him they call Mithra, and his cult they carry on in hidden caves. ... Him whose crime you acknowledge you think to be a god. So you declare it proper for the cult of the Magi to be carried on by the Persian rite in these cave temples, why do you praisw only this among th Persian customs? If you think it worthy of the Roman name to serve the cults of the Persians, the laws of the Persians ...

It is possible to combine a number of current ideas inn order to derive a theory that fits he evidence; for example, the Roman cult of Mithras was a fusion of the Greek cult of Perseua with a Persian cult of Mithra. The Perseus cult had originated in Tarsus and at some point became fused with the Persian Mithra,

with his Zoroastrian connections, before spilling over into the new empire. As Mithraism spread throughout the Roman army, it changed a great deal from any Persian counterpart. The synergetic result was perhaps the most sophisticated religion in the Roman world. The Roman cult of Mithras was at the forefront of astronomy and philosophical thought, making Mithraism the last pagan state religion in Europe and the most important competitor to early Christianity.

The worship of Mithras, the Invincible Sun God, was practiced all over the Roman Empire. Mithraism had an immense popularity among the Roma Legions from late in the 1st century BC until around 400 AD, during which time it came under the influence of Greek and Roman mythologies. Although present in the Persian worship, Anahita and other goddesses are by and large absent from the Roman form of Mithraism. In Rome, Mithras became the ultimate noble warrior, a role model for the Roman Legionnaires among whom Mithraism had most of its adherents. We find remains of Mithraic temples throughout the former Roman Empire, from Palestine, across the North of Africa, across central Europe, all the way to the British Isles. The temples along Hadrian's Wall and in London can still be seen today, as well as some remains in Wales and York.

However, like other mystery traditions of that period (the Eleusinian mysteries and the Isis mysteries), the Mithraic cult maintained secrecy and its teachings were only revealed to initiates. As a result, all we have inherited are a number of underground temples and their paintings, some statues, and a few antipagan documents by early Christians. The Roman form evolved to become very occult, heavily linked with astrology, a secret brotherhood order where slaves, freedmen, soldiers, citizens, merchants, and Emperors came together as equals - an amazing achievement for that period.

One key we might have used to unlock the Mithra/Mithras mysteries would have been to look at where they possibly started, in the old land of Persia. But in the same way that Christianity overcame the Mithras mysteries and all paganism in the West. What was left of the original Mithra in the East was dissolved into the rise of Islam. However, we still have the several hymns to him in the Hindu and Zoroastrian holy texts. These give us insight into the energy of this deity before it became fused with a great deal of Greco-Roman magical ideas. The evolution from god of the green land, wild pastures, and the solar light, to that of the Invincible Sun God who moves the cosmos by slaying the constellation Taurus,

has been a subject of interest to many historians and magicians alike. ...

The Roman Mithraic practice was one of the greatest rivals to early Christianity for many reasons. As well as being a popular pagan religion practiced by the Roman Army, it had many similarities to Christianity [no surprise; as we shall see, both have connections to Zoroaster and Zoroastrianism]. These similarities frightened the Early Church Fathers, as it meant that years before the arrival of Christ all the Christian mysteries were already known [not really true]. ... As Christianity gained in strength and became the formal religion of the Roman Empire, the cult of Mithras was one of the first pagan cults to come under attack. In the 5th century AD, temples of Mithras - like most other pagan temples - were destroyed, and in some places churches were built on top of them."(28)

Ilya Gershevitch gives a different viewpoint on this matter:

THE WESTERN MITHRAS

In the preceding chapters we have had repeated occasion to refer to aspects of the Roman Mithras which are clearly derived from the Iranian Mithra as attested in the Avesta. Mithras' relation to Sol (the Sun), though the details escape us, is clearly based on Avestan premises; Mithras, like Mithra, (and the Celtic Lugh, Lug, Lugus, Lus, Lleu, etcetera) is a lightbringer, no doubt because he, too, is the first light of the day; Mithra's epithet *hvaraoxshna*- "endowed with own light", and the context in which it is used in strophe 142, find their reflex in Mithras' epithet *gen(itori?) lum(inis?)* Franz Cumont, Textes et monuments figures relatifs de Mithras, 2 volumes, volume II, 147, No. 370), which Cumont, Volume I, p. 161, related to the portrayal of the god with a torch in his hand, '*emblem de la lumiere qu'il apporte au monde*'; the epithet *Oriens* allows of a similar interpretation, even Mithras' position behind Sol on the reliefs can be traced to the same source as the Avestan notion that Mithra precedes the sun. We have noticed the aptness of Oceanus = Apamnapat's presence on Mithraic reliefs. Clearly the portrayal of Fortuna and Hermes has equally ancient roots in the ties which link Ashi and Nairyō.sangha to Mithra. Similarly the boar seen next to Heracles will not be unconnected with Verethraghna's incarnation in a boar, and one may suspect that the cock which is occasionally found on Mithraic reliefs (Cumont, op. cit., Volume I, p. 210),

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has something to do with Mithra's friend Sraosha, whose bailiff (Avestan *sraoshavarez-*), according to Vendidad

18.14 sq., is the cock.

We have also seen that Mithras' role of a life-giver is anticipated by three Avestan epithets of Mithra. These, however, some scholars will consider insufficient explanation of the behavior of the Roman Mithras, whose life-giving function is most forcefully expressed in the central scene of most Mithraic reliefs: as in Mithras kills the (primordial?) bull, sperm is emitted by the dying animal (Cumont, op. cit., Volume II, 209, No. 28), and ears of grain sprout from its tail (Cumont, op. cit., Volume I, p. 186). Let us first state our view on how this legend came to be connected with Mithras. It is basically Cumont's view that the legend is a Mithraic version of Ahriman's murder of the primordial bull. Cumont, however, did not commit himself as to which of the two versions was the original one, no doubt because he had not realized the implication of the three Avestan epithets we have quoted.

The legend is not attested in the Avesta, but Middle Persian (Pahlavi) Zoroastrian tradition assures us that Ahriman, the ancient Fiendish Spirit Angra Mainyu, had killed the primordial bull, from whose marrow grew the species of grain, and whose seed, carried to the moon, produced the species of animals. It was always known that a connection existed between Ahriman and Mithras, because in Mithraic inscriptions a *deus Arimanius* is mentioned. Recently Duchesne-Guillemin and Zaehner took the seemingly correct step of identifying the lion-headed deity of Western Mithraism with Ahriman. Moreover, Zaehner has attractively argued that the Mithraists derive from Iranian daeva-worshippers who sought refuge in Babylonia when Xerxes prohibited the worship of daevas.

What 5th century Avestan authors meant by daeva-worshippers is clear from *Yast* 5.94, a passage which is quoted below, note 45, in a revised translation: they are people who worshipped the daevas as well as the gods, or some of the gods, worshipped by Mazdayasnians (Zoroastrians). Thus, in the Avestan passage referred to, the daeva-worshippers offer libations to Anahita, although she evidently was not a daeva; the Zoroastrian author, of course, portrays Anahita as rejecting these libations; but it is obvious that the daeva-worshippers believed the goddess to be agreeable to their offerings. What is true of Anahita has a good chance of applying also to Mithra. He, too, may have been worshipped not only by Zoroastrians who had taken over his cult from pantheistic Mazdahians (formerly

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*Vourunians), but also, and this already in Zarathushtra's lifetime, by people who did not hesitate to combine their allegiance to Mithra with apotropaic sacrifices to the daevas. The Mithra *Yast* itself

confirms this view when in strophe 108 the god is said to distinguish between worshippers who consider it their duty to offer him 'good sacrifice' and those who see fit to revere him with 'bad sacrifice'. The latter are most probably the daeva-worshippers, whose sacrifice to Mithra Zoroastrians could only regard as an affront to the god. Angra Mainyu, who may be an invention of Zarathushtra's, is, of course, a comparative late-comer among the daevas, but he can be relied upon to have travelled faster among the daeva-worshippers than Zarathushtra's 'ahuric' ideas among daeva-despising *Vourunians. The daeva-worshippers, because of their superstition that all evil gods must be 'worshipped', that is, placated, would no doubt be quick to include the powerful new demon, the Fiendish Spirit, among the recipients of their apotropaic offerings. In the wake of Darius' introduction of the cult of Ahura Mazda into Western Iran, the arch-demon Angra Mainyu would not be slow to make his appearance among the Magi, who may well have been prepared, when commissioned to do so, to offer him, along with the daevas of old, placatory tribute. To this practice Xerxes' prohibition officially put an end, and it is not impossible that the westward spread of Ahrimanian Mithraism began at that early period.

In a cult where Mithras was the chief god and Ahriman the chief demon, any action of the latter which had eventual beneficial effects had a fair chance of being transferred to the former. The Zoroastrian account of Ahriman's killing of the bull, though admittedly attested only in a late version, does present Ahriman as the unintentional instrument of the dissemination of plants and animals. Considering that the Mithra whom the daeva-worshippers exported to Babylonia was, on the evidence of the Avesta, a life-giver who caused plants to grow, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that Ahriman's murder of the bull was transferred to Mithra because the latter's epithet 'life-giver' had marked him for producing *intentionally* the good effects which with Ahriman were *unintended* results of criminal behavior.

The above interpretation differs substantially from the one currently held today, which was most ably put forward and defended by Lommel. In the Yajur Veda, Lommel points out, the gods try to persuade Mitra to join them in killing Soma; he at first refuses, declaring that cattle would turn away from him if he

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took part in such action; eventually he gives in and joins in the murder. The killing of Soma, Lommel explains, symbolizes the pressing of the sacred plant Soma, which causes rain, and consequently the growth of plants; Soma is the elixir of life, which after dropping on earth as rain, mounts to the moon and is drunk out of the moon by the gods, who use the moon as a cup. The

animal representing the moon (*Mond-Tier*) is the bull, Lommel continues. Here then, and in the resentment of cattle at Mitra's intention to kill Soma, Lommel sees the proof that Soma is not only a plant but also a bull. Thus the basis is gained for assuming that Mithra's murder of the bull is a pre-Zarathushtrian myth, which survives only on Mithraic reliefs because the Zoroastrians, when they adopted Mithra as one of their gods, finding it intolerable that he should have killed the primordial bull, purged him of this crime and imputed it to Ahriman instead. Accordingly, much has been made by Duchesne-Guillemin and other writers of Zarathushtra's alleged Mithraphobia, said to reveal itself in *Yast* 32.10, 12, 14, cf. also *Yast* 44.20, *Yast* 46.4, *Yast* 51.14. In these Gathic passages, Zarathushtra' undoubtedly disapproves of animal sacrifices, but it cannot be stressed enough that he nowhere in any way implies that Mithra, whom he never mentions, is their recipient. Zarathushtra's alleged '*hostilite a l'egard de Mithra, le dieu des offrandes cruelles et des extases d'ivresse*' (Duchesne-Guillemin *Ormazd et Ahriman*) is a modern invention in all three respects: *hostilite*, *offrandes cruelles*, and *extases d'ivresse*.

The first objection to Lommel's theory is that none of its equations is more than approximate. If Soma is called a bull, so are other gods who are not bulls. As a *Mond-Tier* is not the moon herself it is hardly safe to confirm through a moon equation that Soma is a bull. The resentment of cattle at Mitra's murder of Soma is an even less convincing argument for identifying Soma with a bull; the mere fact that Soma provides 'wide pastures' [Soma has in the *Rig Veda* the epithet *urugavyuti*, which is the etymological and semantic equivalent of the Avestan Mithra's constant epithet *vouru.-gaoyaoiti-*. The reason for this qualification is probably the same in both cases, for Soma, like Mithra, produces rain.] would suffice to explain the reluctance of cattle to see him slain. The equation of the Indian with the Iranian situation is also very doubtful: Mitra is only one of the Soma-killing gods, while the reliefs present Mithras as sole slayer of the bull.

More serious than the inadequacies of Lommel's

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equations is the absence of even the slightest reference in the Avesta to Mithra's alleged slaughter of the bull. It may be said that this objection applies equally to the theory we hold, that the original murderer of the bull is Angra Mainyu, since he, too, is nowhere so described in the Avesta. The answer is that the Avesta altogether has little to say about the Fiendish Spirit, except for cursing him, supplemented by sundry

informative passages strewn over the scripture, as in the case of Mithra. To this one may retort that the author of the hymn may purposely have concealed from us and from his listeners (who, however, must have been well aware of it!) all traces of Mithra's tauroctonous feat. But the idea that Zoroastrian authors should have been so squeamish about admitting that Mithra had killed - very reluctantly [So the pained expression on Mithras' face informs us, see Cumont, Textes et monuments figures relatifs aux mysteres de Mithras, Volume I, p. 193.] - the primordial bull for the most praiseworthy purpose of creating life strikes me as unrealistic. For these same Zoroastrians had no hesitation in stating that Anahita and Drvaspa had accepted and rewarded the sacrifice of hecatombs of acttle, or, what seems even worse heresy, that Ahura Mazda had worshipped Mithra and Anahita. Even from a practical point of view it is difficult to see how the Zoroastrian author or authors of the Mithra Yast, who, as everybody agrees, were not merely trying to please Zarathushtrian worshippers, but also worshippers who throughout their lives had practiced the 'pagan' cult of Mithra, could have got away with such a high-handed treatment of the divine newcomer. Here was a god supposedly reveling in *offrandes cruelles* and *extases d'ivresse*, who under the eyes of his outraged worshippers was being turned into a just and merciful judge, punisher of wrong, which includes the offering of blood-libations, protector of the very cow after whose blood he had forever been thirsting, always vigilant and sober, certainly no longer prepared to condone, let alone encourage, the *extases d'ivresse* of his inveterate supporters. To top it all, what to the non-Zarathushtrian worshippers of Mithra must have seemed his chief merit - the killing of the primordial bull in order to produce life - was taken away from him and thrust as if it had been an act of spite on the archdemon Angra Mainyu. Such cavalier treatment of their awful god would scarcely have induced the Mithra-worshippers to join the fold of the Zoroastrian church.

The above theory on the clever camouflage of Mithra perpetuated by the authors of the Avesta is part and parcel of the modern trend in Iranian studies

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always to suspect that the Avesta either conceals the truth or tells the untruth, and that it is so artificial a scripture, so little based on the realities of the religious life of ordinary men and women, that its authors could permit themselves whatever arbitrary combination, distortion, or suppression crossed their fancy. It must be said in fairness that Lommel, who by his book Die Religion Zarathustras, and his careful translation of the Yasts, has contributed more than any other living author to a balanced and

sound understanding of the Zoroastrian religion, does not otherwise take such a skeptical view of the truthfulness of the scripture of the religion of Truth. It is an irony that little else but this theory, out of a book which is packed with penetrating and sober observations on the Zoroastrian religion, has caught the imagination of present-day religious historians; the greater part of that thoughtful book seems to have passed unnoticed.

If we resist the unrewarding temptation to look for deliberate deception in the Avesta, the silence of Avestan authors with regard to Mithra's slaughter of the bull can be taken as reliable evidence that the attribution of this slaughter to Mithras is an innovation, not an ancient inheritance. It goes without saying that Zarathushtra's condemnation of blood sacrifices should in no way influence our opinion about Mithra. The sacrifices the prophet (Zarathushtra) had in mind were very likely offered to the daevas, and to a few other divinities such as Anahita and Drvaspa. If daeva-worshippers offered blood also to Mithra, Zarathushtra's wrath would turn against *them*, not against the god. We have tried to show above that Zarathushtra and his early followers had more reason to like than to detest Mithra, and the god's unofficial appearance as a *payu-* in an early post-Gathic text bears out our view. If such was the attraction exerted by 'pagan' Mithra on early Zarathushtrians, he cannot have thirsted for the blood of animals. In the Younger Avesta, Mithra remains strictly averse to blood sacrifices. Even strophe 119, which so far has generally been taken to contain instruction that cattle and birds should be sacrificed to Mithra, turns out on closer inspection to have a very different meaning.

At the beginning of this chapter we listed a number of traits of the Western Mithras, which in our view indicate that he represents a development of the Iranian Mithra as attested in the Avesta. It is true that by what has aptly been called a 'severe shock treatment' of Mithraic studies, Wikander has denied the Iranian origin of Mithras, and suggested a Balkan

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origin instead. This novel idea was disproved with conclusive archaeological arguments by A. Alföldi. On the linguistic side Zaehner rightly stresses the significance of the name of the grade *Persa* in the Mithraic mysteries, and the Iranian origin of the name of the word *nama* in the phrase *nama Sebesio* [Zaehner's interpretation of Mithras' epithets *Sebesio* and *Nabarses* as representing respectively **savishyo* = Avestan *saoshya* 'savior', and Avestan *na berezo*, 'the great male', is, however, unacceptable. That Mithra should have been called a 'great male' is unbelievable, seeing that the

very common Avestan word *nar-* 'man', hero, male' is, not surprisingly, never used as an attribute of the gods.

Less reliable, but also perhaps pointing to an Iranian - this time Zarathushtrian - line of thought in Western Mithraism, is the striking resemblance between the wording of an inscription at Rome ascribed to the year 361 AD and Zarathushtra's noble utterance of Yast 33.14. The dedicator of the inscription brings as an offering (*touro fepo to Thuma*) 'works, thought, action, excellence of life, all the choiceness of...wisdom (*erga noon primsin esthla propanra...prapidon*); Zarathushtra 'will give us as an offering his own life, and the first choice of good mind, good deed, and good word'. The inscription commemorates the reintroduction of the taurobolium and criobolium in honor of a divinity who is merely referred to as *palinopdiv eupubian* 'the mighty one that rose again'. Even though this god so described may be Attis, it is possible that the Gathic reminiscence derives from a store of Mithraic liturgic formulae. [Cf. Franz Cumont, Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain, 4th edition, p. 229.]. As a further argument for the very close dependence of (the Roman) Mithras on the Iranian Mithra, the suggestion will be found below [*vouru.gaoyaoiti-*, literally 'having, or providing, wide cattle-pastures'. We have surmised that this epithet was not given to Mithra in consequence of his care for the cow, but is on the contrary the source of the Avestan conception of Mithra as protector of the cow.

The somewhat uncouth translation 'grass-land magnate' has been chosen because of its comparative brevity. That the unusual length and heaviness of this constant epithet of Mithra became in time inconvenient even to ardent devotees of the god can be inferred from the epithet *Cautes* of the Roman Mithras, which in my opinion is the result of a haplological reduction of the Old Iranian **gauyauti-* to *gauyti*, with subsequent disappearance of *y*, and with initial *k* as in Greek

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kauvaka(s) beside *gaunakas* = Old Iranian **gaunaka-*.

Cautes and *Cautopates* are the names of the two torch-bearers who flank Mithras taurictonos on nearly all reliefs on which the immolation is portrayed. The torch *Cautes* holds is turned upwards, that of *Cautopates* downwards. Since the two torch-bearers are exact small-size replicas of the tauroctonous god, and the names of either occur in inscriptions as attributes of Mithras (see Cumanot, Rextes et monuments figures relatifs aux mysteres de Mithras, Volume I), we are justified in tracing the two names to ancient epithets of the god. In *Cautpates* I see the reflex of an Iranian **gauyauti-pati-* 'grass-land chief', synonymous with **varu-gauyauti*.

Non-Iranian worshippers of Mithra in taking over

two epithets would be aware, even without understanding their meaning, that they consisted of an essential element **gau(yau)ti-*, to which two different elements have been respectively prefixed and added. Being indifferent to meaning, they may well have reduced **varu-gau(yau)ti-*, which had virtually become a name of a god, to its main element, following a common hypocoristic procedure. They would be less inclined to alter the structure of **gau(yau)ti-pati-*, which agreed with the pattern of Iranian names ending, in their Greek garb, in *-patas*; but they did greuze its compound-vowel, probably on the anaology of names beginning with *Mithro*.

That the function of the two torch-bearers on the reliefs need not be related to their names was already seen by Cumont, op. cit., p. 206, who pointed out, on the one hand, that two *dadoforoi* flanking a central scene constitute a motif known from Greek and Etruscan art, and, on the other hand, that the representation of two *paredroi* accompanying a divinity is probably of Babylonian origin.

What then is likely to have happened is that, once in accordance with conventional figurative art two torch-bearing *paredroi* had been placed to the right and left of bull-killing Mithras, the desire was felt to give them names. If these were chosen by non-Iranian worshippers of Mithra we must assume that not only *(*varu-*)*gauyauti-* (Avestan *vouru.gaoyaoiti-*), but also the synonymous **gauyauti-pati-* (Avestan *vouru.gaoyaoiti-*), but also the synonymous **gauyauti-pati-* reconstructed by us, were common epithets of the god in non-Iranian Mithraic liturgy, even before they were put to use as proper names of the *dadoforoi*. If, however, the name-givers of the *dadoforoi* were Iranians, it would not be surprising if the name **gauyauti-pati-* had been invented by them for the

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special purpose of providing a correlative (and synonymous) name to **varu-gauyauti-*, the name they had assigned to one of the two *paredroi*] As a further argument for the very close dependence of Mithras on the Iranian Mithra, the suggestion will be found above, that the names *Cautes* and *Cautopates* of the two torch-bearers flanking Mithras, which also serve A EPITHETS OF Mithras himself, are nothing but variants of the Avestan Mithra's most common epithet *vouru.gaoyaoiti-*.

This brings us to our last point namely, that no inference on the nature of Old Iranian Mithra should be drawn from the group of the three Mithrases: Mithras, *Cautes*, and *Cautopates*. The point arises from section IV, headed, *Mihr, Srosha, Rashnu, the Threefold Mithras and the Incarnate God*, referred to by Zaehner. In his book *Zurvan*, p. 102, Xaehner had ventured the guess that

certain three 'judges' (rat) mentioned in the Bundahishn, 'who are needed for the material world and will carry all evil away from it in the last days', are Mihr, Seosh, and Rashin. This guess disagrees with the statement Zaehner later noticed in the Datastan I denik, that 'Gayomartm Jamshet, and Zoroaster are the judges (rat) of the blessed, the means of thankfulness to many, who were created for the consummation of the *frashkart*'. Instead of concluding that his guess was wrong, Zaehner unexpectedly proceeds on the assumption that it was correct, and pretends that there are grounds for investigating a mysterious relation between the triads Mihr-Sraosha-Rashnu on the one hand and Gayomart-Jamshet-Zoroaster on the other. Accordingly, noting that 'Hartman has recently sought to establish the identity of Gayomart with Mithra (Mihr)', Zaehner compares Yast 17.16, according to which Mithra has as father Ahura Mazda [In Yast 17.16 Ashi, described as Ahura Mazda's and Arnaiti's daughter, is said to have as brothers Mithra (who, having been created by Ahura Mazda, was evidently considered to be his son), Sraosha, and Rashnu, as sister the Mazdayasnian Religion. In the light of this statement we can understand Mithra's close connection with both Ashi and the Religion; the latter even replaced her brother Sraosha, where instead of the usual triad Mithra-Rashnu-Sraosha we meet Mithra, Rashnu, and the Mazdayasnian Religion acting in concert.

Finally we note that Benveniste and Zaehner Sraosha, by 'watching over the truces and treaties of Falsehood (and) the most Incremental (Spirit) (*axshtisha urvaicha drujo sparya spenitake*, Yast 11,14, anticipates the function of *mesitas* 'Mediator', which Plutarch attributes to Mithra, and possibly as mother Armaiti, with a late Pahlavi text which allows the

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inference that Ohrmazd and Spandarmat are the parents of Gayomart. The two passages combined show, in Zaehner's view, that Mithra and Gayomart are brothers. 'Thus' - Zaehner concludes - 'it would seem *certain* that according to one tradition Mithra and ... Sraosha ... and Rashnu were regarded as brothers of Man, *if not identical with him*. Gayomart, in this tradition, *is the Sun-Man*, and as such he is the brother of Mithra and born of the Earth'.

Let us for argument's sake admit that Mithra and Gayomart had the same parents. Here does their *identity* follow from their brotherhood? Perhaps through Hartman's having 'sought to establish' it? But the whole of Hartman's book is one huge error, as Mary Boyce has cogently shown, and Zaehner, to judge by some of his remarks, is well aware. Next, in what way does the tradition invoked by Zaehner indicate that Gayomart is

the Sun-Man? What *is* the Sun-Man? Why is it *as such* that Gayomart is Mithra's brother and born of the Earth?

Having reached the conclusion that Mithra and Gayomart are all but identical, Zaehner proceeds to identify Rashnu with Jamshet (Yima), quoting for this purpose a Pahlavi passage which to say the least, is ambiguous. But Rashnu, according to Zaehner, is not only Yima. Because in strophe 100 of the Mithra Yast he flies on Mithra's left, he is the 'sinister' aspect of Mithra, just as Sraosha is the 'dester' or propitious. In the Dumézilian terminology Zaehner here chooses to adopt, 'Rashnu is the 'Varuna' aspect of the Mithra of Yast 10.100 while Sraosha is his "Mithra" aspect'. Such unhelpful definitions need not concern us here, as Rashnu, unnoticed by Zaehner, is also found on Mithra's right-hand side. After postulating on an erroneous premise that Rashnu is an aspect of Mithra, Zaehner is driven to seek in the obscure strophe 79 'further evidence' of this aspect theory. Zaehner's treatment of the strophe is discussed in an addition. [Literally 'the judge (*rashnu*) who renders (*daide*) gaining-in-prominence (*manaxainfim*) the abode [for or of him] to whom [*ahmdi yahmai*] Rashnu has given [it] for long succession'. This translation of a most intriguing strophe has two advantages over the other renderings: it requires no emendations, and offers a logical antecedent to what follows in it. It is based on three assumptions:

1.) That it is Rashnu who provides the faithful with an abode which Mithra makes prosper. Such generosity on Rashnu's part is not met with anywhere else, but may be linked with

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the activity of Rashnu's and Mithra's brother Sraosha, who, according to Yast 57.10, 'after sunset builds a strong house for the poor man and the poor woman'. That Mithra makes 'gaining-in-prominence' the abode built by Sraosha and given by Rashnu would agree with the care Mithra is said elsewhere to take of that house on his office of *xathro dirya* - of the house). Thus, if our interpretation of the present strophe is correct, Mithra, Rashnu, and Sraosha would appear to have been *inter alia* a triad of tutelary genii of the house.)

2.) That the first *rashnush* is not the name of the god but the common noun which occurs in the plural in *Vishprat* 16.1, where 'fire-born *rashnush* are worshipped between 'fire-born gods' and *Fravashis* (see Chapter 2). Christian Bartholomae translated *rashnu-* by 'just', but one wonders if 'the just' would have been mentioned in one breath with gods and *Fravashis*. Moreover, *-nu-* adjectives formed from the base normally have active voice. Hence *rashnu-* ought to mean 'ruling' or perhaps

'judging', when substantiviated 'ruler' or 'judge'. The latter meaning is preferable, since Maithra, to whom *rashnush* here stands in apposition, is said in a Pahlavi passage to be a judge (*databar*).

3.) That the *hapax lagomenon manaxaintim* can be explained by combining Friedrich Wislizenus's reference to (the) Armenian *manavand* 'more, rather, better', *manavandzi*, *manavandi'e* 'above all, chiefly', with James Darmsteter's to Avestan *han*, *vainti-*, the former suggestion to be used as a guide for the meaning, the latter by way of formal analogy. According to Christian Bartholomae, **ham vainani-* means 'victorious', and is derived by haplology from **ham vanant-*. Similarly we may postulate an adjective *manavantya-* (nominative-accusative neutral *manavaintim*) from **mana-vanantya-* 'apt to gain eminence (or similar); this will be a *-ya-* extension of **mana-vanant-* 'reining eminence', as Vedic *sahantya*, 'prevailing, conquering' of the participle *sahant-* **mana-* 'eminence', the noun from which Avestan *mainya* 'authoritative' was derived, the only finite form of which we have endeavored to eliminate, but which is also attested in *mati-* 'promuniturium' and *framenya-* 'eminence'. Substantially we thus find ourselves in agreement with Karl P. Geldner's etymological interpretation, though not with his understanding of word and strophe:

If the above assumptions are granted *manavaimtim* can be taken as predicative adjective, agreeing with

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maithanaim, an antecedent *ahmai* or *ahe* being implied for *yahmia*. *Daio* will then have C. Bartholomae's meaning. When so used *da-* is usually active, but the middle is found in *Yast* 58.1 *tat soi dish tat verethrem dadamaide hyat nama* 'this, the prayer, we make (our) weapon and shield' (E. Benveniste, *Vrta*, 12. Sq.), in *Yast* 55.6 *frasham vasna ahum dathana* 'rendering the existence extraordinary at will',

Not surprisingly, other translations differ considerably from the above and from each other. ...After this was written, B.C. Zaehner's discussion of the present stanza appeared in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies*, XVII, 247. The author states that 'it is more than likely that originally the term *rashnu-* (meaning, presumably, "the righteous, the director, ordainer, or builder") was simply an epithet of Mithra; *Yast* 10.79 is accordingly translated: 'who as Rashnu built a house to which as Rashnu he brought *manavainti-* for long association'. That *rashnu-* is an epithet which originally belonged to Mithra is an inference Zaehner draws from the present passage relying on his theory that 'Rashnu and Sraosha, when associated with Mithra, are merely aspects of him'. This theory, in

its turn, Zaehner is content to base on his suspicion that in a certain myth, related in the Pahlavi Rivayats, Rashnu 'is merely the representative of Mithra'. The myth runs as follows in Zaehner's translation: 'After the resurrection of the dead, Rashn Chivand (the separator or avenger), son of Vivanghan, offers those men who sawed Yam (in two) up in sacrifice. They all die and lie dead for three days'. It is hard to see why rashnu, a well-defined personality in Iranian mythology, should not be given leave to perform this rather unimportant sacrifice in his own rights, but must be held to be here acting as Mithra's 'representative'. If in addition we remember that there is Avestan evidence which refutes Zaehner's other theory on Rashnu, according to which he is Mithra's 'sinister' companion, we shall again be free to look at strophe 79 without the preconceived view that Rashnu is an 'aspect of Mithra'.

As soon as we do so Zaehner's treatment of the strophe reveals two shortcomings. First, no notice is taken of the existence of a common noun or adjective *rashnu-*, which reduces the identification of the god Rashnu with Mithra to an unnecessary and, seeing that there is no other support for it, unlikeli hypothesis. Secondly, as far as I can see, wherever else a *naamam* or *maethanam* is mentioned in the Avesta, it is defined as belonging to somebody, usually by means of a pronoun referring to the owner (cf. strophes 28, 30, 38, 44, (120)

50, 137, Yast 57.21 (above, p. 223), Yast 13.107, Yast 60.7, Yast 57.21, etc.; occasionally a local adverb replaces the pronoun *Vendidad* 11.10). If then, contrary to our opinion, *yahmai* should not refer to the owner of the abode, the strophe would presumably be on a par with Yast 10.77 and Yast 16.2, where the owner is the subject of the sentence. But against the *maethanem* in question being Mithra's own abode stands the fact that he has already two abodes (strophes 44 and 50), neither of which can be meant here, since the one on earth, being the whole earth, scarcely requires 'building', while the one in Paradise was built by Ahura Mazda, and the Amesha Spentas, not by Rashnu. If in our strophe a third abode were meant, it would be strange that our author does not define it against the other two, by mentioning its location or purpose. As to *manavaintin*, Zaehner tentatively changes the word to **mano.vaintim*, translates it by 'she whose victory is in, or over, the mind', and argues on the strength of the epithet Ashi is meant, who is here introduced as Mithra-Rashnu's consort. Although Ashi is indeed connected with the house, the verb (*fra*)*bar-* seems little indicated to take Ashi as object, whether the subject is Mithra or Rashnu. It must be admitted that in view of its position at the end of the

strophe, *manavaintim* is more easily taken as a noun, with Zaehner and other translators, than as an adjective. However, in the absence of a convincing explanation of such a noun, the alternative interpretation of the word as an adjective deserves consideration.

The relationship between Sraosha and Zoroaster, the third respective members of the two triads whom Zaehner feels impelled to identify, has not yet been investigated, but the author foresees that it will reveal 'a final merging and marrying of an ancient solar religion having Mithra as its central figure with the ethical dualism of Zoroaster'.

The present Introduction, whose main points were thought out long before Zaehner's article appeared, is intended to refute and forestall precisely the kind of speculation (that) he has advanced. The line Zaehner takes is that because Pseudo-Dionysius (who, in reality, was either that polyfacetic genius Patriarch Severus of Antioch [5th-6th century] or the Syrian Christian mystic Stephen bar Sadaili or, conceivably, both) mentions a *tripladios Mithras* and the Mithraic reliefs show a big Mithras flanked by two small Mithrases, a threefold Mithra must perforce be found in Old Iranian, perhaps even at the Indo-Iranian, stage. Similarly, because in Western (or Roman) Mithraism, and generally in the Christian era, Mithra has clear

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connections with the sun, Zaehner takes for granted the existence at a pre-Zarathustrian period of a 'solar religion having Mithra as its central figure'. Our line is to take into consideration the chronological order in which the available data present themselves, and not suspect *a priori* that the data are there to deceive us. If chronologically successive data *A, B, C*, are such that one can understand how *B* developed from *A*, and/or *C* must be earlier than *A*, and produce elaborate and unbelievable reasons why *A* shows no signs of having been preceded by *B* and/or *C*.

All the evidence goes to show that the Avestan Mithra is earlier than the solar Mithra, and does not represent the last remnant, or a desolarization, of an earlier solar Mithra. The life giving capacity of the Western (or Roman) Mithras is comfortably derived from the Avestan Mithra. As regards Mithras' killing of the (primordial) bull, this requires a hypothesis whichever way it is to be explained, and the hypothesis which least upsets the available data should be given preference. The transfer of the murder of the (primordial) bull from Ahriman to Mithras in a cult where clearly both were worshipped involves only the hypothesis of a transfer. The transfer of the same deed from Mithra to Ahriman involves not only the assumption

of a transfer, but also the hypothesis of deliberate deception on the part of the authors of the Avesta, as well as the awkward need to explain whom besides themselves these authors might have hoped to deceive by the ostrich's device of ignoring what everybody around them knew to be the case.

Let us now revert to, and end with, the *tripladios Mithras*. He is attested in the fourth century AD; accordingly we can give him a full five hundred years [The beginnings of the representation in sculpture of Mithras *tauroctonos*, i.e., the "bull slayer" are dated by Franz Cumont in about the second century BC, see Textes et monuments figures relatifs aux mysteres de Mithras, 2 volumes.] during which he may have occurred to the minds of philosophically inclined Mithraists as they were gazing at the big Mithras and his small-sized replicas, the two torch-bearers? Franz Cumont long ago surmised that they owe their presence on the reliefs to mere imitation of a conventional type of figurative religious art. The somewhat uncouth translation 'grassland magnate' has been chosen mainly because of its comparative brevity. That the unusual length and heaviness of this constant epithet of Mithra became in time inconvenient even to ardent devotees of the god can be inferred from the epithet *Cautes* of the Roman Mithras, which in my opinion is the result of a

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haplological reduction of Old Iranian **gauyauti-* to **gauyti*, with subsequent disappearance of *y*, and with initial *k* as in Greek *kauvaka(s)* beside *gauvakas* from Old Iranian **gaunaka-*.

Cautes and *Cautopates* are the names of the two torch-bearers who flank Mithras *tauroctonos* (bull slayer) on nearly all reliefs on which the immolation is portrayed. The torch *Cautes* holds is turned upwards, that of *Cautopates* downwards. Since the two torch-bearers are exact small-size replicas of the *tauroctonos* god (Mithras), and the names of either occur in inscriptions as attributes of Mithras (see Franz Cumont, Textes et monuments figures relatifs aux mysteres de Mithras, Volume I, p. 203 - 208), we are justified in tracing the two names to ancient epithets of the god. In *Cautopates* I see the reflex of an Iranian **gauyauti-pati-* 'grassland chief', synonymous with **varu-gauyati-*.

Non-Iranian worshippers of Mithra in taking over the two epithets would be aware, even without understanding their meaning, that they consisted of an essential element **gau(yau)ti*, to which two different elements had been respectively prefixed and added. Being indifferent to meaning they may well have reduced **varu-gau(yau)ti-*, which had virtually become a name of the god, to its main element, following a common

hypocoristic procedure. They would be less inclined to alter the structure of **gau(yau)ti-pati-*, which agreed with the pattern of Iranian names ending, in their Greek garb, in *-patas*; but they did Hellenize its compound-vowel, probably on the analogy of names beginning with *Mithro*.

That the function of the two torch-bearers on the reliefs need not be related to their names was already seen by Franz Cumont, *op. cit.* p.206, who pointed out, on the one hand, that the two *dadophoroi* flanking a central scene constitute a motif known from Greek and Etruscan art.

What then is likely to have happened is that, once in accordance with conventional figurative art two torch-bearing *paredroi* had been placed to the right and left of bull-killing (*tauroctonos*) Mithras, the desire was felt to give them names. If these (names) were chosen by non-Iranian worshippers of Mithra we must assume that not only **(varu-)gauyauti-* (Avestan *vouru.gaoyaoiti-*), but also the synonymous **gauyauti-pati-* reconstructed by us, were common epithets of the god in non-Iranian Mithraic liturgy, even before they were put to use as proper names of the *dadophoroi*. If, however, the name-givers of the *dadophoroi* were Iranians, it would not be surprising if the name

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**gauyauti-pati-* had been invented by them for the special purpose of providing a correlative (and synonymous) name to **varu-gauyauti*, the name they had assigned to one of the two *paredroi*.] If the explanation we have proposed in the same note of the names Cautes and Cautopates is accepted, Franz Cumont's explanation will be confirmed from the Iranian side. If our explanation is rejected, there still remains in Franz Cumont's favor the fact that even Zaehner's determined attempt to find nothing less than a triple series of Threefold Mithrases, viz. Mithras-Cautes-Cautopates, Mithra-Rashnu-Sraosha, and Gayomart-Yima-Zoroaster, merely serves to confirm the impression that the ancient Iranian Mithra shows no inclination to fold into three." (29)

It must be remembered that the cult of the Roman Mithras was very much one of the mystery religions so typical of and prevalent in the period of the later Roman Empire, this in spite of its Iranian origins. Roman Mithraism was very complicated and sophisticated; for example, its seven grades of initiation, i.e., *Raven, Bridegroom, Soldier, Lion, Persian, Runner of the Sun* and

Father. To give a full, comprehensive exposition of Roman Mithraism really has no particular relevance to our main topic. Our intention has been only to give the reader an ample overview of Roman Mithraism, because, after all, its origins were Iranian, no matter what non-Iranian elements became attached to it, and also, we will, from time to time, be referring to the Roman Mithraism, so the reader should at least have a good idea as to what we are talking about in these cases.

Celtic art is most certainly nearer to that of the Iranian nomads of the Eurasian Steppes than to any other. Typical Celtic motifs, such as the spiral, *trisquele* and revolving wheel are

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common in the popular and traditional arts of Iran to this day. (30) Various people have noted that at times it is impossible to distinguish between Celtic and Scythian pieces(31). In the Celtic "animal style", the shape of the animal often dissolves into complex spirals and whorls.(32) This also occurs in the Scythian and Sarmatian "animal style", though perhaps less frequently than in the Celtic.(33) The whorls, spirals and trisqueles so frequent in Celtic art also abound in Scythian and Sarmatian art.(34) Because of its fondness for enamel polychrome, in general it may be said that Celtic art resembles Sarmatian art even more than it does Scythian art. The *trisquele*, an archetypically Celtic motif, is still widely used today in folk art of the Caucasus, notably in Daghestan in the North Caucasus.(35)

Says Nigel Pennick concerning the use of the wheel symbol in Celtic art:

"As the means by which a vehicle travels, the wheel was a sacred object in its own right. In Pagan times, vehicles were buried frequently with their Celtic owners, perhaps to serve as the conveyance of the dead person in the otherworld. Both the sun and moon, worshipped as deities, were portrayed as driving chariots through the sky. In northern Europe, ritual vehicles were used to transport images of deities around the country in sacred journeys that sanctified or cleansed the land. Wagons accompanied the dead in La Tene period tumuli, the wheels being detached and ranged along the walls of the burial chamber. Even in Christian times, images of Jesus mounted on a wheeled donkey were pushed through the streets on Palm Sunday, perhaps in continuation of the rites of the wheel-god.

By themselves, wheels appear in Celtic Paganism as an attribute of the heavenly thunder-and-lightning god, Taranis, 'The Thunderer', whom the Romans assimilated with Jupiter, and the British (Celtic, Welsh) Christians with God the Father under the title Daronwy.

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The wheel-god Taranis was acknowledged by the Pagan Celts from the Balkans to the British Isles. Remains of the worship of the wheel-god have been found all over the Celtic realms. They range from coins, small wheel-brooches and votive images to lifesize statues of the deity. The shrine site at Cold Kitchen Hill in Wiltshire has yielded many wheel-form brooches and votive wheels. Sometimes, deities are portrayed with wheels. One is carved on the left side of a Roman altar dedicated to the Great God Jupiter, kept at Tullie House, Carlisle. A Gallo-Roman altar of Jupiter found at Laudun in Gard, France, shows the god holding a scepter in his left hand, while on the right is an eagle and a five-spoked wheel. Another statue of Jupiter, found at Vaison in Vaucluse, France, shows the standing god holding a wheel, accompanied by an eagle.

Elsewhere, the wheel-god is depicted on the first century BC Celto-Thracian silver cauldron from Gundestrup in Denmark, while in medieval East Anglia the wheel-god became the hero-giant Tam Hickathrift, who saved the people of the Cambridgeshire Fens by defeating the fearsome giant of Wisbech. Hickathrift's weapons were not a sword and shield. Instead, he used the axle-tree of a cart as a quarterstaff, and a wheel as a shield.

In Huntingdonshire, a similar figure, called Old Hub, appeared alongside the molly dancers at the midsummer festivities, marking the high point of the sun in the year.

The wheel is the most significant attribute of the Celtic Cross, and it appeared in a pre-Christian context

along with the columnar form on Roman columns dedicated to Jupiter. A different representation of the wheel-column can be seen on a pagan Roman grave-stela in Carlisle Museum. In the form of a rectangular slab surmounted by a triangular pediment containing a lunar crescent, it bears three wheel-crosses. One is at the apex of the pediment, while the other two are at the junction of the rectangle and the triangle. They are depicted as supported on buobous pillars in the manner of Celtic Crosses. From this, it is possible that pillars with wheel-crosses existed in Roman times as Pagan, rather than Christian, monuments. I support of this hypothesis, there are Christian Anglo-Saxon representations of crosses which closely resemble their pre-Christian forerunners. The Lechmere Stone at Hanley Castle, Hereford and Worcester, is a fine example of this type of cross.

In later iconography, the sunwheel has continued to be a protective sigil until the present day. It was stamped by the Germanic Pagans on the funeral urns in

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which they buried the ashes of their dead. Also, as the *Circle of Columbkille*, the sunwheel cross was the talismanic sigil of St. Columba. Celtic Christians used it to invoke his power as a protection against all harm. Sacred signs inscribed within a circle have a long history as magical talismans. Known generaaly as *insigils*, they play an important role in protection. Medieval Irish magicians ascribed great magical ppower to the circular design called *Feisefin*, the Wheel of Fionn MacCumhaill. Consisting of a circle on which certain letters are written in the ogham alphabet, Fionn's wheel was used as a protective talisman against harm from other human beings, or evil spirits. The Northern Tradition magic of Scandinavia uses similar insigils with bind-runes." (36)

The revolving wheel, also known as the sunwheel, an archetypically Celtic motif as we have seen, is also widely used today in the folk art of Tajikistan, Central Asian home of the Persian-speaking Tajiks. (37)

Nigel Pennick defines the Gaelic word *torc* or *tuirc*; in non-Celtic languages the Latinized spelling *torque* is generally used:

"The most characteristic artefact of Celtic culture is another round structure, the torc, which is literally a binding of metal. Originating in the fifth centyry BC during the La Tene period, the torc is essentially a

body ornament made of precious metal in the form of a curved rod with identical free ends that face one another, almost touching. In effect, torcs are incomplete circles. Worn on the neck or arm, they must be flexible enough to enable the wearer to put them on and take them off, but without damaging or breaking the metal. Torcs appear to have had a sacred meaning, for images of the gods show them wearing torcs around their necks, or holding them in their hands. Among the wealth of magnificent Celtic artefacts, some of the most masterly craftsmanship is preserved in the torcs. The most remarkable collection of torcs comes from the splendid hoard found at Snettisham in Norfolk, England. Dating from the first century BC, the treasure consists of golden torcs composed of exquisite ropework in metal. One of the more notable examples is in the form of a rope composed of eight strands, each strand of which is made of eight twisted golden rods. The fineness of detail and the regularity of the twined

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metal in these torcs is a demonstration of the highest skills possessed by the ancient Celtic goldsmiths. These wonderful ancient Celtic torcs are displayed in the British Museum.

While the curved bodies of torcs were composed of ornamented rods or ropework of precious metal, their terminals were fashioned into geometric forms or animal heads. A heavy silver torc from Trichtingen in southern Germany is a fine example. The Trichtingen torc has opposing terminals in the shape of bulls' heads, each of which wears a torc around his neck. There are literary references to Celtic torc terminals in the shape of dogs and other animals, as well as knob- and ring-shaped endings. The twisted ropework of the torc is an early example of the Celtic motif of the entwined or interlaced rope, which appears later in various ornamental and symbolic forms on Celtic Crosses. Like torcs, Iron Age Celtic chains are remarkable examples of the smith's craft where hard metal has been transformed into a flexible structure whose patterns prefigure the ornament on later Celtic Crosses. The smiths who made them went far beyond mere utilitarian design, creating remarkable interweavings of skilfully patterned iron links." (38)

Celtic chiefs wore torques as a symbol of authority, as did the chiefs of the Sakas, i.e., the Iranian peoples of the Eurasian steppes, such as Scythians, Sarmatians and Alans. (39)

The name "Viriatius", Spanish Celtic hero of the long struggle

against the Romans, is a Latinized version of a Celtic name which means "torque wearer". We will encounter Latinized Celtic names in other places.

Torques were worn by the Scythians of the Altai region of Siberia, circa 400 BC. (40)

In the field of religion, the resemblances are closer still. Speaking of the Druids, the Brahmins and the Magi, Henri Hubert says: "Here one encounters not only comparable priesthoods, but identical priesthoods which were only well conserved in the two

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(geographical) extremes of the Indo-European peoples"(41). And Henri Beer:

"Certain elements of Druidism proceed from the depths of the Indo-European soul, and are related to the doctrines of the Brahmins and the magi."(42)

It is of course well known that the ancient Indo-European peoples used a drug called Soma in Sanskrit and *Haoma* in **Avestan** in their religious ceremonies(43). This drug was pressed from the plant of the same name, mixed with cow's milk *haomaya gava* in Avestan)(44) and drunk after an elaborate ceremony(45). The Druids rigorously preserved the ceremony of the Soma or Haoma Long after the Celts had migrated to regions where said plant does not grow(46), the only difference being the absence of the drug itself. The words which have to do with religion are almost identical in Celtic and Sanskrit(47). Lighting a fire was part of the ceremony(48) *andaid* in Celtic, *inddha* in Sanskrit(49); to drink (as part of the ceremony) is *ibim* in Celtic, *pibami* in Sanskrit(50) (Sanskrit: *piba* = "drink", *mi* = "approach) (51).

Cow's milk as the sacred beverage was called *suth* by the Druids, a word which means "pressed" (52). In Vedic Sanskrit, *Suta-soma* __ means "prepare the Soma" (*suta* = "produce") (53). Arthur A. MacDonell relates the word *Soma* or *Haoma* to the Vedic Sanskrit *su* which means "to press" (54). "To press" in Avestan is *hu* (55). The above seems to me to be conclusive proof that the Celts separated from the Indo-Iranians and migrated to the West after the discovery of *Soma* or *Haoma*.

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Before beginning our discussion of the Holy Grail some preliminary observations are necessary. As A.J. Conyers has noted (56):

"At the end of his writing On the Perfection of the Spiritual Life, St. Thomas Aquinas wrote:

"If anyone wishes to write against this, I will welcome it. For true and false will in no way be better revealed and uncovered than in resistance to a contradiction, according to the saying 'Iron is sharpened by iron' (*Proverbs XXVII:17*). And between us and them may God judge."

Such a sentiment reflects a habit of considerable weight in the history of the (*Catholic*) Church, and one might say that some of the crowning achievements of Christian (*Catholic and Eastern Orthodox*) thought - for instance, St. Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologiae - would never have seen the light of day but for a strong sentiment for a certain openness toward thinkers from other faiths and other philosophies.

It was in overcoming a predisposition in the Church against Aristotle, a pagan thinker, after all - that St. Thomas Aquinas made his contribution. He did so within the thirteenth-century community of thought that was famously populated by Muslim and Jewish as well as Christian thinkers. ...

[In fact, St. Thomas Aquinas owed so much to Muslim thinkers, that it must be noted that it was the "turbaned Aristotle", filtered through Muslim thinkers,

rather than the "pagan Aristotle" which St. Thomas Aquinas "baptized". It was very much easier to "baptize" the "turbaned Aristotle" than it would have been to "baptize" the "pagan Aristotle".]

...When he takes up the definition of "Truth", he proceeds by calling attention to various important insights into the meaning of truth from a number of sources, not all of them Christian. First he draws from St. Augustine, who wrote that

"Truth is that whereby is made manifest (that) which is."

Then he turns to St. Hilary, who wrote
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"Truth makes being clear and evident."

Then to St. Anselm:

"Truth is rightness perceptible by the mind alone."

Next, without comment on his movement to figures of an alien faith, he quotes Avicenna (*ibn Sina*) a Muslim teacher of the tenth and eleventh century:

"The truth of each thing is a property of the being which has been given to it."

And finally he appeals to Aristotle, the pagan philosopher, who says that a statement is true "from the fact that a thing is, not from the fact that a thing is true."

(It should be noted that much of the work of St. Thomas Aquinas is a long refutation of Averroes (ibn Rushd), and in order to refute Averroes, St. Thomas Aquinas very frequently quotes Avicenna (ibn Sina).

...St. Thomas Aquinas does all this in a way that clearly marks it off from modern habits. He does not call attention to the fact that he is drawing from a plurality of sources that represent diverse faiths. Nor is there the lazy air of relativism here. Instead we find the resolute pressing forward to an idea of truth that can be common to everyone because it is *real* for everyone. It is inclusive not in the easy modern way that makes its claim before any effort has been expended to find common ground, but in the more arduous way of the Angelic Doctor (*St. Thomas Aquinas*) whose labors still constitute a wonder of human investigation

and literary production. It promotes not a unity that is assumed and goes unquestioned at the beginning, but one that is found at some cost to those who search. As Simone Weil said:

"Work is needed to express what is true: also to receive what is true. We can express and receive what is false, or at least what is superficial, without any work."

This drive toward divine truth is not the same as the acquisition of truth. Josef Pieper pointed out what both the advocates and detractors of St. Thomas

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Aquinas often forget, that his greatest work is and *unfinished* work. In spirit, and as it happens in form as well, it witnesses to the openness of theology that always points to something deeper. It points to truth rather than holding it captive. This habit of thought has deep roots in the Christian tradition and helps to illuminate what is meant by the practice of toleration. It is an openness toward what is true, recognizing that the truth of God is true for all people, and to the extent that other cultures or religions have been illuminated by truth it is none other than the truth of the One God, the God to Whom Jesus Himself gives full and incarnate witness.

An example of this early practice is found in St. Justin Martyr (100-165), who came to the Christian faith by way of Stoicism and (Neo)Platonism. For him Christian faith is the "touchstone" of truth. He believed that the identification of (Jesus) Christ as *logos* in Scripture opened the way to understanding even pre-Christian philosophies as bearing a measure of truth. Explains historian Henry Chadwick,

"(Jesus) Christ is for St. Justin the principle of unity and the criterion by which we may judge the truth, scattered like divided seeds among the different schools of philosophy in so far as they have dealt with religion and morals."

St. Clement of Alexandria (150-215) provides another witness. Like Philo on behalf of Judaism more than a century before, he incorporated the best works of Hellenistic literature and philosophy in his own Christian teaching. The writings of St. Clement that remain to us contain more than seven hundred quotations from more than three hundred pagan sources. At the same time, it was perfectly clear that scripture was his authority. His arguments would explore the world of

Homer or Heraclitus, but then he would resolve the issue beginning with the words "it is written". Thus his thought was not syncretistic, but synthetic. There was, for him, a "chorus of truth" upon which the Christian might draw. This alternative source did not replace Scripture, but it illuminated its pages. All philosophy, if it was true philosophy, was of divine origin, even though what we receive through philosophy is broken and often almost unintelligible.

All truth, St. Clement would argue, is God's truth. In his work Stromata, (*Miscellaneous*) St. Clement of Alexandria wrote:

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"They may say that it is mere chance that the (*pre-Christian*) Greeks have expressed something of the true philosophy. But that chance is subject to Divine Providence. Or in the next place it may be said that the (*pre-Christian*) Greeks possessed an idea of truth implanted by nature. But we know that the Creator of nature is One only."

While St. Clement's Alexandrian tradition had enormous influence on the Church, the tendency toward a tolerant habit of thought was not found in Alexandria alone. St. Gregory of Nazianzus (330-389), (*one of the Cappadocian Fathers*), whose ministry ranged from Athens to Constantinople, argued for the universality of the knowledge of God, who is

"In the world of thought what the sun is in the world of sense; presenting Himself to our minds in proportion as we are cleansed; and loved in proportion as He is presented to our mind: and again, conceived in proportion as we love Him, pouring Himself out upon what is external to Him."

A.J. Conyers continues:

"An advantage that ancient and early medieval thinkers had in imagining the "openness" of Catholic theology to alien (*pre- or non-Christian*) thinkers is one that tends to elude modern people. The Aristotelian idea of *form* allowed for an understanding that was not confined to individual things. From corresponded well to the Christian idea of Divine *Logos*. Such ideas were largely abandoned through developments in late medieval and early modern thought.

As Louis Dupre has written:

"Nominalist theology (which is really an oxymoron; Nominalism is atheist by its very nature) had thoroughly eroded the notion of *form*. Christians had used this Greek notion for constructing their own synthesis of nature and grace."

This same notion was indispensable to ancient and medieval thinkers. St. Basil the Great, another of the Cappadocian Fathers, expressly uses this approach in arguing for the co-equality of the Holy Spirit with the

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other persons of the Trinity:

"Therefore, inasmuch as the Holy Spirit perfects rational beings, completing their excellence, He is analogous to Form. For he, who no longer "lives after the flesh" but being "led by the Spirit of God" (as Jesus is often called by Muslims), becoming "conformed to the image of the Son (*Logos*) of God", is described as spiritual."

In modern times, when nominalist presuppositions undermined the perceived connection between form and matter, the earlier understanding of a higher connection among different ways of thinking and believing was also lost. Thus modern people found themselves incapable of tolerating alien thoughts other than by saying that all opinions are of equal value (or no value), since they merely illuminate the mind of the individual doing the thinking. Or, to put it less starkly, modern thinkers confined certain kinds of thought-religious and moral thought specifically to the realm of the private. By contrast, St. Augustine could understand that his earlier Neoplatonist books taught him something about God, even though that knowledge was incomplete.

It is not true, of course, that first millennium Christianity was tolerant in any thoroughgoing manner. A famous example of a dissenting voice was Tertullian (*rightly considered to be a heretic*), who objected to all this philosophizing by asking trenchantly "*Quid Athenae Hierusolymis?*" What has Athens to do with Jerusalem? This hostility toward other philosophies and beliefs can be found throughout the history of the Church. But it is also the case that a tolerant habit of mind was an important part of the picture prior to the rise of Nominalism in the late medieval period and the subsequent loss of the capacity for synthesis. It is important to see that the diminishing of such a

powerful tool as toleration came not with the "dark ages" as popular myth holds, but with the dawn of modernity. If we are to regain true tolerance, we must begin by recognizing the difference between its authentic practice and the poor substitute that has risen to prominence in the modern age." (57)

Nominalism is not only arrant nonsense, it a spiritual and intellectual poison, as shown above. Yet, according to the vulgar

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superstition called "Progress with a capital "P", the triumph of Nominalism must be "Progress".

Below is an essay by Kathleen Raine:

THE VERTICAL DIMENSION

"The Verticle Dimension"; in part that is what, for me, is essentially what poetry and all the arts of the Imagination represent in our lives - a scale of values, call it Jacob's Ladder, on which spirits of higher mental regions descend to earth, and on which we, from the realities of is world ascend in vision. And in the second place because, having lived a long life in his changing world, "the vertical dimension", in this sense, is what I feel has come to be neglected, not to say altogether lost, from much of the poetry now being written and from our expectation of it. But when I came to put pen to paper I found such a flood of thoughts pressin in on me that it seemed I could not even begin; for the theme involves so much, involves the very oldest of questions, "What is man?", the question of the Sphinx, he question of the Psalmist, the question of my own Master, William Blake, asked again in an emblem depicting a chrysalis with the face o a sleeping child: into what state of consciousness will har sleeper, in metamorphosis from the caterpillar to the winged life, awake? An ancient emblem of the classical world, implying again, a change of state, a transmutation of consciousness itself. We live in a world to which the very notion of a hierarchy of states of consciousness, is alien. Yet this is the theme which has, in various forms, been central to my life-work, both as a poet and a scholar.

But where to begin? What is poetry, that it should have occupied the hours and days and years o my

life? Or of any life? "Man shall not live by bread alone" we are told, "but by every word of God". Living as we do in a culture circumscribed by a materialist scientism, we have indeed seen in the Communist world a deliberate attempt at a human society which provides "bread alone" and deemed the "word of God" an unreality, something needless. How often do we not read or hear on the media Man described as a clever, tool-making, trousered primate with an exceptionally large brain capacity, and so on. Yet man is not a species, but a kingdom, as different from the animal kingdom as the animal from the vegetable, the vegetable from the mineral. The texture of the universe is seamless, yet

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each kingdom, whatever the overlap, is distinct; and what, if not the Word, is unique in the human kingdom? "In the beginning was the word"; Adam "named" the creatures in Paradise; and if a beautiful painting by (William) Blake is to be believed, Eve named the birds. Or Rilke, in his ninth Elegy, considers what in this boundless universe we are here for? And he writes:

For the wanderer does not bring from mountain to valley
A handful of earth, of for all untellable earth,
but only
A word he has won, pure, the yellow and blue
Gentian. Are we perhaps here just for saying:
House,
Bridge, Fountain, Gate, Jug, Fruit tree. Window,
-
Possibly: Pillar, Tower?

And he goes on, considering what to so vast a universe, we can contribute:

Praise this world to the Angel, not the untellable: you
Can't impress him with the splendor you've felt;
in the cosmos
Where he more feelingly feels you're only a novice. So show him
Some simple thing, refashioned age after age
Till it lives in our hands and eyes as a part of ourselves.

Tell him *things*.

By the word we create a world far other than the material order of the utile that serves only our material needs, that can be quantified, but lies

outside the order of meanings and values which, through the mystery of the Word, constitutes the human order: without the Word there can be no civilization.

So we are told that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God."

That is an amazing claim to make for language, for it points to a source that used to be called "inspiration" when people spoke of such things - the "inspired" Word of God, a God (if one dare use the word) who "spoke by the prophets", and what else is the spirit of prophecy (Blake asks) but "the poetic genius"? If the name of poet is still held in honor it is not because it still carries with it a certain remote echo of that age-old belief that the poet is "inspired"? An honor due to poetry only when, and

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insofar as it does, in a measure, aspire to participation in a sacred vision of the Word that is "with God", on the vertical ladder which has in our time for the most part been lost?

Is not poetry the inspired word by which we name - and by naming create the human kingdom of meanings and values? Without the Word our humanity languishes, we revert to the order of animals whose food is material. When I was a child we believed that the sacred scriptures were "inspired"; and if we venerated poets it was not for their craftsmanship or "relevance" in terms of current affairs but because they too were held to be inspired. If and when we left school for a University it was more than likely that we read in Plato's *Ion* of the "sacred power" of inspiration:

For the best epic poets, and all such as excel in composing any kind of verses to be recited, frame not those their admirable poems from the rules of art; but possessed by the Muse, they write from divine inspiration. Nor is it otherwise with the best lyric poets, and all other fine writers of verses to be sung. For as the priests of Cybele perform not their dances when they have the free use of their intellect; so those melody poets pen those beautiful songs of theirs only when out of their sober minds. But as soon as they begin to give voice and motion to those songs, adding to their words the harmony of music and the measure of dance, they are immediately transported; and, possessed by some divine power, are like the priestesses of Bacchus, who, full of the god, no longer draw water

but honey and milk out of the springs and fountains. ... For they assure us that out of certain gardens and flowery vales belonging to the Muses, from fountains flowing there with honey, gatherin the sweetness of their sons, they brin it to us like the bees; and in he same manner with a, flying. Nor do they tel us any untruth. For a poet is a thing light, and volatile, and sacred; nor is he able to wrie poetry, till the Muse, entering into him, he is transported out of himself.

To poets of he inspired kind the "measure" of song and dance is a magical means of transportin poet and listener from the common world into that other realm; Shelley spoke of the "incanation" of his verse; we have but o hear the first words o any ballad,

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The King sat in Dumferline town
Drinking the blood red wine

or

There lived a wife at Usher's well
And a wealthy wife was she

To be transported into that other state, as by the words "once uon a time" into fairyland. And indeed the poetic intoxication is a theme of poets from Arabia to W.B. Yeats, he too a Platonic poet, who invokes that state:

Because I have a marvelous thing to say,
A certain marvelous thin
None but he living mock,
Though not for sober ear -

The invocation of the Muse has become a literary commonplace, but to poets of he Imagination it remains a reality; Milton invoked his "heavenly muse" an Gray wrote of Shakespeare who beheld "such forms/ As glitter in he muse's ray." Blake, more down-to-earth, summons the "Muses who inspire the Poet's Song to

...Come into my hand,
By your mild power descending down he Nerves of
my right arm
From out the portals of my brain, where by your
ministry
The Eternal Great Humanity Divine planted his

Paradise.

For the inspirers are within. Yeats had his "instructors" who spoke through the mediumship of his wife; or in more modern terms we may invoke Jung's "transpersonal" mind. By whatever name, the inspirers are a reality of imaginative experience.

If I speak of a "vertical dimension" I must make it clear that what is an issue is not any question of "another world" but the manner in which we experience this one. The vertical dimension is the beholder, its transforming power operates in his world; as Blake wrote to an employer who accused him of not painting the world as it really is:

I see everything I paint in This World, but
everybody does not see alike. O the eyes of a
miser a guinea is more beautiful than the
sun,

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& a bag worn with the use of money has more
beautiful proportions than a vine filled
with grapes. The tree which moves some to
tears of joy is in the eyes of others only a
green thing which stands in the way. Some see
nature all ridicule & deformity, & by these
I shall not regulate my proportions; & some
scarcely see nature at all. But to the eyes of
the man of imagination, nature is imagination
itself. As a man is, so he sees. As the eye
is formed, such are its powers. You certainly
mistake, when you say that the visions of
fancy are not to be found in this world. To
me this world is all on continued vision of
fancy or imagination.

Blake's vision is simple and universal; and there are surely few of us who have not at some time seen the simplest things "appareled in celestial light" - in the phrase of another poet, Thomas Traherne, for whom also the simplest pebbles on the path were radiant with that light. It is not the pebbles or the trees that have changed: it is we who no longer participate in that light of vision. There are poets - I think of Larkin - who best regret its absence; few indeed who attempt to re-ignite that vision at the source, though there have been some, during my lifetime; not merely Eliot and Yeats and Rilke, but Dylan Thomas, who used that unfashionable word "holy" or his friend Vernon Watkins. Who, no less than the (Welsh) bard Taliesin knew the reality of inspiration.

I have lived to see the rise and fall of the Communist empire, proclaimed in my student days as the

advent of Utopia - a sincere if misguided attempt to prove that humankind could live by "bread alone". Edwin Muir, in a poem written at a time when he was witnessing in Czechoslovakia what this doctrine represented in human terms wrote of the diminution and obscuring of the human image by the denial of the sacred nature of man; by exalting the image of natural man, what makes man great is lost:

At a sudden turn we saw
A young man harrowing, hidden in dust, he seemed
A prisoner walking in a moving cloud
Made by himself for his own purposes;
And there he grew, and was as if exalted
O more than man. Yet not, not glorified:
A pillar of dust moving in dust; no more.
The bushes by the roadside were encrusted
With a hard sheath of dust.

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We looked and wondered; the dry cloud moved on
With its interior image.

Presently we found
A road that brought us to the Writer's House
And there a preacher from Urania
(Sad land where hope each day is killed by hope)
Praised the good dust, man's ultimate salvation,
And cried that God was dead. ...
And in our memory cloud and message fused,
Image and thought condensed to a giant form
That walked the earth clothed in its earthly
cloud,
Dust made sublime in dust. And yet it seemed
unreal
And lonely as things not in their proper place.
And thinking of the man
Hid in his cloud we longed for light to break
And show that his face was the face once broken
in Eden,
Beloved, world-without-end lamented face;
And not a blindfold mask on a pillar of dust.

Such was Edwin Muir's imaginative perception of the human image in the Communist empire - "far Urania." Nor has Western technological prosperity given rise to a flowering of the poetic genius. Where now is the once confident assurance of Western materialism in the ever onward and upward march of "Progress" through the forces of "evolution"? Contemporary poetry and painting, and even music which reflects the materialist mind of the time reflects rather the uncertainties, the desperation, the cynicism of the despair of an age that

has lost its roots in a spiritual order, deemed to have been made invalid by our materialist science, but with nothing to put in its place. The palliatives of modern technology do not feed the human hunger, when the image of man made "a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor" has given place to some genetic formula. Reaffirmations of human dignity, ather, have come from the heart of Soviet Russia where the extremity of the need has generated a heroic response in such poets as Pasternak, Mandelstam, and Arseny Tarkovsky, father of the great film director. No such heroic response has been demanded of us, and we adapt ourselves to our comfortable hells with acquiescent self-pity. The Waste Land Eliot prophetically described has invaded the arts themselves. Not even the artificial paradise of psychedelic drugs can take the place of mankind's spiritual food, once provided by the poets, painters and musicians - "Poetry, Painting & Music, the three Powers in Man of conversing with
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Paradise" - Blake again.

In contrast with what I have called the vertical dimension, the materialist ideologies can operate only on a horizontal, flat-land world. On that level there can be, at best, political propaganda and social protest, a heightened journalism. Eliot in his use of free verse gave expression to the "waste land" for which there is no incantation, no poetic frenzy of music or dance-rhythms. What for Eliot was a lament, for later generations became merely a style; for loss of form follows on loss of the poetic exaltation of which Plato speaks, that intersection of time with the timeless, the "still center of the turning world" of which Eliot writes in the *Four Quartets*. It is notable that it is the poets who still affirm the center whose work retains formal verse - Yeats, Edwin Muir, Vernon Watkins, Dylan Thomas and Robert Frost. Blake declared long ago that naturalism leads to loss of form, whether in painting or in verse. "Nature has no Outline, but Imagination has. Nature has no Tune, but Imagination has. Nature has no Supernatural & dissolves: Imagination is Eternity." The present time demonstrates in the loss of form in all the arts - the dribbles of Jackson Pollock and the "abstract expressionists", the tuneless twelve-note scale, the "free verse" that has no more structure than a news-item, which are the inevitable expression of the loss of access to the rhythms of life itself, the formal principle which is, as Blake affirms, not in nature but in what Coleridge called the "shaping spirit of Imagination".

Throughout the nineteenth century descriptive verse, and painting which reproduced natural appearances with minute and photographic accuracy abounded. Much of this continued to present the natural world as pleasing to behold, continuing unquestioned earlier schools which had held beauty to be a supreme value. Now beauty is a word scarcely used, for what meaning has the word in the context of the neutrality of nature, unrelated to the vital form-creating power of Imagination? We have seen the emergence first of "social realism" and then of (an even) grimmer realism of poets and painters who have ceased to discover beauty in nature or in human nature. There has emerged a school of writers and painters who describe appearances not to enhance, but to dislimn, not a discovery but a denial of form, beauty and meaning. The kitchen sink is ever with us; but I think of Vermeer's kitchens where daily occupations at household tasks are bathed in what I can only describe as the light of love; so unlike the resentful and negative fashion of

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reducing our simple works and days to something valueless, to be resented rather than enjoyed. Again, it is not the bowls and dishes that have changed - though by our machines these too are made without the informing spirit of craftsmanship - but the light in which these are seen no longer shines from some inner vision of meaning and beauty. The song of birds has been a source of delight to poets from the (Provencal) troubadors to Chaucer, from the nightingales (*bulbul-ha*) of Persia to Keats, from Shelley's skylark and Milton's to Hopkins. Now children's schoolbooks contain poems informing them that the voices of birds are not a song but a scream; it is deemed more "honets" to note nature's warts and blemishes than to observe its daily panorama of sun and moon, clouds and stars, birds and trees as the epiphanic language of a living mystery; or indeed to see that "The roaring of lions, the howling of wolves, the raging of the stormy sea, and the destructive sword are portions of Eternity, too great for the eye of man." All is meaningless and human fantasy, severed from its sacred source, becomes a Disney-land of vulgarity.

It would be unjust to hold poets and other artists individually responsible for the climate of an age and a materialist ideology which implicitly or explicitly affirms the cosmos to be an autonomous mechanism - or a meaningless accident - a view which precludes an entire realm of values. When Wordsworth wrote (paraphrasing Plotinus) "'Tis my belief that every

flower enjoys the air it breathes" he was not indulging in poetic make-believe, but affirming that nature is a *living presence*, as other cultures have held as a self-evident truth. As indeed it is, if not matter but spirit, not the object perceived but the perceiving consciousness, be taken as the ground of reality as we behold and experience it. Yeats saw the post-Renaissance concept of a material universe as a mere brief deviation from the immemorial wisdom of mankind and predicted its end: "The three provincial centuries are over", he wrote, "Wisdom and poetry return." Are not the predictions of the poets self-fulfilling? Let us hope so.

We all know Blake's lines that so clearly affirm a hierarchy of mental worlds, or states of consciousness:

Now I a fourfold vision see,
And a forfold vision is given to me,
'Tis fourfold in my supreme delight
And threefold in soft Beulah's night
And twofold Always. May God us keep
From single vision and Newton's sleep.

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Newton, creator of the cosmology which some leading scientists have already challenged but which, imaginatively, modern Western man continues to inhabit. Yeats, first editor of Blake's Prophetic Books, followed his Master(?) in his total rejection of the premises of Western materialism, and in the course of his intellectual pilgrimage he scanned the entire horizon of long excluded knowledge of the learning of the Imagination, ranging from theosophy and magic, folk-beliefs of the West of Ireland and psychical research, to the writings of the Neoplatonists, the Sufis, the ghost-drama of the Japanese *Noh*. He came, finally, to his final commitment to the great source of that learning, the Vedic tradition [*of which we shall have a great deal more to say*], With his Indian teacher, Sri Purohit Swami he made, in his last years, translations from the principal Upanishads. These studies were ridiculed at the time by both Marxist and American materialist critics. George Orwell did not hesitate to refer to these studies as "hocus-pocus":

"One has not perhaps, the right to laugh (Orwell wrote) at Yeats for his mystical beliefs - for I believe it could be shown that some degree of belief in magic is

almost universal - but neither ought one to write such things off as mere unimportant eccentricities."

It is a measure of the changes of the times that it would no longer be possible for an intelligent critic to write in such a way. He laughs best, we may be inclined to comment, who laughs last! No one can any longer dismiss the Perennial Philosophy, comprising as it does the philosophical and metaphysical literature of all civilizations prior to our own, as "hocus-pocus" - to do so is provincial indeed.

To a seminal essay titled "The Necesssity of Symbolism" prefaced to the Ellis and Yeats edition (1893) of Blake's Prophetic Books, Yeats takes up the theme of the "vertical" dimension so uncompromisingly stated by his master; a hierarchy of states of consciousness which are themselves the agents which create different "worlds". Yeats saw as the underlying fallacy of the materialist view:

"...the belief that material and spiritual things do not differ in kind; for if they do so differ, no mere analysis of nature as it exists outside pur minds can solve the problems of mental life."

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Yeats then goes on to elaborate on Blake's master, Swedenborg's doctrine of "correspondences":

Degrees are of two kinds (Swedenborg writes) there being continuous degrees and degrees not continuous. Continuous degrees are like the degrees of visual clearness, decreasing as the light passes from the objects in the light to those in the shade. ... But degrees that are not continuous but discrete, differ from each other like that which is prior and that which is posterior, like cause and effect, and like that which produces and that which is produced. ... He that has not acquired a clear apprehension of these degrees cannot be acquainted with the difference between the exterior and interior faculties of man; nor can he be acquainted with the difference between the spiritual world and the natural, nor between the spirit of man and his body (Heaven and Hell, 38).

The materialist thinker (Yeats comments) sees "continuous" where he should see "discrete" degrees and thinks of the mind not merely as companioning but

as actually one with the physical organism. The degrees correspond to one another only by "correspondence" as Swedenborg calls the symbolic relation between the outer and inner; which "begins with a perception of something different from natural things with which they are to be compared."

The vertical comparison is the key to the power of the symbol, in which the natural world is used, not (as in nature-poetry in the horizontal dimension) as an object to be described, but as the poet's language, the keyboard, as it were, upon which he strikes resonances of inner experience. Mountain and river, tree and garden, bird and cloud, are words in the language of Eden in which Adam "named" the creatures. One thinks of that supreme genius of the poetic art, Shelley, whose soaring lark (as the French phenomenologist Gaston Bachelard has so beautifully shown), is not so much a bird as an emblem of ascent, the soaring mood of poetic aspiration itself. Shelley does not describe the bird, as a naturalist might do, feather by feather - Shelley's skylark is not visible at all, as "singing it soars, and soaring ever singeth". It is the poet's spirit in flight, like Plato's rhapsodist, to the "garden of the Muses", the "skies" of Blake's "supreme delight" - a region of spaciousness, freedom and light above common consciousness of which the

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"skies" have always been the natural symbol. Shakespeare's lark sings at "heaven's gate" and Milton's at the "watch-tower in the skies", and Blake's mounts through the "crystal gate" of heaven. Hopkins' lark is a musician reading his score:

Left hand, off land, I hear the lark ascend,
His rash-fresh, re-winded new-skeined score
In crisps of curl off wild winch whirl, and pour
And pelt music, till none's to spill or spend.

To what good purpose does a poet for whom these regions are closed inform us that the bird-song that has delighted generations, is not singing but screaming? What do such facts, true or false, tell us of music, of inspiration, of human experience?

Keats' words still remain true:

The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown,
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for
home,

She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements opening o'er the foam
Of perilous seas, and faery lands forlorn.

The nightingale (Persian: *bulbul*) too is a word in the language of poetry. Yet English poets seem to have fallen into the habit of thinking that the function of poetry is descriptive - descriptive of the natural world, the one real world to the "single vision" of materialist thought. It is true that for a poet like Peter Redgrove, nature is no mere mechanism, but a living, vital, magical process of Goethean "formation, transformation". But there are a few poets who retain, as does David Gascoyne, England's one great poet at this time, the high role of the poet as the spokesman of the human spirit. The poetic exploration of the human kingdom, its moods and meanings, has, since the last war, become incalculably impoverished. Poetry, from Homer, Dante, Rumi and Shakespeare, to Eliot and Rilke, to Edwin Muir to David Gascoyne has continually explored the human kingdom in all its heights and depths, seeking to extend the frontiers of that kingdom and record its fine subtleties of wisdom and beauty and moral perception. In an age when there is only natural man the higher realms of Blake's fourfold vision are lost, and with that loss, as Yeats foresaw, "Conduct and work grow coarse, and coarse the soul. ..." We are

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misreading the works of poets of the imaginative tradition if we read their symbolic discourse in terms of another ideology; as indeed we have seen in much modern criticism, especially criticism of the romantic poets - of Shelley, whose exquisite imaginative landscapes, reminiscent of Turner, are taken as such. In Shelley's great Ode on the "wind" of inspiration, every image resonates overtones in the scale of "correspondences". Shelley is invoking - affirming - not a material world but a living, epiphanic cosmos -

Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine aery surge
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
Of some fierce Maenad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm.

Those who know him best will not fall into the mistake of imagining he uses the word "angels" for aesthetic reasons. For all his knowledge of science - the electrical charge of the storm-cloud producing the fringes of cloud - he held the cosmos to be informed

by living intelligences - angels, who, like the bright cloud itself, undergo a metamorphosis into the fiercer form, of "Maenads" - of the approaching storm. The allusion to the passage from Plato's *Ion*, on poetic inspiration, is clear. The hair of the Maenad, frenzied follower of the god Dionysius, rises on the head as the divine inspiration possesses her. Shelley in these images is communicating his own deepest belief about the nature of poetic inspiration. Symbolic thought establishes by means of multiple allusion through images, associations with a whole field of thought, which I have called the "learning of the imagination". Unless we know who the Maenads are, and the character of the god Dionysius and his cult, those frenzied rites that swept over the classical world, unless we have read or seen performed Uripides' play *The Baccae*, in which the women draw honey and milk from the fountains, and tear to pieces Pentheus, the king who cast doubt on their god, we shall not be reading what Shelley wrote.

We have seen much misreading of this kind, in modern criticism; even to the point of one critic who goes so far as to propose "simply to brush aside" Yeats' own reading of his own words (on the allusion in "Among Schoolchildren" to Porphyry's *De Antro Nympharum*).

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What youthful mother, a shape upon her lap
Honey of generation has betrayed
And that must sleep, shriek, struggle to escape
As recollection or the drug decide

-Platonic recollection or the Lethean "drug" of forgetfulness. This symbolism from the mainstream of European tradition, John Wain dismisses as "a personal fandango of mysticism and superstition". Instead of "the drug" of Lethean forgetfulness, Mr. Wain suggests we take "the drug" to be administered by the midwife at childbirth! Such critics are not reading, but misreading, the works of the poets. Both Shelley and Yeats employ a language of symbols which resonate within a whole context of civilization, of whose continuity every present is a part. If that civilization be forgotten or discarded we have indeed already entered a new Dark Age (Sanskrit: *Kali Yuga*). Nor is the loss a matter simply of historical memory, it is a loss of "the vertical dimension" of consciousness itself.

A still greater impoverishment follows from the abandonment by the poets themselves of their age-old

task of establishing in every present a relation to the timeless world which is the soul's country, the invisible kingdom humankind has from time immemorial labored to realize on earth in works of art. There is, as my parents' generation would have said - as I would still say - no "poetry" in so much modern verse - no poetry in the sense of no resonances of imaginative meaning and beauty, but merely descriptions of facts or events we might find as well or better presented by a

television commentator. I.A. Richards, himself one of the "new critics", described poetry as "the house of the soul". Poetry and the other arts are indeed the world we inwardly inhabit, the human kingdom built over

millennia in the full range of the height and depth of human experience by means of symbolic correspondences on a vertical axis of consciousness itself, with its whole range of values which it is the nature of the arts to explore and embody. If the material world be the body's country, the arts are the soul's country; where the realities are of a different order, where the rules are different, where (Blake again) "All things are comprehended in their Eternal Forms" and warty-face can never come.

In that world are heraldic animals and oracular birds, the walled garden of Paradise and its trees and rivers, a whole inner landscape of soul's country, mountains and caverns, demons and enchantments. Do we not all visit this country in our dreams? Jung

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somewhere has written that when words are spoken from that world (whether in dream or in some other state which unites, at certain moments, the sleeping and the waking mind) it is in a high exalted tone, fraught with meaning beyond the mere designatory significance of some object or event in the external world. In contrast with the trivial chatter of the daily mind of the commonplace there is a solemnity and dignity which meanings and values impart to communications of the "other mind". In much poetry of the recent past there has been a deliberate avoidance of the incantatory, the lyrical, the solemnity and grandeur of speech proper to the image of man as made "a little lower than the angels" but not to the materialist image of man - "all that great glory spent, as Yeats laments. It is surely through nomere change of literary fashion that this has come about, but inevitably in terms of the exclusion and denial of soul's country, which nevertheless we continue to visit in dreams - or which continues, in dreams, to visit us. Poets who deny that dimension can no longer write, or desire to write

...whatever most can bless
The mind of man or elevate a rhyme;
But all is changed, that high horse riderless,
Though mounted in that saddle Homer rode
Where the swan drifts upon a darkening flood.

So we have a revised prayer-book, a Good News Bible rewritten in the language of a chat-show, we have productions of Shakespeare which deliberately flatten out his verse to be read as a paragraph of prose, not to elevate but to depress a rhyme. The "high horse" Pegasus on which, in the Greek myth, the poet ascends, has withdrawn to the world of dreams. David Gascoyne, described this school of poetry as "celebration of the commonplace" - not as Vermeer and Traherne celebrated the commonplace, illuminated by celestial light, but as such; like the dust that enveloped Edwin Muir's laborer in the fields of Czechoslovakia under the Communist rule.

The renowned French Ismaeli scholar, Henry Corbin, a co-founder with Jung of the Eranos circle, coined the term "Imaginal", in distinction from "imaginary" - which in common parlance signifies the merely unreal - to designate that inner world of psyche, recognized within the rich Ismaeli tradition he studied as the universe of the soul, the *alam al-mithal*.

[In fact, Henry Corbin worked within the Imami Shi'a

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tradition far more than he did within the Ismaeli Shi'a tradition. Henry Corbin's massive, four-volume work En Islam Iranienne deals exclusively with Imami Shi'ism, as do his major works La Philosophie Iranienne aux XVII et XVIII Siecles and Terre Celeste et Corps de Resurrection: de l'Iran Mazdeen a l'Iran Shi'ite. Henry Corbin's only major work which deals with the Ismaeli tradition is Triologie Ismaelienne. The Ismaelis are Shi'as, though their version of Shi'ism differs somewhat from that of the Imamis, who are the overwhelming majority among Shi'ites worldwide, particularly in Iran, Iraq and Lebanon.]

This *mundus imaginalis* is the soul's universe, and the whole immense world of the imaginable, the universe of symbol, would not exist without the soul. Here thought is materialized as image; and the sensible image, conversely, is imbued with meaning from the angelic intelligences of the inner worlds. This inner universe of soul is the human kingdom proper, an immeasurable kingdom native to us (or to which we are native) with an order of its own. It is the world which from the beginning of humanity poets and painters, dance and story, all the arts of the Imagination have embodied in countless forms, according to each nation - or each period's, or each individual's - perception, and the current language of symbol and myth. In a time when there is no received language these living forms still present themselves to us nameless but still intelligible. I see in the work of the painter, Cecil Collins, the fullest embodiment of the soul's country that we have seen in England in this time - the beautiful gentle forms of the vulnerable soul, moving within a landscape of sacred trees and birds, rivers and mountains, the Holy Grail, the beautiful adornments imagination imparts. Collins uses no religious iconography, but these nameless figures, characteristic of this time in which many look for reality in their own dreams rather than in the iconography of religion, are no less recognizable holy than the Russian icons of the figures of the Christian story or the gods of Greece or India. We recognize the presences themselves of angels and oracles, kings and holy fools, sibyls and

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oracles, and we know that country and its landscape as one to which we are native. And for what other purpose has humankind built temples and palaces, painted and sculpted and told all the fairy-tales and visionary recitals, but to embody and make known to ourselves our inner kingdom? And what is music but the native speech of that country? If man does not live by bread alone is it not because the human kingdom must be fed on the milk and honey of the fountains of the muses, by the "bread of angels" (Latin: *Panis angelicus*)? The quest of the soul as it seeks the Holy Grail or the rose-garden or the emerald cities, a world of marvels and meanings and metamorphoses and ordeals and revelations bears little relation to the "social realism" or minimalism or post-modernism and the rest. The *mundus imaginalis* is, furthermore, a world of true meanings, (unlike the "imaginary" as conceived in factual terms) since the intelligences - archetypal forms - which embody themselves in that interworld

have their origin in reality itself. It is the true world, whose forms we see reflected in the "vegetable glass" of nature, and without which "nature has no outline and dissolves". The imaginal world is, in Blake's terms, "the Nature of Eternal Things Displayed All springing from the Divine Humanity".

The greater part of the poetry of all times and nations tells and retells the soul's story, her loves and sorrows, her desires and her quest. These are guidance on the way as each individual takes up that story, realizes some part of it, and by the poets we are enabled to experience a whole beyond our personal lives. No poet understood this better than did Edwin Muir, who in his beautiful autobiographical book The Story and the Fable wrote of that archetypal story as "the fable", of which each individual life is a reflection:

...the life of every man is an endlessly repeated performance of the life of man. It is clear ... that sleep, in which we pass a third of our existence, is a mode of experience and dreams a part of reality. In themselves our conscious lives may not be particularly interesting. But what we are not and can never be, our fable, seems to me inconceivably interesting. I should like to write that fable but I cannot even live it; and all I could do if I related the outward course of my life would be to show how I have deviated from it, though even that is impossible, since I do not know the fable or anybody who knows it. One or two stages in it

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I can recognize: the age of innocence and the Fall and all the dramatic consequences which issue from the Fall. But these lie behind experience, not on its surface; they are not historical events; they are stages in the Fable. (p. 49)

Edwin Muir's fable is Corbin's *mundus imaginalis*, the Imaginal world, not an imaginary world, but reality itself, where our human truth resides. In every generation the circumstances of life are different, so that every generation needs its poets to retell the endlessly repeated story anew. We have, as Muir elsewhere wrote, "one foot in Eden" and from Eden look into "the other land", the time-world, the world of history. But when that link is broken can civilization survive?

According to sacred tradition, the universal imagination - Blake's Divine Humanity - knows all things - such is the wisdom embodied in the Welsh myth of Taliesin. Vernon Watkins, himself a great underrated poet of the Imagination, has written his own version of the Taliesin poems, wherein this claim is made. In "Taliesin and the Mockers" he paraphrases the age-old claim of the legendary poet:

Before men walked
I was in these places,
I was here
When the mountains were laid.

I am as light
To eyes long blind,
I, the stone
Upon every grave.

I saw a black night
Flung wide like a curtain,
I looked up at the making of stars.

I stood erect
At the birth of rivers,
I observed the designing of flowers.

Who has discerned
The voice of lightning,
Or traced the music
Beyond the eyes?

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My lord prescribed
The paths of the planets,
His fingers scattered
The distant stars.

The poem continues to tell the story of creation, and of human history, to the incarnation -

Certain there were
Who touched, who knew him,
Blind men knew
On the road their God.

-and ends with Taliesin, the inspired poet's challenge to those who assume the title of poet without knowledge of that sacred source:

Mock me they will
Those hired musicians,

They at court
Who command the schools.

Mock though they do
My music stands
Before and after
Accusing silence. (58)

**Says Ernest Wolf-Gazo in his essay:
NASR AND THE QUEST FOR THE SACRED:**

Preface

The work of Dr. Seyyed Hossein Nasr is a challenge to any contemporary Western professional philosopher. I surveyed Nasr's work, from a philosophic point of view, with the intent to do justice to his basic motif: the *Reenchantment of the Profane World*. For the sake of brevity, I shall call this motif, the *Reenchantment Project*. This project was launched early in Nasr's career, although, at the writing of his classic Science and Civilization in Islam, the project had not yet come to fruition and its form had not reached the stage of maturity. Yet, by the time he delivered the 1981 Gifford Lectures, published as Knowledge and the Sacred, the project was in full swing. In order to pinpoint some segments and elements that are relevant in their respective treatment of topics, I selected passages and general assessments to be found in the works of Nasr and thereby located stations *en route* to the sacred. A full-fledged treatment of these stations is wanting;

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yet, at this writing, I refrain from pointing out all the details and references to be found in his work. In that sense the present treatment of Nasr's work is very selective. The selectivity proceeds in terms of priorities to a professional Western philosopher, with the hope that the Eastern reader will respond accordingly. Of course, I hope that this transaction is done in the spirit of justice and enlightenment [poor choice of words, at least in this context], treating fairly the reader as well as the writer. I constructed an ideal type of treatment between the writer, text, and reader pursuing methods, contrasts, and context. I treat a serious theme, promoted by Nasr's project, that assesses a real need to build a "bridge over troubled waters", as the song goes, between the West and the Islamic East. I relied not only on books, articles, and interviews with Nasr, but also on our personal conversations, too numerous to be counted, in Washington, D.C. and Cairo, and also on

lecture notes that that I took during the academic year 1989-90, while attending numerous courses given by him during the writer's sabbatical year. The present contribution is to be understood as a small token of appreciation of Nasr's generosity and intellectual fairness towards the present writer.

I. INTRODUCTION

Aside from identifying Nasr's *Project of Reenchantment*, I add the following themes, suggestive of eliciting a contrastable response, in terms of *The Quest*. Accordingly, I comment on the sacred order of the *Kosmos*, in Platonic fashion, that includes Newton and Whitehead, not the least Nasr, inheriting the *Neo-Platonic-Sufi* strains from Suhrawardi and Mulla Sadra. In addition, I focus on the ecological dimensions of the sacred, which may very well turn out to be the centerpiece of Nasr's project, for he was among the foremost spokesmen in the late 1960s and early 1970s who sensed the danger to our environment, due to the senseless quest for the domination of nature by Baconian minds - in the West as well as in the East. I try to come to terms with the sacred and the problem of epistemological certainty, promoted by Descartes and ushering in the American instrumentalist pragmatism of John Dewey. Despite Dewey's critique of Descartes, it is fascinating to see how Dewey's ideas of certainty contrast with Nasr's "Sacred Certainty", inherited from the Isfahani tradition of Mir Damad and his student (Mulla) Sadra. Lastly, I ask Goethe's *Gretchenfrage* to the debate and discourse between the

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West and East on the legitimacy of the intellectual intuition of God since Kant. By using this problematic theme as a foliage, against which I x-ray Nasr's *Reenchantment Project*, I hope to promote an honest, critical, and productive discourse between civilizations towards which Nasr has contributed much, and which is in dire need of being reechoed and reinforced. The well-known theme of the clash of civilizations only promotes a black and white picture that cannot be supported by history; reality does not unveil itself in such a stark bipolarity. Perhaps, to speak in Hegel's and Nasr's language: *Reality* may turn out to be *Sacred Grey*.

II. THE REENCHANTMENT PROJECT; TRADITION AND THE SACRED

After the devastating First World War, Max Weber concluded his famous speech, "Science as a Vocation", in 1918 at the University of Munich before an overcrowded auditorium of students, as follows: "The

fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the 'disenchantment of the world". By the end of the twentieth century we have a better "feel" for that process that Weber called "*Entzauberungsprozess*". The question, however, I must pose at this time is: has the world turned for the better? Or, have things turned differently than anticipated by Weber? These questions remain for the historian to answer. Whatever may be the case, the disenchantment process described by Weber has not been as successful as anticipated, as the neo-tribal conflicts in the late twentieth century have shown.

Contrary to Weber's analysis, Nasr has proposed a project that may be called "*The Reenchantment Process of the Sacred*". At the center of this process is the rediscovery of the sacred as a dynamic element in the modern world. The sacred is no longer classified as an old fashioned counterpart to the profane, or secular, but treated as a quintessential element that has been rediscovered with a new consciousness. Nasr makes the point, "The rediscovery of the sacred is ultimately and inextricably related to the revival of tradition. ..." It was precisely the notion of tradition, in all spheres human endeavor, that was stripped of its enchantment through the process of rationalization. The transvaluation of values, as Nietzsche puts it, was the single most essential aspect of the loss of tradition. Nasr's project is designed to regain the sense of tradition and to reclaim the entitlement of enchantment between man and God, for the sacred must be put at

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center stage in the reenchantment process. However, we should not equate the project as a "roll-back" of the rational; rather, we must see the process as a reinvestment in man's relationship to the Divine. This rediscovery and reinvestment is part of the reenchantment process. Philosophically speaking, we may talk about the transcendence of the Unity of Being. It is precisely this transcendence that has been lost, at least since Kant. It was this, as Weber pointed out, that got lost in the rationalization process of Protestant Europe, involving the transformation of a premodern community into a modern nation state. The interesting part in Nasr's project is that it derives out of the Eastern tradition of Islam and not the notorious Protestant ethic, of which Weber spoke.

The tradition that synthesizes the classical elements of Islam, along with the Sufi strains of Eastern Islam and the Shi'ite component in Nasr's

project, makes this a challenging and new kind of proposal. To date, very few professional philosophers in the West, particularly in the academic environment, have dealt with or even noticed in Nasr's work. That statement tells us more about the provincial situation in academic philosophy, especially the Anglo-American variety in Western philosophy departments, than about Nasr's cosmopolitan approach to the theme at hand.

Nasr understands tradition as a "Lebensform" in terms of "Lebenswelt"; a language familiar to anyone acquainted with Dilthey, Husserl, with phenomenology, or Habermas. This form of life is rooted in the organic unity of the very transcendent Unity of Being. The life-world (to use Husserl's term as adapted by Habermas) is not a mere "life-style" that comes and goes with the fashions and fads of the season. The traditional forms of life are in quest of wholeness, of holiness, of unity, and of the sacred. One of the basic reasons why the reenchantment project is not just an exclusive quest for the sacred is that the rediscovery of tradition is a prerequisite for the reenchantment project. Tradition provides the basic cultural framework in which the sacred operates. That is to say, societies without tradition no longer can provide the context in which the sacred can manifest itself.

The virtual world of computer technology is exactly the kind of environment in which tradition cannot flourish. The virtual world has no value in itself; it is merely a second-hand world that is used, in Kant's language, as a regulative paradigm, in terms of instrumental reason. The virtual world exhibits rationality without life; without the organic component that provides the background for the special

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relationship between man and the Sacred. Tradition, is treated as something authentic in Nasr's work and not as something that is considered historic, ancient, or of merely anthropological interest. Tradition, in that sense, is not merely treated as belonging in a museum or as a tourist attraction. It is understood as something living, unitary, and organic. It provides space for man and God to meet. The traditional landscape cannot, of course, be recovered. But authentic tradition can be rejuvenated in such a way that tradition is, once again, placed in the center of man's action. Tradition, at this point, is not the old-fashioned sentimental *Biedermeier Romantik* that tried to negate the oncoming industrial development, especially in Germany [and also, in North America, the antebellum South of the U.S.A.]. Tradition in Nasr's terms means those aspects, elements, and practices

that have preserved eternal values, in the face of hard won historical experience. And that includes the transcendent Unity of Being in the context of the Divine. Some of the masters of tradition, such as Rene Guenon, A.K. Coomaraswamy, Titus Burckhardt, Frithjof Schuon, or Martin Lings, have unflinchedly influenced Nasr's work on tradition. Anyone appreciating the unique perspective Nasr offers must be acquainted with the works by the masters of traditions mentioned, respectively. Again, tradition does not mean anthropological, sociological, or political conceptualizations such as we read in academic textbooks. They may be useful, but miss the essential point of authentic tradition. The center of authentic tradition is the sacred as a metaphysical element, bonding the transcendence between man and God. It is this proto-original bond, Nasr reminds us, that is to be recalled and recovered, and which constitutes the center of his re-enchancement project. Thus, seen in this light we do not use the re-enchancement idea as a "going back" to Schiller, or Novalis' "*Verzauberung der Welt*", for this is done in the Disney production *The Lion King*.

Rather, Nasr reminds us of the original bond between man and God defined as "...the pre-temporal existence of man in relation with God. ..."

In view of this perspective it becomes clear that Weber's treatment of the secularization theme is handled in a somewhat different perspective than in Nasr's work. It is a timely reminder for the West that not all options to save the world have been explored. Max Weber is still an inspiration that must be reckoned with, but we can see, as time adds a sense of maturity to our view, that Weber may have been too imbued with Western historical categories to leave room for

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rationality in Islamic dress, basically unknown to the Western public.

III. ON THE SACRED ORDER OF THE KOSMOS: PLATO, NEWTON, WHITEHEAD, AND NASR

In order to come to terms with Dr. Nasr's *Re-enchancement Project* it is useful to recall some of the classical models and their respective structures of the Kosmos. I chose Plato, Newton, and Whitehead with a purpose: these thinkers are deeply into the sacred, despite their mathematical treatment of the structures of the universe, or the Kosmos. The subtle relationship between mathematics and the sacred is something Plato, Newton, and Whitehead have in common.

I should remind those readers not familiar with Nasr's academic background that his formal

training was initially in mathematics, geosciences, and physics. Anyone familiar with his works knows that he is not a stranger to the natural sciences. Quite the contrary, in Nasr's work we can see an interesting attempt at coming to terms with the modern sciences in terms of the Islamic tradition. He reminds us of the great scientific centers of the golden age of Baghdad, Fatimid Cairo, or Nishapur, and not the leats, of 'Umar Khayyam. Thus, it is a misrepresentation, as some may have itm that modern science is opposed to the Islamic tradition. In fact, it is one of Nasr's achievements to make it clear, especially to Western readers of his works, not to mention the more enlightened fellow Muslims, that science and Islam are not contradictions in terms.

In any case, we may agree with Nasr's contention that what has been forgotten in the West is the sacred nature of the order of the universe (Kosmos), of which not only Plato spoke, but also the great Nichoilas Cusanus, and not the least Copernicus and Kepler. The classical philosophers treated the understanding of the Kosmos from a mathematical point. The sacred, in Nasr's project, has always been present, but it had been lost, because societies, civilizations, and individuals have gotten out of touch with the sacred and the original pretemporal bond. This situation is somewhat reminiscent of Heidegger's "Seinsvergessenheit". According to Nasr, humankind has "forgotten" about the transcendent Unity of Being and must recover the transcendent bond of Being between man and God. There seems to be a subtle analogy between Heidegger's recovery of the authentic "Sein" and Nasr's reenchantment of thought, ushering into (Mulla) Sadra's Wisdom of the Throne. It is no surprise that the late

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Henry Corbin, a colleague and friend of Nasr, during the Imperial Academy of Philosophy days in Tehran, should have been the first translator of Heidegger's Was heist Metaphysik into French, opening the gate for the French Heidegger reception. In the long run, Corbin opted for Suhrawardi and the metaphysics of the Illuminationist School of the Islamic East. [I believe it preferable to use John Walbridge's term "The Science of Mystic Lights" in order to avoid any confusion of the philosophy of Suhrawardi with the *alumbrados* who were such a plague to St. John of the Cross and the utterly evil *Illuminati* of 18th century Germany. As we shall see, St. John of the Cross was much influenced by Suhrawardi.]

Leibnitz was the last Western philosopher-mathematician who understood this classical theme. In Descartes we register a partial divorce between the

mathematical and the sacred; by the time Kant spoke of God (*Urheber*) as a regulative principle of understanding and as the transcendental structure of our capacity for understanding (*Verstand*), the notion of the sacred became lost in the Western conception of the Kosmos. In the great Charles S. Peirce, not to mention Dewey, this becomes evident. In twentieth-century Western philosophy, as exhibited in Heidegger and Wittgenstein, the demise of the traditional sacred is obvious. The former may still speak in a veiled language, but the latter put it in a very succinct language, to his twentieth-century readers: the world is all that is the case. The mathematical structure of understanding the universe was closely tied to the symmetry of this very structure, expressed in the aesthetic language of beauty, and harmony. Indeed, in Plato, Newton, and Whitehead, not to mention Nasr, we find the essential elements at play: Order, Beauty, and Justice. It is no surprise that Newton and Whitehead did not provide for an exclusive ethics. In fact, their mathematical understanding is combined with the aesthetic and identified, therefore, as the ethics of the Kosmos.

In an interesting *Sophia* article, Nasr distinguished between sacred, religious, and traditional art. He did not speak of the difference between sacred and profane art, say, between Sultan Ahmed Mosque in Istanbul and the Bauhaus in Dessau. A profane architectural entity, such as the Dessau Bauhaus, may elicit religious feelings by former students and teachers, as is the case with many tourists visiting the Pyramids in Giza, Egypt. The religious feelings may evoke a sense of grandeur, perfection, and presentness. The Bauhaus in Dessau [I
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hate it.] may rejuvenate our sense of mathematical perfection in terms of a perfect geometrical entity, as was in the mind of Gropius. To see in modernity elements of the secular exclusively is shortsighted; no doubt, in the upcoming century we will witness a turn towards more sensitivity, and less ideology, as to what is and is not modern. The sacred will celebrate a come-back in disguise. In that sense Nasr's re-enchantment project is timely.

The sacred and the mathematical, since Pythagoras, have been two sides of the same coin. The Kosmos has always been seen as a sacred entity. Likewise, Plato's forms, Newton's forces, and Whitehead's eternal objects [really the Platonic forms under a different name; Whitehead called Plato "the wisest man that ever lived", and called all post-Socratic Western philosophy "a series of footnotes to

Plato"], can only be understood in a mathematical-geometrical context, underlying the sacred order. If we follow Max Weber and hold that the religious, e.g. Pharaonic Egypt, and especially the monotheistic religions, are a higher level of consciousness, compared to the mythological landscape of Homeric Greece, then we can differentiate between the sacred, the religious, the traditional, the profane, the modern, the secular, and not to mention, the postmodern.

In comparison, Nasr's Kosmos is divinely inspired and intersects with the intellectual intuition of God, or the ultimate illumination of the divine light, understood in the Ishraqi tradition [i.e., Suhrawardi and his followers.]. This is the Sufi tradition in Nasr's quest of the sacred and his understanding of the Kosmos. Nasr is, of course, wellaware of the mathematical configurations inherent in Plato's, Newton's, and Whitehead's philosophies of nature. Mathematics, in his interpretation of the world, may be a divine tool, given to humankind by God to unlock the surface of the earth's secret, but it is not the key to the ultimate disclosure of the universe. In Descartes' world, mathematics is understood to be divine gift of which he partakes, but his God functions as an insurance agent - just in case. He uses God as a footnote, just in case his texts have to verify their respective mathematical sources. Of course, in Nasr's universe mathematics is a means to explore the world, but not an end in itself. In contrast, the Cartesian universe discloses itself in mathematical quantities.

It is obvious that the state of revelation becomes problematic. Revelation does not take center stage in Descartes' world, or in the world of deist philosopher scientists. God's beauty and grandeur discloses itself

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in the scientific search for knowledge in the world. The mathematical is the hidden bond through which the human mind is capable of comprehending the structures of the universe that are accessible and revelatory. Yet, this process of revelation has not yet played out, as far as Nasr is concerned.

IV. THE SACRED AND CERTAINTY; NASR AND DEWEY

I want to contrast Nasr's mature version of his quest for the sacred, presented in his Gifford Lectures in 1981, with another Gifford Lecturer, namely John Dewey, who presented his project of instrumental pragmatism in 1929 which was entitled, *The Quest for Certainty*. I am convinced that, if we compare some

aspects of Nasr and Dewey we shall come closer to the basic misunderstandings and antagonisms weighing heavily on the relation between the West and the Islamic East.

A mere comparison is not sufficient, for it does not draw out the specific philosophic import embedded in Nasr's and Dewey's perspectives. [to be perfectly frank and honest, I always considered John Dewey to be, admittedly with strong competition, possibly the biggest jackass who ever lived] Thus, we use the Whiteheadian notion of "contrast" as a unit of analysis. Whitehead used the term "contrast" in his 1928 Gifford Lectures, subsequently published as Process and Reality. "Contrast" as understood in Whitehead's Gifford Lectures is presented as a category of explanation. This explanation, "...is a datum for a feeling has a unity as *felt*...this unity is a 'contrast' of entities." Thus, contrastual assessment, as I use it in this essay, is treated as a metaphysical component of a worldview. No doubt, Nasr and Dewey are very striking in contrast, but on closer inspection, both are true believers of their respective *Weltanschauungen*. Dewey is as much a messenger of the American dream as Nasr is of the message coming from Isfahan, rooted in the Quran. The former expounds Western rationality in terms of pragmatic instrumentalism, the latter, a transcendent intuition that mirrors not only the respective communities, but also exhibits in a variety of ways the respective civilizations in which they are born, raised, and nurtured. In Dewey's case it is the New England [Puritan, Yankee] landscape, while Nasr represents the Persian classical civilization. Protestant [Puritan, let there be no mistake] Christianity [though there is certainly some doubt as to whether Puritans could be classified as Christians at all] and Shi'ite Islam provide the bedrock of their respective views.

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Dewey presents a reformed ["deformed", - in other words, a deformation of a Deformation, - would be more accurate] Protestant view in terms of the American ideals of the Founding Fathers and the experience of immigration. Chicago, in Dewey's time, was notorious for immigrants and their respective problems of integrating into mainstream America. Dewey addressed his educational views to the problem of immigration. In addition to the American experience, it was the European Enlightenment, as well as the scientific-progressive-optimistic-technological worldview [which I loathe, detest and abhor], with therapeutic intent, releasing the human being from the shackles of bondage and slavery that was the underlying motif of Dewey's

efforts. Dewey was America's substitute for Marx. That is one of the reasons why Marxism never fared well in the United States, as compared to Europe or Asia.

In contrast, Nasr is the heir of a rich and powerful philopshic-theological school, centered in the magnificent Safavid capital of Abbas the Great in sixteenth century Isfahan, Persia. It was a great period in Persian intellectual history, at the time when Descartes won converts for his view in northern Europe, centered in Amsterdam and Leyden. Cartesianism was on its victorious road in European universities, especially in the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries, predominantly Protestant in outlook, while the Isfahan school, led by Mir Damad and his brilliant pupil Sadr al-Din Shirazi, known as Mulla Sadra, worked out his masterpiece, the Asfar, that is, The Transcendent Theosophy Concerning the Four Intellectual Journeys of the Soul. The contrast between Descartes and Mulla Sadra on the one hand, and Dewey and Nasr, on the other hand, is telling. Again, the contrast between Cartesianism and the Isfahani school, between Dewey and Nasr, reflects the stark differentiation between worldviews that exhibits a quest for the domination of nature in terms of the quest for empirical certainty, as pragmatic instrumentalism - in short, a secular approach to solve human problems on earth and on the other hand, a sacred road in terms of the divination of nature, as a religious essence in human beings, created by the Divine.

Contrasting the initial statements by Dewey and Nasr we find, at the outset, a methodological approach that is revealing. The former points out, "Man who lives in a world of hazards is compelled to seek for security". The security that Dewey has in mind is rational certainty in the form of mathematics, natural sciences, and technology. Dewey criticizes European

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philosophers, especially Descartes, for being too timid in that he and his followers sought epistemological certainty, as security on behalf of *theoria* only. What is missing, according to Dewey, is the emphasis upon praxis, or action, and its relation to knowledge. Dewey, in fact, extends to Cartesian view and includes the pragmatic maxim of Peirce with a Deweyan slant. The instrumentality of theoretical knowledge, in the form of applied technology is, to say the least, the project that will save human beings from irrationality, poverty, ignorance, evil, or what Kant called man's "self-incurred immaturity". Pure knowledge alone is not enough. Dewey emphasizes action, doing, and making. It becomes clear that, from Nasr's point of view, Dewey's secular salvation for

the ills of this world is a rather one-sided affair and self-defeating. Dewey, of course, did not witness the resurgence of the ecological consciousness, which Nasr, among the foremost thinkers of his generation in the Islamic world, had pronounced. Thus, Nasr's project of reenchantment, in the form of the quest for the sacred, can be understood as a direct challenge to Dewey's technological praxis, in terms of the transcendent Unity of Being, as opposed to instrumental pragmatism. The Western European, the North American, and the Islamic East, thus contrasted, are in much need of more elaboration and commentary. At this point we are just at the beginning of such a project.

V. THE ECOLOGICAL DIMENSION OF THE SACRED AND THE "RECALL" OF THE TRANSCENDENT UNITY OF BEING

Already in the early 1960s, Nasr had warned of an ecological crisis - in the West as well as in the Islamic East - at the time when students and intellectuals entertained social revolution. The young people in Tehran listened to the flamboyant speeches of 'Ali Shari'ati rather than Nasr. The sign of the times spelled out social revolution rather than caring for nature. Interestingly enough, if some of the intellectual revolutionaries had read their Frankfurt School primer on the Dialectic of the Enlightenment (Horkheimer and Adorno) more carefully, they would have discovered that the human being is also a part of nature, and subject to the laws of nature, at least as far as their bodies are concerned. There was hardly any interest in souls. Thus, nature was understood by the 1960s student revolutionaries as it was expounded by the early Ludwig Feuerbach and the later Marx. Contrary

to Nasr, they did not have the environment on their agenda. Nature was not considered endangered, but had

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to be emancipated from the capitalists' exploitation. The late Soviet Union and its adherents, and any sort of socialism generally, were not considered sinners against nature. In the end, when the workers' paradise was achieved, nature would take care of itself, or, as Marx had in mind, we could all go fishing. Now we are, hopefully, a little wiser. Nasr's efforts, in the long run, did bear fruit in that he contributed decisively to our consciousness about the oncoming ecological crises being of a global nature.

The environmental disasters of Bhopal (India), Chernobyl (Ukraine), the Exxon Valdez (Alaska), the Amazon Rainforest, the depletion of the ozone layer, and the Green house effect, are watershed events not

only for the Western public, but also for our global village. People have become aware that our treatment of nature is amiss. Television images and reports heighten the empirical awareness of the environmental crisis even among the illiterate. What is to be done? The Western response was immediate action: university courses on environmental ethics treated their respective man-made catastrophes as "case studies". The textbook-approach method and attitude is basically social science and technology *per se*, and not steeped in the more spiritual sources of respective traditions found in the West or East.

In his lectures from the early 1960s, published in Islam and the Plight of Modern Man, Nasr pointed out the following; "The missing dimension of the ecological debate is the world and nature of man himself and the spiritual transformation he must undergo if he is to solve the crisis he himself has precipitated." (Islam and the Plight of Modern Man, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, 1975, p. 13) In the meantime,, of course, we have developed an ecological discourse that exhibits the heavy underpinning of social, political, and economic concerns, but not the serious concerns of humankind in terms of religious spirituality. It is in this area that Nasr has contributed pioneering insight towards an ecological theomorphism as a forgotten dimension of the sacred.

The causes for the ecological crisis are many and are still novel. But the essential cause of the crisis, as proposed in Nasr's worldview, is humankind's forgetfulness of God. The 1960s language from the Marx of 1844, would have been "man's alienation from man". In the context of the sacred, man's alienation from man is the result of the alienation of man from the Divine. Thus, the recipe for overcoming this forgetfulness, or alienation within the context of the sacred, is the rediscovery of the original bond between humankind and

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the Deity. We must recognize again, according to Nasr, that our theomorphic nature has to be rediscovered and exercised anew in order to be able to "see" harmony, balance, complementarity, and symmetry in our environment which is, after all, the creation of the Deity. A revival of our spiritual heritage, of any respective culture, is a positive condition under which the emergence of a new bond with the Divinity is possible. Thus, Nasr advocates the religious understanding of the order of nature as a prolegomena to any rejuvenation of a sacred bond between humankind and God (see Religion and the Order of Nature, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, New York & Oxford, 1966).

Humankind, in analysis, is the sick man of modern

times. Modern man is in need of healing; especially the heart and soul must undergo a therapy that provides the conditions under which the heart can "feel" again, and the soul can "see" the immanent principle upon which nature is built. In Nasr's texts we find a critique, especially of the Western Renaissance period, when Western man began to diverge from other civilizations. In other words, Western civilization, from this point of view, became eccentric in comparison to other civilizations. Yet, the precise causes and reasons as to why the West turned "eccentric" are still not too clear [to anyone]. Any Western reader of a European or American high school textbook remembers that the Italian Renaissance got especially high grades for representing the manifestation of man's celebration of the Glory of God. God was glorified in the sculpture of the Italian artists, engineers, and painters. A Giotto, a Michelangelo, a Titian, or a Donatello represented humankind through their respective materials and media precisely to worship the greatness of God. For, after all, humankind was God's creation and not vice versa, as Feuerbach had it. We can well imagine that any reader, educated in the classical curriculum of a British public school, or a German gymnasium, must feel at odds with Nasr's perception on that particular point. The West, during the Renaissance and the Scientific Revolution, did not forget about God, or Divinity, recalling the humiliation Galileo had to endure in the name of sacred truth as interpreted by the Vatican, or the way in which Michelangelo celebrated humankind in God's image. The discourse on this matter has been well presented in the work of the late Hans Blumenberg.

That Western science operated with metaphysical presuppositions, so well put in the works of Alfred North Whitehead (Science and the Modern World, New York, 1985) and E.A. Burtt (The Metaphysical

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Foundations of Modern Science, New York, 1954), is by now an open secret. These are matters that still have to be sorted out in order to come to some kind of balanced assessment of the Renaissance West. I maintain, at this point, that the secularization of the understanding of nature in the West, especially since Kant, did not necessarily discredit the sacred. The heated discussion on Newton's positions within the Anglican Church should suffice to make this point. Churchmen like Clarke, Bentley, or Whiston, just to name the most prominent, on the discourse on the mechanistic universe and the concept of Deity, testify to the intensive discussions, private as well as

public, in eighteenth-century England. The essential problem was then as it still is now, how do we engage the sacred in light of the modern scientific perspective? On this point Nasr's contribution to the ecological dimension of the sacred is decisive.

The German romantics, such as Novalis, or the philosophical Schelling, or the North German painter Casper David Friedrich, had tried to suggest ways of reenchancing nature with the Divine and the Sacred. Anyone who has seen the paintings of Friedrich in the Hamburg Kunststhalles, recently, at the New York Museum of Modern Art, will immediately understand my contention. That strand of thought may be very useful for a Western reader encountering Nasr's ecological demands. Events were not as linear and secularized as many would have us to believe. Again, the work of Hans Blumenberg should suffice to disclaim any sort of black-white framework in the context of the sacred-secular debate.

And Nasr clarifies his view, saying that: "The destruction of the environment is the result of modern man's attempt to view the natural environment as an ontologically independent order of reality, divorced from the Divine Environment without whose liberating grace it becomes stifled and dies." (The Need for a Sacred Science, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Albany, New York, 1993, p. 59). The method of recovery, that is, Nasr's *Reenchantment Project*, demands a recovery of the bond between spirit and nature, the sacred and "the works of the Supreme Artisan". That recovery has a system in the reenchantment project: it is what we might call the "Recall" of the transcendent Unity of Being. Simple awareness of religious spirituality may be called upon by the population at large. A recall, or remembrance of the original bond between humankind and God, is expressed in the time-honored doctrine, pioneered by Ibn 'Arabi

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al-Mursi, as the transcendent Unity of Being. The methodological recall of the transcendent Unity of Being is, likewise, the recovery of the ecological dimension of the sacred. Nasr proposes that a sacred science can succeed in filling the present-day void in the religious understanding of the order of nature caused by the exclusive technological *Weltanschauung* of modern science: "There is need of ethical action toward all natural beings on the basis of a knowledge of the order of nature corresponding to an objective reality, a knowledge that is itself ultimately a sacred science, a *scientia sacra*." (Religion and the Order of Nature, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, New York, 1996,

p. 223.)

[See Chapter 8 of Religion and the Order of Nature by Seyyed Hossein Nasr: "man is created to seek the Absolute and the Infinite. When the Divine Principle, which is at once absolute and infinite, is denied, the yearning and the search within the human soul nevertheless continues." (p. 272); "the ground must be cleared and a space created for the reassertion of the religious understanding of the order of nature as authentic knowledge,..."(p. 273): "What is needed is a rediscovery of nature as sacred reality and a rebirth of man as the guardian of the sacred,...the pontifical man whose reality we still bear within ourselves. Nor does it mean the invention of a sacred view of nature,...but rather the reformulation of the traditional cosmologies and views of nature held by various religions throughout history" (p. 287)]

Of course, the basic distinction between a sacred science and the modern sciences that deal with environmental issues is that modern sciences record empirical data in order to draw upon conclusions reached through induction or deduction, and, at the same time, exclude the religious attitude. The original laboratory, work and play, has been reduced to action - man then sees experimental activities exclusively in terms of labor, as the young Marx pointed out and as reiterated in a more mature version by Hannah Arendt. Nasr proposes a sacred laboratory in which humankind does, indeed, work with respect towards fellow workers and researchers at the task at hand, as reflected in the context of the principle of the Divine. The "sacred laboratory" operates fundamentally on the basis of a metaphysics that Nasr understands as *philosophia perennis*. It is the principle of the *philosophia perennis* that guides him in the "recall" of the transcendent Unity of Being, as a preliminary exercise of the ecological dimension of the sacred. Without the *recall* there cannot be a sacred dimension of the ecological landscape. Nasr reiterates: "the

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philosophia perennis sees a unity which underlies the diversity of religious forms and practices, a unity which resides within that quintessential truth at the heart of religions that is none other than the *philosophy perennis* itself". In this sense Nasr connects the idea of the *philosophia perennis* with the Sufi doctrine of the transcendent Unity of Being as reflected in the work of Ibn 'Arabi al-Mursi. This subtle relationship between the Sufi understanding of nature and contemporary awareness of the necessity of a moral posture towards nature has not been explored

sufficiently. Nasr is a pioneer in this field and he often points a finger toward the ecological field that a younger generation of Muslim scholars should plow.

Again, the special concerns about nature and our environment, not to mention the transvaluation of values on the global scale, has to be explored in more detail. In Nasr's perspective we encounter the possibility of offering a comprehensive worldview that combines natural philosophy, metaphysics, the sciences, and the religious dimensions that provides solutions to our pressing problems. The recall of the transcendent Unity of Being is a prerequisite for such a worldview. In that sense a sacred epistemology is a necessity. The valuation of ecological concerns and the metaphysical presuppositions are two dimensions in which a sacred epistemology is a necessity. The valuation of ecological concerns and the metaphysical presuppositions are two dimensions in which a sacred epistemology must operate. This is a necessity; otherwise, we end up with the typical environmental ethics attitudes portrayed in various journals and academic papers, whose object is to offer "practical solutions" to ecological problems, which are considered problems of the social sciences, to be resolved in terms of social engineering [by a techno-bureaucratic totalitarian state]. Needless to say, the idea of the sacred in this field of endeavor appears as an eccentric attitude not to be taken too seriously, at least from the conventional scientific attitude of positivism.

VI. THE LEGITIMACY OF THE INTELLECTUAL INTUITION OF GOD; WHY DOES THE WEST, SINCE KANT, HAVE A LEGITIMACY PROBLEM OF SACRED EPISTEMOLGY?

Concluding my interpretation of Nasr's perspective on these matters I must resort to an essential question that is at the heart of the fundamental differences between the Western view of legitimate knowledge, especially since Kant [one of the very few things in
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which I am in agreement with Ayn Rand (aside from hatred of Communism and all collectivist, totalitarian, techno-bureaucratic ideologies) is that Kant was a bad philosopher, though perhaps not for all the same reasons as Ms. Rand], and the Islamic East, perennially concerned with the intellectual intuition of the Divine. I want to focus on this specific problem in the following section of my paper, and conclude with a preliminary assessment of Nasr's quest for the sacred. The epistemological concerns of a sacred epistemology and legitimacy of knowledge in

terms of the intellectual intuition of the Divine are intimately laced into our concerns with the ecological dimension of the sacred. The *philosophia perennis* takes center stage in the whole enterprise which I called Nasr's reenchantment project. The perennial concern of a theosophy (for example, that of Suhrawardi or Mulla Sadra) has functionally ceased to exist in Western consciousness since the Scientific Revolution. The chain of thought from Plato and Plotinus to Meister Eckhart, Cusanus, the Romantics (Novalis, the Schlegel brothers, Schelling) has made some inroads among the more sensitive of the 1960s generation, but has not been pursued in a serious manner, such as through a sacred epistemology. Yet, the legitimate concerns of an intellectual intuition of the Divine were never entirely discarded in the Western Hemisphere, as Anneliese Maier, the historian of natural philosophy, and Hans Blumenberg have shown. Somehow, intellectual intuition has been an appendix to the more scientific epistemology that was promoted in the process of making science a positivistic enterprise. Newton could still be moved by his friend's critique (Richard Bentley) of the apparent discrepancy between a mechanistic conception of the universe and conventional Christian views. Yet Kant no longer felt that he had to apologize, except in a political context. The *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* was a comprehensive enterprise and accordingly took care of the intellectual intuition (*intellektuelle Anschauung*, especially) as a regulative principle, and as part of a secular epistemology. The reality of the Divine is transformed into a regulative concept to be entertained analogously as a hypothesis in science, for which, however, one could never provide sufficient empirical evidence [one may clearly see why Kant is sometimes called "the Protestant St. Thomas Aquinas"]. Humankind has been left dangling between earth and heaven ever since. Here the gap between the West and the Islamic East turned into the irreconcilable differences that exist to this day. I suggest that Nasr's reenchantment project provides us

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with an initial response to our dilemma: reconciling a secular and a sacred epistemology.

The situation is clear: in Nasr's universe of discourse the concepts of revelation, unity, source, tradition, perennial wisdom, Sophia, and intellectual intuition of God are interrelated like a cobweb. There is no doubt about the matrix of intuiting the world in its relation to the Absolute. The reenchantment project is the basic program that shows the way towards regaining, that is, *recalling*, the fundamental insight of humankind, according to Nasr:

"Intelligence, which is the instrument of knowledge within man, is endowed with the possibility of knowing the Absolute." (Knowledge and the Sacred, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, New York, 1981, p. 2). But this is precisely what is systematically denied in Western philosophy, since Kant.

Habermas' idea, going back to Kant, is clear: that reason is a historical product of humankind's development ushering in "communicative reason" in the twentieth century and turning into a "...binding force of intersubjective understanding and reciprocal reception." Nasr's idea of a theosophy, as we read the respective passages in his Three Muslim Sages, is worlds apart from the Habermasian *Weltanschauung*. We would have to return to Spinoza and Leibniz to be able to "feel" the words again pronounced by Nasr: "By theosophy we mean that form of wisdom which is neither philosophy nor theology - but a knowledge of the Divine mysteries. ..." (Three Muslim Sages, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1985, p. 150)

Clearly a fault line developed in this area of intellectual activity between the West and the Islamic East. The break can be seen in the seventeenth century of the West. Again, only Spinoza and Leibniz do we find an echo of what Nasr is trying to revive through his reenchantment project. Let us listen to the words of Leibniz: "I am glad that the most solid part of the theology of the mystics is preserved...what there is true and good in our knowledge is still an emanation from the light of God, and that it is in this sense that it may be said, that we see all things in God." These are words that the Illumination school thinkers since Suhrawardi would have understood if they had the chance to read and meet Leibniz. On the other hand, Leibniz did not know about the Isfahani and Ishraqi schools of the Islamic (in this case, the Iranian or characteristic that produces contradiction, which reveals the subtle crack developing into a big gap between West and East: the human creature is limited in

its way of knowing God, or the primary unity. Although
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it is created by the Absolute, it is no longer in the position to apprehend its own creation, as an Absolute. In Spinoza we find a frantic effort to preserve the original bond of absolute unity between God, Man, and Nature, to no avail. Spinoza and Leibniz were the last Western thinkers capable of incorporating the Greek legacy, Eastern Hermeticism, and a unitary vision, as exhibited in the monotheistic religions. They still had a feeling for what Nasr called sacred wisdom, or what the Italian Augustinian Agostino Steuco in his De perenni philosophia of 1540

called: "one principle of all things, of which there has always been one and the same knowledge among all people."

Precisely what had been lost in the mode of Western thought is the feeling for the Divine Mystery. Nasr emphasizes over and over again that the original idea of *intellectus*, not reason, is basic to *philosophy perennis* - that intellection in its original understanding, since Plato, and especially since Plotinus, got lost on the way to the critique of pure reason, in which reason (*Vernunft*) takes on an analytical function for humankind, rather than serving metaphysical speculation. Transcendence is divided into different types of transcendentalism with their respective *Weltanschauungen* (worldviews). It is no surprise that the term *Weltanschauung* has been accepted generally as pertaining to the world exclusively. A *Gottesanschauung* (contemplation of God) is something for mystics, as understood by Western philosophic academics. Reason claims, as Habermas put it, the criteria for reasonable behavior of human beings. To qualify as being recognized as human means foremost, in the Kantian-Habermasian lineage, to meet the standards of rationality that discursive knowledge dictates. In discursive knowledge, intuition of an Absolute is neither possible nor desirable. For this is the problem: how can we have intuition (*intellektuelle Anschauung*) of something that cannot be verified empirically or just hypothesized mathematically? What kind of evidence is there, aside from the intuitive pronouncement of those who maintain that there is such a cognitive experience? All this is not easy to fathom. The logical analysis game will not do - for the matter at hand is too serious to be handled by mere niceties of logical ballet - the problem is paramount.

The tension between those who claim knowledge as *ntellectus*, or *nous*, and those recurring to ratio, or reason, is well known. This situation has been with us since Plotinus and Spinoza and was brought to life again by that sage Goethe, who, it may be said, was the last Western thinker who practiced *philosophia perennis*

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in earnest. The problem reemerges between the claims of the romantics and positivists in the early nineteenth century, and then flourished in the 1960s with the student revolt at large. The poet-philosopher Novalis still spoke of "*innere Schau*". This meant a revolt against official Cartesian dualism and its consequences. The experience of the Absolute is still possible is Schelling, who spoke the kind of language

every devout Muslim understands: "Not we are in time, . . . , but pure eternity is in us." It is an open secret among Schelling scholars that romantics like Novalis, the Schelling brothers, Fichte, perhaps Holderlin, Schleiermacher, Tieck, and Schelling himself, were certainly deeply influenced by the insights of Plotinus - the very ideas that the Arabs picked up as the "Theology of Aristotle". These curious relations and dimensions await exploration by a new generation.

The mystic ecstasy is the paradigm for intellectual intuition. Aristotle's logic is the framework in which discursive logic operates. The problem for the West, since Kant, we find in Plotinus' Ennead, Book VI.9.7, "on the Good and the One": knowledge is non-discursive, it eliminates any temporality of otherness. The *Nous* is another way of seeing in a non-mediated, non-dialectical mode, since the Divine and the One is in us. We are in the One - nature and mind are One. The tension appears for Fichte, Kant and Hegel: if intellectual intuition does not claim objective knowledge, non-conceptualization, negating *Dasein* and replacing it with mystic annihilation, how can we arrive at an objective subject? How is intuition as God-intuition (*Gottesanschauung*) possible in a finite human being? These are some of the relevant problems of the respective topics we find in the German idealistic tradition. The relevance of Nasr's quest for the sacred should be obvious. It is a major problem in the reenchantment project, as presented by Nasr throughout his work. Again, Schelling expressed this matter as precisely as possible in his System of Transcendental Idealism (1800), "The first problem of philosophy can also be expressed thusly: finding something that cannot by any means be thought of as a Thing". That is exactly the point: the Absolute cannot be thought of as a something, that is, as an entity, or as Strawson's *Individual* inhabiting the space-time dimension. For Kant this problem appears as that of the "*innere Anschauung*" (he speaks of it as *problematisch*). If pure reason deals with the system of all principles that

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makes possible the cognition of objects, how can a non-entity possibly be cognized? Intuition (*Anschauung*) *per se* is not sufficient for Kant. It begs the empirical evidence for us to establish it as a legitimate entity. This legitimacy problem is important to those who claim that sacred epistemology is possible.

Intuition, as an epistemological category, is a blind spot within the framework of Western philosophy

since the Scientific Revolution and the rise of positivism. The very concept of intuition (*Anschauung*) is a problematic issue within Kant's program, as outlined in his Critique, and in modern Western philosophy generally. There is nothing to suggest that the mainstream philosophy textbooks, presenting the Rationalists (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz) and the Empiricists (Locke, Berkeley, Hume) differ on the idea of intuition. Already in the eighteenth century the intellectual public in London and Paris did not take intuition seriously. Besides, this sort of activity is reserved for gifted poets, prophets, seers like Swedenborg, and clever salon women. Intuition, as a legitimate category of truth (that is, scientific knowledge) was no longer taken seriously or respected. It lost its legitimacy. Intuition becomes a linguistic problem for Kant since he uses the Latin *intuition* in his dissertation and transforms the Latin term, for want of an equivalent term in German, into *Anschauung*. This left the exclusive Anglo-Saxon-American reader somewhat puzzled. English translations of the Kantian texts reverted to the Latin term; thus, intuition turns out to be *Anschauung*. In Kant we find different kinds of *Anschauungen*, from formal to sensible ones. What is decisive for our question is, considering the difficulty, how can we translate Nasr's reenchantment project into adequate language for a Western educated person?

In the decisive and controversial part of Kant's first Critique entitled Transcendental Deduction of Pure Concepts of the Understanding, he starts his famous paragraph on the proto-synthetic unity of apperception as follows: (It must be possible for the 'I think' to accompany all my representations...). Kant tries to find the foundation for the epistemological subject that can claim to state, "I think". But, there must be something that gives the subject a counterpart, namely, an object. In short, the epistemological subject can only recognize itself, if at all, as an object itself, in a temporal context as "something", and be able to verify, empirically, that it possesses individuality, in the mode we find brilliantly exhibited by Strawson in his Individuals:

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An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics (London, 1959).

Considering this background, we now can reiterate our problem: how can we speak of intellectual intuition of God? This is a serious epistemological problem since Kant, and has not adequately been resolved in modern philosophy. If I, as a person, cannot objectify myself, how can I objectify the idea of God? Of course, this type of

crude question already presupposes that in order to attain the status of subject (epistemologically speaking), one must have an object. The story of the subject-object dialectic, since Hegel and Marx, is well-known and need not be recounted at present. Kant handles the notion of God in a respectful manner and leaves the whole matter in an aporetic situation. In this context Kant never uses the term "Gott" (God), but "Urheber", that is, a something that gave birth to a foundation in the old high German (*Althochdeutsche*). We know, of course, that he suggests using the concept of God as a regulative principle of understanding, in the manner of a hypothesis in science.

Newton exemplifies this Kantian notion, without being aware of it, in his Principia Mathematica he claims gravity is a phenomenon, but what it is in itself - only God knows (the *Pantokrator*), according to Newton. Even Roger Coates, his brilliant young assistant, made the mistake of ascribing to the master that he knew what gravity is. Kant is more radical and points out that human beings are not able, due to their respective constitution, if we restrict the epistemological subject to a temporal context, of claiming absolute certainty about anything, except what is given in the space-time context. Thus, for Kant God is a possibility, but cannot be proven empirically, precisely for the reason that we are limited by the space-time continuum. Kant was not a proclaimed atheist, but an agnostic with leanings toward believing in a rational Divine Being. That is as far as he would commit himself. Western philosophy has never recovered from this situation.

The problem we entertain now is, how can we initiate a meaningful dialogue or discourse between Western philosophy and the kind of project Nasr is proposing? For intellectual intuition of Divinity is absolutely essential in Nasr's worldview. Simply to bypass Kant would not do, since Kant is not easily bypassed. Thus, we must find a way to enlist Kant's help to make it plausible that intellectual intuition is, in fact, a legitimate category of epistemology, especially in the "reenchantment epistemology". For the sake of brevity let us call it "sacred

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epistemology": we can identify Nasr's program as a reenchantment project based upon a sacred epistemology.

If we reconstruct some worldviews from Plato to Plotinus, to Meister Eckhart, Cusanus, and German Romantics (Novalis, Schlegel, Schelling, Steffen), not to mention Spinoza and Goethe, we find that the idea of an intellectual intuition of God is quite legitimate. The reconstruction has to be conducted in

such a way that we can reconcile the Neo-Platonic tradition with the [odious, detestable, utterly wrong] nominalists of late medieval philosophy, from Ockham to the analytic schools, from Newton to Whitehead. The union of theology and science in terms of the intuition of the world as a unique place among the creations of God has been dissipated since the seventeenth century. We are now ready, as the gateway of the twenty-first century is opened, for a more comprehensive and mature view in which we can continue to labor in the experimental fields of science, but make more sense of phenomena that do not enter into the big picture of scientific evidence. We know that scientific evidence is not comprehensive; there are many odds and ends in the claims made by science. Alfred North Whitehead is among those thinkers in the twentieth century who tried to formulate a comprehensive picture with no pretense of scientific hubris. He was an accomplished mathematician and a genius of speculative philosophy, equal to the other genius of Western philosophy, Heidegger. Thus, there is a chance to come to terms with Nasr's reenchantment project that does justice to ourselves and to the Islamic East. Our survival as human beings may depend on it.

VII. CONCLUSION

I have not traced Nasr's quest for the sacred by investigating every minute detail in his work. A full-fledged book would be needed to do that I merely wanted to show how an Islamic thinker, well-versed in the sciences professionally and well-acquainted with the cultural heritage of the West, presents a worldview that challenges the present mainstream contentions in the West: the road and progress of secularized modernity, with all its powerful trappings of power. Money, and consumption, may not necessarily be the great solution for all mankind to follow. [Amen to that!] There are serious blind spots in the worldview of the West and Nasr's importance in the world of thought is precisely to have pointed out these lacunae of the Western paradigm. Hopefully, through the Library of Living Philosophers, Nasr will be made known

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to mainstream Western academic philosophy so it can come to terms with itself. After all, did not Socrates say, that to know oneself is a high virtue, but to know God is the highest virtue of which humankind is Capable?" (59)

REPLY TO ERNEST WOLF-GAZO

by

SEYYED HOSSEIN NASR

"Professor Wolf-Gazo is a German philosopher trained in the German philosophical schools and is at the same time a person with deep experience of the Islamic world, where he has taught for many years and has gained much knowledge of the Islamic philosophical tradition. These traits make him an excellent candidate to evaluate any philosophical views in relation to the Western and more particularly German philosophical currents. And this is precisely what he has sought to carry out in this extensive essay which treats many critical philosophical issues dealing not only with my thought but also with philosophical discourse between the West and the Islamic world in general. Moreover, being a professional philosopher, his discourse deals completely with purely philosophical and affords me the opportunity to enter into dialogue with a Western philosopher with a German philosophical background. Who is at the same time knowledgeable in Islamic thought and desirous of carrying out philosophical dialogue with me. His essay and my response taken together constitute, in fact, a valuable philosophical dialogue in themselves, although of course limited to the issues he has chosen to treat in his essay.

Wolf-Gazo begins his exposition by calling my basic motif "*the reenchantment of the profane world*". If taken as a poetic description, then I would accept such a characterization. But let us remember that the dictionary definition of "to enchant" is "to put magic spell upon", "to bewitch", "to charm". "to mislead", and "to delude". Needless to say my basic motif has nothing to do with any of these actions. To reenchant the profane world from my point of view means only to lift the veil which covers our own eyes and ears and to realize once again the sacred character of the world whose appreciation we have lost. It is the Divine Reality that has bestowed a sacred character upon the world and not us. Therefore, we cannot bestow that character upon it again. That is beyond our power but it is possible for us to rediscover the sacred

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character of both knowledge and the world, and one might say that that has been the basic motif throughout my writings.

To come back to the term "reenchantment", which I take to mean a poetic description for resacralization, there is a deeper sense in which enchantment can be

associated with the world of nature and considered to be another way of describing the world's sacred quality. This deeper sense is related to the very etymology of the term. One might say that to be enchanted is to be able to hear the chant of God's creatures, which is nothing other than their existential prayer and the harmony of their very existence. According to Pythagorean doctrines all things are created on the basis of harmonic properties, as the German scholars Albert von Thimus and his student Hans Keyser rediscovered in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To hear the chants of things [on "chants", see the appropriate parts of Chapter 4.] is to become aware of this innate harmony. It is to be able to train ourselves to hear what Plato called the silent music heard only by the sages. Being a strong proponent of the Pythagorean concept of mathematics and harmony, I therefore also accept having my basic motif characterized as "the reenchantment of the profane world" in this deeper sense. Certainly, as Wolf-Gazo states, my goal is to move in the opposite direction than what Max Weber called *Entzauberungsprozess* [Gesundheit!!!]. I also agree with the author in the general contrast he draws between my attempt to resacrilize, in the sense of discovering again the sacred character of knowledge and the world, and moving in the opposite direction of what has gone on in the mainstream of Western philosophy since the beginning of the modern period.

In section II the author writes, "The tradition that synthesizes the classical elements of Islam, along with Sufi strains of Eastern Islam and the Shi'ite component of Nasr's project, makes this a challenging and new kind of proposal." I need to clarify this statement in two important ways. First of all, "Eastern Islam", which the author uses throughout his essay, might be the illusion that I have not been associated with Western Islam, which is that of the Islamic *maghrib* [in this context I suppose *maghrib* includes Muslim Spain or al-Andalus, though in common use *maghrib* refers only to western North Africa, and Hispano-Muslims were always insistent that they belonged to "Andalusia", and not "Berberia"; in any case, both "Andalusia" and "Berberia" were geographically "Western", though otherwise quite

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distinct in virtually all other respects], or the West, of traditional Islamic geographic texts, whereas in my case there has been an especially close association with *maghribi* [once again, I suppose that in this context *maghribi* refers to Muslim Spain as well as western North Africa, to "Andalusia" as well as "Berberia"] Sufism since my youth. Perhaps by

"Eastern" the author means simply the Orient in the nineteenth-century sense of the term which included North Africa as well. Second, in enumerating the various elements which I have synthesized, the author has left out the several schools of Islamic philosophy which need to be specifically mentioned in this context. What he calls "a new proposal" is "new" in that I have synthesized the different currents of traditional Islamic thought, including Sunnism and Shi'ism, Sufism, theology, the various schools of philosophy, and even the sciences into a pyramid of knowledge unified by the principle of unity (*al-tawhid*). It is only in its being a synthesis expressed in the contemporary medium of discourse and addressing a global audience and global questions that I accept the modifier "new" for what I have to say. Otherwise, as an exponent of the perennial philosophy, I am not given to finding new ideas and do not want to be praised for being original in the current sense of the term. As I have written already in my response to Professor Liu, for me "original" means that which is related to the Origin and the truth that is identified with it. Moreover, let us not forget the Aristotelian doctrine that there is nothing new under the sun.

I also want to emphasize what Wolf-Gazo says in the same section about tradition providing "the basic cultural framework in which the sacred operates" but want to add that tradition provides not only the cultural but above all the intellectual framework, and that it not only provides the framework for the operation of the sacred but is itself the source of all the pitfalls that face those who would seek to reenchant the world outside of tradition as we see in the New Religions. I fully confirm the author's assertion about the reenchantment project" having to take place within the cadre of tradition [see the essay "Tradition and Traditions" by Vladimir Lossky in The Meaning of Icons by Leonid Ouspensky & Vladimir Lossky, Crestwood, New York, 1982, cited in Chapter 8 of the present tome.].

In Section III dealing with the "sacred order of the Kosmos", Wolf-Gazo writes, "In fact, it is one of Nasr's achievements to make it clear, especially to Western readers of his works, not to mention the more

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enlightened fellow Muslims, that science and Islam are not contradictions in terms." Later in this volume I will deal with this complex issue and do not need to enter into it here. But I do need to mention briefly here that Islam cannot, on the one hand, simply absorb modern science uncritically as if it were the *'ilm* or *scientia* mentioned in the Quran, nor on the other hand castigate it as being *kufr* or infidelity and forbidden

by religious law to study or promulgate. There is need of an Islamic *critique* both intellectual and ethno-social of modern science which my own works have undertaken and which I hope will be pursued to an even greater degree by others, as we are in fact beginning to see already. What is important is to realize what modern science is and what it is not but claims to be - or at least the majority of its practitioners claim it to be. It is essential to distinguish what science can discover and has discovered about the physical world from the philosophical positivism (and the ideologies associated with it) now dominating the modern cultural scene in the form of scientism [in fact, "scientism" like "Progress", is a gross, pernicious, malignant, vulgar and counterintuitive superstition.].

The rest of the title of section III is "Plato, Newton, Whitehead, and Nasr" and the section deals mostly with the relation between mathematics and the sacred. There are many profound observations in this section. Others are questionable, such as when Wolf-Gazo writes that "the Bauhaus in Dessau may rejuvenate our sense of mathematical perfection in terms of a perfect geometrical entity, as was in the mind of Gropius", and then adds, "To see in modernity elements of the secular exclusively is shortsighted". Now, the author himself stated earlier that "tradition is a prerequisite for the reenchantment project. Tradition provides the basic cultural framework in which the sacred operates." As already mentioned, I knew Gropius in Cambridge in the 50s and recall one day when standing before the picture of a medieval cathedral in his office he said to me how remarkable tradition was which allowed several generations of architects to create a single work possessing such unity. Then he added how tragic it was that tradition was lost in the West. The geometry of the Bauhaus brings out something of the purity of geometrical intelligibility, but not the sense of the sacred, because it was not based on an understanding of sacred geometry. The ideas of the Bauhaus led to the cubic and rectangular boxes that now dot ["pollute" would be a more accurate term] the cityscape of so many modern cities, while sacred geometry led to the creation of

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many mosques in Isfahan, Istanbul, and elsewhere that Professor Wolf-Gazo has himself visited, not to speak of the great medieval cathedrals of Europe or Hindu temples. For the person sensitive to sacred geometry, of course, the clear geometric proportions of a building like the Bauhaus [I still hate it.] have an aesthetic and even intellectual appeal, but it is not an evocation of the sacred in its full sense.

I have paused to point to this single example in order to bring out a more important general point. I am of course honored in being mentioned with Plato, Newton, and Whitehead as far as my understanding of mathematics in relation to the sacred is concerned, but there is nevertheless a need for clarification. I see Plato as a continuation of Pythagoras and Platonic cosmology and mathematics as expressed especially in the Timaeus as being essentially Pythagorean. Now, I am in full accord with the philosophy of Pythagorean mathematics which I have studied from both Greek and Islamic sources. In fact a major part of my doctoral thesis at Harvard, which appeared later as An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines, is devoted to the *Ikhwan al-Safa'* who were among the most important proponents in Islam of the ideas of Pythagorean mathematics, including of course sacred geometry. Over the years I have also been closely associated with such figures as the British specialist in sacred geometry Keith Critchlow and the Center for the Study of Traditional Arts in the Prince of Wales Institute of Architecture in London devoted to the relation between sacred geometry and art and architecture.

On the basis of my studies of Pythagorean mathematics and harmonics over the years, I am not convinced that either Newton or Whitehead were really interested in or fully understood the meaning of the qualitative and sacred mathematics which was the concern of Plato and is also my concern. There are of course many elements as far as mathematics is concerned which I share with Whitehead and Newton, but there is a basic distinction to be made between Pythagorean/Platonic mathematics and mathematics since the Renaissance, and especially Descartes, which is what Newton and Whitehead were dealing with. I do agree with the author, however, that the essential elements at play in my thought are order, beauty, and justice as they are in the thought of Plato, Newton, and Whitehead, and I would add that in my case the principle of unity must also be included as an absolutely essential element of every aspect of my thought. I also need to add that not only do I hold

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Plato in the greatest esteem, but I also sense an affinity for certain dimensions of Newton's thought, which I do not hold for a Descartes or a Galileo, and also among twentieth century Western philosophers I consider Whitehead to be the among the greatest [I agree]. I read him avidly during my student days and respect his attempt at creating an intellectual synthesis, although I do not accept the premises of the process philosophy and theology associated with

him [once again, I agree].

At the end of this section Wolf-Gazo writes about mathematics being the hidden bond between the human mind and the structures of the universe "that are accessible, revelatory". Then he adds, "Yet, this process of revelation has not yet played out, as far as Nasr is concerned." This statement needs clarification; otherwise it might give a sense opposed to what I believe. My position is that revelation in its objective mode came to an end with the Islamic revelation and also that the world of nature is itself the remnant of that primordial creation which was also a revelation. Inner illumination and realization of the truth, which some call revelation, has not of course come to an end but continues. As for the process of revelation to which the author refers, I can only accept it in the sense of gaining metaphysical insight into the nature of things. From my perspective what has not as yet played out fully is the metaphysical understanding of the mathematical structure associated with the scientific study of the universe. In contrast to all kinds of hypotheses and conjectures which parade as the philosophy of science today, there is need for authentic metaphysical knowledge in order to be able to understand the significance beyond quantitative science itself of what that science has really discovered. For example, there is a metaphysical significance to the collapse of the state vector in quantum mechanics but this significance cannot be discovered by quantum mechanics itself. It requires metaphysical knowledge to understand the bringing into act of a potential state of existence that the collapse of the state vector signifies. This truth has been discussed by Wolfgang Smith in his The Quantum Enigma. Smith describes the physical elements as a scientist but his interpretation of their significance he discusses as a traditional philosopher and theologian, which he also is, in addition to being a respected scientist. It is only in this sense that I accept Wolf-Gazo's assertion about the process of revelation not having as yet played itself out.

In section IV the author compares and contrasts my
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views with those of Dewey and brings out in a very perceptive manner our differences. However, he seems to put those differences at the feet of our different backgrounds and upbringings. He has spoken of Dewey as the messenger of the American dream and I "of the message coming from Isfahan" which would be accepted if interpreted symbolically. Otherwise, I need to assert that I represent a message that does not belong to Isfahan alone but to many other loci of Islamic

intellectual and spiritual life as well. But my main criticism of this otherwise excellent analysis is that Wolf-Gazo seems to reduce the perspectives of Dewey and myself simply to our cultural backgrounds. While not by any means denying the importance of the cultural milieu in which one is brought up, the way one is educated, the influence of parents, teachers, and friends and many other external factors, I believe too much in the freedom of the will and the inner independence of intelligence to accept these external factors as being completely determining and decisive [I must confess that I find in the determinism of Wolf-Gazo something of that German *Ich und Gott* arrogance, which many call "squareheadedness", made famous by Kaiser Wilhelm II Hohenzollern, also known, of course, as "Willy" and "Kaiser Bill"; as the song says:

We will hit Bill the Kaiser
On the head to make him wiser
With our heels and our toes
We will jump on his nose
When we hit that Hindenburg Line.

As Kaiser Wilhelm's grandmother Queen Victoria said: "Willy needs to be spanked".

Or as the World War I Russian soldier song says:

Boche, Boche, Silly Billy
We don't care a damn for Willy.

No one who has helped raise a litter of kittens can believe in that determinism for one moment; I am proud to say that I am dolicephalic, and have no German ancestry, so there is no way I could be a "squarehead". There are many reasons why so many of us cannot seem to stop fighting the two world wars, as some people say that I cannot seem to stop fighting the US Civil War. What is the definition of a square peg in a round hole? Answer: a German putting on his hat. I have great respect for the Byzantine Double Eagle, the Tsarist Russian Double Eagle and the Habsburg Double Eagle, but would be delighted to see the Hohenzollern

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or Prussian Black Eagle roasting on a spit.] There have been those among American philosophers who have hailed from the same background as Dewey but reached very different philosophical conclusions. And the same can be said of other Persian thinkers, even well-versed in the teaching of the School of Isfahan, who have come to hold philosophical views different from mine.

I mention this point in order to clarify my own position concerning background and upbringing versus the innate power of intelligence to discern, to know, and to philosophize. Otherwise, I am fully in accord with the author's excellent study in contrast between Dewey and myself, between his pragmatic instrumentalism and my transcendent intuition. There is also a point that I need to add about the "divination of nature" about which Wolf-Gazo speaks toward the end of this section. I must make it clear again that I consider nature to be sacred and not divine. This nuance is of the utmost philosophical and theological importance especially in the context of Islamic as well as Christian thought. Nature is sacred without this truth in any way detracting from the transcendence as well as immanence of the Divine Principle or God and creation. I think that I have made this point amply clear in my many writings on the relation between religion and the natural environment and on traditional cosmology.

Section V begins with a captivating description of the philosophical scene of the '60s, a description with which I am in full agreement. But let me add that although I did not politicize philosophy nor speak of revolution as did Shariati, I had a very wide audience among young people in Tehran and elsewhere in the '60s and '70s. Of course my whole approach and goal was very different from Shariati's and I never sought to gain popularity by turning religion into ideology and diluting the traditional philosophy and theology which I always defended. Nevertheless, I always faced large audiences of young people whether I spoke in Tehran, mashad, Isfahan, Shiraz or elsewhere. It is unfortunate that the intellectual history of Iran during the '60s and '70s has until now been written not objectively but with ideological goals in mind.

There are a number of other points in the section on the ecological dimensions of the sacred which need further clarification or response. The author writes that "the precise cause and reasons as to why the West turned 'eccentric' are still not too clear." It might not be clear to him but it is very clear to me and I have discussed these causes in several of my works, especially Knowledge of the Sacred and Religion and the Order of Nature. He writes that the Renaissance did

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glorify God in its art. Yes, this is to some extent true. Western man could not discard the millennial heritage of Christianity so quickly. But let us not forget that except for a few inspired Renaissance painters as Fra Angelico and Simone Martini, most European artists of the day anthropomorphized the

sacred art of Christianity and prepared the ground for its demise. The Sistine Chapel, although "great" from a humanistic point of view, already marks the death of that sacred art which had dominated the West since the inception of Christianity in Europe. From that humanized image of God to denial of Him was but a single step. It is true that that step was not and could not be taken immediately, and that even at the beginning of the Scientific Revolution many people still had religious faith. But the seed of that humanism, rationalism, and skepticism characteristic of a number of very influential Renaissance figures was already sown at that time. Its fruit as ever-greater secularization and finally rehumanization of man was to follow in due course, and in fact much sooner than many expected. One might say with the author that since Kant the West "did not discredit the sacred at least not completely". But it did marginalize it and made it irrelevant both to intellectual and practical political and economic concerns of Western society.

In section VI the author makes an important comment about the chain of thought from Plato to the German Romantics making "some inroads among the more sensitive of the 1960s generation, but not pursued in a serious manner, such as through a sacred epistemology". As one who often lectured in America in the '60s, I am in full accord with this assessment and have mentioned often that what prevented the '60s movement from bringing about an in-depth transformation in Western society was its lack of intellectual rigor and sapience, on the one hand, and moral and spiritual discipline on the other hand. Otherwise much that the so-called "hippies" held dear, such as the natural environment, respect for other religions, and emphasis upon spiritual practice, was and remains of the utmost importance. But like followers of the nineteenth-century Romantic Movement they were not able to break the hold of the scientific paradigm upon the Western mind in general. Nevertheless, they created certain openings which have made the study of serious metaphysics and spirituality easier in the West today, while they also opened the door to all those parodies of authentic spirituality now known as the New Religions.

Wolf-gazo adds that the "legitimate concern of an
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intellectual intuition of the Divine has never been entirely discarded in the Western Hemisphere". I agree that it was not completely discarded but that is not enough. What I and those who think like me claim is that that intuition must be recognized for what it is and placed at the center of the paradigm of knowledge

rather than as a marginal possibility accepted by a philosopher here and a scientist there. I think that the author himself realized this truth when he considered the consequence of Kant's Kritik der reinen Vernunft to be the creation of a situation in which "humankind has been left dangling between earth and heaven". Of course, I would not say that whole of humankind, but modern man; but I certainly would agree with this assessment as far as those influenced by the mainstream of Western philosophy are concerned.

In a revealing discussion of intuition in relation to *Anschauung* in German philosophy, a discussion with which I am in full agreement, the author writes, "The mystic ecstasy is the paradigm for intellectual intuition." While I agree with what comes before and after this sentence in this section, I cannot agree with this sentence itself. Intellection or intellectual intuition itself is not experience but knowledge. The experiential dimension or mystical ecstasy follows from or accompanies it in most cases but not necessarily so. There are those who have intellectual intuition which confirms perennial truths but have not experienced mystical ecstasy. And there are those who have experienced a mystical ecstasy which does not possess any intellectual content. I would agree, however, that on the highest level, or what the Hindus call the "Supreme Identity", knowledge and being become united in bliss or ecstasy. But even at this supreme level I would not call mystical exstasy the paradigm for intellectual intuition, while again emphasizing that authentic intellectual intuition is often and even usually combined with a liberating illumination, a state of peace, and even beatitude, which for the contemplative is none other than ecstasy.

Finally, I must comment upon Wolf-Gazo's statement that "Simply to bypass Kant would not do since Kant is not easily bypassed. Thus, we must find a way to enlist Kant's help to make it plausible that intellectual intuition is, in fact, a legitimate category of epistemology." First of all non-Western traditions of philosophy certainly do not have to pass through Kant, whatever Westernized students of Kant in Japan, India, and elsewhere may say. Traditional epistemology stands opposed to Cartesian bifurcation to start with, even before getting to Kant. As for Western thinkers, I

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cannot see how one can bestow upon intelligence once again the power to know the noumena, to know the essence of the nature of things, without going beyond Kantian agnosticism and passing beyond the limitations of the whole critical approach.as a philosopher

belonging to the German school, the author has a way to beseech Kant's help while seeking to reach serious metaphysical understanding and rediscovering the real meaning of intellectual intuition. As a follower of the perennial philosophy, I remain critical of the Kritik and its approach, and I oppose completely the limiting of the power of intelligence to know the essential nature of things and above all to know the Sacred as such.

I am grateful to Professor Wolf-Gazo for a most interesting essay of philosophical substance which has clarified my position *vis-à-vis* many currents of Western philosophy in matters concerning what he calls quite rightly "sacred epistemology". He has afforded me the opportunity to make comments on the important issues that he has raised, issues that pertain to the domain of pure philosophy as well as to comparative philosophy in which both Wolf-Gazo and I share a common interest."(60)

In the November, 2013 issue of the Catholic traditionalist monthly "Culture Wars", E. Michael Jones summarizes the teachings of Plato on this subject:

"Plato deals with the relationship between democracy and capitalism in the Republic when he describes the trajectory of (the) rise and fall which all states, or at least the Greek city-states at the time of Plato, seemed to follow. The trajectory begins with aristocracy, which values what is best in society, otherwise known as virtue. When the people tire of virtue, aristocracy declines and gives birth to plutocracy or what we would call capitalism. When the younger generation becomes filled with rage when they realize that their parents' generation has sold their birthright, they rise up in revolution and impose democracy, which is the rule of *Demos* or the mob. Since democracy, according to Plato, is synonymous with the rule of passion, it has no internal ordering principle. As a result, it leads to chaos, which paves the way for the tyrant to re-impose order, but not the order of virtue. The result is tyranny, at which point decline is complete and the cycle comes to an end."

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History since 1789, along with the names Robespierre, Lenin, Hitler and Stalin leave no doubts as to the essential accuracy of Plato's analysis.

In Gallego-Portuguese, the word for "democracy" is *democracia*, while the word for "demon" or "devil" is *demo*. Hence, some Gallegos say that *democracia* really means "rule by the devil".

The French counterrevolutionary thinker Comte Joseph de Maistre defended the aristocratic principle because:

"The only alternative is the odious hierarchy of wealth".

Donald of Lochiel, chief of Clan Cameron, reportedly told Prince Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie):

"The trouble began when money-grubbers began giving orders to gentlemen".

At the time he wrote the above, Comte de Maistre was absolutely right. Today, however, it would be necessary to revise de Maistre's above-quoted saying thusly:

"Because the only alternative (to the aristocratic principle) is the odious hierarchy of wealth, or the even more odious hierarchy of totalitarian socialist techno-bureaucracy, whether Communist or National Socialist."

Of course, the words of Donald of Lochiel are as true today as when he uttered them.

I am not an egalitarian; there are those who proclaim themselves to be egalitarians, but they always end by setting up a hierarchy more odious than the one they clamored against and

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replaced; the hierarchy of wealth was far more odious than the aristocracy which it replaced, and was utterly detestable, while the socialist totalitarian techno-bureaucracy which replaced the

hierarchy of wealth was even more odious and detestable than the bourgeois-plutocratic hierarchy which, in some places, it replaced. Both "the odious hierarchy of wealth" and the totalitarian, socialist techno-bureaucracy which in some places replaced it are manifestations of what Rene Guenon called "the reign of quantity". In Spanish the word for "bureaucrat" is *burocrata* while the word for "jackass" is *burro*. Thus, Spaniards often add an extra "R" to the word *burocrata*, giving *burrocrata*.

How I loathe and detest this "reign of quantity"!

One of my own proverbs, published in various journals, is this:

"Capitalism and Communism are two sides of the same debased (materialist) coin".

At a right-wing rally in Madrid, a French monarchist told me:

"Capitalism is a disease; it causes the production of antibodies, such as Socialism and Communism, and these antibodies are even more lethal and toxic than the disease itself."

Hierarchy is part of the natural order, equality is anti-natural. The demagogues who speak against hierarchy in the name of equality always end by creating a hierarchy far more odious than the one that they replaced. No, I am not an egalitarian, and

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I yearn for an end to "the reign of quantity", or, in Sanskrit the ***Kali Yuga***, and the return of aristocracy to replace the odious and detestable bourgeois-plutocrats and the even more

odious and detestable hierarchy of the totalitarian socialist techno-bureaucrats whether Communist or National Socialist.

Christopher I. Beckwith lucidly describes the utter ruin which the vulgar, counterintuitive and malignant superstition called "Progress" has wrought in the arts:

"Modernism arose in the great industrial cities of Europe and the European-dominated Littoral zone. Because it was in part a reaction of urban commercial, industrialized Littoral zone people against elite, aristocratic, land-based continental people, it inevitably had a powerful effect on Central Eurasia, which was at the mercy of its colonial rulers.

During the reign of unbridled Marxist socialism in the Soviet Union, especially in the 1930s under Stalin, and again later in the People's Republic of China, especially between 1966 and 1976 under Mao, Rasical Modernism savaged Central Eurasia. Thousands of monasteries, temples, churches, mosques, madrasas, shrines, and synagogues, which contained the artistic and architectural heritage of (the) Central Eurasian peoples, were closed or destroyed. For example, by the end of the 1930s in the Soviet Union, "visible religious life had been virtually destroyed. Out of the 50,000 Orthodox churches in the Ruussian Empire, on the eve of the Revolution, only a few hundred remained open." Of the many synagogues in the Russian Empire, by 1966 the number remaining in the entire USSR was thought to be "only sixty-two". Whereas in 1917 there were 26,279 mosques in the empire, in the USSR at the end of the Brezhnev (r. 1964-1982) era there were about 200. In Azerbaijan alone, there were approximately 2,000 mosques in 1917 but only 55 in 1990. Of the approximately 2,700 (Buddhist) monasteries in the Tibetan Autonomous Region (covering half the total area of Tibet; the rest of the country has been divided up among neighboring Chinese provinces), 80 per cent were destroyed by 1965, according to Chinese government figures; only *thirteen* were left after the Cultural Revolution. The same happened in Mongolia during the Stalinist period. The men who staffed those

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institutions, who embodied the wisdom of the ages, were forcibly removed and secularized, and often imprisoned or sent to labor camps, if not killed outright, and many of their books and art objects were destroyed. The Modern schools and universities that were

eventually built in Central Eurasia by the Soviet and Chinese communists could not - and still cannot - compete with even the smallest colleges in Europe or America in their level of education, not to speak of making new contributions to scholarship and science. The representatives of the old elite secular culture, whether aristocratic, petty "bourgeois" [**though the Marxists themselves are the most "bourgeois" of all!!!**] or intellectuals, were generally treated even worse - they were imprisoned or executed outright. Culturally, Modernism thus devastated Central Eurasia much more than any other part of the world.

In art, as in politics, the beginnings of Modernism can be discerned as far back as the eighteenth-century Enlightenment [**which should more accurately be called the "Darkening", the dawn of the KALI YUGA**]. But before the twentieth century, although the greatest artists nearly all achieved their success by striving against tradition and sometimes breaking the rules, there was a balance between the two forces: the goal of the upward-aiming aristocratic system was to achieve success by creating artworks that were as near to perfection as possible within the parameters of the traditional rules based on the natural order. The goal of the downward-aiming modern tendency was to achieve success by creating art works that effectively changed the traditional or previously followed rules. Because these two forces were in balance, the great artists of the [**relatively recent**] past did not destroy the existing rules, they stretched them or otherwise modified them. But when the entire political and cultural system of the West shifted to Modernism by the early twentieth century, not only monarchy was rejected: thrown out along with it were the palaces and princesses and all other elements of the old culture, especially traditional intellectual and artistic ideals. The substitution of populist(?) for aristocratic ones necessarily eliminated the idea of cultural paragons - the great men who, as Yeats put it, "walk in a cloth of gold, and display their passionate hearts that the groundlings may feel their souls wax the greater". In all spheres of society there was no longer any higher model to aspire to. Money and power, which were attainable by anyone clever or ruthless enough, made the newly rich "robber barons" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries into a

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rough apparent substitute for the old aristocracy, but they and the new populist political leaders were mostly [**entirely**] inspired by ordinary greed. They also did not have the aristocrats' tradition of responsibility toward their subjects, which was one of

the last, faded cultural memories of the courtly culture derived from feudalism. ... The aristocratic idea of the enlightened patron or cultural paragon was cast down like everything else that belonged to the old order, including the idea that there was, or should be, an accepted set of rules, based on the natural order, for determining the creation of works of art.

The sociopolitical stripping of the elite aristocracy's hierarchical position above ordinary "commoners" and the institution of populism was thus mirrored in intellectual and artistic life by the elimination of the dichotomy between the elite, which strived for perfection, and the ordinary, which strived for the commonplace. Modern poets stripped poetry of its elite status in relation to prose: free verse, a thinly disguised form of prose that anyone could write and was therefore accessible to anyone, replaced poetry. Painting called for little training or aesthetic taste (and, indeed, Modernism explicitly demanded its suppression); it required only the ability to splash paint on a canvas. In painting, poetry, and music, among other high arts, traditional forms were rejected and there was unrelenting pressure to abandon any new forms that arose to replace the old ones. The result was literally the loss of meaning of Art and even Beauty, and the mass rejection of contemporary arts by many of the elite, who turned instead to the preservation and cultivation of the art forms of earlier centuries. ... Modernism spread through all the arts, leaving no survivors except in museums and universities, which entombed them and the dead elite culture.

Painters and other graphic artists, most of whom depended on the direct sale of the originals of their works, found that the easiest way to attract attention - in order to gain customers and thus succeed in the artistic marketplace - was to be more offensive in some way than other artists. In the beginning, this was accomplished most easily, and often quite unintentionally, by the artist's abandonment of one or another pre-Modern artistic practice or convention. Soon it became necessary to be more offensive than previously, until shock value produced name recognition and, eventually, market value. It is not that representational art is good, and it is bad that painters rejected it. Representatio per se has nothing

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whatever to do with the problem, which is that artists explicitly rejected the idea of Beauty conceived as perfection (in some way, abstract or not) of the visual order of Nature. As the Modern aesthetician (Theodor) Adorno perceptively says, "Natural beauty

... is now scarcely even a topic of (aesthetic) theory." Yet, natural beauty and art are bound together; **[Adorno continues]**, "reflection on natural beauty is irrevocably requisite to the theory of art, and even more so to its practice."

Because Modernism, as permanent revolution, was "a phenomenon of reaction", it was necessary for artists to change by rejecting what had already been done. Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), generally considered to be the greatest Modern painter of the century, changed styles several times for the same reasons that Igor Stravinsky did in music; it was necessary for them to change, to be different from others, even from their earlier selves, in order to remain Modern and thus sell their output. The unforeseen effect of this process was the devaluing of older works of Modern art as art by comparison with works of pre-Modern periods. Picasso's middle period works had great shock effect at their time, but by the end of the century perhaps the only ones that retained much artistic value, as against commercial or primarily historical value (such as *Guernica*, his most famous painting), were his earliest works, which though representational and essentially traditional did not make any overt attempt to succeed via shock value - an essentially nonartistic or anti-artistic approach. Only the domination of academics and museums over Modern artistic life have maintained awareness of works, famous in their time for their shock value, which would otherwise have been forgotten decades ago.

Modernism in the arts thus developed during the twentieth century into the establishment of a kind of superficial permanent revolution parallel to the superficial permanent revolution of the republican **[one of a multitude of excellent reasons to be a monarchist]** form of government (theoretically achieved through the election system). In both cases the result was, and remains, permanent mediocrity. In the arts, the Modernists did not really react to the ideas or practices of their predecessors; they simply overthrew them and replaced them with entirely new ones - they wanted to clean the slate and start over again. The inevitable result of thus constantly expelling "the preestablished" was "complete impoverishment: the scream of the destitute, powerless gesture." Once the slate was cleaned and traditional practices in the arts

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were gone, the only practice left that was identifiable as artistic was the dunce's job of cleaning the slate. As a result, artists necessarily rejected other artists' previous work, as well as their own previous

creations, and attempted to replace them with totally different fashions. The logical extreme to which many artists succumbed was to break the slate and throw it away: they rejected Art itself under any known or imaginable definitions. The result of the loss of the meaning of Art could only be the meaninglessness of the artifacts produced by "artists".

Poets abandoned the traditional elements that defined literature as poetry and embraced free verse, poetry lacking the defining characteristics of what had been poetry (as distinct from prose) throughout history in most of the world: regular rhythms based on meter or stress patterns, various types of rhyme (in some languages mainly consonance and assonance [**or alliteration**]), and other musical elements. This shift was facilitated and encouraged in European cultures by the earlier loss of the tradition of chanting or singing poetry, so that, even before Modernism struck, it was read, like prose. Most Modern poets in the West had never heard poetry sung or chanted in the traditional fashion; they grew up with little or no understanding of the fact that poetry - both lyric and epic - had once been *defined* as language written to be sung or chanted. Free verse was different from prose only in the odd punctuation, vocabulary, and grammar used by Modern poets to mark their productions as "poetic". Poets recited their works aloud in the odd form of diction peculiar to them. It is thus not surprising that Modern poets found it difficult to write poetry that was not, by all known definitions, essentially prose. The American-British writer generally considered to be the greatest English-language Modern poet of the century, T.S. Eliot (1888-1965), was unable to produce his masterpiece *The Waste Land* (1922) without radical editorial help from another Modern poet, his friend Ezra Pound (1885-1972); nevertheless, it remains seriously flawed at best as art. Eliot's work in general is surpassed by the work of twentieth-century poets writing in other languages, and even by a few writing in English, such as the Irish poet W.B. Yeats (1865-1939) and the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas (1914-1953) [**both Celts**], yet Eliot received more attention than any other twentieth-century English poet. This was not because his work was better as Art but because in the beginning when he made his reputation, it was more shocking and offensive, and thus more Modern, and was canonized very early in the

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Modern movement.

Although Modern composers "atonal" compositions often had a compelling extramusical intellectual

component **[in other words, they were not music]** - typically mathematical, graphical, textual, or philosophical in essence rather than auditory - the "music" they produced was devoid of precisely those elements that defined music in virtually every world culture: rhythm, melody (especially a full tune), and natural harmony. In particular, musicians rebelled against the dominance of the harmonies **[and modes]** and melodic lines built on the overtone system - which is based on nature's own acoustics, including the acoustics of human language - and also rejected natural rhythms. It is not surprising that Modern composers killed off the audience for new Western art music along with the classical **[and pre-classical]** tradition itself: because of the structure of the human auditory faculty, sounds of any kind that conflict too extremely with the natural overtone system are physically painful. In an age when it was necessary for an artist to acquire a popular following in order to survive, Modern musicians' compositions sent audiences, including other Modern composers, running from the concert halls. ...

The man widely considered to be the greatest Modern composer of the (20th) century, the Russian Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971), several times during his long life adopted new styles that had been innovated by other Modern composers. His repeated attempts to achieve the shock effect he had attained with his early ballet *The Rite of Spring*, which caused a riot at its premiere in Paris in 1913, eventually succeeded in alienating practically everyone except other Modern composers, for whom Stravinsky could do no wrong. By the end of the twentieth century, the works of Stravinsky that had become by far the most widely accepted in the repertoire were his early ballets, including *The Rite of Spring*, which are still essentially tonal in the broad sense. The eventual, very long-lived fashion among professional composers for Serialism, which explicitly rejected harmony **[and modes]** based on the natural overtone system, resulted in the loss of the traditional concert audience for new art music.

The vapidity and deliberate anti-aestheticism of Modern art was a direct result of the intellectual barrenness of the entire age. Because man must be a natural creature, the doomed rebellion of Man against Nature, with the accompanying worship of human products (particularly machines), was guaranteed to result in
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contradiction and destruction. Although Modernism began in the **[so-called]** "Enlightenment" **[which should really be called "the Darkening", the dawn of the KALI**

YUGA], a period characterized by the ideals of Reason, as Modernism increasingly merged with populism, the rule of the intellect and rationality - not something characteristic of the common man - became identified with the traditional order. Because that was in turn equated with the aristocratic elite, the ideal of Reason was rejected along with that of the traditional artistic ideals of order and beauty. Perhaps this is the source of the postmodern mutation of Modernism in scholarship.

Although it proved to be impossible to create new styles wholly uninfluenced by the natural order, or by older works that had been based on it, Modernism forced artists to overtly deny any such relationship with their own works. As a result, they were unable to establish what exactly it was they did that was "artistic", what it is artists were supposed to do, and why. They were utterly incapable of defining the meaning of the words *art*, *music*, and *poetry*.

It is the mark of the present period in the history of art that the concept of art implies no internal constraint on what works of art are, so that one no longer can tell if something is a work of art or not. Worse, something can be a work of art but something quite like it not be one, since nothing that meets the eye reveals the difference. This does not mean that it is arbitrary whether something is a work of art, but only that traditional criteria no longer apply.

When popular artists first began to fill the void created by Modern anti-artists, they were mostly not recognized as artists at all. It was only when the equation of market value with art value became firmly established that popular artists - mainly musicians and dancers - began using the term artist. Yet, however one may judge their actual works, they are at least thought of themselves as artists in the full original sense of the word - someone devoted to making beautiful things - unlike most Modern "artista", who rejected all definitions of the words *art*, *beauty*, and even *artist*.

Life undoubtedly has always been difficult for creative people, but it used to be that there was a fairly fixed socioeconomic slot for artists and artisans, because aristocrats needed them. The aristocrats, bad as they sometimes might have been in reality or in practice, represented an ideal, not only something people could look up to but something the aristocrats expected of themselves, too. Looking

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upward, they demanded perfection, or as close to it as they could get, so they hired the best artists and artisans to produce it, and those working for them

tried their best to achieve it. If artists were not looking up and doing their best to serve God, they were doing their best to serve men they *thought* were "better"; it had nothing to do with whether the Church or the aristocrats really were somehow better. Trying to upend things to set the basest type of man above the others, cannot actually replace the old order - no one can look up to someone who is by definition as low as can be - so the result is the elimination of order itself. Today, the artist/artisan socioeconomic slot no longer really exists (one need only ask a young artist), and nothing has really replaced it. By the entire purpose or goal of art is largely gone anyway. The total victory of Modernism meant the conscious rejection of the traditional values of Reason, artistic order, and Beauty.

Because Modernism was not so much a philosophy or movement as a total world-view, it was applied to all aspects of life. The victory of radical political Modernism - specifically Marxist-Leninist socialism - in Russia (from 1917) and China (from 1949) led to implementation of its totalitarian agenda all across Central Eurasia. The destruction of almost all aspects of traditional culture, including material artifacts, by the despotic Russian and Chinese communist rulers, though resisted by Central Eurasian peoples, was ultimately successful.

The difference between the history of Modernism in Central Eurasia and in Western Europe is striking. In Europe, despite the Second World War and the occasional Modern building, Paris is still characterized by its beautiful old traditional architecture, and the libraries and museums are full. Modernism mainly prevented the creation of new works of art. Very little of the inherited culture was destroyed. In Central Eurasia, by contrast, only a few monuments were *not* destroyed, and only a tiny percentage of the once vast number of old books was preserved. By the end of the twentieth century, the evil done in the name of Modernism and "Progress" left Central Eurasians bereft of much of their past." (61)

How anyone can have any knowledge of the two centuries of

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history spanning the period from the French Revolution to the downfall of the Soviet Union and still believe in that vulgar, counterintuitive, pernicious and malignant superstition known as

"progress" is utterly beyond me. Michel Foucault and I may not agree on many things, but we both hate, loathe and despise the so-called "Enlightenment", or as it should be more accurately called: the "Darkening" and "the Dawn of the **KALI YUGA**". Though our motives may not be identical in all respects, there are so many excellent motives to hate, loathe and despise the so-called "Enlightenment" that there is room for much diversity among the enemies of the so-called "Enlightenment", so it is no surprise that Michel Foucault and I agree on this point, if not for all the same motives. Once again, how anyone familiar with the history of the two centuries between the French Revolution and the downfall of the Soviet Union can still believe in the so-called "Enlightenment" is utterly beyond me.

In the 1930s in the Soviet Union a crackpot biologist named Lysenko claimed the acquired characteristics can be inherited, so that after a few generations under Communism, people would be genetically communists. Serious biologists said that this was the most arrant nonsense, but Stalin declared Lysenko's theory to be the official one, because it was "politically correct", i.e., it was compatible with Marxist doctrine; the fact that it was factually grossly in error being of no account, so long as it was "politically correct". Therefore, both the expression "politically correct" and the concept of "political

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correctness" were invented by Stalin. The apostles of "political correctness" are therefore faithful disciples of Stalin. Toady, Stalin is alive and well in U.S.A. As there were people in the

1920s and 1930s who knew of Stalin's gross errors, lies and horrific and unspeakable crimes, but did not denounce them for fear of not appearing to be sufficiently progressive, just so today there are those who are well aware of the errors, lies and injustices of political correctness - not to mention its Stalinist origin - but do not denounce them for fear of not appearing to be sufficiently progressive. "Progressives" are not only ignorant morons, they are the world's biggest and most craven intellectual and moral cowards.

As we shall note in a later chapter, in the US Civil War Confederate soldiers were known as "Rebels" or "Johnny Rebs".

Several decades ago there was a television series of which I was very fond titled "The Rebel". It concerned a veteran of the US Civil War with the Spanish-sounding surname "Yuma" who proudly and defiantly continued to wear his Confederate cap. Today this series could not be made, because it would be censored by the Stalinist minions of "political correctness". I still recall the theme song of said series:

Johnny Yuma was a Rebel
He wandered through the West
Johnny Yuma, the Rebel
He wandered alone
He roamed this land
This savage land
He got fighting mad
This Rebel lad
He was panther quick and leather tough
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And he figured that he'd been pushed enough ...

Like Johnny Yuma the unreconstructed Rebel, I "figure that I've been pushed enough".

I declare my rejection of Nominalism thusly, with a

close paraphrase of a Spanish proverb:

**I do not care a cumin seed for names and labels,
but only for meaning and substance.**

As St. Gregory of Nyssa (4th century), one of the Cappadocian fathers said:

"... terms that we use to express the way in which the unnameable and unspeakable Divine Nature (*Ousia*) adapts itself to the limitations of our human minds."

I have at times been accused of being "Celtic superstitious", though I would call it "open minded". After all, the positivists, and the followers of the idiocy called "scientism" are the most closed-minded people in the world; to borrow a quote from Shakespeare,

"There are more things in Heaven and earth,
Horatio, than are dreamed of in your philosophy."

Were I compare them to an animal, it would be the mole, though I hate to slander moles in this manner.

In any case, I never adhered to such a vulgar, naïve, counterintuitive, pernicious, malignant and dangerous superstition as "Progress with a capital "P". Edgar Allen Poe, William Blake, Robert Burns, G.K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc, Rene Guenon, The Spanish Carlists, William Butler Yeats, Lord Northbourne, Frithjof Schuon, Alain Danielou, Feodor Dostoyevsky

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and the Russian Slavophiles, Alexis Carrel, Corneliu Codreanu, Mircea Eliade, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Martin Heidegger, Leonid Ouspensky, Vladimir Lossky, Fr. Seraphim Rose, Arthur Machen, Jose Ortega y Gasset, Dylan Thomas, Vernon Watkins, T.S. Eliot,

Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, Kathleen Raine, the Southern Agrarians, Charles A. Coulombe, Henry Corbin, J.R.R. Tolkien, Pope John Paul II, Allamah Tabataba'i, Swami Ramdas, and, perhaps most recently, Christopher I. Beckwith, among many others, have thoroughly skewered the vulgar superstition of "Progress with a capital "P". For someone to refer to himself as a "Progressive" is as absurd as to refer to oneself as a "Unicornist". Though I do not believe in unicorns, I find it easier to believe in them than to believe in "Progress with a capital "P". As I said above, how anyone familiar with the history of the Western World in the two centuries spanning the period between the French Revolution and the downfall of the Soviet Union can believe in the vulgar, counterintuitive and pernicious superstition known as "Progress" is beyond me.

I utterly reject the godless *Kali Yuga*, the dehumanized, techno-bureaucratic, totalitarian nightmare, a cultural desert and moral sewer to which "Progress with a capital P" leads and aspires.

It would not be honorable for me to claim credit for the following, because it was inspired by the novel Les Centurions by Jean Larteguy. Jean Larteguy referred specifically to communists, but I cast my net wider, to include not only the communists and

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their stooges, useful idiots and fellow travelers, but all the smug and snobbish hoi-polloi who accept the counterintuitive, malignant and pernicious superstition known as "Progress with a

capital P". Below is a close paraphrase rather than a literal quotation from Jean Larteguy's novel Les Centurions:

"Someday all that smug, smirking hoi-polloi who follow the vulgar, counterintuitive, pericious and malignant superstition called "Progress with a capital P" will be found dead, and no one will know why. When the so-called "Progressives" have finally eliminated all that gives life meaning and makes it even bearable, they will all lie down and die."

G.K. Chesterton once noted that when people ceased to believe in God, they do not then believe in nothing, rather, they will believe in anything. No longer believing in Divine Providence, they accept the vulgar superstition of "Progress with a capital "P" as a substitute for it. Reportedly, a Frenchman who had lost his Catholic faith was asked why he had not become a Protestant, to which he replied: "I may have lost my faith, but I have not lost my reason." Someone who believes in "Progress with a capital"P" has not only lost his faith, he has also lost his reason. Never could I believe in "Progress with a Capital "P"; this would involve losing not only my faith, but also my reason.

Some time ago I read a fable by the Indo-Pakistani poet Muhammad Iqbal. In said fable, Satan has sent a number of lesser demons to earth for purposes of reconnaissance. When the lesser demons had returned and were making their reports, one of them said: "Sire, I regret to inform you that on earth there are now

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many atheists and materialists who no longer believe in you." To this Satan replied:

"Fools! Do you not know that these atheists and materialists are my most faithful servants?"

There is a Spanish proverb which says:

"He who does not accept God as his Lord will have Satan as his tyrant."

Certainly the history of the world since 1789 leaves no possible doubt as to the truth of what we have said above.

In the following chapter we will deal in detail with the epic traditions of various Indo-European peoples. Before dealing with the Holy Grail, an element which Celts and Iranians have in common, we will speak briefly of the Arthurian Cycle, in which the question of the Holy Grail has become embedded.

C. Scott Littleton & Linda A. Malcor have recently edited a book titled From Scythia to Camelot (62) in which they ascribe the origins of the Arthurian Cycle to the Sarmatians and Alans whom the Romans employed as mercenaries and stationed in parts of Western Europe including northern Britain and Armorica (Brittany), and who also came to western Europe with the Goths. Certainly this is a most fascinating idea. However, the authors are making a case, and in so doing tend to overlook two key factors:

1.)When dealing with Indo-European peoples, it is often not possible to be certain what is the influence of one people upon another, and what is simply derived from a common Indo-European background. &

2.)Specifically, throughout the present
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book we shall refer to the many and close affinities between two Indo-European peoples, i.e., the Celts and the Iranian peoples, both Persian and Sakas or Scythians, Sarmatians and Alans. To give a concrete example, Littleton & Malcor ascribe all personal and place names in Western Europe, such as

"Allan", "Allaen", "Alain" and a long et cetera to the Alans. As we shall see in the next chapter, many or most of these names also have a perfectly logical Celtic etymology.

In summary, most of the so-called Sarmatian and Alanic elements in the Arthurian Cycle reinforced and perhaps revitalized Celtic elements already present. However, Littleton & Malcor do mention one important element which I have not found in any non-Arthurian Celtic work, nor is it found in the earliest Welsh sources. This last is important, because as Littleton & Malcor indicate, Wales was one part of Western Europe in which Sarmatians and/or Alans were never stationed, and to which they could not have come with the Goths, as the Goths were never in Wales.

The element to which we are referring is the famous "sword in the stone", or, less commonly "sword in the anvil". Though not found in the earliest Welsh sources, as we said, the image of the young Arthur drawing a sword from a stone and thereby proving his right to be High King of Britain is found in various sources, from Merlin by Robert de Boron (1191-1202) to Le Morte d'Arthur by Sir Thomas Malory. In Estoire de Merlin, Quest del Sant Graal, and Le Morte d'Arthur, Sir Galahad draws Balion's sword from a floating stone. In Le Morte d'Arthur, Sir Lancelot draws a sword from the altar stone of the Chapel Nigramous.

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Obviously, the meaning of drawing the sword from the stone is not the same in all the above examples, as neither Sir Galahad nor Sir Lancelot are of royal lineage and so cannot aspire to be High King of Britain. Sir Galahad's drawing of the sword from the

floating stone proves that he is the most noble, perfect knight, while Sir Lancelot's drawing the sword from the altar stone only proves his right to pursue a quest.

As we said above, there are no non-Arthurian Celtic examples of the "sword in the stone". However, as Ammianus Marcellinus noted:

"The Alan's only idea of religion was to plunge a naked sword into the earth with barbaric ceremonies, and they worship that (sword) with great respect." (63)

Herodotus noted that in honor of their war god, the Scythians made heaps of brushwood which were perpendicular on three sides but sloped on the fourth. At the top of this pile of brush was planted a sword as an image of the god. (64) There is nothing to indicate that the ancient Celts ever practiced similar rites. Certainly it is not difficult to imagine that extracting the sword from the earth had great significance to the Alans. Remember, Sir Lancelot extracts the sword from the altar stone of a chapel.

As we shall discuss in the following chapter, the Ossetians of the Caucasus are descendants of the Alans, and have their own epic cycle, the Nart Cycle. The extraction of a sword from the anvil of Tlepsh is a prominent element in the Nart Cycle. (65) In the majority of the Arthurian romances, the sacred sword is embedded in an anvil, which in turn is embedded in a stone. Since

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a sword is forged on an anvil, the connection is obvious.

There are elements in the Arthurian Cycle in general and the Grail Legend in particular which are Iranian, but Persian rather than Sarmatian or Alanic. Friedrich von Suhtschek claimed that the

Arthurian Cycle is of Iranian origin and that Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival and the Gawaine romances are free translations from the Persian, in effect saying that Wolfram's Parzival should be titled Parzivalnama. (66) Unfortunately I do not have access to Friedrich von Suhtschek's work, nor do I read German.

Granted that von Suhtschek's views are extreme, the very fact that his studies led him to such conclusions is highly significant. My own views remain unchanged, i.e., that the Arthurian Cycle is fundamentally Celtic, with Iranian - both Persian and Alanic-Sarmatian - elements added later. In addition, the Grail Legends contain Mithraic and specifically Christian elements as well as Celtic and Iranian.

One element found prominently in the Arthurian Cycle which has no pre-Arthurian Celtic antecedents but does indeed have a Persian antecedent is the "Lady of the Lake", much later used as the title of a non-Arthurian romance by Sir Walter Scott. Perhaps another Alanic-Sarmatian element is added when Sir Lancelot hurls King Arthur's sword *Excalibur* into the lake and its hilt is grasped by the Lady of the Lake who brandishes it three times and vanishes (in some sources it is Sir Bedevere rather than Sir Lancelot who hurls *Excalibur* into the lake).

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Below is a Breton legend concerning the Lady of the Lake and how Arthur acquired his sword *Excalibur*.

"The King (Arthur) had broken his sword in two pieces in a combat with Sir Pellinore, and had been saved by Merlin (Welsh: *Myrddin*), who threw Sir Pellinore into an enchanted sleep.

And so Merlin and Arthur departed, and as they rode along King Arthur said, 'I have no sword.' 'No matter, said Merlin; here is a sword that shall be yours, as I say.' So they rode till they came to a lake, which was a fair water and broad; and in the midst of the lake King Arthur beheld an arm clothed in white samite, that held a fair sword in the hand.

'Lo', said Merlin (or Myrddin) to the King, 'yonder is the sword that I spoke of.'

They then beheld a damsel walking upon the lake.

'What damsel is that?' said the King.

'That is the Lady of the Lake,' said Merlin; (or Myrddin) 'and within that lake is a rock, and therein is as fair a place as any on earth, and richly furnished; and this damsel will come to you anon, and then speak fair to her that she may give you that sword.'

Therewith came the damsel to King Arthur and saluted him, and he returned the salute.

'Damsel', said the King, 'what sword is that which the arm holds yonder above the water? I would it were mine, for I have no sword.'

'Sir King', said the Lady of the Lake, 'that sword is mine, and if ye will give me a gift when I ask you, you shall have it.'

'By my faith', said King Arthur, 'I will give you any gift that you will ask or desire.'

'Well,' said the damsel, the Lady of the Lake, 'go into yonder barge, and row yourself unto the sword, and take it and the scabbard with you; I will ask my gift when I see my time.'

So King Arthur and Merlin (or Myrddin) alighted, tied their horses to two trees, and so they went into
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the barge. And when they came to the sword that the hand held, King Arthur took it up by the hilt, and took it with him, and the arm and the hand went under the water; and so he came to the land and rode forth.

Sir Lancelot du Lac, son of King Ban of Benwik, was stolen and brought up by the Lady of the Lake, from whose enchanted realm he took his name. But he does not appear at all in true Celtic legend, and is a mere Norman mew-comer." (67)

Roger Sherman Loomis does not agree with Lewis Spence in reference to Sir Lancelot du Lac. Says Mr. Loomis:

"He (Mr. M. Lot) has recently proposed that the Celtic original of Lancelot was a ceratin Llenlleawc the Irishman, who in Kulhuch and Olwen, performs an exploit similar to Cuchulainn's expedition to the Other World to carry off the three cows, the cauldron, and the maiden Blathnat. (king) Arthur went in to his ship Prydwen to Ireland with his men to secure a cauldron from Diwrnach. After being entertained, Arthur returned with the cauldron full of money, to Wales.

Another expedition of Arthur and his men in the ship Prydwen is related in the very archaic Welsh poem called the Harryings of Annwn. The following translation is based on those of Rhys, Stephens, and Squire.

The Head of Annwn's cauldron - what is it like?
A rim of pearls, it has around its edge;
It boils not the food of a coward or perjurer(?);
The bright sword of Lluch was lifted to it,
And in the hand of Lleinawc it was left.
And before the door of Hell's gate lamps were burning.
And when we accompanied Arthur,
Even alone did we return from the fortress of the Perfect Ones.

It is surely not rash to recognize here a variant of the other expedition of Arthur's men, in which the mythological element has been more clearly preserved. We may then equate the sword-brandisher Llebnlleawc with Lleinawc. Since the Harrying of Annum seems to give a more primitive account, we may tentatively assume that the form *Lleinawc* is closer to the original than *Llenlleawc*. It is doubtful whether the two names mentioned in two succeeding lines, Llweh and Lleinawc, refer to the same person. But since we find

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several times in old Welsh literature a figure called Lleh Llawwynawc, one of Arthur's knights, we may regard Llweh Lleinawc and Llweh Llawwynawc as variants of the same name. The question remains which is the original form.

Loth has construed Llawwynyawc to mean "of the white hand". It is possible, however, that Llawwynyawc was an attempt at etymologizing some unfamiliar word. We have already seen that Llenenlleawc was an Irishman, and it seems reasonable to look in that quarter for a possible prototype. And indeed we discover no other than Lug himself, Lugh Loinnbhei Lionach, "Lug of the mighty

blows", god, as we have seen, of the sun and lightning, who is at once the father of Cuchulainn and identified with him. Lugh Loinnbheimlonach, then, is at the head of the line, and very naturally is followed in Welsh by Llwch Lleinawc and its variants. It was probably the Bretons who, knowing that Llwch in Welsh place-names means "**lake**" came to the conclusion that Llwch Lleinawc or Llawwynawc must mean **Llawwynawc of the Lake**. This name in turn felt the attraction of the French name Lancelin, which occurs early in Brittany, and became Lancelot of the Lake. ...

The probability that Lancelot is no other than Lug of the mighty blows, the great sun and storm god of the Gauls and Irish, makes it quite natural that he, like his *alter ego* Cuchulainn-Gawaine, should be the hero of the Beheading Test. The version in the Perlesvaus may not go back to an Irish myth about Lug, but certainly its source was a tale in which the mythical nature of the adventure and of the story ran thus: Lug comes into a Waste Land, barren and desolate, where no birds sing. He enters a ruinous and deserted city. A young chief with a golden coronal meets him and offers him the kingship on condition that he exchange blows with the axe. The chief is one of a long series of brothers who have thus yearly been slain. Lug smites off the chief's head, whereat the land becomes fertile and the city is filled with folk, who hail Lug as king. But at the year's end the woods and fields once more wither and decay, and the brother of Lug's predecessor appears and claims the fulfillment of the bargain. Lug loyally submits his head to the axe. Whereupon the brother proclaims that by his courage and good faith Lug has won the perpetual sovereignty of the land, which henceforth shall enjoy an eternal spring.

The derivation of Lancelot from Lug is corroborated in many ways. It explains the fact that Gawaine and Lancelot play such similar roles, for of course Cuchulainn was Lug's *alter ego*. It explains the fact that in Diu Krone Lancelot possesses a solar

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attribute in the distorted form of strength which increases from noon till night. It is supported in the most remarkable way by the fact that Lug's name with his epithet Lamfada, "of the long arm" has come down as Laquins de Lampadaiz or Lampades or Lambguez. *Laquins* seems to be the French word *Lac*, translated from the Welsh *Llwch*, plus the diminutive *in*. Such diminutive forms are not unusual in Arthurian romance; for example, Banin from Ban, Galehodin from Galehot. And we shall see that besides the notion of a big and little Curoi, the notion of a young god corresponding to an old one of the same name runs through the whole of Arthurian romance. It is interesting to note that just as Gawaine

split off from Gorvain, Lancelot from Lac, so here we have the familiar corruption Lambergues, usually encountered alone, still attached to Laquin; a conclusive proof that the process we have discovered in the case of Lancelot and Gawaine was not unique.

We possess further corroboration of the fact that Lac as a part of a name in the French romances is a translation of the Welsh *Llwch*, which in turn is derived from the Irish **Lug**. For we know that Lug is not only the *alter ego* of little Curoi, he is also the father. In Chretien's *Erec*, Lac is the father of one whose name has developed through natural processes from that of Curoi. For Curoi as we have seen became Gwri, and Loth has pointed out that the original form of the name of Lac's son was Guerec. Guerec was a historic figure famous in Brittany, and the eternal urge to lend familiarity to the strange Welsh names which we have discerned in the case of Winlogee, Mardoc and Lancelot very naturally led the Bretons to substitute the familiar name Guerec for the unfamiliar Gwri. Guerec in French degenerated into Erec, the name under which Chretien introduces us to Lac's son. Guerec also found its way back to Welsh ears, and not being recognized as a corruption of Gwri, suggested in turn the name of a Welsh hero, Geraint, familiar as the son of Erbin. Thus Geraint the son of Erbin and Erec the son of Lac are both derived from Gwri the son of Llweh." (68)

In addition, Loomis also noted that Lancelot du Lac is an authentic Celtic hero whose name is derived from the Welsh hero *Llenlleawc*, and whose father is *Bendigeid Bran*. I am inclined to agree with Loomis rather than Spence, because the Old French

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romancers, while they usually deformed or "Frenchified" the Welsh and Breton names, radically deforming those which were especially difficult for them to pronounce or spell, such as *Llenlleawc*, they did **NOT** introduce new, totally French characters. In the absence of solid proof to the contrary, I accept the theory of Loomis and reject that of Spence. Consider, the name of Sir Lancelot's father, *Ban de Benwik* (Breton) or *Ban le Benoit* (Old French) is clearly recognizable as the Welsh *Bendigeid Bran*, *Le Benoit* being

a translation of *Bendigeid*, both meaning "the Blessed".(69)

So, we see, that, far from being a "Norman new-comer", in fact, has a Celtic name ultimately derived from the that of the god Lug, Lugus, Lus, Lleu, et cetera, of whom we have spoken before, and of whom we shall have more to say later. The French romancers of Arthurian romance often deformed Welsh names which they found difficult to pronounce or spell, but they did not inject purely French or Norman heroes into the Arthurian Cycle.

Also note that Lugh has very strong affinities with the Vedic *Mitra* and the Iranian *Mithra*, in fact so numerous and close are said affinities that one is inclined to proclaim that the three are identical.

As we shall now see, *Llŵch* in Welsh means "Lake", closely cognate with the Gaelic *Loch*, and that the Bretons quite naturally morphed this into *Lac*, which, of course, in French means "Lake". Thus, by an odd though by no means anomalous play of Celtic, and, ultimately, Indo-European coincidences and phonetic changes, we

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arrive at Chretien's *Lancelot du Lac*, which is, of course, "Lancelot of the Lake", so, it was perfectly natural that Lancelot of the the Lake would derive his title from the fact that he was the adoptive or foster son of Vivien, the Lady of the Lake, which, as we shall see below, connects naturally with Persian legend; numerous and close indeed are the relations and affinities between Celtic and Iranian legends and epic lore.

By far the nearest prototype of the Lady of the Lake of the Arthurian Cycle is to be found in the Zoroastrian concept of

Saoshyant, roughly "Saviour". The Pahlavi tradition, based on Yast XIII:128 of the Avesta, speaks of a series of three *Saoshyants*: *Hushetar*, *Hushetarmah* and *Soshyans* = *Saoshyant*, each of whom bring, respectively, the tenth, eleventh and twelfth milleniums to a close. The *Xvarnah*, the "Charisma" or "Golden Aura" of Zoroaster was received by the angel *Neryosang*, who in turn entrusted it to the *Xvarnah*, the "Glory of the Waters", the angel;-goddess *Ardvi Sura Anahita*, "the High, the Sovereign, the Immaculate". The Golden Aura (*Xvarnah*) of Zoroaster is kept in person in the waters of the mystical *Lake Kansaoya*, from which emerges the Mountain of Dawns, *Mons Victorialis*, watched over by a multitude of *Fravartis*, celestial archetypes and guides. At the end of each millennium, a maiden will enter the waters of *Lake Kansaoya*, The Light of Glory will be immanent in her body, and she will conceive "one who must master all the evil deeds of demons and men".(70)

Thus in the Lady of the Lake of the Arthurian Cycle, with her

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underwater kingdom, we see the Avestan angel Goddess *Ardvi Sura Anahita*, "the High, the Sovereign, the Immaculate" in her underwater kingdom in the mystical *Lake Kansaoya*, perhaps combined with the maiden who enters the waters of *Lake Kansaoya* and conceives "one who must master all the evil deeds of demons and men". In the early Welsh sources, the Lady of the Lake is the mother of Mabon(71), while in later sources she is the foster mother of Sir Lancelot(72). That *Ardvi Sura Anahita* and the unnamed maiden who enters the waters of *Lake Kansaoya* and miraculously conceives should become fused into a single person is

not surprising.

Some will say that the Lady of the Lake is the Celtic goddess called *Danaan* in Gaelic and Hispano-Celtic, *Donn* in Welsh, Breton and Gaulish, with the variants *Ana* or *Anu*, cognate with the Persian *Anahita*, and the Vedic *Danu*. *Danaan*, *Donn* or *Danu* is remembered in a series of river names: Don (in southern Russia), Dniepr, Dniestr, Danube, Rhone (*Rodanus*) and the rivers "Don" and Dee" in Scotland, various rivers named "Deva" in northern Spain (*deva* = "goddess") and Donyana, one of the mouths of the Guadalquivir in western Andalusia, "Guadiana" (*wadi* = Arabic "river", + Celtic *Dana* in the variant *Ana*), *Donana* (pronounced "Donyana") in western Andalusia at the mouth of the Guadalquivir.

Also, sacred wells and springs are literally everywhere in Spain, France, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Cornwall, all of which were once dedicated to *Donn* or *Danaan*.

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However, it is not possible to accept *Donn* or *Danaan* as the prototype of the Lady of the Lake. Admittedly, natural lakes are rare in Spain, and not common in France; however, they are very common indeed in Northwestern England, Scotland and Ireland, as the song says:

Then they (the angels) sprinkled it with silver to
make the lakes so grand
And when they had it finished, sure they called it
"Ireland".

However, in all Ireland and Scotland, I know of only one holy lake, the Holy Loch in Scotland, which owes its holiness to a Celtic Christian monastery, and said name appears to have no pre-Christian roots.

Donn or *Danaan* is a goddess of flowing water, or of sources of water, such as springs and wells, not of lakes. Also, though rivers, wells and springs be dedicated to *Donn* or *Danaan*, she does not live in an underwater kingdom in any of them, of which, in any case, there is such a multitude that she could not live in all of them. Thus, the Celtic *Donn* or *Danaan* cannot be the prototype of the Lady of the Lake of the Arthurian Cycle, while the *Ardvi Sura Anahita* of the Avesta and its Pahlavi commentaries fills the bill perfectly.

Of the close parallel between the romance Tristan and Isolt of the Arthurian Cycle, Deirdre of the Sorrows of the Ulster Cycle of the Irish Epic, and The Pursuit of Diarmaid and Grianne of the Leinster Cycle or Fenian Cycle of the Irish Epic on the one hand and the 1st century AD Parthian romance Vis and Ramin, reworked in

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the 11th century by Fakhr al-Din Gurgani on the other hand, we shall speak in detail in the next chapter when we speak of the Parthian *gossans* or epic bards.

While I believe it an exaggeration to say that any part of the Arthurian Cycle is "a free translation from the Persian" or that the Arthurian Cycle should be called the Arthurnama, it is perfectly true that, although the Arthurian Cycle is fundamentally Celtic, Iranian elements, both Persian and Alanic-Sarmatian, entered it at an early date. This was easy due to the strong affinities between the Celtic and Iranian traditions. Indeed, Celtic mythology and epic legends on the one hand and Iranian mythology and epic legends on the other are so closely intertwined

that it is difficult or impossible to separate them.

One of the many elements which Celts and Iranians have in common is the Holy Grail. This is a vast and complex topic; indeed, one hardly knows where to begin, rather like the Italian General Cadorna (World War I) who, looking out over the Isonzo Front, said:

"We can't take the mountain until we cross the river, and we can't cross the river until we take the mountain."

I intend to demonstrate that among Celts and Iranians the Holy Grail has a common origin, and that, as one might expect, its later development among the two kindred peoples is, to a great extent, parallel.

The reader will also note that, in general terms I am in
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agreement with the great Iranist Henry Corbin, who affirmed that in the Arthurian Cycle in general and the Quest of the Holy Grail in particular there are three elements: 1) Celtic; 2.) specifically Christian; & 3.) Persian.

The ultimate origin of the Holy Grail among both Celts and Iranians is the *Soma* or *Haoma* ceremony, of which we have spoken at some length.

The Soma or Haoma ceremony had a most sacred character, and it is easy to see how it could become the nucleus around which much symbolism could collect. As participation in said ceremony required initiation and preparation, the ultimate origin of the "quest" element is clear. Sir John Rhys says:

"All these cases (among the Celts) connecting the sacred vessel or its contents with poetry and inspiration, point possibly back to some primitive drink (Soma or Haoma) brewed by the early Aryans." (73)

Dr. D.F. l'Hoste-Ranking notes:

"Monsieur Eugene Hucher in his introduction to the legend of the San Graal has shown that this mystic vase may be traced back beyond the sixth Century by means of representations on coins and medals by the Gauls. It is first found among Armoric tribes on coins of the *Uelles* and *Boiocasses* that is, in the parts of Brittany nearest to Gaul. This precious vase served from the earliest times among the Gauls, and above all in Brittany, for the performance of certain sacred rites, and, therefore, (was) easily transformed into the chalice of later Christian legend." (74)

It has been noted several times that Celtic legend is greatly preoccupied with chalices, cups, vases and cauldrons, the reason being obvious. These sacred vessels have various magic properties, including healing, like the cauldron of Lugh, and

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providing endless food and drink. In this last aspect, we have a very close parallel with the Grail of Jamshid in the Shah Namah, one of whose properties is that its supply of wine is never exhausted. This is recalled by Omar Khayyam:

Iram indeed is gone with all its Rose,
And Jamshid's seven-reinged cup where no one knows ...

and

They say the lion and the leopard keep
The court where Jamshid gloried and drank deep ...

There is also a close parallel between the Grail, or *Xvarneh* of Kay Khusrau of the Shah Namah and the Holy Grail of Chretien de Troyes and Wolfram von Eschenbach, but we will deal with this later.

Celtic prototypes of the Holy Grail abound in the Irish,

Welsh and Breton traditions. (75)

In the ancient Welsh Romance of Culhuch and Olwen, King Arthur and his knights go to Ireland in a quest for a cauldron. (76)

The concept of the quest is an important part of the Celtic Tradition, involving a long journey and search and the overcoming of obstacles, guardians and adversaries. (77)

At this point, it is very interesting to note that the Sarmatian tribe known as the *Iazyges* was settled in what is now Lancashire, England in the time of Marcus Aurelius (161-180 AD), and the descendants of these Sarmatians were still known in the 5th century AD. (78)

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The sacred character of King Arthur's sword *Excalibur*, and, most especially the "sword in the stone" motif are most evocative of the Scythian and Sarmatian "cult of the sword", most exactly, the Scythian representation of their war god as a sword thrust into the earth or an altar made of a mound of twigs and the Sarmatian representation of their war god as a sword stuck into the earth, as we have noted. Most interestingly, the name of the commander of the Sarmatian cavalry in Britain in the 2nd century AD was Lucius Artorius Castus. The *Artor* of *Artorius* is NOT Latin; most likely it is the Celtic word for "bear", perhaps a tribal or clan totem or even an epithet. "Artorius" is therefore almost certainly a Latinized version of a Celtic name, something quite common at a certain period in Gaul, Spain and Britain; we have already given one example of this.

Of course, King Arthur lived much later than the time of Lucius Artorius Castus, but if the Sarmatians of what is today Lancashire had still preserved their identity as late as the 5th century AD, the memory of Lucius Artorius Castus and certain Sarmatian epic motifs may well have survived until the time of King Arthur, and it may be that King Arthur was indeed named for the Celtic element in "Artorius". It is most intriguing that there may be a Sarmatian element in the Arthurian Cycle. (79)

Roger Sherman Loomis has shown that, with the obvious exceptions of Joseph of Arimathea and his son Joseph, all the names of the characters of Perceval by Chretien de Troyes and Parzival by Wolfram von Eschenbach are Celtic, either common

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personal names or the names of gods. (80)

In my undergraduate years I became interested in the question of universals, something most people considered mere word games. However, somehow I knew that Nominalism is not only wrong but evil; as Richard Weaver said, "**ideas have consequences**". Few people in history have done so much evil as William of Occam, the champion of Nominalism. In the Middle Ages, the Church saw Nominalism for what it was, i.e., pernicious nonsense. Thus, St. Thomas Aquinas had no qualms about citing Avicenna (*Ibn Sina*) in order to refute Averroes (*Ibn Rushd*) and the great sixteenth-century Spanish Catholic mystic St. John of the Cross (whose mind and spirit remained thoroughly medieval) had no problem accepting the influence of Muslim Sufis, and the Shi'a Imams, which

influence in turn helped to shield him from the pernicious influence of Nominalism. The Church declared Thomism to be its official philosophy, thereby declaring its opposition to Nominalism and the anti-traditional demon, as well as its adherence to the Tradition with a capital "T", the Sophia Perennis and the Perennial Philosophy. Later, out of anti-Catholic spite and malice Protestant and scientific thought embraced Nominalism.

That Catholic and Islamic thinkers should oppose Nominalism is obvious, but others as diverse as Charles Peirce, Alfred North Whitehead and Edmund Husserl have proclaimed that Nominalism is not only false, but that it has done great evil. Until quite recent times, Islam has been relatively free of

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Nominalism; there are no thinkers more anti-Nominalist, more bitterly opposed to Nominalism, than ibn Arabi al-Mursi and his Persian Shi'a disciples. To those Protestant louts who constantly scream "Paganism", and condemn St. Thomas Aquinas for being influenced by Muslim thinkers (also "pagans" to their pitiful, cramped and crabbed little minds) Charles Coulombe replied:

"Then you should stop breathing, since pagans breathe."

It was because of the triumph of Nominalism that the West so firmly turned its back on Islam. We shall see how the above is relevant to the question of the Holy Grail, and to other topics throughout this book.

In the grail legends of the Arthurian Cycle, the Grail is variously identified as the cup from which Jesus drank at the Last Supper, a cup in which Joseph of Arimathea collected the blood of

Jesus at the Crucifixion, Joseph later bringing it to Britain, or as simply the chalice used to hold communion wine during Mass. Here we have a sacred cup holding sacred liquid, or, perhaps more precisely, a cup made sacred by the liquid which it contains or contained. (remember, at the Last Supper Jesus, when offering wine to His disciples, said: "This is my blood ..."). Thus, the parallel between the original cup holding Soma or Haoma and the Christianized Grail is complete. Thus, Henry Corbin speaks of:

"...the encounter of Celtism and the (Semi-Apochryphal) Gospel of Nicodemus in the person of Joseph of Arimathea, from whence proceeds the Cycle of the Holy Grail." (81)

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It should be noted that the Gospel of Nicodemus, a Crucifixion narrative, though not included in the Canon of the New Testament, was never condemned as heretical.

Henry Corbin has noted in the Arthurian Cycle a fusion of Iranian and Celtic elements.(82) Now all the elements are present: Celtic, Christian and Iranian.

Wolfram von Eschenbach recognizes as his source *Kyot of Provence*. As Chretien's Perceval and Wolfram's Parzival have the same geeneral plot, it may be assumed that *Kyot* was one of the sources of both; indeed, Wolfram chides Chretien for not following "Kyot" faithfully. Chretien, being associated with Marie Plantagenet, daughter of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, had far easier access to Celtic sources - Breton, Welsh and Irish - than did Wolfram, and so used a greater variety of source

material. The name *Kyot* is a Germanized spelling of a Provençal name, *Guillot* or *Guilhot* being the diminutive of the Provençal or Catalan "Guilhem" or "Guillem", meaning "William".(83) Henry and Renee Kahane in The Krater and the Grail: Hermetic Sources of the Parzival are inclined to identify Guilhot or Guillot with William of Tudela, author of the Chanson de la Croisade Albigeoisie.(84) I must confess that I see no reason whatever to accept this identification, and many reasons to reject it.

"Provence" (*Proensa* in Provençal) in the strict sense means the region of the same name, in the broader sense means "Occitania" or "Pays d'Oc", all the land where the "Langue d'Oc" was spoken. As the Catalan language is near to Provençal,

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Catalunya might be included in Provence (*Proensa* in Provençal), but **NOT** Tudela.

Though a Navarro from Tudela, William of Tudela wrote his Chanson in Provençal mixed with French, no doubt because many or most of his sources, both oral and written, were French. In Navarra two languages were spoken: Navarro-Aragonese and Basque. It should be emphasized that Navarro-Aragonese was by no means identical to Catalan, hence Tudela was outside the Provençal-Catalan speaking area. However, Navarro-Aragonese (not to mention Basque) had no status as a literary language, so it would have been logical for William of Tudela to write his major work in Provençal, mixed with French for reasons given above. Wolfram was a learned man, and certainly knew that Tudela is in Navarra, far from Provence or *Proensa* in Provençal. If *Guillot* is the

diminutive of *Guilhem* (William) in Navarro-Aragonese I do not know. Except for a few enclaves in the Pyrenees, the Aragonese language is extinct. However, I note that when speaking Castilian (Spanish), The Aragonese tend to use the diminutive suffix *ico* or *tico* (masculine) or *ica* or *tica* (feminine), which is said to have been typical of the Aragonese language.

In fact, some of the data which the Kahanes adduce to prove the identification of Kyot de Provence with William of Tudela actually suggest exactly the contrary.

In Willehalm, another of Wolfram von Eschenbach's works we find the lines:

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Des helm was ze Totel
Geworht, herte unde wert

Which the Kahanes translate thusly:

His helmet was wrought in Tudela
It was hard and valuable. (85)

The identification of "Totel" with "Tudela" is perfectly logical. Well and good. However, in another place in Wolfram's Parzival we read:

*Kyot der meister wol bekant
Ze Dolet ver wofen ligen vant
In heidenscher schrifte
Dirre aventiur gestifte*

Kyot, the well-known master
Found in Dolet, discarded,
Set down in heathen writing,
The first source of this adventure. (86)

The Kahanes identify *Dolet* as Tudela. Nowhere does Wolfram Say that Kyot was a native of *Dolet*. Also, it is obvious to me

that *Dolet* is not Tudela, but rather "Toledo", especially if one recalls that in Latin Toledo is called *Toletum*. To get from *Toletum* to *Dolet*, one need merely change the initial "T" to a "D" and drop the Latin case ending "um". Obviously, *Dolet* is much closer phonetically to "Toledo" or *Toletum* than it is to "Tudela". Also note that in another place Wolfram writes "Tudela" as *Totel*. Being a learned man, it is difficult to believe that Wolfram would have spelled the name "Tudela" in two different ways. (87) Conclusion: *Kyot of Provence* is not to be confused with William of Tudela. *Kyot* was an Occitan or Provençal from north of the Pyrenees who traveled to Toledo, perhaps as a

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Crusader against the Almohades (al-Muwahhidun), perhaps for other motives.

Muslims as well as Mozarabs and Jews found the rule of the Almoravides (*al-Murabitun*) to be oppressive; remember, the Almoravides were savagely anti-Sufi and anti-Shi'a as well as anti-Christian and anti-Jewish. Also remember that Persians came to Muslim Spain in some numbers at various times. As we shall see later in this book, there is excellent evidence that Sufis and Shi'as fled to the Kingdom of Saragossa, the only part of Muslim Spain to remain free of the Almoravides. No doubt other Muslims, for whatever motives, who fled the rule of the Almoravides also came to Castile, Navarra and Aragon, especially to Toledo, which at the time had a large Mudejar population. At the beginning of the XIII century, the large majority of the population of Toledo was composed of Mozarabs, Mudejares and Jews. If *Kyot* found in

Toledo a manuscript in Arabic or Persian, he would have had no difficulty in finding someone who could read it.

In the next chapter we shall discuss the many Iranian epic elements which came to Spain with the Visigoths and Alans. Since Toledo was the capital of Spain in Visigothic times, the Mozarabs of Toledo - and no doubt the Mudejares as well - were very largely of Visigothic and Alanic ancestry. All sorts of fascinating possibilities are therefore present in the idea that Kyot of Provence visited Toledo and there found a manuscript or manuscripts which interested him.

Note that both Pierre Ponsoye (88) and Roger Sherman

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Loomis(89) identify the *Dotel* of Wolfram as "Toledo", and **NOT** as "Tudela".

Wolfram von Eschenbach notes that Guillot visited Anjou, where he "read the chronicles of Britain, France and Ireland".(90) Now we are getting somewhere. As Frederic Mistral noted, Celtic survivals are abundant in Occitania. Anjou is near to Brittany, and much later showed its devotion to the Tradition by forming part of La vendee during the French Revolution. More important, Geoffroy Plantagenet, Count of Anjou, married Matilda, heiress to Normandy and England, and became the father of Henry II. Thus, the Plantagenets are sometimes called *Angevins*. The family name of the Counts of Anjou was *Lusignan*, a name of Celtic origin, as we shall see later, "Lus" being a variant spelling of the name of the god *Lugh*.(91) This origin no doubt explains the tendency of at least the early Plantagenets to favor Celts over Saxons (I can

think of other motives). In the time of Henry II the Angevin lands included Brittany, Cornwall, Wales and Ireland.

Eleanor of Aquitaine, wife of Henry II, was a native of the Pays d'Oc and a descendant as well as patroness of troubadors. Thus, a very large part of the Pays d'Oc came to form part of the Angevin realm, and many Occitans or Provençals came to the court of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, among whom was no doubt our friend Guillot de Provence, who now had access to all sorts of Celtic source material.

As we noted earlier, Wolfram says that "Kyot" or rather

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"Guillot" or "Guilhot" also found source material in Toledo, Spain. (92)

There is nothing strange about the above. Many Provençals went - and go - on the Pilgrimage to the tomb of the Apostle St. James in Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain. Indeed, the Provençal pilgrims inspired the Gallego-Portuguese troubadors (see Appendix II) and left place names on the urban geography of Santiago de Compostela.

The pilgrim's road to Compostela was used as a recruiting ground by the kings of Navarra and Castile, particularly during the 12th century, when Christian Spain was menaced by the North African Almoravides (*al-Murabitun*) and Almohades (*al-Muwahidun*). If Guillot went on Crusade against the North African Muslims, he would certainly have gone to Toledo. While one may doubt that Guillot read Arabic (he may have claimed to do so in order to acquire an aura of erudition), Toledo at that time was filled with

Mozarabs and Mudejares (Muslims subject to the King of Castile), including hordes of refugees fleeing the Almoravides and Almohades.

Many things now fall into place with Guillot de Provence as the key. Though Guillot's work - probably in Provençal - is lost, it was no doubt one of the sources used by both Chretien and Wolfram. This last explains the many Provençalisms in Wolfram's, and, to a lesser extent, Chretien's text, as well as why the Holy Grail is called by a Provençal name, i.e., Provençal *grazal*, meaning "vase" or "vessel", spelled *graalz* in the Old French of

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Chretien and *gral* in Wolfram's German. Here is yet another proof that Guillot was a Provençal from North of the Pyrenees; it is easy to derive *graalz* and *gral* from the Old Provençal *grazal*, but rather more difficult to derive it from the Old Catalan *gresal* (93).

In the lost work of Guillot come together Celtic, Christian and Persian elements, these last presumably arriving by way of Muslim Spain.

I do not believe for one moment that Guillot de Provence (or *Proensa*) is the explanation for all the Persian elements in the Quest of the Holy Grail and the Arthurian Cycle in general, nor that Muslim Spain was the only route by which said Persian influences reached the Celtic lands. However, Guillot de Provence is indeed interesting from our point of view, and for obvious reasons.

There are many evidences of Persian influences in the Quest

of the Holy Grail and the Arthurian Cycle in general. I have chosen not to discuss the Hermetic elements in the Quest for the Holy Grail and in Suhrawardi, because they would require a great deal of space, would lead us too far astray from our main topic, and, when all is said and done, are not of Iranian origin; St. Thomas Aquinas was Italian and Catholic, but Aristotle was neither.

The name "Percival", "Perceval" or "Parzival" has an obvious Persian look and ring to it. R.S. Loomis gives the Welsh name "Peredur" as the origin of the name "Percival" (94), which name

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has a definite Persian flavor, though its Old French and ultimately perhaps Welsh etymology is clear enough. This is at least curious.

In 1270 Albrecht von Scharffenberg proposed to write a comprehensive account of the Holy Grail, a compilation of earlier sources, mainly Chretien and Wolfram.(95) Albrecht gives the first specific description of the Grail Temple and its location, Mount Salvat (a Provencal or Catalan name; the influence of Guillot de Provence is obvious). Albrecht's description of the Grail Temple matches the description of the Takht-i-Taqdis, the palace built by Khusrau II Parviz in Shiz, Azerbaijan in detail far too precise to be a coincidence.(96)

Notes Arthur Upham Pope:

"For nearly a thousand years the peoples of Europe were intensely absorbed and emotionally agitated by a series of strange legends about a sacred object of magical power called the Holy Grail. These legends were varied, confused and sometimes inconsistent, for in the

course of their development they had been elaborated with details from folklores of several European and Oriental cultures. Yet from the eleventh to the nineteenth century a common and general faith was fervently accepted: there is a land far, far away, mysterious, inaccessible - an earthly paradise that lies at the true center of the world. There, crowning a great mountain, is a castle or temple of fabulous splendor containing the most precious of all objects, the Grail itself, charged with self-generating self-renewing, overflowing abundance. An object of awe and reverence, the supreme goal of all desire, the ultimate secret of power and perfection, the divine symbol of life itself, its virtue will be imparted to whatever youth of noble birth can attain to it, even behold it.

This strange and deeply moving concept of the Grail permeated the entire consciousness of medieval Europe, everywhere kindling fervid enthusiasm, appearing constantly not only in folklore, legend and

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romance, and in various decorative and ritual arts, but also in architecture which from time to time sought to reproduce the Temple of the Grail according to accepted descriptions, hoping thus to share in, and perpetuate, the magic virtues of the holy object.

The idea had a very long history, was probably ultimately derived from man's earliest fertility myths and rituals, vitalized and sustained by man's universal and persistent search for the elusive secret of life. Although never specifically sanctioned by ecclesiastical authority, it was finally, in later medieval times, assimilated to the Christian doctrine of the Redemption, the Grail being identified, alternatively, as the cup in which St. Joseph of Arimathea caught the blood of Christ or as the Chalice of the Last Supper, symbolizing man's ultimate salvation through divine Grace. "Through this fusion," writes J.M.E. Ross, "there was fashioned one of the richest influences which have ever inspired music, poetry, and art." The Grail WAS "an abiding symbol for the moral and spiritual idealism of pilgrim humanity." Even in the late nineteenth century the legend was again given moving expression in Tennyson's very popular Idylls of the King in Wagner's *Lohengrin* and *Parsifal*, which aroused pious fervor in several Countries, and in Edwin Abbey's sumptuous murals in the Boston Public Library. In short, the Grail legend entered into the language, the ideas and emotions of the Western world, kindling imagination and enhancing a central feature of Christian faith.

European scholars have for generations sought for the origins of this potent cult which evoked such ancient faith, even though not inculcated by the Church. A substantial body of erudite research has been built

up, but it has not yet provided a satisfactory explanation of how and where it all began. The consensus has been, until very recently, that the Grail stories were generated chiefly from French and Celtic sources, beginning in part as far back as the ninth century, with some earlier traces.

Some scholars, however, have suggested that the legend had been adopted from a pagan cult (notable Jessie Weston, who focused chiefly on Adonis traditions); others, that it was a universal, ever-recurring theme born out of man's own deepest experience (a form of the "independent parallel invention hypothesis" proposed, for example, by Gaster). Still other (Weselovsky, Staerk) saw Oriental derivations, not only in the rich romantic colouring, but also in some of the central ideas, notably certain marked resemblances to Babylonian fertility rituals and
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the magical renewal of abundance, which was also a primary function of the Grail. Finally, there were those (Nyberg, Herzfeld) who proposed a Persian location for the Castle of the Grail - Herzfeld, because he thought that the conventional description of the Grail castle resembled the ruined Palace of Ardashir dramatically crowning a cliff in Southern Persia, which might therefore have been the original model.

No one of these divergent theories has ever convinced a majority of serious scholars, each in turn being too general or lacking in specific confirming evidence. So until recently the origin of the Grail legends has remained speculative and controversial. But as one scholar (Ross) wrote nearly fifty years ago: "It must always be remembered that the discovery of some hitherto concealed manuscript might throw a flood of light on the whole subject and rearrange the knowledge now possessed."

That fortunate moment seems now to have arrived, and has been enriched with several apparently unrelated discoveries of critical importance which have been correlated and interpreted by a scholar of remarkable ability, Professor Lars Ivar Ringbom of Finland, and his conclusions point to Asian origins for the central concepts (Graal Temple und Paradies, L.I. Ringbom, Stockholm, 1951).

The starting point was the publication by Dr. Werner Wolf in 1942 of a recently discovered manuscript, with certain variants, of the poem Der Jungere Titurel, by Albrecht (whose last name is unknown, though for a time he was called "von Scharffenberg"), written in 1270 (Grundsatzliches zu einer Ausgabe des Jungeren Titurel pp. 49-113, 209-248.) This professes to give a comprehensive account of the Grail, based on a compilation and completion of earlier writers like

Wolfram von Eschenbach. Albrecht devotes 112 lines to a quite specific description of the Grail Temple (the first that we have) and its site, Mount Salvat, so specific, even to measurements, that it seems to be reporting fact rather than poetic fancy.

Many attempts have been made on the basis of this description theoretically to reconstruct the Grail Temple and to associate with it some known structures (Ringbom, op. cit., Chapters I, IV.) None, however, has been satisfactory, largely because the manuscripts of Albrecht's poem specify impossible dimensions, and cite 72 radial chapels, a number that defeats any feasible structural plan. Now Werner Wolf's publication, resting on the oldest and best manuscript, shows that the text should read 22, not 72 (for the purposes of the investigation, a decisive number), and that the
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colossal dimensions are not affirmed in the original poem, corrections that result in a plan quite possible of construction.

Albrecht's description of the temple is somewhat confused by the inclusion of characteristic features of a Romanesque or perhaps Armenian Church, which was not unknown, but at the core of his account are specific elements. Quite foreign and exotic, clearly referring to some reality beyond the conventional and familiar - a domed structure surrounded by 22 radial chapels or arched recesses, with many distinctive decorative features, and set on a quite unusual and specifically described site.

As Albrecht tells it: In the land of Salvation, in the Forest of Salvation, lies a solitary mountain called the Mountain of Salvation which King Titurel surrounded by a wall and on which he built a costly castle that he gave to serve as the Temple of the Grail, "because the Grail at that time had no fixed place, but floated, invisible, in the air." The Temple "was built of noble stone." The Mountain consisted of onyx and on the top grass, plants and a layer of earth were stripped off, uncovering the onyx which was leveled and polished until it shone like the moon. The resulting platform was one *klafter* (fathom: 6 feet) thick and from the edge of the steps to the temple walls it was 5 *klafter* (30 feet) wide.

The Temple itself was domed, round and high. It was roofed with gold and the interior of the dome was encrusted with sapphires, representing the blue vault of Heaven, and set with glistening carbuncles to mark the stars. The golden sun and silver moon moved through the Zodiac, and golden cymbals announced the seven canonical hours. "Neither inside nor out is there a hands breadth of the Temple that is not richly ornamented." Everywhere was gold, niello, enamel, enriched with jewels or set

with coloured stones. Precious aloewood was used for the seats. Doors and railings were covered with gold. All want and poverty was banished from the vicinity of the Temple.

Now, as Ringbom has pointed out, there was, in the distant land of Persia, at the sacred city of Shiz, another and very famous building, of fabulous opulence, domed, gilded and jewel-encrusted, also endowed with magical powers, also warding off want and poverty, life-protecting and life sustaining, also set on a mountain. This building had been seen by many, had been described by geographers and historians as well as poets and mystics, and a drawing of it, approximately contemporary, exists. Indeed, there are so many similarities between these two buildings, their

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placement, structure and embellishment, their purposes and functions, that it seems as if they must be one and the same.

This other domed temple, perhaps the historical prototype of the Grail Temple, was the famous Takht-i-Taqdis, or Throne of Arches, commissioned by Chosroes II, the great Persian Sassanian King (590-628), and built at Shiz, the most sacred spot in the land, deep in the mountainous heart of Azerbaijan (Cf. Arthur Christiansen, L'Iran sous les Sassanids, Copenhagen, 1936: references to "Takht-i-Taqdis". Shiz is also reported at some length in Arabic and Persian sources: Asma (8th, 9th century); Ibn Khurdabih (9th century); Tabari (9th, 10th c.); Masudi (10th c.); Ibn al-Faqir (10th c.); Yaqut (13th c.); Firdausi (10th c.); al-Tha'alibi (10th c.); and Mustawfi (14th c.). Shiz was, like Persepolis, the spiritual capital of the kingdom. Here were preserved the chronicles of the dynasty. Here Shapur, who designated himself "Brother of the Sun and Moon", deposited a copy of the Avesta with commentaries and a supplementary encyclopedia of all the knowledge of the time. Shiz was the closely guarded repository of the religious, intellectual and political authority of the empire. Here was the sovereign Fire-temple, the Adhargushnasp, from whose sacred fire were replenished the fires of the other Temples. Here was the reputed birthplace of Zoroaster; and here were striking physical properties, particularly a miraculous lake, a bottomless, brimming reservoir which maintained a constant level without regard to seasons; self-generating, self-renewing, of overflowing abundance, conferring life and plenty on the surrounding land - proof of its supernatural, beneficent character.

Chosroes built his Takht as a thanksgiving for a victory which saved the regime, but it was not devised for ostentatious self-glorification. It was really a national effort, an expression of the national faith. It

was not a throne in the ordinary sense, but a great pavilion, accommodating, round the King, a thousand of his nobles. Here the King, surrogate on earth of God, performed the crucial seasonal rites - the potent ceremonies which, by sympathetic magic, assisted the calendrical rotation, assuring the cooperation of the heavenly powers - the sun, moon, stars and rains - which were necessary for fertility, even indeed, for the continued life of the people. It was thus, like Persepolis, a holy, cosmic structure, with the same supernatural function, and like Persepolis it had to be of utmost splendor, a supreme effort of king and nation. Indeed, for its construction Chosroes, with the consent of the nobles, lavished on it a sizeable, even

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imprudent proportion of the national treasure - and a formidable amount that was, thanks to the tribute which poured into the Iranian State coffers from most of Western Asia, and even parts of India and China.

The Takht was built of precious woods; cedar and teak, overlaid with much gold. Only gold and silver nails were used. The risers of the steps were gold. The balustrades - like those of the Grail Temple - were gold; and again like the Grail Temple, the Takht was heavily encrusted with jewels. As in the Grail Temple, blue stones symbolized the sky - lapis lazuli and turquoise in the Takht, sapphires in the Grail Temple. In the Takht golden astronomical tables - which could be changed according to season - were set in the dome, and on these the stars were marked by rubies, recalling that the stars in the dome of the Grail Temple likewise were marked with red jewels - carbuncles, often rubies, though they might be other stones, provided they were red, for example, garnets. In both the sun and moon were displayed, rendered in precious metal. The astronomical adjustment of the Takht went even further: the whole building was set on rollers above a (hidden) pit in which horses worked a mechanism that turned the structure round through the Four Quarters, so that at every season it would be in correct correspondence with the heavens, thus making more potent the celebration of the appropriate rituals.

All the rest of the ornamentation and equipment of the Persian Temple were likewise of a magnificence and Extravagance that only an unlimited imagination, unlimited funds and a great occasion could command. Its beauty and splendor would focus, so it was felt, the sympathetic attention and participation of the heavenly powers. The most sacred area, in the center, was enclosed in a vast curtain embroidered in gold, the patterns including the major astral symbols. Gold and silver braziers warmed the individual nobles while the upper arcades were enclosed in curtains of beaver or

sable fur. To assure practical results, the major motivation, sympathetic magic was again employed - there were machines for creating the semblance of a storm: thunder, lightning, rain - all calculated to induce the outer heavens to send the real storm which would replenish the needy earth.

As the Throne of Chosroes faced a lake, so also, in several major reports, the Grail Temple is related to a body of water. In the earliest written account of Chretien de Troyes (1180-90) the Grail Castle stands beside a river. In Wolfram von Eschenbach's poem and in the Peredur story in the Welsh White Book of Rhydderch (1322) it is beside a lake. The Grail Yemple, in

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Albrecht's poem, is set in the midst of an artificial sea. These are European echoes of the Iranian insistence on water as an indispensable element of the fertility cult, and the ultimate purpose of fertility ceremonies. Other coincidences, though secondary, are still significant in the whole complex. In the Grail Temple, according to Albrecht, were used asbestos, associated with heat, and elitropia, associated with water and rain, suggestive of the main function of the Chosroes pavilion was to control the heat of the sun and water from rain in order to promote life. Again, in the White Book of Rhydderch, Peredur makes a double visit to the Grail Castle, in the first emerging from a forest and finding a lake before the Castle, in the second approaching across a meadow. On another visit, later, he comes to the Castle by following a river through a valley. In this connection it is of some interest that the approach to the Takht from the south passes through a grove of trees, arriving at the lake where once stood the ceremonial pavilion; that from the north comes across a meadow, while the approach from the west (as well as the south) follows a stream up a valley. The Takht is approachable from only these three sides; the Grail Temple had doors only on these three sides.

One cultic parallel is particularly striking. The Grail Temple or Castle was the goal of a long and difficult journey which might be undertaken only by men of noble blood. And each Sasanian King was in honour bound to start, on the very day after his coronation at Ctesiphon, the long, arduous pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Shiz, entirely on foot, a tough journey of four hundred miles which might have taxed any of King Arthur's knights.

A hint of Iranian origins may also be contained in Albrecht's account where he tells of windmills forcing air through pipes down under the buildings (to make the fish and other monsters in the artificial sea move). Windmills were an invention of East Iran and the device by which air is forced down through pipes into the

basement - the *Bad-gir* - is characteristic of Iran.

But the thesis that there is a certain relation between the throne of Chosroes and the Temple of the Grail does not rest on literary evidence alone. In 1937 an expedition of the Asia Institute (the the American Institute for Persian Art and Archeology) reached Takht-i-Suleiman, the present name for the ancient Shiz, and found there substantial factual evidence of a correspondence of the site with Albrecht's description. Here was the mountain, a dome-like extinct volcano dramatically set apart from the surrounding terrain,

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with a plateau-like top, and it was ringed by a powerful, still-standing stone wall (40 feet high and ten feet thick, built by the Parthians in thesecond century BC); here were remains of important buildings - Parthian, Sasanian and Islamic - testifying to the historic role of the site; here was a crystal lake in the center, and here also the flattened, smoothed-off area such as Albrecht described, and even more astonishing, a gleaming, crust-like deposit made by the mineral waters of the lake, which, particularly around the shores where it is more exposed, has taken on the appearance of onyx, with striations of white, brown and other tints. These look sufficiently like onyx to justify Albrecht's assertions that the Grail Temple stood on a bed of onyx, which formed the substance of the mountain - a claim a claim to some critics so fantastic as to deprive his other statements of credibility.

Moreover, Albrecht's remark that want was banished from the precincts of the Temple would be justified here at the Takht, for two unfailling streams pour out of the lake, miraculously conferring fertility, abundant and constant, of the green surrounding land.

Even more conclusive evidence of a dependent relation between Albrecht's Grail Temple and the Takht-i-Taqdis is furnished by an engraved bronze salver, in the Berlin Museum, which is either very late Sasanian or early post-Sasanian. For This shows in elevation a domed palace which is elaborately decorated with symbols of fertility - trees, great blossoms, jars of the living water.

This building, depicted by the line engraving in the center of the salver, has been identified, by an intricate complex of internal evidence paralleling the literary records, as the Takht-i-Taqdis. A striking confirmation is that the rollers on which, according to Persian accounts, the building was set, are clearly shown in the drawing on the salver, a most unusual kind of foundation.

The building itself was interpreted by Strzygowski as an emblematic representation of the Holy Grail to

which, when he reaffirmed it at the Second International Congress for Persian Art (London, 1931), Professor Sarre replied with great vigor that not one line of evidence had been produced - only affirmations. But Strzygowski's guess was apparently correct, for with Professor Wolf's publication of the more accurate Albrecht manuscript the two were virtually conclusively linked. For on the salver the central building is surrounded by twenty-two arched panels, each framing a decorative tree; and in the revised version of the
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Albrecht poem the rotunda of the Grail Temple is surrounded by twenty-two arcaded chapels, each decorated with an ornamental tree. The correspondence is the more impressive because the division of a circular area into twenty-two equal units is practically unprecedented in the decorative arts, and is difficult to achieve with ordinary craft methods.

On the salver the twenty-two arches represent, in a non-naturalistic, decoratively translated "perspective", an arcaded wall that evidently enclosed the Paradise Garden in which the Sasanian Temple would, in accordance with deeply rooted Iranian custom, have been set. Actually, the Temple could not have been encircled by merely twenty-two arches - they would have to have been of impossible heights and would have left conspicuous traces which which the Institute's expedition would have seen. The number must be taken as "short hand" for 220 - just as the terminal zero is often dropped in writing Muslim dates, especially on works of art - it being obviously impossible to depict the full number on the salver. When 22 is thus understood as 220, the figure assumes a natural symbolic character quite lacking in 22, for 220 is divisible by four, important both in the practical design and symbolically because of the overshadowing concepts of the Four Quarters and the Four Seasons; and when divided by four it gives 55, also a "good" symbolic number, as five refers to the Four Quarters and the Center. Such a magnificent wall of arches round the Temple and its garden would justify the name: "The Throne of - Arches" - Takht-i-Taqdis.

Albrecht, or some lost predecessor's work from which he was borrowing, had with western literal-mindedness interpreted the decorative convention of flattening out a perspective as a ground plan, thus giving rise to the plan of radial chapels, and also the concept of the Grail Temple as circular.

Moreover, Albrecht, or his source, also interpreted the representation on the salver literally in respect of another important feature of the Grail Temple. For the engraving of the Takht-i-Taqdis in the center of the salver is miniature in scale in relation to the surrounding arcade; and Albrecht tells us that in

the very center of the Grail Temple was a miniature replica of the temple itself, in which the Grail was deposited.

Again, the fact that it was presented on a *salver* would link the Takht with the Grail. For "grail", in Old French "*graal*", meant originally "salver", and a great salver, ceremoniously borne, was a major feature, usually the chief object, in the solemn procession
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within the Grail Castle which is the climax of the story. The salver bore a major object of the cult, either exposed but unexplained - like the severed head shown to Peredur; or concealed, and indicated as the Secret Object itself. In Albrecht's account is another and more significant episode relevant to the fact that the Temple is illustrated on a salver; for according to him, the Grail was sent to India and as a result a replica of the Grail Temple was built there. This would be possible only if the Grail carried with it a representation of the Temple; and the big round broze tray is a "grail" in the old literal sense of "salver" which does carry a detailed illustration of the Takht and its surrounding twenty-two arches which are echoes in Albrecht's Grail Temple.

It seems certain, then, that Albrecht, or his source, had seen an engraved salver like, or very similar to, the one in Berlin and knew that the building there represented was the Takht-i-Taqdis, so that he could supplement the illustration with other details that were known either from word-of-mouth tradition or in written reports - or the two combined.

But by what routes could this strange far-away building have become known to Europe and so deeply impressed the Europeans? The problem is the more puzzling since the Takht-i-Taqdis was destroyed by (the Byzantine Emperor) Heraclius in 628, hardly twenty-five years after it was begun. The supreme and dramatic, particularly if it expresses the national genius and faith of a great people, travels far across many frontiers by virtue of its own momentum. In the case of the Throne of Chosroes, however, there were several ways in which it could reach the eager, wonder-loving mind of early medieval Europe. Some ten thousand returning officers and men of Heraclius' army must have been deeply impressed by the dazzling and quite unparalleled splendor of the Throne pavilion, which they helped to dismantle; an impression reenforced by the strange storm-working machinery and the horrendous statue of Chosroes, arrogantly elevated high in the constant lake, and, of course, as soldiers they must have been impressed by the site, its formidable wall, and the memory of the tragic defeat there of Marc Antony. Returning, they would have had much to tell.

Byzantine historians recognized the importance of Heraclius' triumph and reported it at some length in accounts now largely lost.

There were, moreover, other and continuous avenues of communication. Persian Sasanian influences spread up through Christian Armenia, where there are many five-domed churches resembling the drawing on the salver,

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and round churches following the alternate interpretation; and Armenia was always in touch with the Christian West. In the eighth century there were Byzantine envoys at the Courts of the Caliphs of Baghdad where Sasanian memories were still very much alive, and Harun ar-Rashid was in touch with Charlemagne. Persia likewise had contacts with Egypt, and Egypt with Europe. The Irish missions to Egypt in the 10th century would have been a likely contact.

But far more important than these secondary contacts, and of poignant interest to the Christians of Europe, was the harrowing story which everyone knew of Chosroes' capture of Jerusalem in 614 and his seizure of the supreme Christian relic, the (True) Cross itself, which the Sasanian monarch carried off to the sanctuary at Shiz. For the whole of devout Christianity this was a heart-breaking tragedy - never to be forgotten until it was retrieved. And retrieved it was, when Heraclius took Shiz, destroyed the Takht and in 629, carried the (True) Cross back to Jerusalem in triumph and re-dedication. Medieval Europe, enveloping in its romantic devotion a great medley of traditions, most of them at least (including Celtic Tradition, which can be considered "Western" only in the geographic sense, having more in common with the Iranian and Indo-Aryan worlds than with Greece and Rome) ultimately Oriental in origin, could hardly have failed to have absorbed the image and the feeling of the Takht-i-Taqdis, along with its legendary repute.

Medieval Europe was, indeed, quite aware of the Asian world. Long before the Crusades, pilgrims sought the Holy Land in such crowds that traffic out of Marseilles had to be officially regulated and each pilgrim, on boarding a vessel, was required to show his return ticket. Again, did not Abbot Suger say, "I love to talk with those who have been to the East and Jerusalem to see if their ways are not better than ours"? Everybody "knew" about a strange Christian king, Prester John, his fabulous palace and wise domains in Central Asia, or alternatively as King of Armenia and Egypt. Actually, Europe, partly because of the episode of the (True) Cross, was well aware of the Palace of Chosroes, and it appears both in literature and the arts. German texts beginning as early as 1125 describe the Throne of Chosroes, with its jeweled dome, and the

Sachsische Weltchronik gives a miniature showing Chosroes seated on his throne high in the vault of Heaven. Other medieval accounts describe the mechanism for imitating rain; others ascribe to Chosroes fantastic powers - even to having covered his entire
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land with a heavenly vault. A Flemish tapestry, now in Sarragossa Cathedral, made as late as about 1480, depicts Heraclius destroying the Throne of Chosroes.

The source or explanation for some of our formative and most persistent ideas cannot be found in our own history because they were engendered in the East before there was any Western culture, and they are far from obvious. Much research is needed; we must, of course, have far more facts about these remote sources.

But successful research into the cultural backgrounds of the Ancient Orient requires not merely more material and documentary "facts", but also, and quite urgently, a sympathetic understanding of presuppositions and attitudes fundamental in West Asian culture, wholly different from either the scientific or the common-sense assumptions of the Western World. We have persistently questioned the concepts and categories behind Asian cultures, but it has been in terms of those familiar to us. Consequently, the mentalities reflected in Asian cultural history often remain stubbornly opaque, they resist our insights and will continue to do so except when investigated in their own terms. More "facts" we certainly need, but uninterpreted "facts" are scarcely facts at all, and such "facts" seen against a Western, rather than an Eastern background are unreliable, if not downright deceptive. The myths and postulates of ancient Oriental culture(s) are involved in a remote and apparently foggy aymboliam, often deeply connected with mystery cults and secret initiation rites, almost always involved deeply in complex religious systems and in many cases interwoven with astronomical concepts involving preconceptions and even images quite alien to both our experience and our information. Moreover, many centuries of cross-fertilization have often obscured the original strains, or crystalizes them in formal simulacra or enmeshed them in references the original Meanings of which have gone astray. Nonetheless, strange and irrationsl as ancient Asian cultural backgrounds may repeatedly seem, they have been evolved through profound and significant human experiences and this has given them initiating power as well as persistence.

If we try, however, to stretch these notions, images and the mythic complexes which are their matrix on the procrustean bed of Western rationalism, they will be deformed past recognition or evaluation, and quite

devitalized, while under sympathetic exploration they can become very revealing and suggestive.

What is needed is still more and more open-minded and imaginatively sympathetic research into the genesis
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and development of the mythic web which is the backdrop of all Asian culture(s), further efforts to clarify and formulate the figures, types, their action-patterns and typical interrelations, a more critical - which also means a more open-minded - assessment of their role in cultural developments such as we have already had, to a considerable extent, in systematic surveys of ancient Egypt and early Mesopotamia.

He part that the Orient played in the Grail legends and cult, the influence of this whole complex on European art and architecture, and specifically in this case on the part played by that extraordinary building, the Takht-i-Taqdis so baly studied by Ringbom, is but one of many instances of the stream of constructive influences that have issued from the Ancient East since before the dawn of Western civilization, a civilization which cannot be wholly or deeply understood without repeated references and new insights into Oriental sources.

Europe found her religious faiths - Greek, Roman or Northern - intellectually, morally and emotionally insufficient and gradually replaced them with Christianity, an Oriental religion, after having experimented with two other Eastern religions - Mithraism and Manichaeism. Rome, in the end, was pretty thoroughly Orientalized. The incessant wars of Rome and Byzantium with Persia involved much cultural interchange. It was from the Orient that Europe learned many of the refinements of life: manners, costume, music. Troubadours and Minnesingers, their songs fashioned on Oriental models (this needs some further commentary; see Chapter 3), introduced chivalry and heraldry, and profoundly influenced European literature. Europe depended largely on Arabic sources for knowledge of the Classics, and owed deep debts to the Near East in various sciences: medicine, astronomy, mathematics, navigation. Persia and Armenia made important contribution to the beginnings of Gothic architecture, and the eighty thousand Persian coins of the tenth century alone found in Scandinavia witness the lively commerce between these regions. The flow of cultural contributions from the East was considerably augmented by the Crusades, and the extravagant enthusiasm of the eighteenth century for the Arabian Nights tales is a late example of Europe's continuing for the release and stimulation that Oriental imagination and emotion provided.

Hence it should not be at all surprising that the

Takht-i-Taqdis, the fabulous temple that Chosroes (II (Parviz) built on a strange mountain-top in northwest Persia, should have been the model for the Temple of
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the Grail, as the complex interlocking evidence from independent sources now shows. In fact, that various legends surrounding the Grail came to Europe from the Orient can now be substantiated by a mass of detailed evidence. Dr. Phyllis Ackerman, who has contributed valuable ideas to this article, is bringing to conclusion several years of intensive research on certain Oriental sources of Grail mythology, the ways and means for the transformations of certain Oriental myths, more or less disguised, that reappear by traceable routes in the Grail cycle. It is urgently to be hoped that there can be arranged a thoroughly equipped scientific expedition to the site of the Takht-i-Taqdis, to see if any traces remain of the fabulous temple of Chosroes. Results of both investigations will be eagerly awaited by scholars of many countries." (97)

In the Welsh White Book of Rhydderch, Peredur visits the Grail Castle three times, once following a river, once crossing a meadow, once going through a forest, exact descriptions of the three approaches to Takht-i-Taqdis. (98)

The Grail Temple could be approached only by men of noble blood, after a long and arduous journey. Each Sassanian Emperor, beginning the day of his coronation, was obliged to travel on foot the 400 miles from Ctesiphon to Shiz, site of Takht-i-Taqdis, certainly an arduous quest. (99)

In the 13th Century Latin work Perlesvaus, Percival or Peredur arrives at a mysterious castle on an island:

"The masters (of the castle) made Percival sit at the master table with themselves. He (Percival) sees a chain of gold come down from above him loaded with precious stones, and in the midst of them a crown of gold." (100)

The above paragraph powerfully evokes the crown of the Sassanian Emperor Khusrau II Parviz and his successors, which

crown was so heavy that a man's neck could not support its weight, and was suspended from the ceiling by a golden chain, each link set with a jewel.(101) Thus was symbolized the glory and the burden of being emperor.

Henry Corbin noted:

"Our Author (Sir Jahangir Coyajee) compares Kay Khusrau with Percival and with King Arthur. He also attempts to trace a positive historical route, to retrace the path of the reencounter (NOT "encounter") between Celtism and Iranism."(102)

Certainly there is a close resemblance between King Arthur and his knights on the one hand and Kai Khusrau (Avestan: *Kavi Haosravah*) of the Shah Namah and his knights on the other.

The Saxons against whom King Arthur fought are exact equivalents of the Turanian enemies of Kai Khusrau.

As we shall see, Arthur Pendragon, known as King Arthur, bore on his banner a dragon as his heraldic device, as the name "Pendragon" indicates; in the Shah Namah of Firdausi, Kai Khusrau also carries a banner which bears a dragon as its heraldic symbol. Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar, known as "El Cid", on his shield bore the image of a dragon as his heraldic device. So, King Arthur, Kai Khusrau, and El Cid all used the dragon as their heraldic symbol.

There is a very close resemblance between King Arthur and his knights on the one hand and Kay Khusrau and his knights - Rustam, Bizhan, etc. - on the other. Finn and his companions, the Fianna of the Leinster Cycle of the Irish Epic are sometimes put forward

as prototypes of King Arthur and his knights.

However, King Arthur and Kay Khusrau are kings of royal blood, Finn is not. In the tales of Finn and the *Fianna*, the High King (*Ard Righ*) of Ireland is a distant figure. Finn and the *Fianna* are really a "band of comrades in arms". Though sworn vassals of the High King of Ireland, and though they follow a rigorous code of chivalry, none of the *Fianna* could be called "knights", nor are they inclined to go off on their own individual adventures and quests.

After his last battle, King Arthur is taken to the mystic Isle of Avalon to be cured of his wounds. Glastonbury is sometimes given as the prototype of Avalon. However, it was in the interest of the Plantagenet Dynasty to identify Glastonbury with Avalon, though Glastonbury could not be considered an island by any stretch of the imagination. If Avalon has a prototype, it would be the Isle of Man, in Gaelic *Vannin* or *Mannin*, sacred to the Celtic sea god *Manannan*, as well as secure from Saxon incursions.

The aging Kai Khusrau disappears from the sight of his knights in a blizzard, and is borne to the mystic castle of Kang-Dez. (103)

Below is the account of the disappearance of Kai Khusrau as recounted in the Shah Namah of Firdausi, translation by Dick Davis:

"When Kai Khusrau had dealt with his nobles' affairs, he sank back, exhausted and weak. One who had
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not been mentioned yet as a beneficiary of the king's bequests was Lohrasp, and Kai Khusrau ordered Bizhan to bring this chieftain before him. As he entered, the king

arose and opened his arms in welcome. Descending from the throne, he lifted the crown from his own head and gave it Lohrasp, saying, "I bestow upon you sovereignty over the land of Iran: may this crown that is new to you bring you good fortune, and may all the world be as your slave. I had over to you here the sovereignty and treasure which I have built up with such struggle and pain. Henceforth see that only justice issues from your mouth, since it is justice that will bring you victory and prosperity; if you would have your luck remain ever young and fresh, allow no demons access to your soul. Be wise, harm no one, and always guard your tongue." Then he turned to the Persians assembled there and said, "Rejoice in his throne and good fortune!"

The Persians were astonished by this turn of events, and bridled like angry lions; none could accept that they would have to call Lohrasp their king. Zal strode forward and said aloud what he felt in his heart: "My lord, is it right for you to dignify such dirt in this way? My curses on anyone who calls Lohrasp his king, no one here will submit to such injustice! I saw Lohrasp when he arrived in Iran; he was a wretch with one horse to his name. You sent him off to fight against the Alans, and gave him soldiers, a banner, and a sword belt. How many wellborn Persians has the king passed over for this man, whose family I have never set eyes on, whose ancestry is all unknown? No one has ever heard of such a man becoming a king."

As soon as Zal finished speaking a roar of agreement came from the courtiers there, and voices cried out, "We will serve no longer! If Lohrasp is to be king he can count on us for neither his banquets nor his battles." When Kai Khusrau heard Zal's words he said to him, "Not so fast, and calm your rage: a man who speaks unjustly is more interested in smoke than fire. God does not approve of our doing evil, and the wicked will tremble before the revolutions of Fate. When God makes a man fortunate, deserving of sovereignty, an ornament to the throne, that man has wisdom then, as well as *farr*, dignity, and royal ancestry; he will be just and victorious, and his justice will bring him prosperity. As God is my witness, Lohrasp is possessed of these qualities. He is descended from the pure-souled Hushang, who was lord of all the world; he will cleanse the earth of evil magicians and establish the ways of God; the world will be renewed through his guidance, and his son will

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continue his legacy. Greet him as your king, and as you love me do not turn aside from my advice. Any man who ignores my words has destroyed whatever credit he may have built up fighting for me; he is ungrateful before God and his soul will be assailed from every side by

terror."

When Zal had heard him out he touched the earth with his fingers and smeared black dirt on his lips. Loudly, he greeted Lohrasp as king, and said to Kai Khusrau, "Live in happiness my lord, and may evil never touch you. Who but the king of victory and justice could have known that Lohrasp was of royal descent? I have sworn repentance for what I said, blackening my lips with dirt; may my sin be cancelled." The chieftains scattered jewels before Lohrasp, hailing him as king.

The great king said to his people, "The road I take now is the one you will take tomorrow: when I have left this wretched earth behind me I shall commend you to God." His eyelashes were wet with tears as he kissed each of them farewell: weeping openly, he embraced the heroes one by one. He said, "Would that I could take all of this company with me." Such a cry went up from the army that the sun lost its way in the heavens: women and little children wept for him in the streets and bazaars, and the houses were filled with groans and lamentation for the king's passing. The king said:

*"Glorious for your deeds, and glorious in descent,
Rejoice in God's commands and be content.
Now I prepare my soul for death; my name
Shall live henceforth with undiminished fame,
Sorus has come to guide me, and my heart
Withdraws from life: I am ready to depart."*

He called for a horse, and as his soldiers lamented, he rode toward the royal apartments, his cypress-stature bent with age and weakness over the pommel. He had four women who were as beautiful as the sun, such that no man had ever seen except in dreams: he summoned them and told them what was in his heart. He said, "It is time for me to leave this fleeting world; I am tired of the earth's injustice, and you will never see me alive again. Keep your hearts free of pain and grief."

But the four fainted, and when they revived they wailed aloud for love and sorrow: they scored their cheeks and tore out their hair, they ripped their fine clothes and destroyed their jewelry, and cried out to him, "Take us with you from this hateful world, be our guide to the happiness you seek." The king answered,

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"The road I take now is the one you will take tomorrow: there Jamshid's sisters live, and great kings in their pomp and glory; my mother, Afrasiyab's daughter, is there, who fled across the Oxus with me, and Tur's incomparable daughter Mah afraid. The bed and pillow of them all is dust, and I do not know whether they dwell in hell or heaven. Do not try to deflect me from my

journey; it will be easy enough to find me." He wept and called Lohrasp to him and said to him, "These are my womenfolk, the glory of my bedchamber: while you are king, grant them the same privileges and quarters they have always had. See that they are no cause of shame to you when God summons you to His presence: remember, you will see me there, next to Siyavush. Do nothing that will humiliate you when you stand before us in the other world." Lohrasp agreed to all he said, promising to maintain the king's women in respectable privacy.

Then the king bound on his sword belt and went out to address his men, to whom he said: "Have no pain nor fear in your hearts because of me. Do not rush to embrace this world, for its depths are but darkness: live in justice and happiness, and think only well of me." Iran's chieftains bowed their heads to the ground and said that they would remember his advice as long as they lived. He told Lohrasp to take up residence in the palace, saying that his own days were now at an end. "Maintain the royal throne in glory, sow only seeds of righteousness in the world: when nothing threatens nor troubles you, see that the crown and luxury and wealth do not corrupt your soul. Remember that your departure will not be delayed for long, and that the days of your life narrow toward their end. Seek justice, act with justice, free those who are just from evil."

Lohrasp wept and dismounted from his horse and kissed the ground. Kai Khusrau said to him, "Farewell, be the warp and woof of justice in the world."

Zal, Rostam, Gudarz, Giv, Bizhan, and Gastahom, together with Kai Kavus' son Fariborz who made a seventh and Tus who made an eighth, accompanied by their separate bands of troops, went with Kai Khusrau as he made his way from the plain to the mountain foothills. There they rested for a week, moistening their dry lips, wailing and weeping at the king's decision: no man could reconcile himself to such sorrow, and the priests [**Magi**] said in secret that no one ever heard of a king acting in this way.

When the sun rose over the mountain peaks, groups came from every direction, a hundred thousand Persian men and women, weeping before the king; all the mountain side was filled with the sounds of mourning, and the granite slopes re-echoed with their cries. They

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said: "Great king, what has filled your bright soul with such pain and confusion? If you are angry with the army, or if you are tired of the crown, tell us why, but do not quit the Persian throne, nor hold the crown in contempt. Stay, and we shall be the dust beneath your horse's hooves, the slaves of your eternal flame. But where is your knowledge, your judgment, your wisdom? The angel Soroush never appeared to a king before, not even

to Feridun: we pray before God and in our fire temples [atashgade] that God will grant our desire, and that the priests' hearts will look favorably upon us."

The king was astonished at this outpouring and called his priests to him. He said, "What happens from now on is a blessing, and why should men weep at a blessing? Be grateful to God, be pure and Godfearing: do not grieve at my departure for we shall all be reunited soon enough." Then he turned to his chieftains and said, "Descend this mountain side without your king: the road ahead is long, hard, and waterless, without vegetation nor shade. No one can traverse these slopes unless he has the divine *farr* to help him." Three of the heroes, Zal, Rustam, and Gudarz, heard him and obeyed: but Tus, Giv, Fariborz, Bizhan, and Gastahom did not turn back.

The group went forward for a day and into the night, weakened by the wilderness and lack of water. Then they came upon a stream, where they refreshed themselves and rested. The king said to his followers, "We will stay the night here and talk over the past: you will not see me for much longer now. When the shining sun unfurls its banner and turns the purple land a liquid gold, the time for me to part from you will have come. Then I shall meet Soroush: if my heart trembles at this last journey I shall tear its darkness from my side."

When part of the night had passed, Kai Khusrau bent over the stream and washed his head and body in its clear water, murmuring the words of the Zend Avesta as he did so. Then he addressed his companions:

*"Farewell forever. When the sun's first beams
Appear, henceforth I will come to you in dreams
But you will never see me here again.
Go back tomorrow to the Persian plain -
Even if musk should rain down far and wide
Do not linger on this lonely mountain side;
A wind will blow here soon, a wind to freeze
The mountain slopes and uproot stalwart trees,
From dark clouds snow will fall, you will lose your way
Back to your Persian home if you delay."*

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*Weary and saddened by his words they wept,
Uneasily, at last, the heroes slept:
And when the dawn's light touched their resting place
The king had gone, leaving no earthly trace.*

They searched the desolate mountain slopes, but as they found no sign of him they returned to the stream like men insensible with grief, and in their hearts they bade a last farewell to the world's king.

Fariborz said, "I cannot believe that Kai Khusrau's

words were wise: the earth is warm and soft, and the weather is clear; given what we have suffered I do not think it is reasonable for us to set off immediately. We should rest and eat, and after we have slept we can leave this stream and go back." They camped by the stream and went over what Kai Khusrau had done, saying that no one had ever seen nor heard of such a wonder (nor would he even if he remained in the world for a long time) as this departure of the king which they had witnessed. They lamented his good fortune and wisdom, his greatness and nobility; but they added that the wise would laugh at the notion that a man could go before God while he was still alive. Who knew what had befallen Kai Khusrau, and what could they say when people refused to believe them? Giv said, "No hero has ever heard of a man who was his equal, not for manliness, generosity, wisdom, valor, appearance, stature, glory, or lineage: leading his troops in battle he was massive as a mammoth, and presiding crowned at his banquets he was radiant as the full moon."

They ate the provisions they had with them and soon fell asleep. But a wind sprang up and black clouds amassed; the air became as dark as a lion's maw, a blizzard began to blow, and the snow piled higher than the heroes' lances. One by one they were buried in the snow; for a while they struggled beneath its canopy, trying to clear a space to survive, but finally their strength gave out and their sweet souls sought release.

Rustam, Zal, and Gudarz had waited for three days further down the mountain side. As the fourth day dawned they said, "This has gone on too long, how long must we wait here on these stony slopes? If the king has disappeared from the world, like a wind that blows through a group of heroes and is gone, what has happened to our chieftains? Did they not follow Kai Khusrau's advice?" They waited for a week on the mountainside, but when the week was over they despaired of seeing their companions again. They mourned for them, and Gudarz tore out his hair and scored his

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cheeks with his nails. He said: "No man has ever seen such evil as has come to me from the seed of Kai Kavus: I had an army of sons and grandsons, ambitious and noble youths all of them, and all were slain in the wars of revenge for Siyavush, so that our tribe was broken and lost its lustre. And now another has disappeared from my sight; who has seen such sorrows as I have endured?"

Zal counseled him at length: "To be wise is to accept God's justice: they may yet find a way through the snow and return. But we should not stay on this mountain side and lamentation will not help us. We can send foot soldiers out to look for some trace of them." Weeping, they made their way down the mountain side,

each thinking of one or another of the lost heroes, of his own son or relative or friend, and of the king who had been like a cypress overtopping all the orchard.

*So turns the world; her favors are soon passed,
All whom she nourishes must die at last.
One she will raise from earth to heights unknown,
One she will cast down from a royal throne;
But there is no cause to triumph or complain,
Such is the way she turns, and turns again:
Where are those heroes now, those champions, where?
Drive out such mortal thoughts, that bring despair."*

Finally, King Arthur and Kai Khusrau are both "once and future kings", who never died and who will one day return. (104)

As we shall see in Chapter II, Kai Khusrau belongs to the "Rustam Cycle" or "Seistan Cycle" of the Persian Epic, which appears to have Saka as well as Parthian roots. The possible "Sarmatian connection" of the Arthurian Cycle, of which we have spoken before, looks more and more interesting, though no firm conclusions may be drawn.

There are also close parallels between Kay Khusrau (Avestan: *Kavi Haosravah*) and Percival. Both lose their fathers in similar situations of perfidy and treachery, the mothers of both are princesses, both are taken by their mothers to wild forests and

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mountains. Both learn the secret of their royal origin. Both Kay Khusrau and Percival pass their childhood in the forests, where they are taught the rules of knighthood; when both appear in a royal court for the first time, they are chided for their ignorance of court etiquette. Both are "lads of a pure heart". Kay Khusrau goes to the court of Kay Kaus, where he is recognized as guardian of the royal *Xvarneh*, *Khvarrah* or *Farr*. Both Kay

Khusrau and Percival take a vow of vengeance; Kay Khusrau to avenge the death of Siyavush, his father, and against the violators of Xvarneh, while Percival vows to vanquish the enemies of the fisher king and avenge the death of Goon, his brother. Both Kay Khusrau and Percival restore the health of a king, both free their country from an evil curse and allow the spring to break forth. Kay Khusrau becomes sovereign of the Xvarneh, Percival becomes king of the Holy Grail.(105)

Kay Khusrau is said to have the "Grail of Jamshid", which now appears as the "world revealing Grail".(106) However, this "world revealing Grail" is, apparently, not the same as Xvarneh or Hvarnah (we shall deal with Hvarnah, Xvarneh, Khvarrah or Farr

in detail in Chapter II). No doubt due to the influence of the Grail as the cup from which Jesus drank at the Last Supper, or which had held the blood of Jesus, the Celtic Grail retained or recovered its very sacred, mystical character, indeed, as the case of Percival shows, having much of the character of the Persian Xvarneh; if Kay Khusrau is sovereign of Xvarneh, Percival is "King of the Holy Grail". In other words, the Celtic Grail is

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still the sacred cup, but it is also Xvarneh or Hvarnah, the two aspects being firmly, inseparably united.

Below is a description by a present day dastur or Zoroastrian priest of the role of the cup in the Zoroastrian liturgy:

"The (sacred) mixture, when ready, is presented to

God and His angelic hosts; and there is a corresponding response from above with (a) downpour of blessings. These enrich or transubstantiate) the contents, and the sacrament becomes a chalice or **holy-grail**, an uplifting or sanctifying medium of grace. Those who partake of it are united in brotherhood, temporarily sharing the same force. Such (a) downpour of forces is called *Nirang* in Avestan (Modern Persian: *Niru*) or "power". All such objects filled with that power are called "Exalted through Purity". (107)

It is evident that the Legend of the Holy Grail is another proof of the close affinity between the Celts on the one hand and the Iranian peoples on the other. It is also evident that Muslim Spain was one route - though not necessarily the only route - by which the Persian elements in the Grail Legend reached Western Europe.

Arthurian themes have always been popular in Spain, as the popularity of the name "Arturo" shows; as we shall see, there are even Arthurian elements in the Cantar de Mio Cid. Spanish versions of Arthurian material are of relatively late date and are not relevant to us at the moment, as they add nothing new.

However, Galicia at least has its own Grail legends, to what degree indigenous, to what degree brought from the Pays d'Oc, France and Britain by pilgrims on the Road to Compostela I do not know. The leading literary journal in the Gallego-Portuguese

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language, in which I have had three essays on Celtic topics published, is called *Grial*, which means "Grail". During my long residence in Galicia, I heard of several Grail legends, but was unable to track them down or document them, with one exception.

In the Gallego Province of Lugo (an obviously Celtic name), not far from the border with the Province of Leon, in the high

peaks of Cebreiro on the Pilgrim's Road to Santiago de Compostela is a parish called "Pedrafita do Cebreiro".

In Pedrafita do Cebreiro around the year 1300 was a priest who doubted the miracle of transubstantiation.

"Oh God", said the doubting priest, "my faith is weakened, my being enfeebled and my brain explodes, but i do not see clearly this mystery. A few crosses drawn in the air by my hand and a few words murmured by my mouth, not always clean and pure, how can they achieve such a miracle."

There was a parishoner who lived about a mile and a half from the Pedrafita do Cebreiro who was so devout that neither thunderstorms nor blizzards could prevent him from attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days.

One Sunday the doubting priest was saying Mass alone, because a frightful wind-driven blizzard had kept the parishoners in their homes. The priest had consecrated the communion wafers and the wine in the chalice when he heard someone enter the church.

The priest looked with great surprise, murmuring:

"Poor man, coming from so far and in such terrible weather that he risked dying on the way, only to kneel before a little bread and wine."

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But then something strange came over the priest. He looked at the paten and saw, horrified, that the communion wafer was reddening, becoming bloody flesh which appeared to have been recently cut from a living body, and the wine in the chalice thickened, acquiring a darker tone, and smelled of blood.

The priest fell to his knees before the altar, and then fell

to the floor, unconscious.

The parishoner who had just arrived ran to the altar and attempted to revive the priest, but he was dead.

The relics of this miracle are preserved to this day in the church of Pedrafita do Cebreiro.(108)

The parallels of the above legend with other materials concerning the Holy Grail are so obvious that no commentary is necessary.

The Holy Grail plays an important role in Shi'a Islam, both Imami or Twelver and Ismaili.(109) For those unfamiliar with Shi'ism, I refer the reader to the basic bibliography on the subject given at the beginning of the chapter of "Shi'a Festivals", as well as to works listed in the notes in various other chapters of the present work.

Prominent in Shi'ism is the concept of what is called *futuwwat* in Arabic, *javanmardi* in Persian, which may be translated as "spiritual chivalry". The *futuwwat* or *javanmardi* initiation includes a "ritual of the cup" which was established by the Prophet Muhammad (on whom be peace). After proclaiming Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (the First Imam) as the "knight of the community",

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Muhammad called for a cup of water and salt. He then mixed three pinches of salt into the water.

- ❖ After putting the first pinch into the cup, he said: "This is the *shari'at* (law)"
- ❖ after the second he said: "This is the *tariqat* (mystical path)"

- ❖ after the third he said: "This is the haqiqat (mystical self-realization).

There is also a triple classification of knights: i.e.,

- ❖ 1.) Knights of the word (*qawli*),
- ❖ 2.) Knights of the sword (*sayfi*) and
- ❖ 3.) Knights of the mystical cup (or Holy Grail) (*shurbi*).

Once again the "triad", of which we have seen so many examples throughout this work.(110)

There is also another tradition which says that in pre-Islamic Arabia there existed a chivalric order (*futuwwat-dari*) whose rites included a cup of wine. Later forty of the companions of Muhammad requested that he institute a *futuwwat* which would include the ritual of the cup. This Muhammad did, though eliminating the use of wine,(111) continued the use of salted water.

The above forcefully reminds us of the Celtic, Persian and specifically Christian examples of the "sacred cup" or "Holy Grail" which we have mentioned above, and also of the "cup" or "krater" so prominent in the Mithraism once so prevalent in the Roman Empire.(112) In the *Nusayri* calendar of Shi'a festivals

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there are two (*Now Ruz* and *Mehrgan*) which are of Zoroastrian origin and two "Christmas and Holy Thursday) whose precedence is Christian. At this, some will begin to cry "syncretism". However, one whose mind is not poisoned by Nominalism and/or Protestantism or Wahhabism will agree with Henry Corbin:

"From the Gnostics' (initiate's) own point of view,

the recognition of other lamps which are lighted in the same way (*or from the same Source*) is of an order of thought which is the opposite of this so-called syncretism." (113)

One is reminded that the early Celtic monks used the same tonsure as the Druids, and that St. Patrick borrowed two Druidic Symbols: the shamrock and the Celtic Cross, and put them to Christian use.

In order to comprehend the ritual of the Cup or Holy Grail described above, we must delve into the doctrines of a somewhat mysterious and ultimately tragic figure, Abu'l Khattab. His full name was Abu'l Khattab Muhammad ibn Abi Zaynab Miqlas al-Asadi. Abu'l Khattab was a close friend of Ja'afar as-Sadiq, the Sixth Imam. The high esteem in which Abu'l Khattab was held by Imam Ja'afar is indicated by the following words of the Imam:

"Remember and never forget! You know that which is hidden, you have now become the treasure-chest of my knowledge and the dwelling-place of my secret. Unto you I entrust our living and our dead." (114)

Later Abu'l Khattab was disavowed by Imam Ja'afar, and was martyred by the Abassid Caliph Isa ibn Musa. However, everything indicates that said disavowal was by mutual consent, Abu'l Khattab

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sacrificing his own life for the sake of the Shi'a community, Imam Ja'afar consenting only with the most extreme reluctance and personal agony. This is amply proven by the fact that afterwards Imam Ja'afar could not speak of Abu'l Khattab without tears in his eyes, and several times admitted that his grief and anguish over his disavowal of Abu'l Khattab and Abu'l Khattab's martyrdom were inconsolable. Imam Ja'afar cited the companions of Ali ibn Abi

Talib, the First Imam:

"We remember the friendship which united and the trials which they suffered. We are also stirred with compassion for them."

Imam Ja'afar commented on the above:

"This is permitted.(115)

The theology of Abu'l Khattab is radically *apophatic*, what is called in Christian Mysticism *apophatikos* in Greek, or *via negativa* in Latin, which is the 'not this, not this' (Sanskrit: **neti, neti**) of the *Upanishads* and *Advaita Vedanta*: the same is true of other Shi'a schools. The Absolute Divinity is radically incomprehensible, ineffable, and can never really be defined by any name or attribute. Yet from God emanates the Name (*Ism*) and the Meaning (*Ma'na*), which are manifested in each cycle by a group of five theophanic figures. These cycles are called "domes". This term is indeed striking, because a dome, while spatial, is not a temporal figure. This indicates that said cycles are, in reality, beyond time, in the "Eternal Now" of the mystics of all religious traditions. Friedrich Nietzsche, often considered to have been an atheist (though he himself would **not** have agreed) and

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in any case not a student of mysticism, intuited this in his work

Thus Spoke Zarathustra:

One!
O man! Attend!

Two!
What does midnight's voice contend?

Three!
'I slept my sleep,

Four!

And now awake at dreaming's end:

Five!

'The world is deep,

Six!

'Deeper than the day can comprehend.

Seven!

Deep is its woe,

Eight!

'Joy - deeper than even the heart's agony:

Nine!

'Woe says: fade! Go!

Ten!

'But all joy wants Eternity,
Eleven!

'Wants deep, deep, deep Eternity!

Twelve!

For I love you, O Eternity!

Thus, the passage from dome to dome is **NOT** a temporal

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progression, but the work of a single transcendent Light.

In the Shi'a doctrine of Prophets and Imams, one certainly finds parallels with the *Verus Propheta* (True Prophet) of the homilies of St. Clement of Alexandria, whose final manifestation is Jesus. Of course, to a Muslim, Shi'a or Sunni, the Seal of the Prophets is not Jesus but Muhammad, and Shi'ism adds a cycle of spiritual initiation following the Cycle of Prophecy, the Cycle of

Walayat (Friends of God) whose Seal is the Imamate. of Moses, the Domes of Persia, and, finally, the Muhammadan Dome. The absence of a "Dome of Jesus" is very difficult to explain; that a Shi'a would either deliberately or inadvertently do anything which might slight Jesus is simply unthinkable. It has been suggested that the "Dome of Jesus" was "absorbed into the Persian Domes", which is not completely far-fetched; as we shall see, there are many Christian as well as Persian Shi'a sources which affirm that Jesus was heir to Zoroaster as well as to the Old Testament Prophets. I have heard of a society, apparently very ancient, called "Brotherhood of the Lamb", one of whose tenets is that Jesus was of Persian rather than Jewish ancestry. At the moment I have no bibliography concerning said esoteric society.

The Persian Dome is really four domes in one, and is called the "Bahmanian Dome" rather than the "Zoroastrian Dome" or "Mazdean Dome". *Bahman* is the Pahlavi and Persian form of the Avestan "*Vohu Manah*", the first of the six Zoroastrian archangels or *Amesha Spenta*. *Vohu Manah* literally means "Good Mind", and symbolizes the wisdom of Ahura Mazda. (116)

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Each of the four Persian domes has its own name. The first is the "Major Bahmanian Dome", composed of Gayomart (the Zoroastrian Adam), Tahmuras (of whom we shall have more to say), Bahman (*Vohu Manah*), Hormoz (Ormazd, Ahura Mazda), Jamshid and others. The second Persian Dome is the "Sublime Bahmanian Dome", whose leading figure is Zadan Shah, Kay Qobad, Kay Ka'us, Kay Khusraw, Kay Lohrasp and Goshtasp (Avestan "*Vishtaspa*",

protector of Zoroaster.

The third Persian dome is the "Red Bahmanian Dome", "which contains an explanation and an esoteric secret (*sirr*)". We shall have a great deal more to say concerning this "Red Bahmanian Dome". The figures of said dome are Sohrab, Hushang (Avestan: *Haoshyangha*), the first king of the mythological Pishdadi dynasty, conqueror of demons (Avestan *daeva*, Pahlavi and Persian *div*), and fairies (Avestan *pairika*, Pahlavi and Persian *peri*). (117) The others of this dome are figures from pre-Islamic Persian history. *Sohrab is familiar to all readers of the Shah Namah of Firdausi.*

The Fourth Persian Dome is the "White Bahmanian Dome", whose figures are Esfandiyar (great hero of Zoroastrianism) (118), Hormoz and Ardashir, founder of the Sassanian Dynasty.

Most interesting is the passing from the Persian domes to the Muhammadan Dome, which is explained by an exegesis of Qur'an LIV:6:

"The day when the Caller shall call them to a difficult thing."

This is the day of the Manifestation of Salman the Persian:

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"In his right hand he holds a Holy Grail (*ka's*, i.e., cup, chalice or krater) in which is found the servant of the Light (the Wine of Malakut, of which we shall have more to say). In his left hand he holds an 'oud (lute). He calls the people to the Prophecy Muhammad and thus brings about their conversion to Islam (this being the "difficult thing"). Previously, one had appeared (Zoroaster) who had called them to the Magian (or Bahmanian) religion. Then the Prophet Muhammad appeared, who called them to know and recognize him. But the people were confused because of the difference between the two languages (Persian and Arabic) and two theophanies: Bahmanian and Muhammad. When Mawlana the Emir of the Bees (Imam Ali ibn Abi

Talib; "bees" is sometimes used to mean the stars in the sky) then became manifest, who is *Ma'na* (hidden meaning and the object of their devotion (*ma'bud*)). He was seen holding the *Dhu'l-Fiqar* (the wondrous sword) in his hand. Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) then told them:

"Here is he who is your lord and companion, Ali-al-Kabir (Ali the Great)." (119)

One could hardly express more clearly the idea that it is through the Imams, i.e., Shi'ism, that the conflict between Zoroastrianism and Islam is overcome, thus achieving the passage from the Bahmanian Dome to the Muhammadan Dome, in other words, the conversion from Zoroastrianism to Islam. Note that this is from early Shi'a sources, **not** the theory of a Western scholar. Of course, Sufism should perhaps be added to Shi'ism in this case, but then Haydar Amoli said that Shi'ism is Sufism and Sufism is Shi'ism.

Now comes, from our present viewpoint, what may be the most interesting part of the ceremony. The Holy Grail cup, chalice or krater is passed from hand to hand. Each participant drinks his fill, yet the level of the liquid in the cup does not diminish. The same occurs with the Holy Grail in the West; each knight

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receives his fill, with no decrease in the content of the Grail. We shall have more to say of this later.

Now Abu'l Khattab raises his arm in the gesture of a Catholic or Eastern Orthodox priest at the moment of Consecration, and makes a circle in the air. The cup then slowly rises from his hand, floating in a **red dome** (once again, we shall have more to say of this) which then opens around it and Imam Ja'afar as-Sadiq

appears in its light. Surrounded by the "blaze of the Holy Grail", Imam Ja'afar as-Sadiq reveals the mystery of the "Wine of Malakut" (Wine of the World of Angels). The visionary moment is completed by the re-descent of the Holy Grail. However, now it is empty: all of the Invisible Ones of the other domes have also been participating in the rite; all are present in the "Eternal Now".

Abu'l Khattab explains that the Holy **Grail** is the cup of Tahmuras (of whom we shall have more to say). Tahmuras was, under the Bahmanian Dome, the "Emir of the Bees", homologue of the Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib. Abu'l Khattab is the homologue of Hoemoz. This is **not** reincarnation, it is the "Eternal Now".

In the Shi'a ritual of the Day of Ghadir Khumm, the day of the investiture of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib by the Prophet Muhammad, a large cup is filled, all hold their hands up to God, and the cup is passed from one participant to another.(120)

We now present the text of the liturgy, or, in another phrase coined by Henry Corbin, the "visionary recital" of the Wine of Malakut. At times we will digress to further explain and

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elucidate things which have been hinted at but not clearly defined. While some may say this should have been done earlier, I believe that the elucidation will be clearer in the light of what we have said above.(121)

Abdulklah al-Barqi reports the words of al-Bythura'I (an otherwise unknown personage):

Muhammad ibn Sinan told me the following, which he heard from Abu Harun the Blind, who told him:

"I had gone to visit Muhammad ibn Abi Zaynab (Abu'l Khattab), the father of good people and good things, may he be revered! Seventy men were present, come from different countries. Among them was Musa ibn Ashyam (later to be) a martyr.

There was lengthy discourse among them. Finally, Abu'l Khattab said to them: "O companions! Do you desire the drink?"

A-Kh:

The drink (wine) of the Malakut (Wine of the Angelic Realm or Mundud Imaginalis).

We:

You have nourished us through your knowledge of the Malakut; now give us to drink our fill of the brew.

A-Kh:

The wine of the Malakut is for you; the wine of the gates of Hell (*Bahut*) is for others.

We:

And what is the wine of the Bahut?

A-Kh:

The blood of Iblis (Ahriman, the Zoroastrian Satan, or Satan), may God condemn him! But the drink (wine) of the Malakut is the pure beverage which God has described as the drink of the friends (*li-awliya'ih*) in Paradise. (Abu'l Khattab recites Qur'an XLVII:15)

"Rivers of wine, and delights for those who drink of it."

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Therefore, drink of it in perfect knowledge and in total truth.

We:

Then give us to drink our fill, in perfect knowledge and in total truth.

Then he (Abu'l Khattab) called out: "O young girl! She quickly arrived, and he told her: "Bring the drink for the bodies of earthly men." She brought a wineskin filled with a brilliant radiance and a cup which shone with the golden light of dawn. Then he said: "It is with this that God gratifies His friends." Then he set the cup down and recited: "You shall feel neither intoxication nor headache from it."

(Qur'an LVI:18-19: "With goblets and ewers and a cup of pure drink, their heads ache not from it nor do they become intoxicated")

Then Abu'l Khattab said to Musa ibn Ashyam: "Begin! Let your brothers drink their fill. And when the drink has passed to all, then by this cup you hold in your hand, your bodies shall be filled for all the periods and cycles to come. For you belong to the Holy of Holies (*quds al-muqaddasin*), and you were of the Bahmanians (see above), among the number of the most excellent and noble of them. I have displayed the world for them, and filled them with its delights. I fulfill you with its magnificence, and by my power, give you what I have given no other."

Musa ibn Ashyam stood up and said: "O my lord! From your hand give me a drink which shall satisfy the thirst of him who drinks his fill of it, throughout the centuries of centuries and the eternity of eternities."

Abu Harun the Blind continues his recital: "Then Abu'l Khattab poured the wine into the cup (Grail). He presented (*Nawala-hu*, a term which in Arabic Christian liturgy means "Giving Holy Communion" to someone) the cup (Grail) to Musa, and Musa drank from it and was satisfied. Abu'l Khattab then told him: "Now give the cup to your brother, Abu Isma'il. He then drank until his own thirst was satisfied, without any decrease in the contents of the cup. All thus drank their fill in turn. Finally, having circulated among all present, the cup returned, exactly as full as it was at the beginning."

We now interrupt the visionary recital to elucidate a crucial point.

In its aspect as the Source of Life, the above is also a

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Characteristic of the Holy Grail of the West. As La Queste del Sant-Graal says:

"Four days more Lancelot tarried (in the castle of *Corbenyc*), which caused the king great joy, for he had long desired to have him (Lancelot) with him. But on the fifth day when they were seated at dinner it befell that the Holy Grail had filled the tables so marvelously that no one could imagine a more bounteous provision." (122)

The name *Corbenyc* is interesting. *Corbenyc* is said to mean "Most Holy Vessel", and has a Celtic etymology. "Blessed Horn" is

Corn Beannacht in Gaelic, and *Cor Benic* or *Cor Benyc* in Welsh and Breton. *Cor Benic* or *Cor Benyc* passed to Old French or *Langue d'Oil* as *Cor Benit*.

As the Celtic epics indicate, the horn was the most common drinking vessel among the ancient Celts, hence "horn" became the general term for any drinking vessel, no matter what its shape nor what may be the material from which it is made, much as in English and Spanish any drinking vessel is likely to be called a "glass" or *cristal* (Spanish), though it be made of horn, ceramic, plastic, wood, metal, waxed paper or styrofoam. (123)

We now return to the visionary recital.

Then Abu'l Khattab held the cup (Grail) up, moving it around in a circle. As he traced the form of the circle, we regarded it intently: then the cup elevated, rising little by little, floating in space, until it came to its resting place. At this moment, we beheld the Lord (*al-Sayyid*, the Imam Ja'afar as-Sadiq) looking upon us from the heights of this space. He was underneath a red dome, built from a unique pearl, whose light shone from the East to the West. The air was filled with a perfume of musk.

Once again, we interrupt the visionary recital in order to

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elucidate a point, this time in connection with the red dome.

In the last three centuries the color red has acquired certain unpleasant connotations, associations and symbolisms. First, red became the color of the tunics of the British Army, and thus became associated with Whiggery. "Red coat (*siler roy* in Gaelic), was an epithet of hatred and loathing long before the American War of Independence ("Revolution" is not really accurate in this case). This is eloquently expressed in the poem "the

Highwayman by Alfred Noyes:

PART ONE

I

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty tree,
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
And the highwayman came riding-
Riding-riding-
The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn door.

II

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace at
his chin,
A coat of claret velvet, and breeches of brown doeskin;
They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up to the
thigh!
And he rode with a jeweled twinkle,
His pistol-butts a-twinkle,
His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jeweled sky.

III

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark inn-
yard,
And he tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was
locked and barred;
He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be waiting
there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

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IV

And dark in the old inn-yard a stable-wicket creaked
Where Tim the hostler listened; his face was white and
peaked;
His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like moldy hay,
But he loved the landlord's daughter,
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say-

V

"One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize tonight,
But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morning
light;
Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry me through the day,
Then look for me by moonlight,
Watch for me by moonlight,

I'll come to thee by moonlight, though Hell should bar the way."

VI

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce could reach her hand,
But she loosened her hair in the casement! His face burnt like a brand
As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his breast;
And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,
(Oh, sweet black waves in the moonlight!)
Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and galloped away to the West.

PART TWO

I

He did not come in the dawning; he did not come at noon;
And out o' the tawny sunset, before the rise o' the moon,
(69)

When the road was a Gypsy's ribbon, looping the purple moor,
A red-coat troop came marching-
Marching-marching-
King George's men came marching, up to the old inn-door.

II

They said no word to the landlord, they drank his ale instead,
But they gagged his daughter and bound her to the foot of her
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narrow bed;
Two of them knelt at her casement, with muskets at their side!
There was death at every window;
And Hell at one dark window;
For Bess could see, through her caement, the road that he would ride.

III

They tied her up to attention, with many a sniggering jest;
They had bound a musket beside her, with the barrel beneath her breast!
"Now keep good watch!" and they kissed her. She heard the dead man say-
Look for me by moonlight;
Watch for me by moonlight;
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though Hell should bar the

way!

IV

She twisted her hands behind her; but all the knots held good!
She writhed her hands till her fingers were wet with sweat or blood!
They stretched and strained in the darkness, and the hours crawled by like years,
Till, now, on the stroke of midnight,
Cold, on the stroke of midnight,
The tip of one finger touched it! The trigger at least was hers!

V

The tip of one finger touched it; she strove no more for the resr!
Up, she stood up to attention, with the barrel beneath her breast,
She would not risk their hearing; she would not strive again;
For the road lay bare in the moonlight;
Blank and bare in the moonlight;
And the blood of her veins in the moonlight throbbed to her love's refrain.

VI

Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot! Had they heard it? The horse-hoofs ringing clear;
Tlot-tlot, tlot tlot, in the distance? Were they deaf that they did not hear?
Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the hill,
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The highwayman came riding,
Riding, riding!
The red-coats looked to their priming! She stood up, straight and still!

VII

Tlot-tlot, in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot,* in the echoing night!
Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a light!
Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she drew one last deep breath,
Then her finger moved in the moonlight,
Her musket shattered the moonlight,
Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned him-with her death.

VIII

He turned; he spurred to the West; he did not know who stood

Bowed, with her head o'er the musket, drenched with her own red blood!
Not till the dawn he heard it, his face grew gray to hear
How Bess, the landlord's daughter,
The landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Had watched for her love in the moonlight, and died in the darkness there.

IX

Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to the sky,
With the white road smoking behind him, and his rapier brandished high!
Blood-red were his spurs I' the golden noon; wine-red was his velvet coat
When they shot him down on the highway,
Down like a dog on the highway,
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with a bunch of lace at his throat.

* * * * *

X

*And still of a winter's night, they say, when the wind is in the trees,
When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
A highwayman comes riding -
Riding-riding-
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-door.*

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XI

*Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs in the dark inn-yard;
He taps with his whip on the shutters, but all is locked and barred;
He whistles a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there
But eh landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.*

The English highwayman, known for his sartorial elegance and gallantry towards the ladies, had his origin in the English Civil War, after which veterans of the king's army or "Cavaliers", often found themselves outlawed. Later, each Jacobite rising added its

quota of outlawed gentlemen, who found themselves forced to become highwaymen in order to survive. Thus, the most gallant, honorable and honest of men were outlawed, while syncophants, boot lickers, thieves and murderers governed the country.

The highwayman of Alfred Noyes' poem is obviously not a vulgar thief, his garb and manner indicating an aristocrat. The location is uncertain; it could be Scotland or extreme northern England. The word which is spelled "moor" in English is spelled *muir* in Scots, while the word which is spelled "bonny" in English in Scots is spelled *bonnie*. So, indications are that the locale is extreme northern England. The references to "red coats" and "King George's men" indicates that the highwayman is a Jacobite, not a Cavalier in the strict sense, as he lived long after the time of Charles I. The fact that the landlord's daughter is repeatedly described as having black hair and eyes

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indicates Celtic ancestry rather than a Saxon, Viking or Norman origin.

Also, the fact that it is the military rather than the local sheriff who is sent to catch the highwayman indicates that he is a political offender and not a vulgar thief. It also indicates that the local populace is very largely in favor of the Jacobite cause (as would be true in extreme northern England), and therefore could not be trusted to catch the highwayman. Note also that the king George's (also known as "German George", "Geordie Welks" and the Wee, wee German lairdie") soldiers are called "red coats", are obviously detested by the local populace, and are plundering,

murdering criminals.

Also, as everyone knows, red later became the color associated with Communism.

Here is a little song from the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39, very much in the Andalusian dialect and sung to the rhythm of the fandango de Huelva.

Si eres del puño cerrado
Escucha a este fandanguillo
Me cago en lo colorao
En la hoz y en el martillo

If you are of the clenched fist (communist salute)
Listen to this little fandango
I shit on everything red
On the sickle and the hammer.

The red beret (often accompanied by a Navarro-style red sash) worn by Carlists surprises many people, who find it odd that the most militant of anti-communists should wear red. I have had to explain that the Carlists' red beret and red sash antedates
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Communism.

Here is a Carlist song, also from the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39 which takes advantage of the fact that Spanish has two words for red, "rojo" and "colorado".

Si quieres ver a los rojos
Huir en desbandada
Solo tienes a ensenalos
Una boina colorada.

If you wish to see the reds
Flee in disorder
You only need to show them
A red beret.

It is curious that whenever the color red has acquired an evil symbolism, the colors which oppose it are always white and green. One thinks of the green tunic of the Irish Jacobites and

the white rose and white cockade of the all Jacobites, the Vendeeans and the Chouans, as well as the green collar worn by so many leaders and some of the rank and file of the Vendeeans and Chouans that it came to be considered as one of their insignia or badges of identification. During the Russian Civil War, the armies which opposed the "Reds" were known as "Whites".

However, anti-communist peasant guerilleros who operated behind red lines and were generally out of touch with the White armies were known as "Greens". In the Russian Civil War, the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39 and more recently in Afghanistan, the color of the Anti-communist Muslims was green.

There is an Irish song, "Wearin' o' the Green":

O Paddy dear, an' did ye hear the news that's goin' round
The shamrock is by law forbid to grow on Irish ground
No more St. Patrick's Day we'll keep, his color can't be seen
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For they're hangin' men an' women for the wearin' o' the green.

But if the color we must wear is England's cruel red
'Twill but remind us o' the blood that Ireland has shed.
So take the shamrock from your cap, an' throw it on the sod
An' never fear, for 'twill take root, though under foot is trod.

When the English can stop the blades o' grass from growin' as they grow
An' when the leaves in summer time their color dare not show
Then I will change the color, too I wear in my caubeen (hat)
But 'till then, praise God, I'll stick to wearin' o' the green!

Like many of Irish blood, I strongly dislike the flag of the Republic of Ireland and refuse to fly it, because I hate the broad orange stripe; orange, the color of William of Orange (also known as "Billy Windmills" and "Wee Willie Winkie") and of the Ulster Protestants, or "Orangemen", who are "horrible gobshites", to

use an expression common among Gaelic-English bilinguals in the West of Ireland. To me and to many others the true flag of Ireland is a golden harp and shamrocks on a field of green; as the song says, "Wrap the green flag around me, boys".

In order to avoid grossly misinterpreting what follows, I must ask the reader to mentally travel to a time when the world had the great good fortune to be plagued by neither whigs nor communists, when the color red had not yet acquired evil associations.

Firstly, the sayings (*hadith*) of the Shi'a Imams concerning the throne of Mercy. Note especially how Ali ibn Abi Talib, the First Imam, associates each of the four pillars of the Throne of Mercy with a particular color.

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Below are the sayings of the Shi'a Imams concerning the Throne of Mercy.

"Al-Jathaliq (*Katholikos*, Patriarch of the Armenian Church) inquired from Amir al-Muminin (Ali ibn Abi Talib):

'Inform me whether Allah, the Almighty, to whom belongs Might and Majesty, lifts the Throne (*of Mercy*) or the Throne lifts Him?'

Aki ibn Abi Talib replied:

'It is Allah, to Whom belongs Might and Majesty, Who lifts the Throne, the heavens, the earth and all that is in and between them. And it is what Allah, to Whom belongs Might and Majesty, Himself says:

'Truly, Allah holds the heavens and earth, lest they remove; should they remove, none would hold them after Him. Surely He is All clement, All forgiving (Qur'an XXV:41)

Then he (the Patriarch) said:

'Inform me about His (*Allah's*) words, 'And upon that day eight shall carry above them the Throne of your Lord' (Qur'an LXIX:17).

How has Allah said so when you have said that Allah lifts the Throne, the heavens and the earth'

Ali ibn Abi Talib replied:

'Truly the Throne has been created by Allah, the Sublime, out of four categories of light: **There is the red light from which the red color derived its redness.** There is the green light from which the color green has derived its greenness. There is the yellow light from which the yellow color has derived its yellowness and there is the white light from which the white color derived its whiteness. It (*the Throne or white light*) is the knowledge which has been imparted by Allah to those who hear it. And this (*knowledge*) is the light from and out of His Majesty. Thus, through His Majesty and Light, Allah made the hearts of the believers realize Him. And because of Allah's Majesty and Light, the ignorant turned hostile to Him. And also because of His Majesty and Light, all the creatures, whether in the heavens or the earth, seek the means for an approach to Him (*Allah*), through various acts (*of obedience*) and through religions that they are allied to. Thus, everything that has been lifted, Allah lifts it through His Light, His Majesty and His Power. These things have no power to hurt nor profit themselves, not power of death or life, or rising up. Hence everything
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is lifted (*by Allah*). Allah, the Almighty, the Exalted, is He Who holds the heavens and the earth lest they remove, and it is He Who encompasses them and everything, and it is He Who is the Life and the Light of everything.

'Glory be to Him! High indeed be He exalted above what they say.' (Qur'an XVII:43).

"He (*the Patriarch*) asked him (*Ali ibn Abi Talib*), 'Tell me where is Allah, the Almighty, the Great?'

Ali ibn Abi Talib replied:

'He (*Allah*) says:

'He (*Allah*) is here, there, above, beneath, around and with us. This is what He (*Allah*) says:

'Three men conspire not secretly together, but He is the fourth of them, neither five men, but He is the sixth of them, neither fewer than that, but He is with them, wherever they may be.' (Qur'an LVIII:7)

Thus the Throne (the comprehensive seat of His Authority and Knowledge) encompasses all the heavens and the earth and whatever is between the two, and what is beneath the lowest of the low, below the earth.

'And be you loud in your speech, yet surely He knows the secret and that yet more hidden.' (Qur'an XX:7)

This is what these words of Allah, the Sublime mean:

"His chair comprises the heavens and earth; the

preserving of them tires him not; He is the All-high, the All-glorious.' (Qur'an II:255)

Those who bear the Throne of Supreme Authority are the learned scholars upon whom Allah has bestowed His Knowledge. Out of these four things (The Throne, the Chair, The heavens and the earth) there is nothing of that which Allah has created in His Kingdom, (the Kingdom) which He has shown to His chosen ones and which He showed to His friend (Abraham) as He says:

'So We showed Abraham the Kingdom of the heavens and earth, that he might be of those having sure faith.' (Qur'an VI:75)

How can the bearers of the Throne bear Allah (Himself) while their hearts are alive through the life (bestowed by) Allah and through Divine Light they are guided to know Him?"(124)

"Abu Qurrah went in to the Imama (Ali al-Ridha or Ali Reza, the Eighth Imam) and inquired about the lawful and unlawful. Then, he said to him (the Imam), 'Do you admit that Allah is (in a state of) being
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carried'

The Imam replied,

'Everything carried is (passive), i.e., acted upon by someone else, and in need (of others). The word "carried" in itself connotes deficiency and need. On the other hand the carrier is (active) i.e., the one who acts. The word "carrier" signifies analogy within itself, just as the words above, below, the very high and the very low are generally used by speakers. Allah has also said,

'And to Allah (alone) belongs (all) the most beautiful names, so call Him by them.' (Qur'an VII:180)

And He has never said in His book (the Qur'an) that He has been carried. Rather, He has said that He carries on land and sea

('We have honored the children of Adam and carried them on land and sea.[Qur'an XVII:70]) 'And it is He Who holds the heavens and earth lest they remove' (Qur'an XXXV:41)

And everything which is carried is always apart from Allah. It has never been heard that anyone who believes in Allah and His Majesty called Him (Allah) "O the carried".

Abu Qurrah inquired: "Allah Himself said:

'And the angels shall stand upon its borders and upon that day eight shall carry above them the Throne of your Lord.'" (Qur'an LXIX:17)
And regarding the verse:

'Those who bear the Throne and those round about it, proclaim the praise of their Lord, and believe in Him, and they ask forgiveness for those who believe; 'O Lord, You embrace every thing in mercy and knowledge; therefore for give those who have repented and follow Your Way, and guard them against the chastisement of Hell, Our Lord and admit them to Gardens of Eden that You have promised them and those who were righteous of their fathers, and their wives, and their seed; surely You are the All-mighty, the All-wise' (Qur'an XL:7-9)

The Imam replied,

'The Throne by itself is not Allah. The Throne is the name (having two meanings, one of which is) His Knowledge and (the other) His Might, which includes each and every thing with it. Further, Allah has
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attributed the bearing (of His Throne) to some among His creatures who are other than He Himself. Since through the bearing of the Throne Allah has made His creatures worship Him. The bearers of the Throne are those who are the bearers of His Knowledge and those creatures who glorify Him around His Throne (i.e., the second meaning). They act according to their knowledge. They include the angels who record the doings of mankind. Allah has made the inhabitants of the earth worship Him by their circumambulating His House (the Ka'abah). And Allah sat Himself upon the Throne as He Himself said. (Qur'an XX:5) Allah holds and protects the Throne, its bearers and all that is around His Throne. Allah is the One Who holds them and sustains them and every sentient being. He is over and above all these things, and fully prevails over them. He cannot be regarded as carried or (as being) underneath anything. These words are quite improper, having no (logical) basis. Such words are wicked both in their letter and their spirit.'

At this point Abu Qurrah said:

'Do you falsify the tradition narrated (to us) which says,

"Truly when Allah becomes angry His wrath is known through (the increased) weight (which the angels feel) on their shoulders while carrying the Throne. (At that moment) the angels forthwith lie in prostration. When (Allah's) wrath subsides, the weight of the Throne lightens, and the angels return to their former

position." (name of author or said tradition not given; presumably the Prophet Muhammad).

Hearing this, the Imam Ali Reza said,

"Tell me, whether Allah, be Blessed the Sublime, has or has not been wrathful over since He cursed Iblis (Satan), and tell me when He became pleased with Iblis. (No doubt) Allah has ever since been wrathful over Iblis, his friends and followers. Therefore, the angels, who carry the Throne, must be lying in prostration till now! Further, how do you dare to associate with Allah the attribute of changing from mood to mood and state to state. And how do you dare to imply to Him (the Creator) what is applicable to the created while Allah is glorified and too high) above this? Allah has never perished along with changes, and never alters along with things that alter. Everything beside He Himself is fully in His hold and at His disposal. All are in need of Him but He (Allah), besides Himself, is in need of nothing at all." (125)

Said Fudayl ibn Yasar:

"I inquired of Imam Ja'afar (Ja'afar as-Sadiq, the
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sixth Imam) regarding the verse of (Allah) the Almighty, the Great:

'His Chair comprises the heavens and earth.' (Qur'an II:255)

The Imam replied:

'O Fudayl, all things, the heavens and the earth, are all within the Chair."
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Said Zurarah ibn Ayan:

"I inquired of Imam Ja'afar) (Ja'afar as-Sadiq, the Sixth Imam) regarding the words of Allah, the Almighty, the Great, 'His Chair comprises the heavens and earth'; 'Do the heavens and earth include the Chair, or does the Chair include the heavens and earth?'

The Imam said:

"It is the Chair which comprises the heavens, the Earth and the Throne. The Chair (also) includes every (other) thing.'" (127)

Said Abi Hamza:

Said Imam Ja'afar (the Sixth Imam):

"The bearers of the Throne - the Throne is knowledge - are eight. Four are from amongst us (the progeny of the Prophet Muhammad), and four are from those amongst those whom Allah wished." (128)

Said Dawud ar-Riqqi:

I inquired of Imam Ja'afar (the Sixth Imam) regarding the following words of Allah, the Almighty, the Great,

"And His Throne was upon the water. (Qur'an XI:7)

The Imam inquired,
'What do people say about it?'

I replied:

'People say that the Throne was upon the water and Allah was on the Throne.'

The Imam said:

'They are liars. He who thinks thusly has made Allah (transportable), someone carried and (in this way) has ascribed to Him the attributes of the created. Further, this proves as a necessity that what bears and lifts Allah must be stronger than Allah Himself.'

I requested the Imam,

'May I be made your ransom! Kindly enlighten me
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on this point.'

The Imam said:

'Truly, Allah, prior to creating the heavens and earth, the jinn, mankind, the sun and the moon put His Religion and Knowledge on the water. When Allah intended to create the creatures, He spread them all before Him and questioned them,

'Who is your Lord?'

The first and foremost who replied (to this question) were the Messenger of Allah (the Prophet Muhammad), Amir al-Muminin (Ali ibn Abi Talib) and the other Imams. They said,
"You are our Lord."

At this, Allah made them bear His Knowledge and Religion and addressed the angels,

"Those are the bearers of My Religion and My Knowledge, and are My custodians over My creatures, and these are the people who will be called upon to give account."

Then Allah addressed the sons of Adam (mankind):

"Acknowledge the Lordship of Allah and the rulership of these people and their obedience."

Mankind replied:

"Yes, our Lord, we do acknowledge ."

Then Allah addressed the angels:

"Be witnesses (to them)."

At this the angels affirmed saying:

"We are witnesses to them, so that they may not deny tomorrow and say:

'As for us, we were heedless of this.' (Qur'an VII:172)

Or they may say:

"Our fathers were idolaters aforetime, and we are seed after them. What, will you then destroy us for the deeds of the vain-doers?" (Qur'an VII:173.

Said the Imam:

"O Dawud, Our rule is highly stressed to them in the pledge." (129)

We now refer to a work called Book of the Red Hyacinth, the word "hyacinth" referring to a precious stone, not to the familiar flower of the same name. This book was written in the middle of the nineteenth century by Shaykh Muhammad Karim-Khan Kirmani, disciple of Shaykh Ahmad Ahsa'I, founder of the Shaykhi

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School of Iranian Shi'a philosophy.

As we said earlier, there are no more implacable enemies of the intellectual poison, the pernicious nonsense known as "Nominalism" than the Shi'a philosophers of Iran. Let this be to the great honor of said philosophers and to Shi'ism.

Qur'an XV:21 says:

"There are no things whose treasures (khaza'in) do not exist alongside us. We make them descend only in determined proportions."

For the Shi'a thinkers of Iran, the "treasures" mentioned above are the "archetypes" or "Platonic forms". All spatio-temporal phenomena are the result of a "descent of archetypes" or "descent of Platonic forms" from superior worlds. (130)

At this time it might be wise to explain the concept of *Ta'wil*, much used by Shaykh Muhammad Kirmani, who defines it as:

"Consisting in referring the literal appearance back to one of the archetypes or Platonic forms (*khaza'in* in any case)[or in exchanging the literal value for one of the treasures of the archetypes

or Platonic forms].(131)

We shall have occasion to return to the concept of ta'wil.

The first part of Book of the Red Hyacinth is a long treatise on qualitative physics. This last may sound like an oxymoron to many people, to whom "physics" is quantitative by definition. Rene Guenon would call this another example which proves that today we live in the "reign of quantity", while to the poet William Blake it is "single vision and (Isaac) Newton's sleep." E.A. Burtt, Aldous Huxley and Seyyed Hossein Nasr among others have described how everything not amenable to mathematical

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treatment was arbitrarily excluded from the scientific world view.

The scientific world view may be correct as far as it goes, but it has its limitations and deals only with a part of reality, probably a small part. Even logical positivists, such as Ayer, have now admitted that they were in error.

We now proceed with those parts of Book of the Red Hyacinth which deal specifically with the color red.

Firstly, there is the ta'wil of the exoteric dimension of the color red.

Recall the words of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib saying that red is the color of the lower left hand pillar of the Throne of Mercy, and that it is from this pillar that "the color red gets its redness". Thus, said pillar is the archetype from which the color red descends into the spatio-temporal world. Also, this fourth pillar of the Throne of Mercy is typified by the Archangel Gabriel, and is Nature, comprised of four modalities: Fire (red),

which is the very nature of being; Air (yellow), which is its exemplary image; Water (white), which is matter. And Earth (black) which is its body. The descending order of the elements, Fire, Air, Water, Earth, is reversed in the spatio-temporal world, which ascends from Earth to Fire. According to a parable or analogy, when the Creator produced a red hyacinth (hence the title of Shaykh Kirmani's work), He contemplated it with admiration, and the red hyacinth melted into water (the reciprocity of Fire and Water; as any chemistry student knows, the burning of hydrogen produces water, hence the reciprocity of Fire and Water is true in

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both qualitative and quantitative physics). Out of the foam of this Water God created the Earth; out of its vapor He created Heaven. Shaykh Kirmani explains that the red hyacinth typifies Nature: it becomes Water which is Nature's matter; Heaven, which is the world of archetypes or Platonic forms (called, in a phrase coined by Henry Corbin, *Mundus Imaginalis*), is created from its subtle vapor, while Earth is turned into telluric mass, which is the world of bodies. Thus, the symbol of the red hyacinth which includes the totality of the four fundamental modalities.(132)

We now come to the esoteric dimension of the color red. This takes us from the Throne of Mercy to the Throne of the *Walayah* (*dusti* in Persian), which literally means "Friendship", or, by extension, "attachment", and refers to the Twelve Imams. It is the *walayah* or *dusti* of the Imams which transforms the Religion of Law to the Religion of Love. The Christian resonances are obvious.

The correspondence between the Throne of Mercy and the Throne of Walayah is perfect. The pillar of white light of the Throne of Walayah is the Twelfth Imam, the "Hidden Imam". As he is the last Imam, he is at the apex of the "upper right-hand pillar" of the Throne of Walayah.

The lower right-hand pillar of yellow light is Ali ibn Abi Talib, the First Imam.

The upper left-hand pillar of green light represents Hasan ibn Ali, the Second Imam.

The lower left-hand pillar of red light represents Hussein

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ibn Ali, the Third Imam, made "Prince of Martyrs" by the tragedy of Karbala.

The throne of the Walayah of the Imams is the esoteric dimension of the Throne of Mercy. The fourth pillar, made red by the light of the martyred Imam Hussein, is the esoteric dimension of the fourth pillar of the Throne of Mercy, which is Nature, represented by the color red.

Shaykh Kirmani recounts a beautiful legend which says that on a feast day Imam Hasan and Imam Hussein, then children, asked the Prophet Muhammad, their grandfather, to give them a garment as a gift, and two white robes dropped down from Heaven. Hasan and Hussein then declared that they would prefer it if the two robes were dyed the colors they wished. Hasan asked for his robe to be dyed green as an emerald, but Hussein said that he wanted his robe to be the color of the red hyacinth. The Archangel Gabriel obliged. The Prophet Muhammad rejoiced, but Gabriel began to

weep. When the Prophet asked Gabriel why he was weeping, the archangel replied that Hasan would be poisoned, while Hussein would be assassinated.

Another legend reveals the link between the Archangel Gabriel, the fourth pillar of the red light of the Throne of Mercy, and Imam Hussein, fourth pillar of the red light of the Throne of Walayah by saying that the Prophet Muhammad clothed Imam Hussein in a garment woven of the Archangel Gabriel's hair.

Yet another legend expresses the same esoteric knowledge by saying that in paradise the palace of Imam Hasan is emerald green,

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while that of Imam Hussein is the color of the red hyacinth.

We now have reached the esoteric dimension of the *ta'wil* of the color red. In the angelic tetrad which supports the Throne of Mercy, it is the Archangel Gabriel who is the angel of Nature, whose color is red. There is a tradition which says:

"The red rose is an effusion of the Archangel Gabriel".

How the Irish poet William Butler Yeats would have loved the above tradition, had he known of it! One is reminded of Yeats' saying that the rose is the mystical flower of the West (which in this context most certainly includes Persia) as the lotus is the mystical flower of the East.

Thus, it is obvious that there is a perfect correspondence between the tetrad of theophanic universes, the angelic tetrad of the Throne of Mercy, and the tetrad of the Throne of Walayah, and that in each tetrad there is an anamnesis of the color red.

The esoteric dimension of the *ta'wil* of Nature, typified by

the color red may also be the esoteric knowledge of the sciences of Divine Love, so beloved of the Sufis and many of the Christian mystics. Imam Ja'afar as-Sadiq, the Sixth Imam, speaks of Divine Love as:

Fire that unexpectedly invades the depths of the heart and consumes all that is not the Beloved Object.

One hears echoes of the words of Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq in the Gulistan of Saadi:

Oh nightingale, learn from the moth to love
That shrivels in the flame without a sigh

And, most especially, in Oh Living Flame of Love by the
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Sixteenth century Spanish poet and mystic St. John of the Cross:

O living flame of love
How tenderly you wound
My soul in its deepest center!
Now that You are not hiding
Finish now if You will
Break the thread of this sweet encounter.

Oh sweet captivity!
Oh wound that is a gift!
That savors of Eternal Life
And pays all debts
Killing, You have transformed death into life.

Oh lamps of fire
In whose brilliance
The deep caverns of the senses
That were dark and blind
With strange
Heat and light give beside the Beloved.

What gentle and lovely
Memories in my bosom
Where secretly only You abide
And with Your sweet sighs
Filled with righteousness and glory
With what delicacy You taught me of love!

We shall have more to say of this in the chapter which deals with St. John of the Cross and Sufism.

As we shall see, in a very real sense St. John of the Cross may be considered a spiritual master in a line begun by Hasan ibn Ali, the Second Imam. It is very true that the sayings of the Imams are a mine of spiritual knowledge!

Now we have come to the *ta'wil* of the exoteric dimension of the color red. The *ta'wil* of the esoteric dimension of the color red was disclosed to us in the person of Imam Hussein. Now, the esoteric dimension of the color red leads us to the *Imam within*, a concept found in the greatest spiritual masters of Persian

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Shi'ism: Najamuddin Kubra, Mullah Sadra Shirazi and a long et cetera.

According to Shaykh Kirmani, there is an Imam Hussein within each man, his intellect, whose light derives from the Imam. However, this inner Imam is surrounded by enemies, i.e., the powers of the carnal soul that come from the Imam's enemies. So, within every man is reenacted the tragedy of Karbala. As Shaykh Kirmani says:

"In the Karbala of his heart, it may be that the powers of the carnal soul kill the intellect and the angelic companions who assist it, and uproot all traces of them from Man's heart. Then indeed there is accomplished in each one of us, word for word, the *ta'wil* of the tragedy of Karbala." (133)

Shaykh Kirmani continues:

"While the esoteric dimension of the color red is Imam Hussein, because he died a martyr's death at Karbala, the *ta'wil* of this esoteric dimension is man's intellect, because all intellects derive from the irradiation and the light of this esoteric dimension (i.e., from the Imam), intellects that can be murdered by the carnal soul and its assistants." (134)

Obviously, said assistants of the carnal soul may be the Minions of Yezid (the Umayyad Caliph under whom Imam Hussein was Assassinated) or those of Ahriman, Iblis or Satan.

In La Queste del Sant-Graal, Percival's aunt, a holy recluse, tells him:

"In the same way, I think, the knight whom you ought to regard as master and shepherd (Galahad) came to comfort you. For just as Our Lord (Jesus) came in the appearance of a flame (to His apostles at Pentecost), so the knight came in red armor, in colors like fire." (135)

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Anyone familiar with Celtic mythology and folklore knows that in Celtic lore a red cap is a sign of a supernatural being.

As we shall see, the rooster or cock was sacred to Celts, Slavs, and, apparently, Scythians, Sarmatians and Alans. The cock or rooster is very frequently used as a decorative or artistic motif in Sassanian glassware. (136) This is the origin of the cock as a symbol of France. The rooster or cock certainly wears a "red cap".

The Sufi master Suhrawardi wrote a book titled The Story of the Red Archangel, which, I suppose, refers to the Archangel Gabriel.

The *Mithras* of the Mithraism prevalent in the Roman Empire is always portrayed wearing a red cap. (137)

The elite cavalry of the early Safavis were known as *qizil bash* in Turkish or *surkh sar* in Persian, in both cases meaning "red heads" because of the red felt caps which they wore over their helmets and the red back cloths which were part of their uniform. Said red felt caps had twelve folds for the Twelve

Imams.

There is the *oriflamme*, the red pennant which was one of the banners of medieval France.

We must not forget the red beret of the Carlists; the Carlists fight for a branch of the Bourbons, and red is **not** a color of the Bourbons, nor is it a color of the Habsburgs to whom the Carlists became attached because the mother of Carlos de Borbon y Austria-Este was a Habsburg.

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Finally, there are the red vestments of the cardinals, the "Princes of the Catholic Church".

We now return to the visionary cycle.

"The lord-companion Imam Ja'afar, giver of our salvation, then proclaimed his secret:

"O Muhammad (Abu'l Khattab), I quench the thirst of faithful adepts, the pure, the noble, the just, with this drink which I have forbidden to common libertines. I have offered it to my faithful who are present in this world and in the other world. But to the common libertines I have imposed yoke and chains, and have sent them into the desert of those who lose their way."

As for us, we were rapt in contemplation of the beauty and light which radiated from the dome. Then my lord (Imam Ja'afar as-Sadiq) spoke to us again:

"I have chose you, I have attracted you to me, and you have come near by remaining with my Friends. If it had been otherwise, your eyes would have been torn out by the power of this Light, and you would have fainted in terror upon hearing this voice. But I have made it so that this is an honor for you and a disgrace to your adversaries. Therefore, welcome this in recognition, for today is the day of surplus."

And the Imam recited this verse:

For those who do good is excellent reward and more: no darkness (or dust) shall cover their face nor ignomy befall them; these are the dwellers of the garden; in it shall they abide."

(Qur'an X:27)

At this moment the cup (grail) began to once more descend towards us. But this time it was empty, with not a drop remaining. Then Abu'l Khattab said to his companions:

"Behold, this cup has circulated through the temples of all the non-Arabs, throughout all the seven periods of the world, all of them are your brothers in faith and esoteric knowledge. You have drunk with them from this cup, for you are of the number of the Nobles. And I have given you to drink your fill of this beverage today, just as I
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gave you to drink of it in the times which came before."

Then Abu'l Khattab took the cup, filled it again, and gave it to Musa ibn Ashyam, telling him:

May God give you life, O Friend of the Merciful!"

And Ibrahim (play on words, no one present was named "Ibrahim", which literally means "Friend of the Merciful"), Friend of the Merciful, took the cup in his hands and drank from it.

Then the lord (Abu'l Khattab) said:

"May God's drink bring great good to you. By my life! Through this drink, you have tasted the knowledge of the Malakut., the knowledge of all that was in the first of the centuries, and throughout all the world. Henceforth, you may speak any language. Having tasted of this drink, you know the language of the birds, and of all that breathes upon the surface of the earth."

Afterward, Musa ibn Ashyam said:

"I bear witness to Him Who created me in harmony! After drinking from this cup, there remained no being nor any thing, neither on earth nor in Heaven, nor anywhere in between, whose language remained hidden to me."

Then Abu'l Khattab had each of us partake of the beverage, and he told us:

"Today you are in the house of surplus.

Speak then and I shall listen. Supplicate, pray, and welcome any appeals."

We:

May this drink be allowable for our absent friends, even as you have allows it for us.

A-Kh:

This wine is allowed for your brothers, when they are in the company of brothers in faith and in esoteric knowledge. But this wine is forbidden to you and to them, when not in the company of your brothers (in
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faith and esoteric knowledge). For God has requited your act of drinking your fill and nourishing yourselves with this beverage, by removing the four basic polluted Natures from you, those which are the cause of blame. Do you know by what grace you have attained to this eminent rank, this sublime and noble degree?

We:

By what grace have we then attained it?

A-Kh:

Imagine that one of you had just gone to bed. Having just placed his head upon his pillow, the thought comes to him of one of his brothers who is weaker, and who has been left behind in regards to food, drink, clothing, and does not even possess a mount. This makes him rise from his bed in consternation, so anxious that he goes straight to his brother, and puts his affairs in order as if they were his own. Well, it is by this manner of action that you have been raised to this high degree and eminent rank.

Musa ibn Ashyam:

Glory to God! How sublime is the spiritual virtue of this action, both inwardly (esoterically) and outwardly (exoterically).

We now interrupt the narrative to elucidate a point.

Tahmuras, Avestan *Takhma Urupi*, is one of the kings of the mythological Pishdadi dynasty. In the Avesta, Tahmuras or Takhma Urupi is known as the "demon binder" and to have ruled over demons (Persian *div*, Avestan *daeva*), fairies (Persian *peri*, Avestan

pairika) and sorcerers (Persian *jadu*, Avestan *yatu*). Tahmuras of Takhma Urupi is also the binder of Angra Mainyu, the "Demon of Demons", who dwells with his evil brood in the bowels of the earth to make onslaughts on the world of righteousness. (138)

Under the "Major Bahmanian Dome", Tahmuras or Takhma Urupi
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is the equivalent of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib, as he is called "Emir of the Bees". Abu'l Khattab reminds us of the sacred nature of the name Bahman, since this is the name of the First Archangel (*Amesha Spenta*) who emanated from Ohrmazd (*Ahura Mazda*). Under the First Bahmanian Dome were two figures who bore the names Bahman (Avestan - *Vohu Manah*) and Hormoz (*Ahura Mazda*). One passed the cup to the other just as in the present visionary recital, and by virtue of the law of homology, Abu'l Khattab was then Hormoz: under the Muhammadan Dome, abu'l Khattab is what Hormoz was under the First Bahmanian Dome. (139)

We now return to the visionary recital.

A-Kh:

This is the cup of Tahmuras. He was the Emir of the Bees under the First Bahmanian Dome. It was he who presented the cup (Grail) to Bahman - and Bahman is the most sacred of names. Bahman passed the cup to Hormoz, and I was Hormoz, whom Bahman bade drink from the cup. I was thereupon filled with knowledge, wisdom and intelligence. This is why I desired that you find solace in this cup. Indeed, what is that which shields the efforts of believers to console each other from the vanities of Iblis (Ahriman, Satan)? They refrain from these vanities with their spiritual brothers, yet they heap them upon their own flesh and blood. Surely they will suffer painful punishment in the other world.

Abu Harun the Blind now concluded:

"Then the companions parted in happiness and lightness of heart. Never have I seen such a gathering of such beauty and light as this assembly. We were

brought together by the Grace of God, which had descended upon us along with His Benevolence. This is what our lord Abu'l Khattab has brought about especially for us, during the ceremony of the Cup (Holy Grail) with the grace that it brings. Glory be to God, Lord of the worlds. This recital is at and end."(140)

The resemblances and parallels of the Shi'a Liturgy of the

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Holy Grail with the Celtic, Persian and specifically Christian manifestations of the Holy Grail should be obvious to all and require no further comment.

The Holy Grail is so vast a topic that I could have written a book on it; in the notes are listed works which the reader interested in this fascinating topic may consult.

The Holy Grail demonstrates elements which Celts and Iranians have in common, parallel developments of these elements, and later Persian elements which fused with the Celtic traditions. Of course, it is not possible always to distinguish what is common to Celts and Iranians from what is a much later Persian influence. When speaking of the epic we will note that the Welsh-Breton Romance of Tristan and Isolt, which forms part of the Arthurian Cycle, the Irish Romance of Deirdre of the Sorrows and The Pursuit of Diarmaid and Grianne on the one hand, and the Parthian Romance of Vis and Ramin all have the same plot. For chronological reasons, the above must be a case of an element common to Celts and Iranians, or, at the very least, an example of parallel development of common elements. As Ireland had no "Sarmatian connections", in this case Sarmatian influence by way of Sarmatian cavalry stationed in Roman Britain is precluded.

However, the Quest of the Holy Grail and the Arthurian Cycle in general contain elements of undoubtedly Persian origin. In connection with *Guillot* (or *Guilhot*) de Provence (or *Proensa*) we have seen how Muslim Spain was one route by which Persian elements

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reached the Medieval Celtic World. Nevertheless, Muslim Spain cannot have been the only route by which Persian influences reached the Medieval Celtic World and so powerfully influenced the Grail Legend and the Arthurian Cycle in general; what were the other routes I do not pretend to know, and prefer to admit as much rather than promote theories which seem to me to be totally implausible.

The dog was held in reverence by both Druids and Zoroastrians. (141)

Since the words relating to religious worship would be among the last to change, this would seem to be a powerful support for the theory that the Celts are an Eastern Aryan people who migrated to the West. In the book Celtic Heritage: Ancient Tradition in Ireland and Wales by Alwyn Rees and Brinley Rees (London, 1961) one can hardly find a page without a reference to the Vedas or to the ancient Indo-Aryans.

Like the Magi, the Druids had their sacred fires, *atarsh* in Avestan(142), *atur* in Pahlavi(143). Says H. Hubert:

"... in Kildare (Ireland) the nuns of St. Brigid - who took the place of an ancient goddess (of the same name) - avoided with the same care as the Persian Magi the contamination of the sacred flame with their breath.(144)

In pagan times said sacred fires were far more numerous. In

pagan Ireland the main fires were at *Tara*, site of the royal palace, and at *Uisnech*, traditionally the geographical centre of Ireland(145). In the Rig Veda it is said: "Agni (god of fire) is

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at the center of the universe"(146).

As we said above, Lithuanian is generally considered to be the living language closest to the original Indo-European tongue. The Lithuanians, or Balts, were also fire worshippers. Says Marija Gimbutas:

"The Balts were great venerators of fire. *Lituani sacrum colebat ignem eumque perpetuum appellabat*. (Eneo Silvio, beginning of the 15th century.) Fire was sacred and eternal. Tribes had official sanctuaries on high hills and on river banks where fire was kept, guarded by priests, and in each house was the sacred hearth in which fire was never extinguished. Only once a year, on the eve of the midsummer festival, was it symbolically extinguished, and then kindled again. Fire was a goddess, who required offerings. She was fed and carefully guarded and covered over at night by the mother of the family. The Latvians call this flame 'mother of the fire', *uguns mate*; in Lithuanian it is *Gabija* (from the verb *gaubti*, 'to cover'); in Old Prussian *Panike*, 'the little fire'. Fire was the purifying element and the symbol of happiness. Legends relate that fire was transferred to earth by *Perkunas* in a storm, or that it was brought by a bird, usually a swallow, who burned itself while bringing it.(147)

The Slavs also venerated fire. Says Marija Gimbutas:

"The worship of the hearth fire, preserved among the Ukrainians and Belarussians, must once have been as strong among the Slavs as among the Balts: guarded by priests in the sanctuaries and by mothers in the home, the fire never went out except on the eve of the summer solstice festival, when it was symbolically extinguished and then rekindled. The north-west Slavic *Zuarasic* - Latin transliterations of Slavic at the time being quite haphazard - may have been identical with *Svarozhich* (Svarog's son), the early Russians' personification of the solar fire. Svarog's name is probably related to the Indic (Vedic Sanskrit) *svargas* 'radiant sky' and *svarati* 'gleams, shines'. The suffix *-og* shows his name to be of

Scythian, i.e., Iranian origin. He survives in the Rumanian adjective *sfarog* 'torrid, sunburnt', and in names of hills and towns along the Slavic-German borderline in Poland.

As generator of the sun, *Svarog* rates comparison
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with Vedic *Indra* and Iranian *Vrtragna*. *Indra's* great feat is the slaying of the *vritra*, 'obstruction', an evil serpent who has imprisoned the waters behind the 'mountain' (i.e., the sky). The Iranian warrior-god *Vrtragna*, as his name shows, also overcomes obstructions, though there is no record of him as a dragon-fighter. He is also a smith, associated with fire and with generative power, particularly of a sexual nature. A master craftsman, he can change his own form into that of the wind, the gold-horned aurochs, the boar, the horse, or the falcon *Varagna*, the last-named being his main incarnation. This suggests the Russian *bylina* of the *bogatyr' Volkh* (*volkhv* 'priest, sorcerer) who could turn himself into a grey wolf, a white bull with golden horns, or a bright falcon. It also suggests the creature in folklore, a supernatural falcon or hawk or a fiery dwarf who turns into a whirlwind, called *rarog* in Polish, *jarog* or *rarich* in Ukrainian, *rarach* in Czech. The whole character of *Svarog* is probably complicated by borrowings from the (Iranian) tradition of *Vrtragna*.(148)

In a later chapter we shall speak of fire worship among the Slavs.

Horse sacrifice was practiced by the Celts, Medes, Persians, Scythians, Sarmatians and Alans as well as by the Vedic Hindus or Vedic Indo-Aryans.(147)

We have a first-hand, eye-witness account of a ceremony practiced in Ireland as late as 1085 AD which is virtually identical in every detail to the Vedic **ASVAMEDHA** or "horse sacrifice.(148)

See Sanskrit: **ASVA**, - "horse":

MEDHA - "a sacrificial animal victim, an animal sacrifice, offering, oblation:

MEDHAJA - "sacrifice born", i.e., Vishnu:

MEDHAPATI - "lord of sacrifice":

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MEDHASATI - "the receiving or offering of the oblation; sacrificial ceremony; the offering of devotion, service or worship of the gods." (149)

The Hispano-Persian historian Isa ibn Ahmed ibn Muhammad al-Razi (9th-10th century) says that their name *al-Andalus* derives from the *Alandalush*, a pre-Roman people of Spain descended from Japhet who were *Magi* or "fire-worshippers" by religion. (150)

The name "al-Andalus" fits perfectly in the Celtic phonology, and therefore could be of Celtic origin, as al-Razi's statement strongly suggests. Indeed, the number of possible and plausible Celtic etymologies for this name is so large that it is difficult to come to any specific conclusion. One possible Celtic etymology would be *Erinn da Lugh*, i.e., "the Aryans of (the god) Lug", assuming that the name Lug was later given the Latin suffix "us", and that the "g" between the two "u" fell away. The name of the Lusitani, Celtic people from whom the name "Lusitania" as a name for Portugal is derived, is itself derived from the name of the god "Lug", and that also the name of the noble family *Lusignan* has the same origin. Another possible etymology would be from Atarush, "(the people of) the Sacred Fire", the "n" being added because of nasalization of the "a", and the "t" being sonorized to a "d". As anyone knows who has lived in Andalusia, confusion between the "l" and the "r" is quite common there. Also, the tendency to nasalize the vowels is quite noticeable in Portuguese

and the *patois* of many parts of Spain. Al-Razi being of Persian origin, it is to be supposed that he had knowledge of the Persian

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Magi, and therefore his testimony in this field is particularly valuable.

There is a word in Gallego (language of Galicia, in the extreme Northwest corner of Spain) called *aturuxo* (pronounced "aturusho"). It is at once the name of a dance, which does indeed resemble a ritual dance around a sacred fire, and of a sort of yell which is generally believed to be derived from a Celtic war cry. Said word is clearly not derived from Latin, nor does it mean anything in any of the surviving Celtic languages. Note, however, its resemblance to the Avestan *atarsh* (Sanskrit - *atarva* (151). One may postulate that the second "a" became a "u" by a process analogous to that which occurred between the Avestan *atarsh* and the Pahlavi *atur*, and that the "u" between the "r" and the "x" or "sh" was added as an aid to pronunciation. "Aturuxo", therefore, originally meant "sacred fire", something perfectly logical considering the present meanings of the word and the well proven fact that the Druids, like the Magi, had their sacred fires. This example is not unique, time after time I have found words and names in ancient chronicles which are evidently Celtic but meaningless in the surviving Celtic languages. In a very great number of cases said words yield a reasonable meaning when compared to Sanskrit, Avestan or Persian words of similar sound taking into account, of course, the laws of phonetic changes within the Indo-European languages. This fact is perfectly

consistent with the theory that the Celtic languages originally belonged to the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European family

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and gradually became "westernized" as a result of migration to the West and contact with Western Indo-European peoples, mainly Illyrians and Thracians.(152)

Water as well as fire was a sacred element of the Druids as well as the Magi(153). The Celtic goddess of water was *Danaan*, at times called *Anu*, equivalent to the Vedic *Danu* (154) and the Iranian *Anahita*(155). Memories of this goddess linger in the names of rivers from the river "Don" in Ukraine to the river "Don" in Scotland and in an infinite number of sacred wells and springs.

Said relics are particularly abundant in Spain. It is difficult not to see a dim memory of this goddess in the multitude of sacred springs throughout the length and breadth of Spain, perhaps the most famous of which is *Fuensanta* (Holy Spring) near Murcia, with its patroness Our Lady de la Fuensanta. "*Madre Mia de la Fuensanta*", say the Murcianos. On the outskirts of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia is a strong spring of very good water. Beside this spring is a medieval chapel called "A Nosa Senora da Fonte" (Our Lady of the Spring), and very nearby is one of the traditional sites of fires on the Night of St. John. The continuity with pre-Christian Celtic times is obvious. In all Northern Spain rivers named *Deva* or *Diva* abound. This *Deva* or *Diva* is simply the Sanskrit *Deva* (a god) (156), the Avestan *Daeva* (demon)(157). In Old Irish *Dia* (nom), *Dee* (gen) (158), *Deuo* in Gaulish, *Duw* in Old Welsh (159). This name retained its original

form fossilized in place names. Once again the farther back one goes in time the nearer are the Celtic languages to Sanskrit,

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Avestan and Persian. In Asturias the goddess Danu or Anu lives on as the *Xana* (Shana), reduced to the status of a water nymph of streams and springs, often believed to be the guardian of treasure (160).

Great was the Plantagenet or Angevin dynasty; with the exception of two or three "black sheep", its men were regal and kingly, its women lovely. The Plantagenets are usually considered to be Normans, but, in fact, were Normans only in the female line. As the name "Angevin" indicates, the Plantagenets were originally Counts of Anjou, that lovely and fertile land in northwestern France so near to both Brittany and La Vendee, where the *planta genesta* from whence the name "Plantagenet", still grows in profusion. The family name of the Counts of Anjou was "Lusignan", which, as we said before, indicates an ancient Gaulish and Celtic pedigree rather than a Roman, Frankish or Viking ancestry.

According to legend, Raymond de Lusignan, one of the earliest of the Counts of Anjou, fell in love with a beautiful girl with the very Celtic name *Melusine* (sometimes spelled "Melusina" or "Melisinde"). Melusine agreed to marry Count Raymond with the promise that he would never see her on Saturday. But one Saturday curiosity got the better of Count Raymond. He saw, to his horror, that from the waist down Melusine was a blue and white snake. Melusine died of the shock, but her ghost continued to haunt the castle of Chinon, frightening people with her swishing tail. To

this day visitor to the ruins of the castle of Chinon are advised to watch for and beware of snakes with blue and white tails.

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Melusine was one of the female ancestors of the Plantagenet or Angevin dynasty. (161)

A Scythian myth concerning the origin of said people, recounted by Herodotus, says that *Mixoparthenos*, mother of Scythes and thus female ancestor of the Scythians, was a woman from the waist up, but a snake from the waist down. (162)

As is well known, the Scythian chiefs were buried with rich and elaborate grave goods in mounds called *kurgans*, which were topped with life-size monolithic stone sculptures. (163)

At least in certain periods, Celtic chiefs were buried in a manner identical to that of the Scythian chiefs, even in the detail of the life-size monolithic stone sculpture topping the burial mound. (164) The presence in Armenia of the Persian custom of young girls strewing flowers on a swift-flowing stream in the spring has been noted. The same custom has also been noted in Russia. (165) I have personally noted this same custom in Galicia in Northwestern Spain, a strongly Celtic area to this day. In late spring in Galicia the young girls strew wild flowers over clear, swiftly-flowing streams. Only wild flowers will do, garden flowers not being acceptable. In Galicia this custom has taken on a local variant. After the wild flowers have been strewn on the clear, swiftly-flowing stream, other wild flowers are put in bottles of spring water (tap water will not do). After the wild flowers have steeped in the spring water for a few days, it is

considered good luck to wash one's face in the wild flower water. I myself have in late Spring received bottles of wild flower water

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from admirers of my column in the newspaper EL CORREO GALLEGO, instructing me that washing my face in it would bring good luck. No doubt this local variant arose because some of the wild flowers, notably chamomile and digitalis, do indeed have medicinal properties.

The presence of the Persian custom of young girls strewing flowers on swift-flowing streams in spring in Armenia and Russia may be easily attributed to Iranian origins, Median and Persian in the case of Armenia, Scythian or Saka in the case of Russia. For reasons which will be explained in Chapter II, an Iranian origin cannot be entirely ruled out for the presence of the same custom in Galicia, Spain. However, a Celtic origin for the above-mentioned custom appears far more plausible in the case of Galicia in Spain. There were indeed a few Alans who settled in Galicia in Spain, as will be explained in Chapter II. However, Galicia was very late in being conquered by the strongly Iranized (or "Saka'ized") Visigoths, and, in contrast to Castile and Leon, only a very small number of Visigoths ever settled in Galicia. Hence, though an Iranian origin for said Gallego custom cannot be entirely ruled out, a Celtic origin appears far more plausible. Perhaps the Alans reinforced to some extent a Celtic custom which already existed. This no doubt happened in many parts of Spain, Iranian elements which entered with the Alans and Visigoths reinforcing Celtic customs which already existed in Spain. In

summary, the Gallego custom of young girls strewing wild flowers on clear, swift-flowing streams in late spring is another example

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of the close kinship between Celts and Iranians.

The number "3" is sacred to the Druids, Magi and Brahmins. The Celtic "Trinity" was *Brian, Iuchar* and *Iucharba*. (166) In pagan Ireland the sacred fires, including those at Tara and Uisnech, were always triple: two main fires and one auxiliary fire. Likewise, among the ancient Indo-Aryans the sacrificial fires were always triple, called *Garhapatya, Arhavaniya* and *Dakshina*, following the same arrangement as in Ireland. In Sassanian times in Iran there were also three classes of sacred fires: *Farnbag, Gushnasp* and *Burzin Mihr* (167). Thus the clover, (shamrock) is the symbol of Ireland. It is an Irish saying the "the third time is the charm". In Santiago de Compostela it is a very old custom that pilgrims strike their heads three times against a pillar on entering the cathedral. The "Trinity" of the Vedas is Indra, Mitra and Varuna, and in later Hinduism is Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva (168). The "Trinity" of the Achaemenian Persians and the Parthians was Ahura Mazda, Mithra and Anahita; Parthian coins have been found which show three fires burning on three altars (169).

In Spain as in other countries with a Celtic background, June 23, St. John's Eve, the eve of the day of St. John the Baptist, the old Celtic midsummer festival, or festival of the Summer Solstice, is celebrated with enormous bonfires. A song known all over Spain but especially popular in Asturias goes:

A coger el trebole, trebole, trebole

La noche de San Juan

A coger el trebole, trebole, trebole
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Mis amores van

(To gather clover, clover, clover
The night of St. John

To gather clover, clover, clover
My loves go.)

What could be at once more Celtic and more Iranian: gathering clover, which symbolizes the sacred number 3, on the night of the sacred fires?

In Iran, bonfires are also part of the celebration of "Now Ruz", the Persian New Year, which falls on the date of the Spring Equinox. To this day in Iran it is a custom to jump over the bonfires of Now Ruz. (170) Jumping over the bonfires of St. John's Eve (June 23, time of the Summer Solstice) is also a custom in Spain, where I have seen young men badly burned doing this.

According to the calendar of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Day of St. John the Baptist (*Ivan Kupala* in Church Slavonic, Russian and Ukrainian) falls on July 7 rather than June 24, but this is still close to the Summer Solstice. In Russia and Ukraine on the eve of the day of St. John the Baptist bonfires are lit, and young people try to jump over them. As in Spain clover is collected on the Eve of the day of St. John the Baptist, in Russia and Ukraine ferns and special herbs are collected on this holiday. (171)

Catherine de Hueck Doherty was born Ekaterina (Katya) Feodorovna Kolyschkine in Russia on August 15, 1896. After serving as a nurse on the frontline in World War I, Katya fled to Finland

to escape the Bolsheviks. Later she emigrated to Canada, and,

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known as "The Baroness" because of the title she had inherited, became known for her philanthropic works in both Canada and USA. Below is her first hand account of the Day of St. John the Baptist (*Ivan Kupala*) in rural Russia before World War I:

"And the feast days! So many of them are marked forever in my heart with ways and customs that made them both holy and gay. A joy forever!

St. John the Baptist's Day, for illustration, was celebrated with huge bonfires. They seemed to reach the very skies, and they always brought out daring young men who jumped through dancing flames. Strangely enough they all came out unscathed and untouched by those fiery and dangerous fingers! Probably each whispered a quick prayer to the fearless saint.

On the same day the girls would weave beautiful wreaths from the many field flowers that bloomed about that time of the year. Laden with them, they would go to the nearest river or lake and, taking careful aim, throw them into the water to the accompaniment of age-old verses whose origin was lost in the dimness of centuries gone by. These rhymes expressed their hopes and desires.

This rite performed, the girls would run along the banks, a colorful and beautiful crowd, dressed in their naive costumes. Each would watch her own wreath breathlessly, for the wreath that kept afloat longest promised its owner marriage within a year. And where is the young heart that does not yearn for love and romance?"(172)

Note that part of the account of the Day of St. John the Baptists (*Ivan Kupula*) in rural Russia which deals with the bonfires is not only similar to that in Galicia in northwestern Spain, it is identical. In Galicia the Celtic origin of said custom is still remembered, as the cry "eee-hooo-hoooo-hooo", called by the very Iranian-sounding name *Aturuxo* (pronounced: "Aturusho") is said to be an ancient Celtic war cry. Another of many examples of the affinities between Celts, Slavs and Iranians.

As we will note several times in this work, Celts, Iranians and Slavs share a great many customs and other common elements. There is indeed a certain affinity between Celts and Slavs; virtually all Celts, including virtually all Spaniards, are Slavophiles, lovers of Russian and Ukrainian music, art and literature which brings up an interesting point. Since Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia and Southern Poland all contain Celtic substrata which hopelessly complicate the question, in this connection we will deal only with the East Slavs, i.e., Russians and Ukrainians.

The earliest known people to inhabit what are now the Ukrainian Steppes from the Volga to the Rumanian border were the Cimmerians, about whom little is known, save that they were certainly Indo-Europeans. That the Cimmerians were Celts is a most reasonable and plausible supposition. Robert Howard, original author of the Conan series of novels and short stories, was an erudite in Indo-European studies. Conan, the protagonist of said novels, is obviously a Celt, and Howard unhesitatingly called him "Conan the Cimmerian" and "Conan of Cimmeria", thus affirming that the Cimmerians were Celts. Indeed, said supposition fits the known facts perfectly, as well as being in agreement with Celtic legend. The Welsh call themselves *Cymru*, and similar names appear throughout the Celtic world either as ethnic and tribal names or as place names. Take off the English suffix "ian", and "Cimmerian" becomes "Cimmer", for practical purposes identical to

numerous Celtic ethnic, tribal and place names. Also, in the Russian and Ukrainian Steppes there are a number of river names - Dniestr, Dniepr, Donets, Don, perhaps even Volga (though the name "Volga" may be Finno-Ugrian) - which appear to be Celtic.

However, others have noted that because a supposition is reasonable and plausible is not conclusive proof that it is true, that when one is dealing with two Indo-European peoples a common ethnic or tribal name is not proof that one may be equated with the other beyond a common Indo-European base, and that said river names could most certainly be Celtic, but, except for "Volga", they could just as well be Iranian. Though many accept the theory that the Cimmerians were Celts, others believe that they were Thracians, while yet others believe that they were Iranians. In all probability the exact ethnic identity of the Cimmerians, what would be their place within the great Indo-European family, will remain forever a mystery, one of the many enigmas of Indo-European studies.

There is one fact besides Celtic legend and the coincidence of the name "Cimmerian" with numerous Celtic names which appears to support the idea that Cimmerians were indeed Celts. The earliest known culture universally considered to be Celtic is Hallstatt culture of the Danube basin (circa 900 - 700 BC). Though not perhaps in its earlier stages, the Hallstatt culture was one which came to know the technique of iron smelting, thus passing from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age. At about the same time as the Hallstatt culture was in its early to mid stages, the

Cimmerians, perhaps due to Scythian pressure from the East, invaded the Caucasus, where iron smelting had been known since Hittite times. Thus the question of the precedence of the knowledge of iron smelting present in the Hallstatt Culture is answered; the Cimmerian-Celts learned of iron smelting in the Caucasus, and passed this knowledge to the Danubian Cimmerian-Celts. This would seem to be confirmed by the fact that the latest Cimmerian burials and the earliest Scythian burials in the Russian and Ukrainian Steppes contain iron implements of Hallstatt type. (173) Thus, the Cimmerian-Celts became strong in the Danube area and other parts of Central Europe, which became the nucleus of later Celtic expansion. One branch of the Cimmerians settled in Phrygia or Central Anatolia. This would explain why a later Celtic wave settled in Central Anatolia, becoming the Galatians of the New Testament, but did not Celticize Thrace nor Bithynia; in Central Anatolia these Celts reinforced a Cimmerian-Celtic population already there. In any case, in Cimmerian times the Slavs still lived far to the Northwest of the Russian and Ukrainian Steppes; therefore, the Scythians were the first people of the Russian and Ukrainian Steppes who could have had a strong influence on the Slavs. (174)

In cases like this where one is dealing with three Indo-European peoples, i.e., Celts, Iranians and Slavs, one can never be certain what proceeds from the common Indo-European base.

However, it is most certainly true that Celts, Iranians and Slavs share certain customs which they do not share with other

Indo-European peoples, some of which we have already mentioned and others will be mentioned throughout this work. Therefore, I am inclined that the explanation for the many common elements among Celts, Iranians and Slavs is the very strong Iranian, i.e., Scythian, Sarmatian and Alan, influence on the Slavs.

According to the poet Abu Bakr ibn al-Qutiyya (Abu Bakr Son of the Goth), the three great holidays of the Hispano-Muslims were *Mihrajan*, *'Id* and *Nowruz*. Two of these are of special interest to us. The word "Mihrajan" is Persian (Avestan: *Mithrakana*), meaning "birth of the Light"; the word *Mihr* being derived from the name of the god *Mithra*, one of whose functions was as god of light. The word *Nowruz* is also Persian, and means "New Year", literally, "New Light". In Iran *Nowruz* is celebrated on the date of the Spring Equinox, but in al-Andalus it was celebrated in the first days of January. Thus, the Persian New Year was confused with the Christian New Year and also with Epiphany. *Mihrajan* is also of Persian origin, as we said above. In Persia, *Mihrajan* is celebrated at the time of the Autumn Equinox, but in al-Andalus was celebrated on June 24, or at the time of the Summer Solstice.(175) Thus the Persian *Mihrajan* was conflated with St. John's Eve, which, as we have said, is a festival of Celtic origin. Thus, two of the three most popular holidays of Muslim Spain bore Persian names, though in practice one was confused with the Christian New Year and Epiphany, while the other was confused with a festival of Celtic origin, though long given a Christian name. It is interesting to note that the name *ibn al-Qutiyya*,

pronounced "ibn al-Gutiyya" in al-Andalus, means "son of the Goth", leaving no doubt as to the poet's Spanish ancestry.

The ancient Irish chronicle Leabhar na Gabhala or "Book of Invasions" speaks of a great king in Spain named "Breoghan", who founded the city of Braganza among others. One of his descendants, named "Milidh", served as a mercenary in Egypt and returned to Spain where he died, but soon afterward a group of Celts left Spain for the conquest and definitive Celtization of Ireland.(176) It is interesting to note that in the Irish tradition the three most ancient Gaelic poems were written by a Spaniard, the bard of the people of Milidh" called Amergin Glungel. Said poems are clearly pagan and are of a philosophical-theological nature, since their main topic is reincarnation.(177)

The name "Milidh" appears to be related to the two Sanskrit words: *mil* = "assembly" or "congregation", and, by extension, "army" (see the Latin *miles*) and the suffix *dha*, "he who has" or "owner". "Milidh", therefore means "Leader of the Army".(178)

Note that a particular city, Braganza, is mentioned, together with a reasonable etymology of its name. Also, said quotation from the Leabhar na Gabhala is related to certain Spanish legends.

The local legend of the city of La Coruna in Galicia concerns a lighthouse on a headland in the outskirts of the city. The present lighthouse is mainly of Roman construction, but according to local legend in pre-Roman times there existed another tower on the same spot. Breoghan climbed to the top of this tower, and from there saw Ireland to the North. It was thus that the

descendants of Breoghan knew of the existence and whereabouts of Ireland, and thus some migrated there. To this day most Coruneses call said lighthouse the Tower of Breoghan". Celtic ruins abound in La Coruna and its immediate vicinity. Anyone familiar with Galicia who has read the novel Bard by Morgan Llewelyn will recognize "the stronghold by the headland" of said novel as La Coruna. However, the city of Betanzos, not far from La Coruna, which was called Brigantia in pre-Roman times, also lays claim to be the port from whence the descendants of Breoghan left for Ireland. The anthem of Galicia is called *Fogar de Breogan*, i.e., "Home of Breoghan", and there are even soccer teams named for Breoghan.

A relative of the very old Gallego family called Caamanyo, dona Mercedes Gil Rigueira of Santiago de Compostela, has in her possession a manuscript which the paleography department of the University of Santiago de Compostela says is of the 17th century.

The anonymous author of said chronicle speaks of a local tradition concerning a king named "Brigo". In a very Renaissance manner, said author attempts to relate something not well understood to the Classical World. The author did not take his information from Irish sources, since he does not mention Ireland, nor does he mention Braganza. Numerous gallegos have told me of oral traditions among illiterate villagers concerning Brigo or Breogan.

It is said that Arcos de la Frontera was originally called "Arcobrigan" from its founder, a king named "Brigo". (179) Arcos

de la Frontera is near Jerez de la Frontera and not far from the mouth of the Guadalquivir and therefore near a place called "Donana", pronounced "Donyana", (which name almost certainly comes from the Celtic "Danaan", Sanskrit "Danu", Avestan "Anahita") in Southwestern Andalusia. There is indeed a strong Celtic heritage in the very heart of Andalusia.

The Celtic names *Brigo* and *Breoghan* are related to the Sanskrit stem *brih*, which means "great" or "excellent" and "prayer" (180). The Indo-European *ghw* and *gh* are "h" or "gh" in Sanskrit, hard "g" (as in "gum") in Celtic.(181) From the stem "brih" come the names "Brahman" and *Brihaspati* (lit., "Lord of Prayer"), the Vedic god of wisdom and eloquence to whom eleven hymns of the Rig Veda are dedicated, (182) as well as the name of the Celtic goddess of wisdom, "Brigit".(183) Note the similarity between the name "Brigit" and the participle of *brih*, which is *brihati*.(184) In reference to the names *Brigo* and *Breoghan*, the presence or absence of the final "N" is of no importance. The final "N" is a case ending of the accusative, genitive and dative in certain declensions of Old Irish Gaelic (185) and a case ending of the vocative and accusative in certain declensions of Sanskrit.(186) "Aryan" is *arya* (nom), *Aryan* (accus) in Sanskrit, *Airya* in Avestan, *Iran* in Persian, and *Eriu* (nom), *Erinn* in Old Irish Gaelic.(187) In reality, the name "Ireland" is a Viking word. The Old Irish Gaelic *Erinn* (Modern Irish Gaelic *Erin*, Modern Scottish Gaelic *Eirinn*) is the native Celtic name for Ireland, which, like Iran, means "Land of the Aryans".

Lithuanian is generally considered to be the most archaic of all living Indo-European languages. Interestingly, in Lithuanian the word for "Ireland" is *Airija*, pronounced "I-ree-ya", or, in more standard phonetics, "Ai-rii-ya", virtually identical to *Airyā*, which is the Avestan word for "Aryan". The "Arco" of Arcobrigan may also have a Celtic etymology. In Celtic *Ardd*, *ard* and *ardu* mean "high" or "height".(188) Sanskrit has two words for "high" and "height", i.e., *aruda* and *aroha*.(189) The relation between the Celtic "ardd" "ard" and "ardu" on the one hand and the Sanskrit *aruda* is clear. *Aroha* is cognate with the Latin *arx*, "fortress" or "height" and the Persian *arg*, which means "fortress". Now, within the great Indo-European family, it is precisely with the Indo-Aryan, Iranian and, perhaps, (as we have said before, there is some doubt concerning the Italic languages in this respect) Italic groups that the Celtic languages have most relation. It would be very strange indeed if a stem found in Sanskrit, Persian and Latin did not at some period also exist in Celtic. By the law of phonetic changes within the Indo-European languages, *aroha* in Sanskrit would be *arg* in Celtic, the same as in Persian. One must assume that the stem "arg" disappeared from the Celtic languages before they came to be written in the 6th-7th centuries AD, surviving only in place names. Near Noya on the western coast of Galicia is a place called "Argalo", once important but now reduced to a village. This name readily breaks down into "Arg-Galo", the "Fortress of the Gallaecos", the Gallaecos being a Celtic tribe

from which the

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name "Galicia" is derived. So, at last we have something similar to "Arcobrigan", the "Height of Breoghan" or the "Fortress of Breoghan". Later the *arg* fused with the Latin cognate *arx*, giving *Arcobrigan*. Anyone who has visited the lovely town of Arcos de la Frontera will testify to the appropriateness of this name. We may assume that other places in Spain named "Arcos" also have a similar Celtic etymology.

The name "Ireland" derives from the accusative of the Old Irish Gaelic *Erui*, which is *Erinn* (190), Modern Irish Gaelic *Erin*, Modern Scottish Gaelic *Eirinn*, cognate with the Sanskrit *Arya* or *Aryan* (191), Avestan *Airyā* (192), Persian *Iran* (193). *Erinn*, like *Iran*, means "Land of the Aryans". Roman sources use the name *Aryium* for what is now the coast of Galicia and Asturias. (194) This name is quite obviously the Sanskrit *Arya* plus the Latin case ending of the genitive plural of the third declension, which is *-ium*. Once again, "land of the Aryans" and once again the farther into the past one delves the nearer are the Celtic languages to Sanskrit, Avestan and Persian.

Much more could be said about relations between the Celts on one hand and the Iranians and Indo-Aryans on the other. These close relations contribute in an important way (they are probably the key element) to the great affinity between Spain and Iran. However, from a scholarly viewpoint they at times cause complications, because it is often difficult or impossible to

determine what is the result of Iranian influence and what is part of the Celtic substratum. I wish to note here that said problem is often overstated. There exists a tendency among scholars to take an "either\or" attitude, forgetting that in reality things are seldom so simple and clear-cut. There is no necessary contradiction in saying at one and the same time that a given element proceeds from the Celtic substratum and is the result of Iranian influence. The substratum could have prepared the ground while the Iranian influence strengthened something already present. The Iranian influences which reached Spain at various times no doubt contributed to the survival and vitality of the Celtic substratum, while said substratum contributed to the reception, acceptance and persistence of said influences. God protect us from useless and destructive polemics!

Besides similar geographical and ethnic bases, Spain and Iran have been subject to the same or similar outside influences. Persia was very early influenced by the Babylonians, Assyrians and Aramaens; Spain by the Phoenicians, Carthaginians and Hebrews. Persia was conquered by the Greeks and Macedonians, Spain by the Romans. The Greeks were expelled from Persia by the Parthians and the Sakas; the Romans were expelled from Spain by the Vandals, the Alans (a Saka people) and the Visigoths.

Therefore, prior to the Arab conquest, both Persia and Spain were subjected to quite similar Semitic, Hellenistic and nomad influences. Both Spain and Persia were conquered by the Arabs. In Spain the political rule, language and religion of the Arabs

were finally expelled, but the long period of Arab rule profoundly affected the major part of the Peninsula. In Persia, the Islamic religion remained after Arab political rule and the Arabic language were expelled, though Arab Islam and Persian Islam differ in their particular characteristics or typology. Persia, like Spain, finally separated from the Arabic political and cultural sphere and reaffirmed her own personality, but was nevertheless profoundly affected by the long period of Arab rule. With hindsight, it is possible to see that Muslim Spain might have followed the same route as Persia, i.e., remaining Islamic but only very partially Arabized, if other factors had not intervened.

Thus, whether from the geographical, ethnic or historical point of view, the similarities and parallels between Persia and Spain are numerous and striking.

One of the many ways in which Spain and Persia resemble one another is that both are lands of Mysticism. There is no doubt whatever that Spain has produced more mystics than any other country west of Persia. Spain is unique in having produced mystics of three religions, i.e., Christian, Muslim and Jewish. Almost certainly no other country has produced so many Christian mystics as Spain, including the great and unique figure of St. John of the Cross, called "the greatest of the mystical theologians" and "the Christian Sufi" because of his poetic style which so closely resembles that of the Persian Sufis (195). Spain was a secondary centre of Sufism in its great period, the homeland of ibn Arabi of Murcia and ibn Abbad of Ronda among others, and

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let us not forget Fatima bint ibn al-Muthanna, known in some sources as Fatima bint Waliyya, of Seville, the first "sheikh" of ibn Arabi, who first set his feet on the mystical and esoteric path. This fact is striking considering that Spain and Persia are (and were) separated by language barriers as well as vast distances (196). The answer to this seeming enigma is, I believe, that in Spain and Persia Islam was imposed on Aryan peoples, much more inclined toward Mysticism and Esotericism than the more legalistic Semites. Spain is the homeland of Jewish Mysticism, No doubt for similar reasons (197).

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